



SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT



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ESSAY

The Next Question

Prompt: Describe a moment when you demonstrated leadership or discipline under pressure, and explain how that experience has shaped your goals, either academically or as a member of the Schools' Challenge Quiz team.

“The most important question is always the next one.”

On a day in March, we were playing the third match in the semifinal series against Wolmer's Boys. The match was a mere formality, ending with us winning 40–25. However, every quiz man knows that the second match is where the losing team has its best chance to make a comeback. As such, Wolmer's Boys entered the match determined to take their chances.

The match went as expected, with both teams making mistakes but with us leading 32–26 going into the buzzer section. We knew it was not going to be easy because Wolmer's was a decent team. The section started with them getting the first two buzzes, answering one incorrectly and the other correctly.

Then came Local and International Affairs (LIA), which is not one of my assigned subjects. When the visual appeared, however, I decided that I had to get it for my team. We had been exposed to the visual before, so it would have been a cardinal sin not to answer. I did, and we earned two points.

The score was now 34–26. A couple of questions went by before we made a missed press and Wolmer's made a good buzz, bringing the score to 32–28. Before the section started, I had told myself that I would do anything necessary to win the match. I then buzzed for a biology question — another subject I do not cover — and answered correctly to extend our score to 34.

Unfortunately, we made another missed press on a physics question, which allowed Wolmer's to draw closer. However, we had been taught that the most important question is always the next one. When the next question came from Jamaican Heritage, one of my assigned areas, I knew I had to get it. I answered correctly, taking us back to 34 points.

In the final minute, Wolmer's made one last charge to tie the game. With ten seconds remaining, the score was JC 34, Wolmer's 32. I called out, “Ten seconds left, JC,” reminding my teammates to remain composed and hold firm. Wolmer's attempted the final question but answered incorrectly, resulting in a 34–30 victory at the end of regulation time.

That match was a testament to what can happen when you firmly set your mind on achieving something. I knew in my heart that, no matter what happened, Jamaica College would advance to the final with a 2–0 series victory.