1. **Describe how you have taken advantage of a significant educational opportunity or worked to overcome an educational barrier you have faced.**

When I joined my first MUN conference, a sudden spark enlightened my heart. Not only was it beating at an frightful accelerating pace, but for once in my life my heart took over my body. When I spoke my first ever MUN speech, my heart was doing the talking for me. I had completely disregarded the script that I had made, yet I felt suddenly confident and in place when speaking. From that moment on, I knew that this was my passion and that I was determined to explore to the fullest extent possible. But I ran into several walls along the way, the greatest wall would have to be my parents.

My parents did not see this interest of mine as something worth my time, and because of that I had to explore my love for MUN through my own pocket. In full honesty, local conferences weren’t much of a problem, but there was this destination that I was dreaming of attending, Harvard Model Congress Asia 2020. I was fortunate enough to discover that they had a scholarship program, and I was even more fortunate enough to get an opportunity to submit an application after the deadline. While I only had 4 hours to complete it, I put my heart and soul into my keyboard. I let my heart do the talking, while all my body had to do was stay awake at 3.a.m.

When I received the good news, I knew that I had to make the most of it, because it might have been my first and only international MUN conference. I started researching a month before the conference, where everyday I would bring a binder to school and annotate my research whether it’d be during class or at lunch time. Even while on the flight to the conference, I was the only person who still had their seat light on highlighting 3 binders of notes.

At the conference, I made sure to make as many friends as I could. I went to other committees and I introduced myself to as many people as possible. But my greatest achievement there was my decision to participate in the delegate speech competition. When I won this competition, I had the chance to speak in front of more than 2000 international students where I shared my struggle to get here and inspired them to see walls not as obstacles but as a border to find your way around. When I got back at attended local MUNs, people started recognizing me, and told me how they appreciated how I inspired them to find their own way to explore MUN too. The key takeaway for me though was that I found my connection to my heart and I inspired others to do it too.

Hi Darren!   
This is a great story and experience! I could tell how serious and determined you were and how you gave your best in your preparation.

I feel that your story here focuses on the educational opportunity you have taken advantage of, with a slight touch of hindrance from your parents. Your opportunity of attending the Harvard Model Congress Asia 2020 could definitely be a potential we could elaborate more.

I think there are 3 parts to this.

First, would be your story and experience on how you seized this opportunity, which was by applying for the scholarship program despite the limited hours you had to complete all the administration and prepare for the conference.

The second part would be about what happened next after seizing the opportunity.

The third part could talk about how you won and what happened after that: speaking in front of more than 2000 international students and became an inspiration for many.

I have a few suggestions that I think would help make this prompt stronger

1. For the second part, you mentioned that your greatest achievement was your decision to participate in the delegate speech competition. I think it would be great to elaborate on this more before we move on to how you won and what came after that. A few points that could be considered when elaborating could be:

* How did you end up participating in the delegate speech competition?
* Describe the experience of the speech competition.

2. I think it’ll be better to exclude “But I ran into several walls along the way, the greatest wall would have to be my parents.” in the first paragraph. Instead, include your dream of attending the Harvard Model Congress Asia 2020 in the last part of your first paragraph to draw the attention and focus there.

Overall, I think this was such an inspiring experience you have! You seized an amazing opportunity that led you to inspire others. ☺

3. Conclusion

* I think for the conclusion, it’ll be good to flashback a little bit and include how it was the opportunity that you have taken advantage of that helped brought you there. You could mention how the Harvard Model Congress Asia 2020 has shaped or affected you. An example could be, “Looking back, the Harvard Model Congress Asia 2020 has taught me to persevere amidst obstacles and brought me to inspire others through my experience.”