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# STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE

## Evolution and Disillusion

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**Prompt:** It all started with \_\_\_\_\_. Fill in the blank and use the phrase to develop the theme of your story.

It all started with fire.

Some say it was a natural invention from our species' big brains. Others argue it was a forbidden gift from the gods. Still others think it was discovered by accident. In any case, the hot, non-solid entity that was fire preceded the dawn of rapid progress for humanity.

A random hunter-gatherer could've stumbled across it in a lightning storm or smashed two rocks together and ignited an arbitrary stick. Either way, a very fast chain of events – from a planetary time scale – occurred. We began to hang raw meat over the blaze to create a juicier, more nutritious variant that increased our intelligence further. Our ancestors forged metal tools, allowing for more efficient hunting, creating of societies, and resource gathering.

Then, this little thing called agriculture came along and we domesticated multiple crops, or more precisely, they domesticated us. We settled down into permanent farms and villages, bringing a whole load of benefits as well as troubles with it. Larger groups formed, but child mortality skyrocketed. Technological advancement grew, but many people succumbed to diseases. Even today, we can still look back and ask: Was that the right thing to do?

Greater and greater structures rose from the land, from churches and markets to watchtowers and city walls. Fire still existed in many places, namely used for cooking, warmth and lighting. Even as sharp sticks became cannonballs and arrows became musket balls, disease still plagued the community, social rifts became more pronounced, and the highly religious society was convinced that it knew everything there was to know.

Wars commenced. Nations were built. Globalization rose dramatically as our technology became more sophisticated. As agriculture transitioned to industrialization, machines drove factory workers off the par with cheaper and faster labor. A journey from Spain to Mexico went from weeks to days to hours. Production of various goods went from a luxury to something routine.

And yet, fire followed us everywhere. It existed, whether real or electric, at the heart of every locomotive and aircraft and ship. It came in the form of radio and microwaves as we sent messages around the world and instantly heated our breakfasts. It powered our homes from miles away at power plants. All these still happen today. Medicine lets us still talk about this topic.

But with these developments came a lust for power and control. Fire was a terror-inflicting tool used by criminals and terrorists. Fire was a damaging blow, accompanying mighty explosions of nuclear warheads. Fire caused human and animal deaths alike, whether from massive blazes in the forest or silently-killing cigarettes. And all these still happen today.

Computers are going to take over. We will expand to other heavenly bodies. More documents of triumphs and failures will be created. This is the story of us. This is the story of fire. This is the story that still hasn't ended today.

Whether endowed upon us by ourselves or the gods above, fire is a versatile, dangerous tool. It's up to us how we use it. 🍷