

Stories

Vol. 3

A collection of stories
by Teach For Malaysia

SEKOLAH DI PERAGARA BERKEMBANGAN DARI
SEKOLAH PERTAMA
KUALUMPUR PUTANG
"TAKKAN DAN STAKAS KERANA
ANDA BAKAL KE SEKOLAH"
TERIMA KASIH DARIPADA GURU GURU BAKAL







DEAR FUTURE TEACHER

Written by a student of Suet Li, 2012 Alumna
Teach For Malaysia Fellowship

My future teacher, we never know each other before but we'll know soon. Who ever you're, you'll replace my present teacher next year because she will leave us by the end of the year.

I feel very depressed. It is too hard for me to accept this situation. However, I think most about the future of my school. All I see, there is no hope and darkness all around. We need someone who can guide us.

You're our future, our hope, and I know that you won't let me down. I believe in you.

You the one who can guide us with your great personalities. That's why we really need you to be our future teacher. Come and guide us and we'll create another history for this school, and our country in our glory day.

Before you come, I would like to ask you somethings.

Are you ready enough to take on this responsibility?

What will you do to change us into we?

**“You're our future,
our hope, and I
know that you
won't let me
down. I believe in
you.”**

THE PASSION TO TEACH AGAIN

A story by Shafika

Volunteer

Education Recovery Tutoring Initiative (ERTI)

I never set out to be a teacher. In fact, my first step into education wasn't driven by passion—it was a way to cope. I longed for connection, for purpose, for something to break the numbness I was feeling at the time. Teaching seemed like the perfect avenue to meet people and engage with them.

But reality hit me fast. I discovered that traditional teaching wasn't for me. Paperwork, logistics, and after-school care. It didn't align with what I envisioned at all. I started to believe that maybe teaching wasn't for me.

I was wrong.

Volunteering with Teach For Malaysia changed everything. It reminded me of what truly matters—the joy of sharing knowledge, the magic of watching young minds light up with understanding. Unlike before, I was able to focus purely on teaching, crafting lessons, and making every moment in the classroom meaningful.



But beyond reigniting my love for teaching, this experience opened my eyes to something much bigger.

Education is not a privilege; it is a right. Yet, right here in Kuala Lumpur—a city so advanced, so full of opportunity—there are still children struggling for access to quality education. And if this is happening in the heart of Malaysia, what about the children beyond the Klang Valley?

These kids are brilliant. I believe, with all my heart, that every child is a genius. Their ability to absorb knowledge, to dream, to innovate—it's limitless. Since my very first day as a kindergarten teacher, this belief has never wavered. And every time I volunteer, I see it again and again—the untapped potential, waiting to be nurtured.



Teaching, I've realised, is more than just a profession. It is a responsibility. A commitment to ensuring that every child, regardless of background, has the opportunity to learn, to grow, and to thrive.

A special thanks to my co-tutor for being on this journey together. We've supported and learned from each other, making every session more meaningful. Teaching alongside someone who shares the same passion for education has been an incredible experience and I'm grateful for the impact we've created together.

If you ever have the chance to teach, to mentor, to guide—take it.

You might just change a life.

And in the process, you might discover something life-changing within yourself too.

“

**If you ever have
the chance to
teach, to mentor,
to guide—take it.**

”





BILA ANAK MURIDKU MULA BERSUARA

Mohamad Firdaus bin Razali, Duta Guru Kohort 4 dari Sabah
Pemenang Anugerah Inspirasi STEM 2024

Nama saya Mohamad Firdaus bin Razali, berasal daripada Kelantan dan kini berkhidmat di Sabah. Pengalaman mengajar saya tidak banyak, saya baru 3 tahun mengajar subjek Sains dan Reka Bentuk dan Teknologi (RBT).

Setiap sekolah, setiap anak murid ada cabaran yang berbeza. Kita tidak boleh menyamakan semua sekolah di seluruh negeri ini. Jadi apabila kita ingin mendekati murid-murid, ia akan mengambil masa. Begitu juga apabila kita mahu membangunkan potensi mereka, ia memerlukan masa dan kaedah pengajaran yang sesuai dengan keperluan mereka.

Apabila saya mula mengajar di sekolah ini, saya mendapati murid-murid agak sukar untuk bercakap antara satu sama lain. Kebanyakan pelajar saya dari kampung, jadi apabila saya bertanya soalan, mereka akan diam tersipu malu. Sekiranya saya tidak memberi jawapan, kelas akan terdiam seribu bahasa.

Jadi, saya gunakan pendekatan yang diajar dalam Program Duta Guru (PDG) iaitu 4B: jika pelajar malu untuk bertanya kepada guru, dia akan mulakan dengan 'buddy' (kawan), kemudian dia akan buka 'book' (buku). Kemudian, barulah mereka akan menggunakan 'brain' (otak), dan akhirnya apabila otak mereka sudah buntu, barulah mereka berjumpa dengan 'boss' (guru).

Melalui langkah demi langkah ini, pelajar belajar mencari penyelesaian sendiri.

Sedikit demi sedikit, saya melihat perubahan. Mereka mula berani untuk datang ke hadapan untuk bercakap dengan cikgu dan berkomunikasi antara satu sama lain.

Bagi orang lain, mungkin pencapaian ini kelihatan kecil. Tetapi bagi saya, ia sangat besar untuk anak-anak murid saya, kerana bukan semua orang mampu mengatasi rasa takut untuk bersuara.



“Jadi apabila kita ingin mendekati murid-murid, ia akan mengambil masa.”





A SHIFT IN SILENCE

A story by Intan,
2024 Fellow
Teach For Malaysia Fellowship

I still remember my first encounter with Adam. He was loud, naughty, constantly disrupting class and challenging every instruction I gave. In just one hour, I would call out his name more than thrice just to get his attention to my lesson. I genuinely struggled to handle him. It got so overwhelming that I even asked my Guru Hos if I could change class. Every day felt like a battle.

And honestly, I wasn't sure if I had it in me to keep trying with him.

But over time, I started noticing little things. He never missed Science class. He'd still make noise and joke around, but when I asked questions, he could actually answer them. It made me pause.

Maybe he was paying attention — just not in the way I expected.

One day, I told the class that I was trying to save paper by printing worksheets on recycled pages. The next day, Adam walked up to me with a ream of A4 paper in his hands. "Teacher cakap nak jimat kertas kan, so saya belikan satu rim terus," he said, as if it was the most casual thing in the world. I was speechless. It wasn't just about the paper — it was the fact that he listened, he cared, and he acted on it.

Since then, something shifted. He's still not the quietest in the room, but he's trying. He asks more questions, he even asked if I could do extra intervention classes — just to recap topics before the exam. There was one day when he came to my intervention class while feeling unwell, just because he didn't want to miss out.

Adam reminded me that progress doesn't always look neat or predictable. Sometimes, it looks like a student you once wanted to give up on — now showing up, trying, and choosing to care in his own quiet ways.



FROM PARENTS TO PARTNERS: KELAS SINARAN

A story by Atikah, Teacher Coach (Johor)
Program Kemahiran Asas Literasi dan numerasi (KALIS)

In the heart of a school in Pasir Gudang, a remarkable transformation is taking place. One fuelled by collaboration, dedication, and a shared vision between teachers and parents. What began as a challenge: low parental engagement in the Pemulihan programme, has now flourished into a thriving partnership that uplifts students who struggle with 3M (Membaca, Menulis, Mengira).

Cikgu Latipah (a KALIS teacher), alongside her understanding and supportive Guru Besar and also school administrators, initiated Kelas Sinaran, a programme that invites parents to play an active role in their children's learning. Initially, participation was minimal, with only a handful of parents responding to the call. However, through persistence and commitment to making a difference, the school's efforts paid off. Parents not only attended sessions but took an active role in assisting, conducting activities, and providing learning materials for Pemulihan students.

This initiative did not just stop at academic support, it became a community movement. It spread even outside the Pemulihan community. Other parents got involved and began to understand the unique challenges these students faced, fostering empathy and a stronger home and school connection. The process was enjoyable, meaningful, and above all, impactful.

Now, under the leadership of Cikgu Latipah and the Guru Besar, the school is ready to take the next step. Inspired by the success of Kelas Sinaran, the school plans to introduce KALIS among parents, further enhancing their role in helping Pemulihan students progress. The goal is to create a Mini KALIS Community, where parents are not just participants but leaders in supporting their children's literacy and numeracy development.

For 2025, the school has mapped out various activities to strengthen this initiative. These include mini PLCs (Professional Learning Community) among Pasir Gudang KALIS teachers, regular engagement sessions to track student progress, and resource sharing among teachers in the school, especially with the KALIS toolkits.

What this school has achieved is nothing short of inspiring. I look at this as a testament to the power of collaboration, persistence, and belief in every child's potential. They have transformed parental engagement from passive to proactive, ensuring that no child is left behind!

“
**...the power of
collaboration,
persistence, and belief
in every child's
potential.**”



**Pemulihan is a remedial education programme within Malaysia's public education system that seeks to address the gaps in students' foundational skills.*

Teach For Malaysia is implementing Program Kemahiran Asas Literasi dan numerasi (KALIS) to strengthen and complement existing remedial interventions.



IN TRYING TO TEACH, I FOUND MYSELF BEING TAUGHT

A story by Muaz Hazali

Volunteer

Education Recovery Tutoring Initiative (ERTI)



Every week, I step into a classroom filled with energy, curiosity and pure chaos. Through Teach For Malaysia, I volunteered to teach Maths to 10- and 11-year-olds in a PPR community. And nothing could've prepared me for what I'd experience.

I thought teaching Maths would be simple. Add, subtract, multiply, done. Right?

Wrong.

Some couldn't spell numbers in English or even Malay. Others struggled to focus. Most only understood Malay.

And distractions? Sticky notes flying, drawings everywhere, snack breaks mid-lesson, and endless questions about games (while I'm preparing for class).

But between the chaos were moments that changed everything: A student spells correctly after lots of trials. The proud grin after solving an exercise. The shy kid finally starting to be participative.

Those little wins? They meant the world.

I came in expecting to teach numbers, but I learned about patience, empathy, and how powerful connection really is.

And teachers? Deserve all the medals. This journey gave me a whole new respect for them.

If you're thinking of volunteering, do it.

**You'll teach a little. Learn a lot.
And leave with a full heart.**



LITTLE MINDS, HUGE IMPACTS

A story by Cikgu Thasvinyaa, 2024 Alumna
Teach For Malaysia Fellowship

As a newbie, full of visions and motivation to teach, I stepped into this class full of little learners with great challenges to learn. As I started my journey with them, it slowly hit me that these little ones need something beyond the textbook.

Where do you start when all you see is dead ends?

The mind kept contemplating. Instead of standing still, I decided to break the wall. Brick by brick, a little by little everyday from the scratch. I made them spell simple words, designed creative hands-on activities in the classroom. Added little colours together with the vocabularies they learnt. Taught them it's okay to learn along the way. Reminded them it's not okay to give up too soon.

One fine day, I was equally amazed with the outcome they've produced. They made their own Adjective Popcorns! They spelled those words themselves.

These are the moments that taught me that the way we 'teachers' show up for our students matters. Trust the process.



A PART OF HIS STORY

A story by Afief

2025 Cohort Fellow

Teach For Malaysia Fellowship

Earlier this year, I informally started a small public speaking and debate club at school. Nothing big, just a few students who were curious, and the goal was simple: help them build confidence, communication skills, and maybe a bit of character along the way.

Nazrul wasn't in the original group. But a few weeks in, he came up to me and asked if he could join. It didn't take long for me to see he had something. The way he spoke, how he structured his thoughts, it stood out. Maybe it was from his past experience as an emcee, or from that one speech competition he joined last year. He lost then, but I could tell the potential was there.

So when the invitation for this year's district-level competition came in, the school nominated him. We had less than two weeks to prepare. Almost every evening and night, we'd sit and work through his speech. Some other teachers helped too. But when the day came...he didn't place. Not top three. The gap between him and the other contestants was obvious.



I could see it in his eyes, that moment of disappointment. This was supposed to be his comeback from last year. I reminded him of the same thing I'd said from the start: Enjoy the journey, give your best. I never set expectations. But deep down, I had quietly hoped we might prove something, that rural, Orang Asli students could stand tall with anyone.

“

**But deep down,
I had quietly
hoped we might
prove something...**

”



Then we got another shot, an invitation to the state-level competition. This time, we had a month. We doubled down. Reviewed his script, refined his delivery, challenged his thinking. We trained nearly every evening. But what struck me wasn't the training, it was the shift in him. His drive had become internal. His script never left his hands. He started showing up early. He was hungry to grow.

And our sessions weren't just about speaking. We talked a lot about mindset, about how where you're from should never make you feel less. That your story deserves to be heard just as much as anyone else's. Then came the state competition. Honestly, I didn't expect much. Just quiet hope. The other contestants were strong, well-polished, well-supported. But Nazrul showed up. He gave it everything.

And when the results came out, he didn't just place. He won. First place. From not placing at district...to winning at state. And I don't see myself as the one who made it happen. I believe I'm just a small part of something bigger, a single piece in the long chain of people shaping his journey. There were others before me who saw his light, and there'll be others after me who take him even further.

I'm just glad I got to be that piece of the chain, part of a story that's still unfolding.





MORE THAN LABELS

A story by Ronan, 2025 Cohort Fellow
Teach For Malaysia Fellowship

Cikgu, nak dengar kata-kata hari ini?"

My student often teased me with this every morning. He was often playful by nature. I always played along, but one day, something unexpected happened.

This was the same student who once confidently answered my Sejarah question: "Apa yang tentera-tentera bawa atas kapal ke Sarawak semasa penjajahan Brooke?" with "Pancing, cikgu. Untuk tangkap ikan."

After class that day, he was quietly working on something. As I walked past, I saw him making a birthday card, carefully putting his last efforts into decorating; not for marks, not for praise, but for a close friend.

There was a tenderness in the way he worked, the kind you don't always see in a noisy 15-year-old boy.

These moments remind me that my students are far more than the labels people give them. Beneath their cheekiness, they carry friendship, unity, and humanity; gestures that keep me grounded and hopeful in my Fellowship journey.

“

**...not for marks,
not for praise,
but for a close
friend.**

”



Imagine these stories
multiplied across the nation.

PEJABA
SK (P) PUDU



**Scan to learn more
about what we do**



RIYAN

*One day, all children in Malaysia will have
the opportunity to realise their potential
through quality education.*



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