

ENTRY 1**Name: Markus Inigo Macayana Perez****Class: 4-5****Write a reflection on how your Meridian experience has shaped your vision for your future.**

If someone had asked me in Secondary One what I wanted to become, I would have given them a job title. Today, I would give them a purpose. That shift, from seeing my future as a destination to understanding it as a direction, is perhaps the most profound change Meridian Secondary School has sparked in me. I used to ask myself, "What will I be?" Now I ask, "What will I stand for?" The first question once seemed sufficient, even practical. However, with each passing year at Meridian, each failure that taught me resilience, each success that revealed my capacity for leadership, each conversation that challenged my assumptions, that second question has grown heavier, more urgent, more central to everything I do. It is something I can no longer answer with a profession or plan. It demands something deeper: a reckoning with my values, my responsibilities and the impact I want to have. One truth has been instilled in me after four years at Meridian: the future is not waiting to be found. It must be built with values at the foundation, purpose as the guide, and adaptability which keeps me stable, even when the ground shakes beneath me.

In Secondary One, I measured my future success in grades and rankings. What success meant to me was being first in class and receiving academic awards. I had a formula: work harder than everyone else and the future would take care of itself. When adults asked what I wanted to be, I would name whatever professions topped the 'most-respected careers' or 'highest paying jobs' lists, not because I knew what the job entailed, but rather it required excellent grades and excellent grades were something I knew how to pursue. My vision was shaped purely by external validation rather than internal conviction, chasing benchmarks without asking why it mattered, and accumulating achievements without considering what I was building towards. I was so focused on climbing the ladder that I never stopped to ask whether it was leaning on the right wall.

During my lower secondary school years, I applied to as many different programmes that Meridian offered as I could. Take the 'Meridian Speakers' programme as an example, where opportunities to speak in front of large audiences were provided. Prior to applying for the audition, I had never presented or spoken about anything to large groups of people. Additionally, I was frightened to speak in front of them. 'What would people think of me if I mess up? They would make fun of me for sure!' Those were the types of thoughts I had perceived about public speaking. It turned out I had passed the audition, a pleasant shock for someone who decided to apply out of venturesomeness. Through my years in the programme, I was given many opportunities to be an emcee for multiple school events, most notably to be an emcee for the National Day celebration in 2024. It began to tug on my heartstrings. Granted, I made many mistakes and the process was exhausting, it helped grow my appreciation for the preparation

behind the big day. This helped me enjoy the process and the journey and growth, rather than solely fixate on the end goal. This made me realise that none of these would have happened if I had not taken my first step in registering for the audition. The future does not need to be a clear ladder to climb for it to be a future that is worth looking forward to. It could be doors waiting to be opened. Even though we do not know what is on the other side, sometimes, the best action is taking a step through that door, and the Meridian Speakers programme helped me realise that.

In Secondary Three, I was part of the Executive Committee (ExCo) of Meridian Secondary School. It was a huge jump from the previous leadership positions I had held. A greater workload, higher expectations and more commitments, all while juggling academic and external commitments. These took a toll on me. In my first term, my grades dropped and that devastated me. I was aware that this was a normal occurrence through my form teacher, noting it happens with every batch of students. I never had a concrete purpose of being in ExCo, all I wanted was to achieve a higher level of LEAPS 2.0 for my post-secondary education. Being in ExCo required me to be in meetings and stay back in school multiple times, which started to affect my attendance for wrestling practice sessions—something I practised outside of school hours. All of these drove me to the brink of quitting the ExCo. It was one day when I was walking around school when a junior approached me, eagerly telling me, “Hey, you are part of the ExCo right? You know you are so cool, you inspired me to be a Peer Support Leader!” That shook me to the core. I never thought I could make a genuine impact as an ExCo member. I was ridiculed by some friends who witnessed the exchange. However, my actions, our actions, inspired others to take that step to lead. It ignited a spark in me and gave me a purpose to lead: to inspire others to take a step to lead themselves and others. Through more time, I improved my time management and my grades rose again. To look back and realise that none of these qualities I have gained would have come to pass if I had left.

Through these experiences—learning my personal values, finding my purpose and being more adaptable—my view of the future has been shaped tremendously. Instead of focusing on the end goal, I have learnt to build my future with my beliefs and values. The thought of me graduating is surreal, something I had always wanted to push back as the years passed. The experiences, memories and bonds I have made are going to be something hard to say goodbye to and to just look back as memories. However, in my next steps after Meridian, I would keep the lessons I had learnt close to my heart, building the future I want based on my values and purpose I had found at Meridian.

ENTRY 2**Name: Nur A'isyah Humaira Binte Khairul****Class: 4-5**

Write a reflection on how your Meridian experience has shaped your vision for your future.

My years at Meridian Secondary School have been a profound journey of growth, discovery, and self-realisation. Beyond academic instruction, Meridian has shaped my values, mindset, and aspirations for the future by providing meaningful opportunities to cultivate resilience, leadership, and a strong sense of purpose.

One of the most significant ways Meridian has influenced me is through its emphasis on holistic development. Through CCAs, VIA programmes, and various school events, I came to understand that success is not measured solely by academic achievement, but also by character and contribution. Participating in these activities instilled in me the importance of teamwork and perseverance. Whether preparing for performances such as SYF, attending rigorous training sessions, or completing collaborative projects, I learned to confront challenges with determination and to support my peers throughout the process. These experiences shaped my belief that future success depends not only on ability, but equally on attitude, resilience, and a willingness to grow.

Meridian also nurtured my sense of responsibility and leadership. Observing and engaging with student counsellors and teachers who genuinely cared for the school community inspired me to take ownership of my actions. I learned that true leadership is not defined by authority, but by service—by listening attentively, making principled decisions, and leading by example. This understanding has shaped my aspiration to become an individual who contributes meaningfully and positively to society.

Academically, Meridian challenged me to examine both my strengths and my areas for improvement. The encouragement and guidance from my teachers, particularly my English teacher, Ms Moon, motivated me to persevere through difficulties. Through these challenges, I developed fortitude and self-discipline, qualities that have profoundly influenced my outlook on my future studies and career. I now recognise that setbacks are not failures, but opportunities for growth and refinement.

Ultimately, as I prepare to graduate from Meridian Secondary School, I carry with me not only cherished memories, but also the values, resilience, and determination forged throughout this journey. These lessons will endure long after I leave the school gates, guiding me forward as I step into the future with gratitude, conviction, and quiet confidence.

ENTRY 3**Name: Bianca Leia Tan Zixin****Class: 4-7**

Write a reflection on how your Meridian experience has shaped your vision for your future.

Going through memory lane now that I am in Secondary 4, I find myself reflecting and reminiscing about the good old days—from my first moments of uncertainty in Meridian’s new atmosphere to the current familiar routines. Every memory and experience in this school influenced my vision for the future—which is to continue the consistent hard work to achieve anything I set my heart to. This includes achieving the impossible, and—similar to what the Meridian school motto says—“Uniting to Reach New Heights”. This was proven in moments throughout my entire secondary school life, from academic excellence to friends and finally, to my Co-Curricular Activity (CCA).

In primary school, I was never the smart kid, unlike what people currently think of me. I never studied in primary school and took my studies really lightly—I never had a real vision for the future and thought it was pointless to study. Then, I came to Meridian, with an Achievement Level (AL) of 20. Something clicked in my mind—perhaps it was the new environment, or the need to right my wrongs from primary school. I genuinely tried this time, and I surprisingly achieved all grade As except for Chinese Language. I still remember receiving the Meridian report card for the first time and experiencing a dopamine rush I hadn’t had in months. From then on, I continued to put in the effort and became consistent, which earned me the reputation as the ‘smart kid’ all the way to Secondary 4.

Making friends... it was much harder than academic excellence for me. I never thought I would make new ones in secondary school. My classmates did not seem to like me at all—mostly because I had interests that were vastly different from theirs and typically kept to myself. I only had one friend for the entirety of Secondary 1. This changed when I joined the Student Council in Secondary 2. I was originally hesitant as it meant that I would have to interact with others often and constantly commit my time. However, it was the second best thing that came out of my school life at that point—I made new friends. In the Student Council, I was surrounded by more like-minded people with interests similar to mine, yet with drastically different personalities. The only reason I became friends with them though, was because I went against the instinct to stay quiet by speaking to them first. This showed me that if I came out of my comfort zone, I could achieve things I could not before.

CCA was the hardest of all. I joined a music CCA despite my hearing loss. I found the Meridian Nusantara Orchestra (MNO) more interesting than the other CCAs and thus felt drawn to it. However, when I entered, I struggled. Hard. The instructor assigned me to the hardest instrument, and scolded me harshly because I could not follow his rhythm and was “problematic”. I still remember bursting into my living room after CCA in tears—he had scolded

me for something I could not control. Afterwards, my parents and I explained my condition, and only then did the instructor realise how badly it affected me, and corrected himself. CCA was still tough as I was basically a fish out of water with my hearing difficulty. I resorted to just trying to survive every CCA session, making my way home with a heavy heart. Then, in Secondary 3, a miracle happened! Not a sudden one, but a gradual shift. My hearing... got better! That should not be possible whatsoever, considering my hearing implant settings were unchanged, but I somehow became more attuned to sounds that I could not hear before and could recognise songs just by the tune played in the beginning. I could only listen to five songs in Secondary 1, but in Secondary 3, I was listening to and learning more than 20 songs in the whole year. That made me realise I had just achieved the most impossible thing of all—listening better than the preset settings in my hearing implants. That was because despite dreading CCA, I was consistent in attending sessions, and that increased my ability to discern sounds.

All these experiences were from my time in Meridian. It shaped how I think of the future positively—in primary school, I thought I was a hopeless case, but in Meridian, I grew, put in consistent hard work and achieved the impossible. This makes me want to persist and keep pushing the limits of my abilities and disabilities in the future.

ENTRY 4**Name: Natalia Shafeeqa Aung****Class: 4-4****Write a speech for incoming student leaders about the challenges and rewards of leadership.**

10 years ago, Meridian was a new school finding its footing. Today, as we celebrate a decade of growth, we're not just celebrating the school, but also the leaders Meridian has shaped. Good morning incoming Student Leaders, my name is Natalia, your dearest member of ExCo. Today, I would like to share some insights into Student Leadership.

4 years ago, I stood where you're standing now; unsure, excited and completely unaware of how Student Leadership would change me. When people see Student Council, they often see confidence, strength, and responsibility. However, they don't see the challenges, doubts, and the quiet growth happening behind the scenes.

Student Leadership isn't always glamorous. When I first stepped into Student Council in Secondary 1, I didn't understand why we had to always be "prim and proper". I felt as though I was constantly held to higher standards. Whether it was in terms of attitude, behaviour or presence. I had to always carry myself in a way I felt screamed "Student Council". Even on days when I didn't feel myself, I had to show up. I felt restricted, held back from things my non-student council friends could do. How do I "switch off" from this responsibility?

Over time, I had to stay long days after school. Meetings, plans, rehearsals constantly filled my schedule. I had no time for CCA, friends or even myself. Especially during events such as Secondary 1 Orientation, I vividly remember returning to school for planning every day of the week—seeing the same faces every day, as well as the constant cycle of trial and error. It was tough having to juggle my council duties, academic deadlines and personal life.

However, the rewards of student leadership far outweigh the challenges. Yes I saw the same faces every day, but these people weren't just my teammates, they were my people. My people who saw me at my most tired, most stressed, and still chose to stay in late afternoons spent planning, the shared frustration before events, and the small glances exchanged when things went wrong, I found my sense of belonging.

Secondly, student leadership gave me emotional insight. I started realizing that I was not just a role model but a legacy to be continued by the next batch of Student Leaders—you, all of you, each and every one of you. Through every group work I was in, I started to understand myself better, in all my layers. I understand that I am the type of person who would automatically find alternatives when I reach a dead end, but also want to sit and feel my emotions, and that is ok. I understand how to be there for others, friends, or not. Plenty of realisations that don't just come to you as easy. Through this, I felt rewarded.

Now, I am not solely telling you my story for the sake of talking, but to show you the true sides of student leadership. As challenging as it can be, you will always feel rewarded. Soon, you leaders will look back to your time in Meridian and say, "I'm glad I did that! Thank you all for listening!"

ENTRY 5**Name: Nathania Tee****Class: 4-4**

Write an article for the school magazine explaining how a particular space represents the heart of Meridian Secondary School

THE HEART OF MERIDIAN

The place every student looks forward to; the hour everyone craves to have. The place where loud chatters and laughter can be heard—where cravings and tummies are filled and satisfied. In moments like these, what more could one wish for?

Meridian's canteen holds countless memories for many. It is the stage where photobooths pop up, Secondary 1 orientation leaders lead spirited cheers and countless performances come to life. The seating is just as varied, with tables and chairs to suit every need or mood—from standard benches to high tables and stools. There are even cozy corners equipped with whiteboards and power plugs for convenience. Students also count on the vending machines during and after co-curricular activity (CCA) hours, especially the 'legendary' faulty one that dispenses two chocolate milk packets for the price of one.

As you step into the canteen, you would witness all kinds of interactions—students having consultations with teachers, students chatting with one another as they wait in long lines, teachers catching students cutting queues—all while stallholders greet everyone with joyful smiles. These moments often go unnoticed because they are so routine; from trying new dishes to knowing every price by heart, and getting to know the stallholders personally. Before one knows it, in the blink of an eye, graduation arrives. One should start to treasure these moments—a collection of precious, lifelong memories, before they slip away.

Ultimately, these shared moments are what make the canteen the true heart of Meridian. The special moments created there will stay with the students long after graduation, even as new batches of students arrive every year to continue the legacy and walk their own paths.

ENTRY 6**Name: Rachel Ann Ong Qi Loke****Class: 3-6**

Write an email to your future self reflecting on what Meridian has taught you and what you hope you will remember ten years from now.

We were never meant to stay quiet.

Dear Rachel

In ten years' time, I hope life has been kind to you. There's so much I want to tell and ask you, but first, do you remember where it all began?

Meridian's Go Green Festival, 5th April 2024, 3.10pm, when we were just Sec One. We were comfortable in our circle of friends, happy, but yet, it felt as if something was missing in life. Then, Mrs Koh chose us to emcee at the Go Green Festival. Remember how we were paired up with Serenity? She was so kind to us and encouraged us when she saw us fidgeting with the mic and repeatedly drying our sweaty palms. When we began? Gosh, I can't even remember what we said. I completely blacked out then. But, as I continued introducing act after act, spoke line after line, I grew louder and more confident, to the point that after our part ended, I was still buzzing with energy. And most surprisingly, I didn't feel relieved that the event was over, but was looking forward to doing it again. This was what we were missing. Like a puzzle piece, everything clicked into place after that.

This is what Meridian does: it provides people like Mrs Koh and Serenity to help lift and guide its students without overshadowing them, giving them the opportunity to learn and grow their passions, just like what I'm doing now. Even in the future, wherever you are now in ten years' time, I know that the nerves are still there like when we fidgeted with the mic. But now we have the confidence to overcome the nerves. Meridian helped us learn that our voice is our purpose, but it does not only mean our artistic voice, or our writing voice, but the voice inside us all which leads by actions instead of words.

Now, as I'm writing this, I still don't know many things. I wonder what the shy little girl we used to be would think of us now, standing in front of the whole school to campaign to be the Head Student Leader, or you in the future, hopefully having fulfilled our dream of being behind a news desk, mic in hand, or on the stage. No matter where we are now, I hope we never forget everything that Meridian has given us. I definitely haven't, like the opportunity to represent students at Meridian. Regardless of the result, I hope that you and I remember that no matter what, we tried and worked hard for it, spending countless late nights to perfect plans and revise scripts. We just need to keep in mind that we were never meant to stay quiet.

Now, the whole world gets to hear us.

ENTRY 7**Name: Liu Zian, Anderson****Class: 3-5**

Write an email to your future self reflecting on what Meridian has taught you and what you hope you will remember ten years from now.

Dear Me

In the blink of an eye, 10 years have passed like water fleeting our grasp through the seams between our fingers. Have you become the one you aspired to be? Have you forgotten the path you travelled, ropes you climbed and the stories you experienced on this journey called life?

I remember 3 years ago, you were still a timid, naive boy who first stepped foot into an alien world. The language barrier stopped you from reaching out, and the cultural barrier prevented you from understanding others. You wanted to cry, to shout, to prove that you were better than you seemed to be, but you heard merely the echoes of your voice, faint, distant, despairing cries. Amid this storm, some light suddenly shone in. She was our English teacher. Out of nowhere, you suddenly found someone who would encourage you for every trivial matter that you've done correctly, who would still choose to listen despite your thick accent. She was the one who first brought your heart closer to Meridian. Soon you developed a small group of friends. They were joyful, inspiring and kind to you. With their help, you picked up English bit by bit, learnt local culture, and something lost for long was found once more—confidence.

As I'm writing now, I have spent almost three years at Meridian. I have joined leadership groups, camps, and have been doing well in most of my studies. People would finally befriend me, accept me, and even appreciate me. But what they do not know is the feeling of getting trapped in a pitch dark tunnel, groping my way to an exit that might not even exist. It was during this time when Meridian helped me to adapt, with all of its kindness, resilience and inspiration. Because of all those people around me, I was able to believe in myself again. In other words, Meridian's acceptance and friendliness have taught me how to rebuild one's confidence, break through obstacles and bring hope back to my heart.

I hope you have achieved your goal. But no matter how successful you have been, you should always, always remember this story because it is your very own change, own growth and own metamorphosis you yourself have gone through!

Best wishes,
Anderson

ENTRY 8**Name: Nur Dayana Aqilah Binte Mohammad Azmi****Class: 3-7**

Describe how your CCA, school programme, or camp at Meridian created new opportunities for you. Include specific examples and reflect on how these experiences have impacted your growth, skills, or perspectives.

A school programme that has helped me create meaningful and unforgettable memories would be the National School Games (NSG). Participating in NSG throughout my three years in Meridian has shaped me in many ways. Not only did I improve my skills in the Floorball sport, but I also developed important qualities such as leadership, communication and resilience.

When I first joined Meridian, I was a shy and reserved girl who did not dare to speak up or interact with new people. I preferred to remain in my comfort zone and only mingled with those I was already familiar with. As a DSA student, I began training earlier than the rest, together with a small group of students. Initially, it felt uncomfortable and awkward. However, after a few training sessions, my seniors and teachers gradually made me feel more at ease. Even though we were not close at that point in time, they consistently made an effort to include me, which helped me open up slowly.

When NSG season began, our bond as a team strengthened significantly. We shared countless memories, from laughing at each other's mistakes to celebrating goals together, and even supporting one another during difficult moments. These experiences made me realise the importance of teamwork and unity. At the same time, I learned valuable lessons by observing my seniors. I saw how they led the team with confidence and guided us whenever we were unsure. This inspired me to work on my own leadership skills, as I hoped to take on a similar role in the future. Although we only made it to the top 8 and did not reach the top 4, the experience remained unforgettable because of the strong bonds and memories we created.

After the season ended, I realised that I could no longer rely on my seniors, as they had to focus on their B Division training. This made me understand that it was my responsibility to step up, become more vocal, and take initiative. When the new batch of Secondary One students joined, I saw it as an opportunity to challenge myself. I made the effort to guide and support my juniors whenever they needed help. Through this, I not only improved my leadership abilities but also became more confident in communicating with others.

When NSG came around again, I was given the opportunity to lead my team as captain on several occasions. Being able to take on this role and witness the joy on my teammates' faces was one of the most rewarding experiences for me. It made me realise how much NSG truly meant to me. It is not just a competition to determine the best school in a sport, but also a meaningful platform for personal growth. Through NSG, I discovered new strengths within myself and gained valuable life lessons that will continue to guide me in the future.

ENTRY 9**Name: Auzan Bin Muhammad Effandy****Class: 3-3**

Deliver a speech titled “A school’s legacy is not its buildings, but its people.” Explain how Meridian Secondary is more than just buildings and classrooms.

The corridor outside the conference room felt awkwardly silent. I waited, blazer half-buttoned, for my name to be called for my student leadership ExCo interview, my heart racing. As I stepped into the room, I had countless thoughts flooding my brain, nervous, afraid of the worst, but I decided to walk in with a smile anyway.

The interview went by quickly. When it ended, our principal, Mr Puah, had commented on one detail that he had noticed. It went something along the lines of, “Keep smiling, that smile can get you places.” He had mentioned that the moment I stepped foot into the room, I had lifted the atmosphere with my smile.

Although it may have seemed like a simple comment, it was a significant lesson for me. A short moment that had stayed with me, etched forever in my mind.

After that day, in almost every encounter with Mr Puah, I would get reminded of the day I realised that I carried much more significance than I thought I had, just by simply smiling.

Indeed, it was a simple comment, but I realised something even deeper. It is that Meridian Secondary is not defined by the buildings we walk through daily. It is not the classrooms, the corridors, or even the toilets for some of us, but it is instead the people.

It is the principal who notices a student’s confidence. The teachers who teach with such patience. The friends who support us through thick and thin.

These small moments are truly what shape our experience here. One day, we will all leave Meridian Secondary, but the buildings will remain, and new students will fill the classrooms. But what we will carry with us are the experiences we share with the people who believed in us.

Buildings stand for years, but the words of those who encourage you will stay in your heart for a lifetime. That is the true legacy of a school. That is why Meridian Secondary will always be more than just buildings and classrooms, it’s the people who shape us and who we become.

ENTRY 10**Name: Nur Safira Myiesha Binte Muhammad****Class: 3-1**

Describe how your CCA, school programme, or camp at Meridian created new opportunities for you. Include specific examples and reflect on how these experiences have impacted your growth, skills or perspectives.

Music has always been close to my heart. Since young, I have been passionate about melodies and rhythms, often tapping my fingers along to any song I hear. I have been in a music CCA since primary school. When I entered secondary school, choosing my CCA was simple. I joined Meridian Nusantara Orchestra (MNO), where I was introduced to unique instruments like gamelan and angklung. I never expected this CCA to shape my character in such a meaningful way.

At first, I was excited but also unsure. The gamelan instruments looked complicated, and keeping the correct rhythm required a lot of focus and precision. The angklung seemed easier, but I realised it requires strong teamwork because each player has to play them at the same time. If one person missed their timing, the whole melody would sound incomplete. During my first few practices, I struggled with the timing and consistency.

Over time, I began to improve through regular practices and guidance from my seniors. More importantly, I formed a strong friendship with my CCA mates. We spent a lot of time practising together, helping one another when someone made a mistake. Instead of criticising, we encouraged one another to improve. We also shared many fun moments, such as joking during breaks and celebrating when we successfully played a difficult piece together. Preparing for the Singapore Youth Festival (SYF) also brought us closer as a team. The long rehearsals were tiring, but we supported and motivated each other to keep going. Through this experience, I truly felt that I belong to this CCA.

This year is also the year I will play with my seniors. I know I will miss them when they leave because they have guided and encouraged me throughout my journey. However, them leaving also means that my batch will become the next seniors and we would have to continue the legacy. My CCA mates and I will try our best to make MNO as special and memorable as they did for us. MNO does not only make memorable memories, but it also teaches us discipline and responsibility. We can have fun but also be serious at times. MNO has certainly shaped my character—to be resilient in times of difficulties and to be caring to the needs of others.

ENTRY 11**Name: Shah Kaavya Mitesh****Class: 2-6****Describe a competition or performance you have participated in.**

The sharp blast of the whistle sliced through the air, signalling the start of the final quarter. My chest rose and fell as sweat trickled down my arm, my muscles aching. I stepped over the line as if I was crossing a canyon, adrenaline rushing through my veins. It was the last game that we would play in the C-division NSG games for Netball. All of us had given up on winning the whole thing but wanted to make our last game count.

The score was close, only 6 points apart. Our goal shooter shot, the net swishing; it was now five. I heard a wave of encouragement and claps ripple through the court, lighting a spark of hope.

“You’ve got this!” the coach exclaimed.

As soon as the other team started, I rushed out, following my opponent. She tried to pass through, but I was adamant on not letting her. Having to pass the ball to someone else, the girl who played centre passed to another teammate. However, as fast as a cheetah, my teammate intercepted the ball. I made a beeline down the court, asking her to pass. Catching the ball, I quickly passed to another teammate, watching as they took care of it, scoring another point.

I looked over at the scoreboard, internally jumping with joy. We were so close I could almost taste it. However, most of us were reaching our limit, panting and sweating due to the intense match and the humidity. I was concerned but knew we couldn’t give up.

The match carried on, as both teams scored points, going back and forth. We fought our hardest, as if we were going to war; defending and attacking with a burning intensity.

When the whistle blew, I let out a sigh of disappointment; we had lost by less than five points. I scanned everyone’s faces, which seemed to mirror mine.

We shook hands with the opponents, thanking the referee and other team, moping around.

However, as we sat in a circle, my coach’s words surprised me.

“You all did well,” she said. “I’m proud that you gave it your all instead of giving up.”

Her words sparked something in me. I realised that it wasn’t only about the destination; it was about the journey too. We might have lost, but we went down with a fight. We gave it our all until the very end.

My teammates seemed to have come to the same conclusion, nodding in agreement. We weren't smiling ear to ear, but our moods had definitely brightened.

I learnt something new that day: the journey was as important as the destination. As I got on the bus, I decided I would train harder and participate in NSG again the next year.

ENTRY 12

Name: Law Jia Xi, Natalie

Class: 2-7

Describe a subject that was difficult for you when you first started it.

When I first started secondary school, I was introduced to 3 new subjects: Literature, Geography, and History. I found History the hardest out of all 3 as I felt that it was similar to a subject that I used to struggle with in primary school, social studies.

When I started my first lesson, I found it very boring. This was because at that time, I still had a mentality to let the past be the past, and therefore, was not motivated to study for that subject at all. This led to a C5 grade for my WA1 in my report book for History.

Staring at my results, I felt really bummed as it was my worst subject. It was then that I knew I had to work much harder to pull my grade up.

I started paying more attention in class and going back home to revise. My teacher was really nice. She taught History through slides and used videos to help us better understand the topic. The slides were not those typically long slides which were like the textbook, instead, the slides were short, decorated, and summarized, making it easy to read through.

While she teaches, she often gives the class short two-minute breaks, which helps me process whatever she is teaching and also not feel so tired during class. At the end of every topic she teaches, she would also give us a summary of the whole topic, which helps me understand the topic much better. When someone has a question, she would also patiently answer them.

This motivated me to study harder for the upcoming history examination, as I knew that I could ask her or any of my friends if I had questions about anything.

After the WA2, my grades improved significantly from a C5 to an A2.

This taught me that you cannot have a bad mentality if you want to do well in a subject. You have to work hard for it.

ENTRY 13**Name: Nelly Yusrina Binte Muhammad Yuzaini****Class: 2-1****Describe a new or improved school facility that was introduced during your time at school.**

Stepping into Meridian Secondary School in 2026 felt so much different from 2025. At first glance, Meridian looks so much cleaner and more cheerful to be in. It is a nurturing environment to be in. The different paintings reflect the school's identity and values. The rules on attire and grooming had also been modified by the new principal, Mr Puah You Kai. In my opinion, this is an advantage because it makes the students look so much neater and smarter. Although some students may dislike and oppose these changes, he implemented them because he knows what is best for us.

In addition, the school had renovated the toilets! They are more enhanced and exquisitely embellished than before. It is in warm-toned colours, and it is aesthetically appealing. The cleaners have been doing their best to keep the toilet clean and flawless. Every time I visit the toilet, the mirrors are as clear as crystal, and the floor is spotless. They really are the most helpful and hardworking workers in the school. The school also added bidets. What an upgrade! They really looked into our suggestions and tried their best to fulfil them.

Moving on, my favourite part of the school is the canteen. It has a plethora of different cuisines such as Chinese food, Malay food, Indian food and of course, Western food. The scrumptious aroma of the food lingered around the canteen. I would always be in a dilemma as there are too many food and drink options to choose from. The prices are also affordable and reasonable. The food vendors are also very friendly! They would serve us with a huge smile plastered on their faces. Their happiness in serving us truly makes my heart melt. They are always full of excitement and bubbly energy. My favourite food is the sushi bake from the newly opened stall. It is Muslim-owned, and the food is halal, perfect for everyone to enjoy! It is very rare to find a school that sells sushi bakes, and I think that it is something very unique in Meridian. The menu is written in vibrant, multi-coloured chalk, making it eye-catching and easy to read. I find this astonishing.

Next, the atmosphere of the canteen is very calming and fun to be in. There are artificial plants to decorate the canteen, adding to its relaxing vibe. Also, there's a study corner at the back of the canteen. Students could make use of that space to be alone, or spend some quality time together with friends!

Overall, I believe that the improvements made to the school and its attire have benefited everyone, whether they realise it or not. I prefer this updated version of the school compared to the previous one. Even though the rules are stricter, I believe they will shape us into better and more disciplined students.

ENTRY 14**Name: Damon Pang Wei Run****Class: 2-1****Describe a competition or performance you have participated in.**

Last year, I participated in the Badminton National School Games (NSG). It was my first competition representing Meridian Secondary School. Before the NSG started, I was already nervous, as I did not want to disappoint the school.

I had time to train before the competition began. Our training schedule was on Mondays and Thursdays. On Mondays, the boys would start training first while the girls did physical training (PT). After an hour, the girls would train until 5.30 p.m. On Thursdays, it was the opposite. The girls trained first while the boys did PT. We followed this routine every week, starting training at 2.30 p.m. Although I found it tiring, I knew it was necessary. I even took it a step further and signed up for external training every Friday from 6.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.

The training was relentless. We did continuous smashing drills and running drills until our hands and legs felt like they were begging us to stop. Our PT sessions were no different. We would do wall sits for one minute straight, and if anyone stopped before the timer ended, we had to restart. Sometimes, our legs would refuse to cooperate after the timer went off.

We trained like this for weeks on end. Every morning, my legs did not want to budge, and I had to drag myself out of bed and force them to move. One day, our teacher announced, "Next Tuesday, we will have a friendly match with another school."

I was both nervous and excited. In the blink of an eye, it was already Tuesday, and we were on the bus heading to the school. My heart was beating faster and faster by the second. When we arrived, we warmed up with their team before the matches began.

I was playing doubles with my friend. Although we lost, we realised that our communication was lacking. We kept assuming the other person would hit the shuttlecock, but neither of us did, which caused us to lose points. After a few more matches, we had to return to school.

In the following training sessions, my partner and I focused on improving our communication. Our coach also allowed us to play doubles against the seniors. After some time, we could clearly see the improvement. I felt more prepared for the NSG, but after hearing about our seniors' past experiences, I knew I still had room to improve.

Finally, it was NSG day. As we entered the venue, the sounds of shuttlecocks being struck by rackets mixed with laughter filled the air. We put our bags down, warmed up, and started stroking. I was so nervous that my arm felt as stiff as a brick. When the coach arrived, we gathered around him as he shared some words of encouragement.

The match began, and we were up against a strong opponent. The first singles player lost, but we remained hopeful. However, when the first doubles pair lost as well, the tension in the air became noticeable. We were shocked and nervous. Then our second singles player won, which gave us some relief. Next, it was my turn to play with my partner.

We lost the first set but won the second. The third set was the decider. My partner and I were both exhausted and nervous, but our opponents were too. I was so anxious that I almost zoned out. All I could remember was hearing the cheers from the opposing team's supporters. In the end, we lost the match, and our team was knocked out of the competition.

I was heartbroken. I felt as though I had let everyone down. Although I learned many valuable lessons from the experience, the feeling of defeat and disappointment still lingers in my heart.

After last year's defeat, I am determined not to repeat the same result this year. I will train to the best of my ability and do my part to make sure we do not let our school and teachers down.