Essay 1:

My interest in studying Arabic began with my curiosity in Middle Eastern studies. The Middle East is the birthplace of civilization and is one of the most volatile regions in the world. For me, the Middle East is a fascinating and extraordinary region because of its long, tumultuous history. I am intrigued even further by the both ominous and optimistic prospects that lay ahead for the Middle Eastern region. This interest sparked my desire to learn Arabic. Arabic is not only a beautifully spoken language but it also very famous for its artistic and intricate script. Arabic calligraphy is an art that I would like to master in the future.

The Arabic language and the Middle Eastern region struck my attention in high school during the religions unit in a world history course. The importance of religion in the Middle East and the importance of Islam in the Arabic language are highly relative to the study of Arabic as a whole. Islam is a fascinating religion that has unfortunately been associated with terrorism in the United States. However, this ignorant thought is one belief I and many others, including President Obama, have openly rejected. I wish to learn more about the different religions in the Middle East, specifically Islam.

Prior to this application I have taken a course on the politics of the Middle East that discussed the effects that politics, religion economics, and international relations have had on the history and current situation of the Middle East. It was an incredible course and I am taking its supplementary course in the Spring 2010 semester.

Essay 2:

 The intensive study of Arabic in a country where it is natively spoken will be a tremendously educational experience for me in my future endeavors. It will give me a better understanding of both the language and the unique culture that I have read and heard so much about.

I am currently studying anthropology and in the future I plan on doing participant-observation field work in the Middle East. Specifically, I would like to study adolescence in the Middle East. After taking a course called the Anthropology of Adolescence I have recognized the importance of researching adolescents in a rapidly changing world. Adolescents make up the generation that has the most influence on the political, economic and social aspects of the future. My future research could include studying the effects of war, a conservative religion, and a changing culture on child development and adolescence. To develop good rapport with the people I wish to study I need to be able to speak and understand their language and specific dialect; this is especially important when working with adolescents. Anthropological fieldwork requires that the anthropologist not only observes the target group but also is integrated into the culture he or she is studying.

In the field of International Studies I would like to do further research on why joint political and economic institutions, such as the European Union, fail in the Middle East. This research would include studying the internal and external efficacy of the Arab League and eventually lead to conclusions that could allow the formation of joint institutions. There are far more languages and dialects that I have to study, such as Farsi, Persian, and Hebrew. However, the study of Arabic, which is the official language of the Arab League, is an integral part in my career goals for Middle Eastern diplomacy.

Essay 3:

As an undergraduate I am going to complete a minor in Arabic. I will be required to take at least three more Arabic courses after next summer. In addition, I plan on taking Islamic studies courses as well as political science courses on the Middle East. I also am looking into study abroad programs in other Arabic speaking countries. Specifically, I would like to travel to either the American University in Cairo in Egypt or the American University in Beirut in Lebanon. For future career endeavors, I would like to develop at least some dialectical skills in every Arabic speaking country.

Because my school offers Arabic as only a minor I am limited in my course selection. However, I hope that by the time I am a junior it will also be offered as a major. I have talked to my professor and a group of students about requesting the deans of my university to provide the resources so that they can offer an Arabic major. If we are able to gather enough support and interest in studying the language, Case Western may provide us with further resources and new professors that will improve Arabic and Islamic studies.

I would also like to travel to the Middle East informally with my family. My sister has very close personal contacts in the United Arab Emirates as well as Kuwait. Specifically, I am interested in visiting the various architectural marvels all throughout the region. However, I would like to be a tourist that knows the language of the country in which I am traveling.

Essay 4:

From a very young age, I have been able to adapt well in social situations. I am sociable and energetic in even the most diverse group settings. Because I handle stress and nerves well, I project my optimism and amicability, which allows me to befriend people very quickly.

In 2008 I auditioned for a music program called American Music Abroad that brought students from around the country to perform in small venues across Europe. This experience also familiarized me with experiencing different people in different settings. I only spent four weeks with those musicians but we shared incredibly emotional moments throughout the trip.

Working at Cradle Beach Camp for disabled and disadvantaged children was one of the most eye-opening experiences for me. It was a twenty-four hour job and up to sixteen of those hours were spent up and alert, watching the children. I worked with rude and sometimes violent children from the inner-city as well as children who have physical and mental impairments. Most of the campers came from vastly different backgrounds than me and I learned a lot from them. Despite their negative and debilitating attributes, I loved these unlikely campers. There is an underlying unity among all people, no matter where they come from or what advantages or disadvantages they may have.

Though I have lived in the United States for my entire life, I am an avid traveler. Within the US I have visited many states, which often have unique and differing cultures. Internationally, I have traveled many times to various countries in Europe and to India. I am familiar with being in cultural situations that I am not used to in the States. I do not negatively perceive any of these experiences abroad; they have given me an insight into what life and culture is like in other areas of the world and I am not only prepared but excited for whatever may come my way.