EXPLAIN HOW YOU RESPONDED TO A PROBLEM AND/OR AN UNFAMILIAR SITUATION. WHAT DID YOU DO, WHAT WAS THE OUTCOME, AND WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE? (MAXIMUM 1500 CHARACTERS)

It wasn’t until I felt tons of Catholic eyes staring at me that I felt the anxiety. My body vibrated in the cold windy room. How was I, the only Muslim, supposed to lead the daily prayer in a Catholic school. I felt like a total stranger in the wrong place; like an explorer locked in a tiny apartment out of fear. Each second passed gave time for one more eye to stare at me; to judge me. I couldn’t start as my mouth continued trembling. Was I allowed to do this? Should I do it based on my beliefs? Or theirs? I had no clue what to do.

I took a deep breath, hoping maybe the spotlight would turn elsewhere. Instead, the room intensified. “God” was the only word that my shaky throat could come up with. Then, I said to myself: Just reflect on the things today, and let it flow. I tried my hardest to ignore the eyes. I just mentioned the things that happened that day: how stressful the test that morning was, how refreshing PE was, how fun chatting with my friends throughout the day was. Halfway through, I didn’t even notice I was in a cold room, I was floating following the wave of my heart, reliving the day in my mind coated by the sudden warmth in the room. Without realizing it, I closed the prayer and took a deep breath.

I opened my eyes to a bunch of gasps. The teacher approached me with watery eyes and a smile. She said it was such a beautiful prayer. That compliment will forever stay in my heart. It will always be a reminder to believe in myself and let God do the rest.