



Coaches' Manual



The Odyssey of the Mind™ Pledge

"Odyssey of the Mind is in the air,
 In my heart and everywhere.
 My team and I will reach together,
 To find a solution now and forever.
 We are the Odyssey of the Mind."

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What Is Odyssey of the Mind™?

The Odyssey of the Mind™ Program is an educational program that fosters creative thinking and problem-solving skills among participating students from kindergarten through college. It features an annual competition component at regional, state and international levels. Students solve problems in a variety of areas, from building mechanical devices to giving dramatic interpretive performances. Through the Odyssey of the Mind™ program, students learn to work with others as a team, evaluate ideas, make decisions, and create solutions while developing self-confidence from their experiences.

How Does it Work?

The Odyssey of the Mind™ program, created by Dr. Sam Micklus, professor emeritus at Glassboro State College, (now Rowan College of NJ) teaches teamwork and creative problem solving. Working in teams under the guidance of coaches, groups of five to seven students develop solutions to problems and are given the opportunity to test their creative solutions against those of other teams. New problems are designed each year and allow for competition in four divisions: elementary, middle/junior high school, high school, and collegiate. In addition, there is always a primary problem for K-2nd graders.

At competition, teams are judged in three areas: the effectiveness of the solution to the long-term problem (200 points), the style of the solution and its overall effect (50 points), and the solution to a spontaneous problem given to the teams on competition day (100 points).

Who Participates?

The program began in 1978 with 28 schools in NJ participating. Today, the program is available not only in the USA, but also internationally with over 30 different countries competing in the Odyssey of the Mind™ Program. Team members compete from kindergarten to college.

Components of Odyssey of the Mind™

The Long-Term Problem (200 points)

Example: Build a vehicle powered by a jack that will maneuver an obstacle.
Every year, the Odyssey of the Mind™ organization publishes five competitive Long-term problems, and one non-competitive Primary problem. Some problems are "dramatic" in nature, focusing on a literary topic, for example, with the performance generally in the form of a skit. Other problems are "technical" in nature, involving the creation of one or more devices that accomplish certain tasks. Still other problems combine both areas, requiring some technical component and a skit. All problems are open-ended enough that an unlimited number of interpretations are possible. The team prepares the Long-term solution prior to competition. Usually three to five months are spent developing these solutions.

Style (50 points)

Example: A team is required to do a skit about the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The team creates the required skit, but elaborates on it by making it an opera, complete with subtitles --That is Style.
Style is the pizzazz that is added to the solution. It is the enhancement to the long-term problem solution. It could be in the form of costumes, scenery, props, humorous dialogue, sound effects...

Odyssey of the Mind™ Long-term problem solutions require creative problem solving. The Odyssey of the Mind™ program rewards teams for elaborating their Long-term problem solutions since elaboration requires additional creativity. Odyssey of the Mind™ calls this elaboration Style. Confused? Think of it like the icing on the cake. If the Long-term problem is the cake itself, then Style is the way the cake is decorated, so to speak. All teams that solve a given problem have met the requirements of the problem - the cake. But all teams have "decorated their cake" in unique ways - they all have created special aspects of their solutions that were not required - and that is their Style. Up to 50 points can be awarded to teams for these special features.

The Spontaneous Problem (100 points)

Each Odyssey of the Mind™ team entering a competition must also solve a spontaneous problem. One of the purposes of spontaneous competition is to see how well the team members react to new situations. Students try to work on creative responses or solutions to the problems. Spontaneous problems take one of three forms: Verbal, in which team members generate creative verbal answers in a short time period; Hands-on, in which a physical or technical problem must be solved in a short period of time; and a combination of the two, Verbal Hands-on, in which a physical object is manipulated in turns by the team members as they generate creative verbal answers. Many Spontaneous problems require teamwork and points are often awarded for this, regardless of the success of the team's solution. Team members will not know the content of the Spontaneous problem until the judge presents the problem to them. Teams competing against each other in long-term are required to solve the same Spontaneous problem. Team members are not allowed to discuss the problem they were given until the end of the season.

An example of a verbal problem would be: Your problem is to name things that are blue. You have one minute to think and two minutes to respond. It would be common to say, "the sky" A more creative response would be, "I'm blue because my boyfriend dumped me."

An example of a hands-on problem might be to retrieve paper cups and stack them without touching them or the floor within a 15 x 15 foot area using a broom, a three foot piece of string, a ruler, an 8-1/2 x 11 sheet of paper, 3 mailing labels, a paper cup, a pencil, a rubber band, and 3 paper clips. The creative emphasis would be on how the students worked as a team to put together devices to retrieve the cups.

1. The three foot piece of string could be separated into three or four pieces, tied together, and then used by two team members to sweep the cups to other team members who could pick them up and stack them using the sheet of paper or a pencil.
2. Or, the ruler could be attached to the broom with the string, and one team member could retrieve the cups for other team members to stack.

Note: All seven team members may participate in the presentation of its solution to the long-term problem. All seven team members may also participate in the spontaneous problem-solving portion of the competition.

What Else Does Odyssey of the Mind™ Teach?

1. That there is not just one answer to a problem; there are many solutions. Some solutions just happen to be more creative, more efficient, or more effective than other solutions.
2. To look past the obvious and go for the outrageous and off the wall.
3. To take a risk. Ideas may not work, but they may give you another idea that will work.
4. Teamwork. All students must work together to come up with a solution. Someone who is artistic is not necessarily handy with a hammer and nail, and someone who can sew a costume may not be able to act. Odyssey of the Mind™ draws from the talents of all team members. They all contribute to the creativity of the solution.

What Do Coaches Do?

In a nutshell... Coaches act as facilitators for the team. They provide a place for the team to meet. They help the team understand the long-term problem. They help the team obtain materials and knowledge to solve the long-term problem. They arrange for guest speakers and/or provide resources that may be helpful in solving the long-term problem. They make sure the team stays on task. They designate breaks for the team when things are becoming unproductive. They stimulate the team with creativity exercises. They ask questions, but they do not solve the problems.

Solutions are left to the team!!!



Odyssey of the Mind®

Long Term Problem Synopses



**Problem 1
Vehicle**

Traveling through creative courses, hitting targets, delivering parts, and carrying teammates “across the sky” or “under the seas” are some of the tasks completed by original team-made vehicles. Teams use unusual sources of energy and original engineering to create vehicles that often don’t look or move like a vehicle. Teams perform an original skit that usually includes characters and special effects but the emphasis is on the running and testing of the vehicle.



**Problem 2
Technical**

Creating a robotic pet, a Not-So-Haunted “pop-up” House, and devices powered by rubber bands are technical problems our teams have solved. The level of technology is up to the team and ranges from basic engineering and electronics to more advanced robotics. Technical devices have served purposes that include producing special effects, delivering mail, and improving the lives of people in need. OMers test their devices in performances that are often hilarious.



**Problem 3
Classics**

Imagine turning the story of Pandora’s Box into a video game or creating an original Lost Labor of Heracles! In our Classics problem, teams write and perform original theatrical performances based on a work from classical literature, artwork, music, culture, or history. Subjects range from bringing the past to life to revisiting and rewriting history, all while OMers learn about world history. Solutions often reflect upon the majesty and sophistication of humanity’s most impactful and enduring creations.



**Problem 4
Structure**

Picture a 15-gram (½ ounce) structure made of balsa wood holding and balancing a stack of weights while getting hit, twisted, or even broken apart. Each year a new problem requires an original structure to withstand a new test of strength as it holds weight until it breaks. It’s not uncommon for experienced teams to hold over 1,000 pounds. OMers create and present performances ranging from comical to extravagant where testing their structures is part of the action.



**Problem 5
Performance**

Whether it is showing the world from the point of view of an animal, acting out a Food Court where all of the characters in a courtroom are food, or showing social outcasts saving the planet, you can be sure that our performance problem will be fun and unexpected. In their solutions teams integrate stage and drama elements from lighting effects to puppetry to elaborate set changes. Original characters and unusual situations give OMers plenty of opportunity to show off their creativity.



Primary

Teams might present their very own prehistoric art festival or a skit where a character keeps waking up in a different place and time. Teams present their solutions at tournaments in a non-competitive showcase where they interact with judges who provide feedback. Primary problems are designed to provide younger OMers with a comprehensive, fun, and instructional experience that helps introduce them to Odyssey of the Mind.

BECOME A MEMBER AND SOLVE ONE OR SOLVE THEM ALL!



odysseyhq



odyssey_hq



odysseyofthemind.com

How to Join?

Before you can begin your Odyssey of the Mind™ experience there are a few fees and registrations that must be purchased. The sooner you fill out the forms and pay the fees the sooner you can get started on your problem-solving fun.

Membership Fees

International Membership Fee \$290 – Due ASAP

Additional memberships for the same school/community group (e.g. Team B) @.....\$190
6-10 memberships from the same school district (registered at the same time) @\$240
11 or more memberships from the same school district (registered at the same time) @\$190

Members receive:

- a. Five divergent problems that are challenging and user-friendly with a wide range of subjects
- b. One Primary problem for younger students to introduce them to the Odyssey of the Mind™ experience.
- c. A Program Guide that provides coaching information, program rules, and team forms.
- d. A subscription to the Odyssey of the Mind™ Newsletter.
- e. Eligibility to enter one team per problem per division in competition.
- f. Prompt and efficient support services from the friendly staff at International Headquarters.

Register online at:

<http://www.odysseyofthemind.com/registration/>

Michigan State Membership Fee \$60 Due January 10 (yearly)

The Michigan State Membership fee funds are used to run the state program and State Tournament. One must be purchased for each International Membership.

Regional Registration Fee (*per team) \$50 Due January 10 (yearly)

* Each team competing in a Regional Tournament pays a regional tournament registration fee of \$50, which is used to run the Regional Tournament. A Regional Tournament Registration Fee must be purchased for each team, including Primary teams. This is done online at www.miodyssey.com.

How to Form a Team?

As a coach/coordinator you need to move on to the next step of the team building process. Once team members get involved in the program you will find that they often will not want to stop being a member of a team.

The Recruitment Meeting

Are you ready to start an Odyssey of the Mind™ team but need team members? The first step in recruiting team members is to have an organizational meeting. This meeting can be run in a variety of styles. You might want to just have a meeting where potential team members come and learn about the program and practice spontaneous problems. Or you could have a parent meeting where parents come and learn about the program. Either way you will want to plan your meeting and then try to find potential team members.

There are many ways to find team members who are interested in problem solving.

- Send home a flier with students at your school telling about the program and the meeting.
- Write an article for your school newsletter telling about the program and the meeting.
- Hang fliers in the hallways telling about the program and the meeting.
- Announce a meeting at the PTA/O meeting.

Team Selection

Once you have found some interested problem solvers, your next step is to select a team. If you have between five and seven interested problem solvers then you have a team. If you have more than seven you might need to form two teams or have tryouts. Use the tryout to allow team members to see what they and their future team members are capable of doing, not to eliminate potential team members. If you have tryouts, you will want to decide what you are looking for in a team member.

The availability of the team members might also be a beneficial method for selecting teams. Most kids have other commitments, which should be considered.

If you are forming two or more teams you may want to divide them on their talents. Different people all have different talents, try to find out the talents of the team members you are selecting. Having a team with seven artists may not be as helpful as having a well-rounded team.

Let the team and the parents know exactly what you are going to expect out of the team concerning practice time and commitment. It is important to establish this right away or you will never gain control of your team.

Competition Divisions

Another important consideration in team member selection is the division of the team. Odyssey of the Mind™ has five divisions. Each Odyssey of the Mind™ team is grouped into a division for competition based on the grade level of the team members. The team must participate in the highest division for which any team members qualify.

- Primary – Grades K-2
- Division I – Grades K-5
- Division II – Grades 6-8
- Division III – Grades 9-12
- Division IV – Collegiate

There is a division finder at http://www.odysseyofthemind.com/division_calculator.php to use to determine the division of your team. It is recommended that you use it before your team begins solving the Long-Term Problem.

Things to Discuss at the First Meeting

- Introduce Coaches
- Explain about the Components Odyssey of the Mind™ Program
 - Long-Term Problem (5 Problems plus Primary grouped in Divisions by Grade)
 - Spontaneous
 - Style
- Practice Schedule (Dates and Times)
- Tournament Dates, Times, and Locations
- Student Expectations (Attend practices, inform coaches of missed practices, be at Competition)
- Parent Expectations (Aid with Fund Raisers, Costs, Help at Practice)
- Outside Assistance (What it is and what it is not)
- Registration Form - You will want everyone that is interested to fill out a registration form. It should include the team member's contact information, hobbies, available practice times and personal information such as date of birth, school and grade.
- Encourage your team and parents to start looking for a judge and volunteer to work at their tournament
- Each team will need to provide:
 - 1 volunteer to work a 2-3 hours shift at their team's tournament. This volunteer shift will not conflict with their team's performance
 - 1 judge to work that is willing to:
 - Work the day of the tournament
 - Attending mandatory Judges Training
 - Judge at the Michigan State Finals should your team advance
- Judges and Volunteers can be parent, grand-parents, friends, neighbors, teachers, co-workers....

Participation Forms

(found in Appendix)

Often times it is useful to be prepared for any situation. The following are some pre-made forms that can be very useful. You should alter or change them in any way you like but you would be well advised to have your team members fill out the forms. Keep the teams forms in a place that you can access when needed.

Student-Parent Contract - Use this form as a buffer to let the students and parents know what you expect out of your team members.

Conduct Code - This form tells the students and parents what you regard as proper behavior for your team members.

Medical Form - Use this form as a safety net in case one of your team members gets hurt during practice or competition.

Be a Prepared Coach

Coaching an Odyssey of the Mind™ team is a complex and rewarding challenge. There are as many ways to coach as there are coaches, but the processes and principles remain basically the same. Cultivate your own motivation, enthusiasm, and advocacy for your team. Work through difficult emotions and maintain a good relationship among the team members and yourself. Be resourceful by keeping organization and planning at the top of your priority list. Work faithfully to provide a risk-free environment -- physically, emotionally, socially and mentally.

While there are no "wrong" answers, there are many right answers. The job of team members is to find a solution that is right for the team. This can only be achieved through listening, contributing, cooperating, refining, and intense practicing. For team members, Odyssey of the Mind™ is hands-on. For coaches, it is hands-off.

Strive for perfection, but be willing and ready to accept the best that your team can offer. Never lose sight of the ultimate goal that every team member should have a gratifying experience. Enjoy!!

Tips and Advice

- Always answer a question with a question. Learn how to ask questions.
- Arrange for a Co-Coach or back up person for the team.
- Keep time management as a priority and ask team members to create and stick to schedules. Set goals. Write them down and place them in clear view.
- Set up a meeting schedule with team members. Include something that can be accomplished at each meeting.
- Learn to recognize burnout and when to lighten up. Keep morale high and make the learning/working environment a fun-filled place.
- Have team members make (and bring to competition) backups of everything -- extra forms, tapes, batteries, etc. Have a checklist for loading, staging, tasks, etc.
- Know the Odyssey of the Mind™ long-term problem and the Odyssey of the Mind™ Program Guide inside out and backwards. Make sure the team knows and re-reads the problem when problems arise.
- Encourage team members to do some thinking on their own time and to write down their ideas.
- Be a real resource person. Be creatively resourceful by providing the materials and specialists who can teach the skills (not solutions) that your team needs. Take the team on field trips to the hardware and fabric store.
- Teach skills and attitudes to help the team anticipate unknown problems.
- Practice spontaneous as much as long-term and Style. Remember, "think time" in spontaneous is generally 33% of the problem. Require that your team(s) use this time well.
- Simulate every aspect of a competition and practice this frequently. Practice reacting to mistakes and accidents as these often happen.
- Look at the answer or solution. Have team members ask: Is it of high quality? Does it feel right? Is it believable? Do we identify with our solution? How original is it? Can it be done? Will it be universally accepted?
- Help the team develop confidence in risk taking.

Coaching Do's & Don'ts

- **DO** teach your students the creative problem-solving process and use it throughout the problem solution.
 - **DON'T** tell them how to solve the problem, but rather ask questions that help them think it through.
- **DO** help students to understand that winning is not the goal. The process of getting there is the important thing -- not the competition.
 - **DON'T** make them feel like they have failed if they don't win. Failing is only when they won't try again.
- **DO** help students to see and recognize the abilities of each team member and encourage team members to capitalize on the individual strengths of ALL.
 - **DON'T** allow any criticism of teammates' personalities or physical attributes -- no cutting remarks.
- **DO** encourage growth through each new experience.
 - **DON'T** get disturbed when teams make mistakes along the way. This is part of the OM learning process.
- **DO** help them get organized and become aware of the importance of keeping a schedule and meeting deadlines.
- **DO** help them expand their minds, dig deeper, and look for more creative ideas.
 - **DON'T** limit creativity by setting restrictions which are too tight or which reflect your own, perhaps limited, vision.
- **DO** help them give and take constructive criticism of IDEAS and to avoid insulting and insensitive personal remarks.
 - **DON'T** step in on their disagreements. Let them work it out as part of learning to work as a team.
- **DO** be willing to admit you don't know everything and encourage your team to get help in learning skills from others. (Be careful of Outside Assistance with this one.)
- **DO** help them to learn how to evaluate their ideas and progress continually throughout each aspect of the problem solution.
- **DO** go over the score results with team members after a competition to help them improve in future tournaments.
- **DO** set a good example of adult behavior and by all means be a good role model for your team members and others.
 - **DON'T** complain about other teams, coaches, or judges. This only teaches poor sportsmanship.
- **DO** be a quiet "guide on the side," not the "sage on the stage."
 - **DON'T** get uptight. Relax and remember that the team members are the ones who have to know everything or find out. You are the coach and are not supposed to produce the problem solutions.
- **DO** have team members write, illustrate and design all details of mechanically complex concepts, sets, vehicles, etc., before beginning.
- **DO** include community members, parents and teachers at school who will volunteer their time, write letters, etc. Establish a network of available talent.
- **DO** contact colleges, universities and businesses for professors and highly skilled artists, engineers, electricians, etc. to demonstrate needed skills. (Be careful of Outside Assistance.)
- **DO** establish relationships at businesses frequented such as hobby shops, fabric stores, lumber yards, hardware stores, department stores, etc.
- **DO** relax and enjoy seeing these young, creative minds at work!!
 - **DON'T** allow teams to prepare a problem solution that knowingly goes against the Spirit of the Problem or any of the limitations given in the problem itself.
- **DO** READ, READ AND REREAD THE PROBLEM AND THEN READ, READ, AND READ SOME MORE.

OMER'S Top Ten Reasons for Becoming an Odyssey of the Mind™ Coach

#10 THERE ARE MINIMAL QUALIFICATIONS. Can you spell Odyssey of the Mind™?

#9 Odyssey of the Mind™ GIVES YOU THE ULTIMATE ANSWER TO THAT UBIQUITOUS COCKTAIL PARTY QUESTION: "WHAT'S NEW WITH YOU?"

You'll never be at a loss for words since once you start explaining "What's Odyssey of the Mind™?" and an hour later you're just getting around to the finer points of the latest clarifications to your team's problem.

#8 Odyssey of the Mind™ COACHES WITNESS THE "DISCOVERY CHANNEL" WITHOUT EVER HAVING TIME TO TURN ON THE TV

Watching 7 kids morph from the slack-jawed "DUHH" stage to the effervescent, polished performers with dazzling stage presence is a rich and rare experience that evolves ever so slowly over a period of several months gestation.

#7 Odyssey of the Mind™ CAN REVERSE THE NATURAL AGING PROCESS OF THE BRAIN

Brainstorming with your Odyssey of the Mind™ team fires up your neurons, too! Just being a judge in spontaneous practice sessions with your team challenges your brain cells to keep up with theirs.

#6 "Odyssey of the Mind™ COACH" LOOKS GOOD ON YOUR RESUME

You are now officially one of former President Bush's "1,000 Points of Light."
Being an Odyssey of the Mind™ Coach can also preempt you from having to do most other volunteer jobs at school.

#5 Odyssey of the Mind™ COACHING EXPANDS YOUR SHOPPING HORIZONS

You'll never shop in a hardware store in the same way again. Strange and heretofore unnoticed objects will challenge your mind as to what wonderful and creative inventions they could be.

#5a Odyssey of the Mind™ COACHING ALSO EXPANDS YOUR STOCKPILE OF USEFUL JUNK

You'll never throw anything away again.

#4 Odyssey of the Mind™ ADVANCES A CURE FOR THE MID-WINTER BLUES

January and February used to be dull months. No longer! Time flies when there's a regional deadline.

#3 Odyssey of the Mind™ ALLOWS A BREAKTHROUGH IN WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAM

The tossing and turning in the middle of the night burns extra calories.

#2 Odyssey of the Mind™ OFFERS THE CHANCE TO TRAVEL WITH CHILDREN TO EXOTIC LOCATIONS SUCH AS Ames, Iowa and East Lansing, Michigan.

#1 THE COACHES RECOVERY PARTY AT WORLD FINALS!

First Five Meetings

Meeting #1

- Meet with team and parents to explain program and set team goals
- Discuss the process, give dates for tournaments
- Go over the time commitment and responsibility of being on the team
- Stress regular attendance at meetings
- Explain Outside Assistance
- Review behavioral expectations
- Talk about difference between “winning” and “succeeding”
- Set a meeting schedule
- Set team members and their families on a hunt for judges and volunteers.

Meeting #2

- Incorporate a team-building activity
- Discuss working as a group. All ideas are valid
- Review brainstorming rules, remember ... no put-downs
- Explain Spontaneous and relevance to scoring
- Practice a couple Spontaneous problems
- Read the Long-Term problem synopses & clarifications
- Talk about skills and interests of team members and group

Meeting #3

- Incorporate a team-building activity
- Brainstorm how group can be a successful team
- Practice a couple Spontaneous problems
- Have team decide on Long-Term problem (vote?)
- Brainstorm possible solutions to Long-Term problem

Meeting #4

- Incorporate a team-building activity
- Practice a couple Spontaneous problems
- Read the Specific Long-Term problem rules
- Brainstorm Long-Term problem solutions and skills needed to solve problem

Meeting #5

- Continue team-building
- Continue Spontaneous practice
- Re-read your Long-Term problem and rules
- Brainstorm list of tasks to accomplish and timeline
- Assign tasks and discuss team member responsibility
- Ask for help if you need it

Team Building Tips

- Respect Each Other (team members and coaches)
- Share picnics, dumpster raids, buying trips, pizza parties, joys, sorrows
- Kids are people too – they have good days and bad
- Positive Criticism
- Continually Work on Spontaneous Skills
- Celebrate Together - Cry together
- Allow the team time to be kids and have some fun
- Recap at the beginning or end of sessions
- Go with the Flow
- Teach your team self-discipline

Sample List of Things the Team Could Do to Solve the Problem

Problem selection	Storyboard
Central concept (main idea) – plot scene	Music and sound design affects
Technical solution(s) - vehicle design and construction	Target dates
Script/dialogue writing	Practice times
Spontaneous problem-solving (all types)	Lighting
Character development - (appearance, description, name, emotions, etc.)	Research
Style	Singing
Build structures	Dance
Problem requirement components (points, penalties, etc.)	Videotaping
List materials needed	Judges
Purchase materials needed	Sign
Decision-maker (long-term problem or spontaneous)	Humor
Set – (background, props, special effects)	Memorize lines
Costumes – (design and construction)	Rehearsal
Make up	Motivation
Secretarial – (note keeping at team meetings)	Special effects
Construction assembly	Forms
Typing preproduction copy	Artwork
Transportation of team props	Backups
	Playbill
	Tools
	Ideation

Odyssey of the Mind™ Coaches Bill of Rights

1. You have the right to expect school-appropriate behavior and language from your team whether they meet at school or not. The rule of thumb is; "If you wouldn't do it around a teacher, you don't do it at Odyssey of the Mind™ meetings." If you are a parent-coach you may wonder how teachers keep their large classes under control, while your seven team members are swinging from the rafters at every meeting. It's simple: they expect school-appropriate behavior, and so should you.
2. You have the right to expect your team members to be at their regular weekly meetings. If a child doesn't attend regularly, the whole team suffers. Give them a calendar of scheduled meetings and expect them to attend.
3. You have the right to expect the parents of your team members to help--You are a coach, not a genie! You can't be in two places at once, you don't have four pairs of hands, and you only have two eyes. Let the parents know when and where you will expect help.
4. You have the right to expect parents to share in the cost of creating the solution. How you go about it is up to you, but don't feel obligated to pay for everything.
5. You have the right to remove a child from a meeting if he/she is unable to behave appropriately. Find a safe place in the room for the child to sit, and insist that he/she stay there for the duration of the meeting. Don't leave him/her unsupervised.
6. You have the right (and the responsibility) to call the child's parents if a problem occurs or recurs. Do not let one or two kids ruin the creative energy of the team. You would want to know about your child's behavior, and so do they. Do not be afraid to call.
7. You have the right to remove a child from your Odyssey of the Mind™ team if all attempts to modify his/her behavior fail, and it is clear that the team cannot proceed otherwise. This is a last resort and should only happen with the child's parent's knowledge and involvement.
8. You have a right to have a life outside of Odyssey of the Mind™, especially during the last few weeks before regional competition. (This will be news to some of you!) It's true -- you can and should step back from your team and its travails and get some perspective. Is it still fun? Are you taking it too seriously? Are their problems becoming your problems? Do you want to "WIN" more than they do?

How to Deal with Parents

Parents and Outside Assistance

What parents may not do is provide the dreaded "Outside Assistance", for which the team will receive penalties at the tournament. Just remember that all ideas for the long-term problem solution, as well as all of the implementation of those ideas, must come from a team member.

However, there is NO "Outside Assistance" in Spontaneous Problem Solving, so feel free to assist the coach, practice at home around the dinner table, and have fun with your family doing spontaneous problems with your child and/or other children. (Everyone loves spontaneous!)

How Parents Can Help Odyssey of the Mind™ Teams

1. Attend practices on your scheduled day to assist the coach.
2. Coordinate snack schedules.
3. Offer to make copies, write a newsletter, parent letters, etc.
4. Encourage the research phase (trips to libraries, museums, junk stores, etc.).
5. Teach your expertise to team members: sewing, building, painting, engineering, electrical, etc.
6. Help set up and judge spontaneous problems.
7. Play word games, mental games at home - work on verbal spontaneous at home.
8. Urge your child to READ AND REREAD the long-term problem.
9. Make certain your child is on time for meetings. Notify the coach if a meeting is going to be missed.
10. Anticipate problems in scheduling team meetings.
11. Encourage independent thinking!
12. Stay positive.
13. STAY OUT OF THE PROBLEM SOLVING!!!
14. Offer to be a driver when the team goes on field trips.
15. If you have an idea for a judge for regional competition, let the coach know. Judges have to go to training.

Role of Parents

Meet with Parents of Team Members Prior to Tournament Day:

1. Remind parents that Odyssey of the Mind™ is a KID program, adult input is not appropriate.
2. Tell parents that their child will be busy all day at the tournament. You, the coach, make decisions regarding the day's schedule, and when students have free time. Discuss whether you will supervise the team members all day, or want parents to assist during the free times.
3. Make a plan for lunch. Do you want the team to eat together, or do you want parents to be responsible for their child's lunch?
4. Tell parents they may be needed to sit with team props, clothing, etc.
5. Ask that students not bring large amounts of money with them. This will save you from spending precious time searching for the money, which inevitably gets lost.
6. Find out which parents have vans or large vehicles to transport props.
7. Ask one or more parents to tape the team's performance. It's a nice remembrance of the day and a great learning tool for next year.

Give everyone a copy of the "Pssst... Odyssey of the Mind™ Parents" handout which can be found in the appendix.

Outside Assistance

OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE is receiving help from a coach, a parent, another adult, or a child not on the team...anyone who is not a team member. It is outside assistance at any time during the season to have more than seven kids create the solution. Take time at the beginning of the year to make sure that your team understands what outside assistance is and is not.

What is Considered Outside Assistance?

IT IS OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE IF ANYONE BESIDES THE TEAM MEMBERS:

1. SUGGESTS or CHOOSES the theme, music, costumes, props, etc.
2. SUGGESTS or MAKES any part of the solution or style materials.
3. OFFERS IDEAS or solves the problem for the team. As with all Outside Assistance... the discovery and learning process is destroyed.
4. FILLS OUT any of the paperwork except in Division I. Division I coaches may record the team's ideas on the paperwork, but it cannot be the coaches' ideas. It must be the team's words and decisions.
5. ASSISTS in applying makeup, repairing materials, or hairstyling.
6. ASSISTS the team in any way once they have left the staging area judge.
7. ANSWERS questions addressed to the team by a judge.
8. SIGNALS or assists the team in any way while they perform.

Teaching Team Members Skills

A coach or a parent can be most helpful to team members when they teach them a skill that the team members may not have possessed before the Odyssey of the Mind™ year. It is important to remember that no one can suggest that they use a certain skill. Don't allow them to be counterproductive, by trying to reinvent the wheel. One of the ideas behind the Odyssey of the Mind™ program is for team members to learn new skills. The following is an example of a situation that may occur and suggestions for dealing with the situation.

Situation:

A team member is trying to hammer in a screw with a wrench. Most people would realize that this is not a proper technique. Approach the team member and ask them "Is that the proper technique for the job?" Most likely they will say "No." There are several different techniques that the team member could use that would solve the problem. Question the team member and allow them to explore some different techniques before allowing them to continue.

- Question #1: What is the proper tool for screwing in a screw?
They could choose to get a screw and screwdriver
- Question #2: What do you normally hammer into a piece of wood?
They could discover that they need a nail and hammer
- Question #3: What do you normally use a wrench for instead of hammering?
They could discover that they need a bolt and wrench
- Question #4: Are there any other methods of attaching the two items?
They could discover that they could glue it together

Whatever technique they choose, once they have made a decision someone can teach them the skill needed for that job if they do not possess that skill. I.e. If they choose to hammer in the nail then you could show them the proper way to hammer and nail with a scrap piece of wood and an extra nail.

If they answer "yes" ask them if their technique is yielding a successful result and encourage them to seek the help of their fellow team members. Remember that you do not have to allow them to do anything dangerous or destructive.

Completing the Outside Assistance Form

Every team has to fill out an outside assistance form. This can be found in the Odyssey of the Mind™ Guidebook. If the team did have any outside assistance, make sure they record it on the form or omit it from their solution. Finding alternate ways to solve the problem without outside assistance is the spirit of the program. Question your team prior to competition to make sure they have not received any help that they feel was not from a fellow team member. Make sure that the team understands what is and is not outside assistance. Make sure to fill out the form completely filling out any outside assistance that the team received. If none the team must state that on the Outside Assistance form. The team will be penalized for any outside assistance that they receive even if it is stated on the form.

Inside Assistance

The following is a statement that you could read to your team to show them the thought process they should have while solving the problem.

When this team is finished with this problem, we will be able to proudly say, 'This solution is ours!' Because, during the process of solving the problem we will rely totally on brainpower. We do not need outside assistance from anyone. We may become frustrated with the problem, we may become angry with one another, and because the problem is difficult, we may have to start over if our solutions don't work. But through it all, we will stay a team, we will do our own work, and we will use Inside Assistance to the fullest.

We may ask our coaches for help in learning how to brainstorm. We may ask our fathers, mothers, or others how to use certain tools. We may learn how to act from workshops, mentors, or books. And we will certainly fix any parts of our solutions that breaks, by ourselves. And, because we are using Inside Assistance, no one will need to brainstorm solutions for us, build our props or equipment for us, or run tools for us that we are unable to use. No one will help us, not our teachers, not our coaches, not our parents, and not even our friends. We will use our own inside brainpower to write our script or skit and design our solutions. When we are finished, it will be all ours. And it will be great.

Yes. We can do it by ourselves because we are a GREAT TEAM, and as a team we will reject any outside assistance if it is offered. Instead, we will use only Inside Assistance in solving this problem.

Outside Assistance Scenarios

SCENARIO A team decided they will revolve their skit around a CELL theme. The coach gives them a homework assignment to come up with all of the words they could with CELL in them like CELLophane, CELLular Phone, etc.

QUESTION Is it OA for a coach to give a homework assignment that gets the kids to think more creatively about an initial idea that they came up with?

ANSWER NO - Although the coach should not give any examples, the assignment is one of the types of things the coach should do.

SCENARIO As the team deliberates on what their solution will be, the coach asks questions to make sure that their solution is well thought out.

QUESTION Is it OA for the coach to ask questions as the team is developing their solutions?

ANSWER NO - that's what a coach is for!!

SCENARIO A Division I team is spray-painting a prop.

QUESTION Is it OA for the coach to hold a team member's hand to help show the proper way to spray paint?

ANSWER YES - You may not demonstrate a skill or assist on anything that will be used in the team's problem solution. S/he must use another item (perhaps a scrap piece of paper or wood) to give this lesson.

- SCENARIO Kids put 2 boards together perpendicularly (4th graders) with screws and nails, but it keeps falling.
- QUESTION Is it OA to ask an adult who is familiar with carpentry to demonstrate what techniques can be used to brace the boards? (Going on the principle that if it can be found with research, an adult can tell them.)
- ANSWER NO - An adult can tell and show the team members various ways to brace the boards as long as s/he does not show them specifically what to do for their problem solution.
- SCENARIO A Division I team is brainstorming their solution.
- QUESTION Is it OA for the coach to write down their ideas for later review?
- ANSWER NO - This is a good idea. The only rule surrounding this is that the coach may only write down what the team members say. Don't editorialize their ideas.
- SCENARIO A coach prepares a simple, generic demonstration of an engineering concept and that concept is immediately applied by the kids into their structural design (i.e. a simple demonstration of how a truss withstands lateral loads better than a frame).
- QUESTION Does the presentation of an engineering concept represent OA in this circumstance?
- ANSWER YES - The coach would have to present several options of construction. S/he could demonstrate how each fails, but the team members must draw their own conclusions.
- SCENARIO A younger sibling has been following with interest the experiments, designs and "tricks of the trade" of an older siblings' team.
- QUESTION Can the younger sibling adopt the many "lessons learned" from following an older siblings' team around for several years without incurring OA?
- ANSWER NO - This is OK to do as long as the younger sibling does not produce exact thematic copies.
- SCENARIO A local group of several different OM teams is convened for the purpose of practicing each team's long term solutions and present them to all of the other teams.
- QUESTION As described, is anyone in this instance providing OA? If not, and the teams are scored, is this OA? If not, and the scores are provided back to the teams, is this OA?
- ANSWER NO but be careful- The teams may present their solutions to each other and maybe scored. The may be given their numeric scores but may not be given verbal comments. (Verbal comment would tend to give the team more specific direction in not only what category should be improved (indicated by the score), but what specific items or changes should be made (e.g. "Costumes were colorful, but all were alike so little creativity was exhibited")

For General Information

The only outside assistance possible in spontaneous is if, during the competition, one of the non-participating team members joins in to help the team members who are doing spontaneous. (Or if someone obtained a copy of the problem(s) in advance and gave them to a competing team.)

Coaches have the responsibility to organize the team, to maintain order and discipline. They may serve as a "secretary" to a team (no matter what division) as long as they write only what the team members say. However, for official forms only in Division I may coaches write them out. They should always ask questions that get the team members to think about their solutions and how to improve them. However, these may not be asked in a leading way, e.g. "Don't you think it would be better to narrate your play, rather than act it out?" The correct question is, "What are some other ways you could present your play?" By asking broad questions, the coach stimulates the team members to think. This is the whole point of the program!

A coach is supposed to help the team members to grow. This means providing a good environment, maintaining discipline, and stimulating thinking.

Penalties

Here is how an outside assistance penalty should be considered: first, you must consider the amount of outside assistance given. For example, in the scenario where the coach holds a team member's hand to show how to spray paint, if this is done while painting the prop, then a very small outside assistance penalty would be assessed. -- The question the judge should ask is, "If the coach did not help spray this part of the prop, would my score have changed? How much did it help the team?" -- the assumption is made that if the coach did not spray that part, s/he would have taught the team member to spray paint using another item. The answer to the question is obviously that the score would not have changed or not have changed significantly. If the coach helped paint the entire prop, a larger penalty would be assessed. If the coach made the entire prop, a larger penalty; and, if the coach had the idea for the prop as well as made it, an even larger penalty. However, there is a second consideration. How much is the prop worth to the team? If the team did not have this prop, what difference would it have made? For example, assume the coach designs and makes an elaborate background set for the team. The team is in the structure problem and the set is one of the free choice style categories. The most points that the team can earn for this set is 10 plus whatever of the 10 overall effect points might add. -- In no case more than 20 points total. Therefore, the penalty should not be the maximum. However, suppose that the team is in the Classics problem. The set is paramount to the play. It sets the focal point for the performance. The penalty should be much greater. In the first instance, the structure problem, the judge should say to him/her self, "If I give this amount of penalty for a style item, what penalty would I give if the coach designed and made the structure?" This obviously would be a maximum penalty since it is the whole long-term problem solution.

When Help is OK

- Someone shows you how to brainstorm different ideas.
- Someone shows you how to use a tool but does not work on one of your props.
- Someone teaches you acting skills. Your Odyssey of the Mind™ team then practices to make your performance better.
- When part of your solution breaks, you ask a mechanic what tool would fix it. Then you make the repairs.

When Help is Not OK

- Someone else brainstorms the ideas that help solve the problem.
- Someone helps build your props.
- Someone tells you how to change the performance.
- Someone else fixes your broken Odyssey of the Mind™ part.

Questions to Ask Team Members About Outside Assistance

Did anyone help you make anything?
How did you come up with the idea for...?
What did you make out of...?
Who came up with the idea to use...?
Why did you choose as your main character?

Who made your costumes?
Who decorated your props?
Who painted your backdrop?
How did you build...?
Who cut your wood?

Questions to Ask Yourself About Outside Assistance

Did anyone help the Team make anything?
How did the Team come up with the idea for...?
What did the Team make out of...?
Did the Team come up with the idea to use...?
Did the Team choose the main character?

Who made the Team costumes?
Who decorated the Team props?
Who painted the Team backdrop?
How did the Team build...?
Who cut the Team wood?

Long-Term Problem Solving

There are many techniques and approaches to solving the long-term problem. The following is a few of these techniques and suggestions.

The Creative Problem Solving Process

Before beginning work on the long-term solution, teach, review, and practice the "creative problem-solving process" with your team. This process includes brainstorming, hypothesizing, building/creating, testing, evaluating, and elaborating.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is one of the basic tenets of the problem-solving process and is used as a starting point for generating a multitude of ideas. Teach the rules for brainstorming and review these often with your team.

Rule #1: Withhold Criticism

Withhold all criticism -- verbal (such as remarks that can cause a shutdown of ideas) and non-verbal (a shrug of the shoulder, a frown, etc.). Brainstorm and discuss positive critiquing methods. Negative criticisms damage and sometimes put a halt to thinking creatively. Once critiquing methods have been agreed upon, maintain and reinforce these ideas at all times.

Rule #2: Go for Quantity

The more answers, the better the opportunity of getting the best answers. This encourages the fluency and smooth flow of ideas.

Rule #3: Encourage Teams to Piggyback or Hitchhike

This is effective not only- in spontaneous problem solving, but also during solution formation. Can ideas be combined? How can this suggestion be supplemented or expanded? . . . How can they enhance the image they wish to create?

Rule #4: Consider All Ideas-- Even Wild and Zany Ones

The more ideas generated, the more likely it is that your team expressed some really creative ones.

As your team members progress through the problem-solving process, they will need to hypothesize, build, and test their solutions. Effective questioning will lead your team into these areas.

Questioning Techniques

Problem solving is not a singular event. It is a series -- a sequence -- of solution finding using different techniques, one followed by another. One method may give you part of the answer and then a second or third may finalize your solution. What you're really doing is thinking -- or learning how to think. It is difficult and time consuming. Essentially, you must research and implement multidimensional problem-solving techniques, organize your thoughts, and become great planners.

With practice, both you and your team will become professional questioners. Teams must ask the right questions to get the right answers. You must generate a huge number of questions until, by logic or luck, you find the question(s) that unlocks the secrets you seek. Have a team member or coach ask each question.

Begin by asking your team:

- What exactly is it that you must do?
- Can you rewrite the problem in your own words?
- Do you have the skills to accomplish your goals?
- What research would help give you the background you need?
- What additional question(s) will your research generate?
- Concentrate on the key points -- those elements of the problem by which the team will be judged. For each point, begin developing questions.
- Isolate the specific problem you want to solve.
- Ask many questions, in a series, about the process, subject, thing, etc.
- Have a team member or coach ask each question.
- Don't be too general or too vague. Try to be specific, narrowing the questioning.
- Restate questions as statements and hypothesis, if needed.

Examples:

What should be done?
When should it be done?
Who should do it?
What about?
Can this be tested?
What if this were enlarged?
What could be omitted?
How could this be done faster?
What if we change the order?
What about cause and effect?
What are the negatives?
Why not up instead of down?
What could be left unsaid?

What if this were divided?
Should it be stronger?
How about more time?
What color would be better?
What idea does it suggest?
Can we combine ideas?
Whose Style can we emulate?
How can we improve the appeal?
Would an assembly line work?
How can we add more value?
Why is it necessary?
Where should it be done?
How should it be done?

Long-Term Problem Outline

Every Long-Term Problem is set-up in the same fashion. As a coach you should be aware of this outline and know the problem. It is important that you, as the coach, know what the team is not allowed to do in the rules. If the team members have forgotten a rule or are breaking a rule then you need to be able to remind them to "re-read the problem". If the team is doing something that is questionable, then they need to send in for a Problem Clarification to have their questions answered. This applies to the rules in the general handbook as well as the Long-Term Problem.

A. The Problem

- Outlines the intent of the problem and what it is asking the team to accomplish in the solution
- Read and understand the problem
- Make sure that the team knows the Spirit of the Problem

B. General Limitations

- Tells the rules that all teams must follow in their solution to the problem
- Read and understand the general limitations
- Have the team refer back to the rules often to make sure their solution is valid
- These are found in the Membership Packet and online at www.OdysseyoftheMind.com

C. Site, Set-up, Competition

- Gives a description of provided floor space on competition day
- Minimum site and setup specifics are spelled out in the Site, Setup and Competition section of the long-term problem
- Additional information can be found in the Program Guide

D. Scoring

- Have your team read this section carefully, it outlines the scoring of the problem
- Make sure the team covers every scoring requirement
- Check carefully for specifics. "Creative use of recycled material" is very different from "Creative use of A recycled material".

E. Penalties

- Details things that are illegal in the solution
- Read and understand the penalties
- In some cases, your team will incur a penalty, make sure you understand the penalty so you can explain it properly to the team

F. Style

- Lists the style categories that the teams must use in their solution
- The first two Style elements will be specified
- The second two Style elements will be the team's choice
- The fifth Style scoring element will be the overall effect of the first four in the performance

G. Tournament Director Will Provide

- A list of items the Tournament Director will provide. Don't count on anything being there that isn't specified in the list.
- Usually includes the size of the competition area, three prong outlet and a judging team

H. Team Must Provide

- A list of items the Team must provide
- Usually includes competition forms, extension cords, outlet adapters and clean up materials

I. Problem Glossary

- These definitions are written for the purpose of solving OotM problems and may differ from what is found in a dictionary
- If a word appears in italics in a long-term problem, it is defined in the Problem Glossary or it is defined in the Program Guide

Problem Clarifications

- If you or the team does not understand some portion of the problem don't assume anything. Fill out a Problem Clarification form found in the Odyssey of the Mind™ Guide Book or go online and submit the part of the problem or rule that is in question.
- If your team wants to do something that is questionable to the team's understanding of the rules they should write out exactly what they would like to do and submit it in the form of a question.
- Make sure to save all of your clarifications you receive and store them in a folder to take to competition.

How a team goes about solving a problem?

Brainstorming for a theme

Adapting and combining ideas

Delegating responsibilities

Making use of team members' talents

Creative Influences

Fluency - the ability to generate a great number of ideas

Flexibility - the skill that allows us to produce a variety of ideas

Originality - the talent to think of unusual ideas

Elaboration - the process of filling in all the details

Evaluation - the process that allows us to select, test, and revise ideas

Cost Limitations

Every problem has a cost limit. A Material Value Form needs to be completed by each team. An explanation on what to items need to appear on the form can be found in the Odyssey of the Mind™ guidebook.

- Encourage the team to seek alternate solutions if the ones they choose are too expensive.
- Understand the items that are exempt from cost and those that are not.
- Encourage the team to keep a running list of items that they have used in their solution.
- Make sure each team member has read the cost form and agrees with the items and cost of the items on the form.
- When filling out the form it may be necessary to have some advertisements ready to show younger team members the cost of items that appear on the team's form.
- With younger teams it may be wise to have the team members who worked on an item complete a material value form for each item.
- If the team has room left on their material value form it is wise to include any questionable cost exempt items on the form. (i.e. cardboard, old wood, etc.)
- Don't buy new unless old cannot be found.
- If an item is expensive make sure it is important to the solution if the team is close to its cost limit.
- Reread problem

Costed, Exempt & Banned Items

(Please check the current version of Program Guide)

Costed Items - (Use only as guidelines as each situation may be unique)

- **Commercially produced musical instrument and its case**, including required peripherals such as a stand, amplifier, and speakers. VALUE: \$5 or actual cost if less.
- **Any type of audio or video recorder or player** and speakers to hear the sounds if applicable. VALUE: \$5 or actual cost if less. A phone playing sound through Bluetooth speakers is also \$5.
- **Audiovisual cart**. VALUE: \$5 or actual cost if less.
- **Laptop or desktop computer system** (including monitor, keyboard and connecting cables). Smartphones are considered computers. VALUE: \$10 or actual cost if less.
- **Projector of any type**. VALUE: \$10 or actual cost if less.
- **Television or monitor** (not used in conjunction with a computer). VALUE: \$10 or actual cost if less.
- **3D Printed Items**: 50 cents for every ounce of printed plastic.
- **Robotic controller**: \$20
- **Shoes with built-in wheels** must be counted in the cost and approved for use by TD
- **Jeans / Pants / Skirt / Sweatshirt / Sweater**: \$.50 - \$1.00 or actual cost if less
- **T-Shirt**: \$.25 - \$.75 or actual cost if less
- **Cardboard**: From trash = "trash" / If purchased = actual cost

Exempt items

- **Batteries, extension cords and power strips**
- **Chairs, stools, tables and desks**.
- **Jewelry, such as wristwatches, earrings, rings, etc., and street clothes** that do not enhance the solution or contribute to a costume. Remember, if a team is wearing identical street clothes such as matching shirts, they would count towards cost because they appear to be a uniform, therefore enhancing the solution.
- **Trash items** — items that are usually discarded such as cardboard cartons, milk containers and scraps of wood that may be altered from their original state are exempt from cost. Used materials that are recyclable and have value such as a deposit are considered trash materials and are exempt from cost.
- **Tool kit** - used to build and/or repair any part of the solution that does not enhance the performance. Tool kit must be in the Staging Area when time begins and may be used on the competition site for setting up the performance or repairs only.

- **Storage bins, casters, or dollies** may be used to move props from the Staging Area to the competition site, as long as they are not used in the presentation. They must be removed immediately after the item they are moving is placed in the competition area.
- **Personal prescription items** of team members such as eyeglasses and hearing aids
- **Floor coverings**, such as drop cloths, used only to protect the floor, or protective mats used to prevent injury
- **Required foot coverings** worn as commercially produced. Anything added to the foot coverings, the value of the additions must be counted.

Banned Items & Miscellaneous

- **The following items may not be used in the team's presentation of its solution:**
 - Lighter-than-air balloons (e.g., helium) that are not sufficiently tethered and/or weighed down. That is, those that will float uncontrollably upward are not allowed.
 - Items that are excessively hot or cold (including dry ice)
 - Items that leave a residue (some types of fire extinguishers, some types of fog machines, etc.)
 - Internal combustion engines
 - Flammable fuels
 - Smoke bombs or similar items
 - Fires in any form, including lighted candles and sparklers
 - Liquids that can stain or cause other floor damage
 - Emergency response alerts, i.e. fire/smoke alarm
 - Hoverboards
 - E-cigarettes/vape pens
 - Capacitors for batteries
- **Batteries** - Unless a problem states otherwise, only unmodified, commercially produced sealed batteries may be used. The combined measurement of any commercially produced battery, battery pack / charger is limited to 15" (total length, width & height).
 - All batteries used must be available for checking by Officials
 - Batteries in items such as cell phones and computers are excluded
- **Chemical Reactions** - If attempting to create a specific effect with chemicals, the resulting effect must be safe and clean. Unsafe chemicals and unsafe reactions are not allowed. Example: Combining Mentos and soda is NOT allowed.
- **Copyrighted Material** - It is illegal to use and reproduce copyrighted material without the owner's permission.
- **Floor Damage** - No part of the problem solutions may cause damage to the facility or injury to anyone. Specific penalties are outlined in the Program Guide.
- **Weapons** - Weapons are prohibited from the competition site and tournament venue. If an actual weapon is discovered it must be removed from the site immediately or it will be confiscated. There is no point deduction.
 - Team-created replicas of weapons that are easily mistaken for real weapons are also prohibited. They must either be changed to look less realistic or be removed from the competition site or they will be confiscated.
 - Props that appear and/or are used as a weapon in the performance are allowed provided they are obviously not real and pose no threat. These include team-made props and toys that do not look like real weapons, such as water pistols, plastic swords, etc.
 - If a team uses a fake weapon in its performance it must confirm with the Staging Area Judge that it is allowed. It can only be used for practice and during the performance; it must be put away at all other times

What are Clarifications?

In keeping with the Odyssey of the Mind™ philosophy, problem limitations are written to provide just enough guidance to solve the problem without limiting creativity. If the problem does not specify that something cannot be done, most likely it can be done.

Often, however, a team may question the interpretation of a limitation, or it may be unsure that an aspect of its solution is allowed to meet the problem's requirements. General clarifications amend or further explain a problem's limitation. Team members may go to www.odysseyofthemind.com to find general clarifications. If they do not find the answer to their question there, they may submit their question to International Odyssey of the Mind™ (CCI). This may be done by mail or electronically.

Team specific clarifications pertain to a particular team's solution. These are confidential since teams must describe details of their solution to ascertain an accurate reply. If the answer to a team's clarification allows for a very creative solution, it may be published and distributed for judges only. These are never made available to other teams. If a team receives a clarification, it is important that it presents the signed, written clarification form or a printout of the e-mail to the judges at competition to avoid any discrepancies. Only problem clarifications issued by CCI are official.

Requesting Long-Term Problem Clarifications

Long-term problems are written to provide just enough guidance to solve the problem without limiting creativity. If a team questions the interpretation of a limitation, or is not sure if an aspect of its solution is allowed or meets the problem's requirements, it may request a clarification.

Anyone requesting a clarification must cite the rule in question. Abuse of the clarification system may result in an Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty. Read and re-read the problem and this Program Guide completely before submitting a clarification request. If the information is clearly presented in the problem or Program Guide you will be instructed to read them again. There are three categories of problem clarifications:

(1) General clarifications amend or

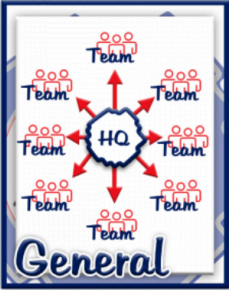
Submitting a Clarification

- You can submit a clarification online at the international site. This is the fastest and easiest way.
- You should try to reference the part of the problem that you feel your solution needs clarifying.
- You should not ask for clarifications before rereading the problem.
- You should check online to make sure the question has not already been clarified.
- You should reread the program guide before submitting your clarification.
- You should ask for clarifications for items that seem to be highly creative. If you think a judge might question whether or not you are violating a rule it is a good idea to get a clarification.
- The cut-off dates for clarifications that will be honored at a Michigan tournament are:
 - Midnight on the Friday before a Regional Tournament
 - Midnight on the Wednesday before a State Finals Tournament

1. To view current clarifications or submit a new clarification, go to www.odysseyofthemind.com
2. Under the "TEAMS" menu go to "Clarifications"


The Clarification System

Our Long-Term Problems are written to provide just enough guidance for teams to solve the problem without limiting creativity. Occasionally additional guidance is required from Odyssey of the Mind HQ or teams may have questions regarding their interpretations of the Long-Term Problem limitations and the rules, as stated in the [Program Guide](#). When this occurs, there are three categories of problem clarifications.




General

These are updates, amendments, or further explanations of Long-Term Problem limitations, written by Odyssey of the Mind HQ and made public for all members. General Clarifications take precedence over published problem details and the rules in the [Program Guide](#), so it's important that teams keep current on all general clarifications issued throughout the year by clicking "Read Clarifications" below.



Team Specific

When teams are unsure whether their solution is allowed within the limitations of their Long-Term Problem and the rules of the Program Guide, they may request feedback from Odyssey of the Mind HQ. The questions and answers remain **CONFIDENTIAL** and may be taken to tournaments, to affirm that a team's solution is valid. For full details, please consult the [Program Guide](#). To submit your request, click "Submit Clarifications" below.



Judges Only

In some cases, the answer to a team-specific clarification may be distributed to judges, sometimes with additional guidance from Odyssey HQ, to assure that judging of team solutions is consistent throughout the entire Odyssey of the Mind program. These clarifications are **ONLY** seen by Odyssey of the Mind association representatives.

**READ
CLARIFICATIONS**

**SUBMIT
CLARIFICATIONS**

3. If you would like to view current clarifications, skip to item #7
4. If you would like to submit a clarification, select "Submit Clarification" and you will be directed to login
5. Once you have logged in, select "Submit Clarification" at the bottom of the "Member Area" welcome screen

Welcome to the Members Area!

MICHIGAN MEMBER

street1

street2

city, MI 11111

[Logout](#)

Team Registration

Tournament Registration

Member provided volunteers

Association Website

Association Contacts

**SUBMIT
CLARIFICATIONS**

**CLARIFICATION
STATUS**

**MEMBERSHIP
STATUS**

**REQUEST
MEMBERSHIP INVOICE**

6. Complete the required information and select "Submit"

CLARIFICATION REMINDER

The problem clarification system is not intended to replace reading the problem and program guide. Please read them again before submitting a clarification. Do not submit a clarification that asks: **(1)** if an idea is creative or if one idea would receive more score than another. (No comment regarding subjective scoring will be provided); **(2)** where the judges or audience will be during the performance (That is a question for your tournament director); **(3)** to confirm the wording of the problem; **(4)** if something may be different from an aspect that is specifically required (For example, if the problem requires 1/8" wood for a part you may not use 1/16" wood for that required part).

New Clarification

First name

Last name

Problem

Division

Position

Email

Reference






Question

SUBMIT

7. To view **GENERAL** Clarifications, select "Read Clarifications"
8. You may click on any of the Long Term Problem icons to be taken directly to the clarifications for your problem
9. Note: dates of most recent clarifications are shown, check back regularly for updates

General Clarifications

General clarifications amend or further explain a problem's limitations without revealing information about a team's solution. The clarifications below take precedence over limitations listed in the problem and the rules in the Program Guide, so it's important that teams keep current on all general clarifications issued throughout the year.



Problem 4: Where's the Structure?

Search:

Date	Clarification
October 6, 2022	B7 – The three required structure components: To qualify for scoring, each of the three required structure components must assist in supporting and/or balancing weight when assembled into the final weight-tested structure.

How to Solve a Long-Term Problem

- Read Problem
- Read Clarifications
- Reread Problem
- Assign tasks to team members
- Brainstorm ideas for solving the problem
- Discuss theme ideas
- Brainstorm Style Ideas
- Reread problem
- Assign Style Task
- Reread Problem

Generating Ideas

How do team members get ideas for solving the problems? Try some of these suggestions!

1. Dedicate one practice session to forming a “Think Tank” and limit the agenda to making lists of ideas.
2. Have everyone on the team carry a notebook and record ideas as they occur during the day, prior to sleep, upon waking. Organize these into one collective, large book.
3. Research, Read, and Explore
4. Learn historical background information -- what has been done in this area?
5. Conduct informal research such as scanning magazines and catalogs, watching movies and TV, etc.
6. Assign each team member to produce 50 ideas. Evaluate, reduce, and combine these ideas for use in problem solving.
7. Develop checklists.
8. Start a “big box” containing idea starters, clippings, printed matter, notes and sketches of your own, etc.
9. Set a deadline. Have team members sign a contract to submit their ideas on a pre-determined time line.
10. Set a quota of at least 5 ideas per day. It is likely that many more will occur.
11. Develop a definite time period for thinking of new ideas and nothing else. Have team members do thinking at the start of practice. Routine tasks can be tackled later.
12. Go where the ideas are. Have team member’s travel to locations that seem to inspire and generate the mood for creativity, such as hiking through the woods, walking in a crowd or on a beach at night, strolling in the moonlight, driving, going on a hayride, running, visiting a museum or library, exploring in the attic, watching the sun rise or set, listening to music, reading poetry or great literature aloud and so on.

Failure Proofing for Success

1. List all the things that could go wrong.
 - Use team brainstorming to think of all the things that might go wrong.
 - Write everything down.
 - Ask open-ended questions to prompt ideas.
 - Do not edit ideas at this time.
2. Determine how the potential problems are related to each other.
 - Group the problems from the brainstorming, e.g., props, people, equipment.
 - Rank importance and determine possible solutions for each.

3. Add new things to your list.
 - Look for additions to your list.
 - Combine items the team thinks are really the same.
 - Do not delete anything unless the team is unanimous.
4. Rank the problems for the trouble they could cause.
 - Rank the potential problems for the seriousness of the result.
 - Remind the team that small things can sometimes have disastrous results.
 - Review each group and make any adjustments.
5. Think of all the ways to prevent the problems or to minimize the problems.
 - For each problem, think: "If this happens, we could..."
 - Discuss problems that cannot be prevented, e.g., weather, crowds.
 - Encourage the team to have fun and be creative with their ideas.
6. Prepare a plan of action.
 - Include who, what, when, where, and how.
 - Review the plan periodically.
7. Do It!
 - As with all problems, practice, practice, practice! Go back frequently and look for ways to make it better!

Creative Problem Solving Processes

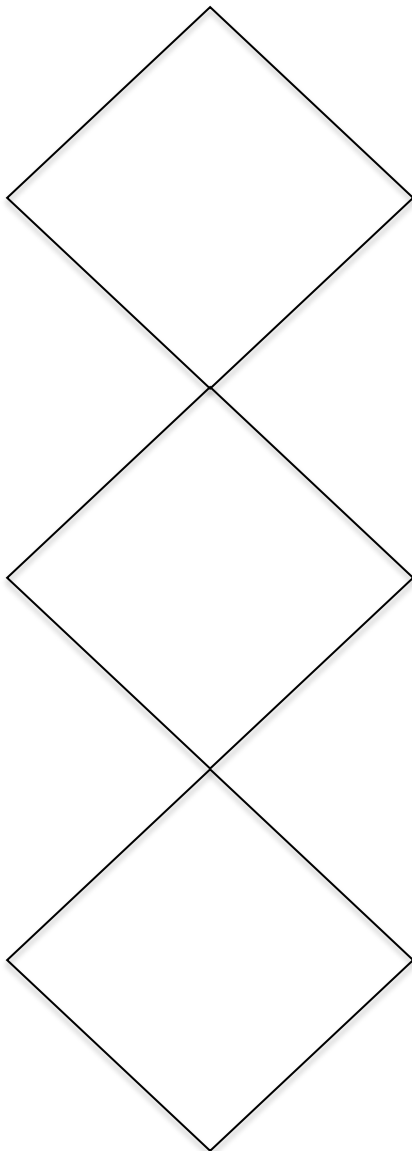
Great Beginnings

As the coach, you should reproduce and distribute copies of the problem, the Basic Competition Information and Rules from the Odyssey of the Mind™ School Program Rulebook, and all problem clarifications to each team member. The team must carefully read the problems and understand them. Set a definite time line (a week or so) to read and preview each problem. Ask individual team members to volunteer and take the responsibility to outline in detail the problem, limitations, scoring, etc., to present to the team at the next practice.

Teaching team members how to go from problem perception to finding a solution is important. One technique to accomplish this is the Diamond Thinking Process. Draw several large diamonds on a large chart or on the blackboard using this pattern:

First, ask a question. Next, generate many answers and record them in the center of the first diamond. Then, select one of those answers and pose it in the form of a question. Place this question at the top of the next diamond. Generate possible solutions for that question and select one from among those solutions, etc.

You can also use an Evaluation Matrix (see appendix) to identify and evaluate possible solutions. Possible criteria to use for evaluating solutions might include cost, creativity, availability of materials, ease or difficulty, humor, how much the team knows, artistic value, time required, uniqueness, originality, audience appeal or judge appeal. Rank the solutions according to the criteria you have selected.



Fine Tuning Your Ideas

After you have generated many ideas and possible problem solutions, the next step is to make formal hypotheses to assist in establishing a few solutions that your team will test. Here are a few techniques to help you in this phase.

Attribute Listing Method: This technique is used when you are attempting to improve tangible objects (products). Make a list of all the properties, attributes and basic qualities of the product. List as many improvements as you can for each. Select and use the best ideas. Redesign and remake the product, set, vehicle, structure, costume, etc.

Synecotics: This technique is used to state ideas and develop problem solutions. Fold a sheet of paper in half lengthwise. Then into three horizontal sections, making a total of six equal blocks or areas. On the left side, write Fantasy Solution (the ideal, utopian, fictitious, futuristic, way out, impossible solution) in the first block. In the second block write Direct --How would an animal solve this problem in the jungle, woods, ocean, air?... How would Mother Nature do this?... Is this problem similar to some process or anything you find in Nature? In the third block write Personal --If you were the object, what would you do or become?... How would you act?... How would you like to be handled? Adjacent to each block, write in your thoughts about each of these areas.

The Inspired "Big Dream" Approach: Read, study and think about every related topic or subject connected with your problem or need. Think the biggest dream possible. Drop down a notch or two and engineer your dream into reality.

Sequence Attribute Modification Matrix (SAMM): First, down the left side of a sheet of paper (the vertical axis) list in logical order, the steps (sequence) in a process. Be very specific and complete in your description. Across the top of your paper (the horizontal axis) write the words Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Magnify, Minify, Put to Other Uses, Eliminate, Reverse, and Rearrange. Place a check mark on the matrix (where the horizontal and vertical elements meet) to identify those areas that need to be worked on. Brainstorm and use other operations, analogies or mechanisms that will modify and improve the process.

Morphological Analysis: This is a method using forced relationships. Construct a matrix. Down the left side of the paper (the vertical axis), list the materials and objects (parts of the problem) involved. Across the top of the paper (the horizontal axis), write the elements (parts) of the environment where the problem (process) is performed, made, demonstrated, executed and so on. Select one material and one environmental element. Combine these two (not necessarily logically related) together to form a new concept, use or perspective previously perceived as impossible or unrelated. Vary this procedure by arbitrarily introducing elements, objects and things that randomly pop into mind. Force these new parts into the problem. They may reveal alternatives no one had considered.

Other problem-solving techniques are available. Take the time to research and try different methods. Some additional, interesting concepts are Bionics, Reverse Brainstorming, The Gordon Method, Value Analysis, Kepner-Tregoe Method, Buffalo Method, Heuristics, and Edisonian.

Prioritizing Tasks

Construct a thorough list that includes every conceivable detail or task that needs to be accomplished to properly solve the problem. This should be a flexible checklist that visually lays out your goals. Initially, stick to the larger question: "What must we accomplish?" This is your starting point. The team first lists the major tasks. Subdivide each task into smaller, more manageable parts. Prioritize the tasks by listing what must be done and what can be done. Group tasks into three major categories -- Long-Term, Style and Spontaneous.

Further refinements may be made by subdividing each task into mini-tasks. For instance, the development of scenery can be divided into areas such as (a) creating a storyboard, (b) designing drawings for the construction, (c) listing and obtaining needed materials, (d) constructing items, and, (e) engineering. Do not overlook these important organization details. Neatly outline the tasks and refer to this chart frequently as you progress. This entire list may be displayed as a large chart placed prominently in the practice area.

Assigning Responsibilities

Once the master task list is complete, team members should begin delegating tasks corresponding to individual skills and talents. The first assignment should be the most important, and probably the most difficult tasks, such as writing a script, constructing vehicles, designing and constructing set and Style. Team members decide whose skills and interests match up with each task. It is important to have this large chart constructed and printed clearly and neatly.

Individuals, partners, or small groups may undertake tasks. Team members should have the option to help with each other's projects, increasing morale and decreasing boredom. Each team member should have a plan for how she or he will accomplish each task.

Use the Prioritized Master Checklist to develop a realistic time line or target date for assignments to be completed. Post this time line in a position of prominence and refer to it frequently. Stick to the time line but maintain some flexibility' to allow for unrealistic deadlines and unexpected changes. If you have established February 1 to have the set complete, and it is only 50% finished, establish a new target date that allows more time. Creatively customize time lines to your own needs.

Once a task is complete (or partially complete), be certain to make a public announcement to the team members. Ask the responsible team member to check off what he or she has accomplished. Celebrate!

Reality Checks and Balances

Once time lines are constructed, evaluate your team's progress on a regular basis. Critique progress by asking: Where are we? Where should we be? What adjustments are needed? Include setting aside specific team meeting times to encourage a freewheeling discussion for individuals to express their thoughts and feelings about their progress, social dynamics, and frustrations. This allows team members to express feelings and unwind a bit. It also maintains high team morale.

Performance Problems: Dynamic Solutions

Whether your team is solving a performance problem or developing presentation elements for the technical solution. There are key factors to consider. These include:

- Theme/Story Development
- Script Writing
- Character Development
- Design of Props and Sets
- Acting Techniques

In developing a theme or story line, encourage the creation of an original plot with a clearly definable beginning, middle and end. To facilitate this process, try the story starter technique. Conduct a brainstorming session and present Story Starters such as, What if ... Just suppose... Pretend that... Why don't... If only... I wish... How about... What would happen if... People could... The future... Humanity needs... The past sometimes... I wouldn't... Place a list of these starters, one at a time, in clear view of all team members. Each team member responds in turn, completing the sentence for approximately five minutes. Record the comments. At the end of 30 minutes, discuss and evaluate the stories, looking for the most creative ones.

A good script provides structure to the story and provides a good beginning, a body that builds suspense, develops interest and makes a point, and a climactic ending. Building a script is similar to developing a Prioritized Master Checklist. Team members list all the "parts" they need to assemble their script. Have the team members develop a storyboard of images using simple sketches. The images should interpret each word and sentence of the script. Taking the time to execute this process will help the sets, background, props, costumes, locations, etc. come to life! Team members will be designing something out of nothing -- the very essence of creativity.

Consider inviting a local school drama coach or community theater director to teach your team the elements of an exemplary production. Invite a local artist or school art director to teach artistic skills and techniques. When working on the scenery, props, and costumes, consider size dimension, color, and movement. Props and scenery should be easy to assemble and disassemble. Here is a list of questions you may wish to consider when developing your dramatic presentation:

Costumes

- What time period or Style should the costumes emulate?
- Can we use everyday materials in different ways to create costumes?
- How can we construct costumes for longevity?
- Is there evidence of innovation and imagination in the design?
- Do the costumes integrate the desired effect of the production?

Audio

- How can we integrate music into our performance?
- Can we use or create imaginative lyrics?
- Would vocal or instrumental music serve the purpose better?
- Would creative sound effects serve a purpose in the solution?

Scenery and Props

- Can we design our scenery to last through multiple performances?
- Will the utilization of props further develop the plot? Can they be uniquely created and designed?
- Can details, scene changes, and prop utilization be woven and integrated in a smooth, efficient manner?
- Does the setting coordinate, extend, or develop the overall solution?
- Can we transport the scenery and props to the competition?

Overall Production

- Can we accurately define the theme's form: melodrama, tragedy, comedy, romance, historical, etc.?
- How can we make our transitions smooth?
- How can we make our speech clear, accurate, and articulate?
- What must actors do to move in a well-defined manner indicating strong characterization?
- Is there repetition or enlargement of a dominant theme?

To be effective, the team should evoke emotion and feeling in the audience. Team members must listen to each other and respond as if they are the character and not themselves, identifying with and feeling the part. Practice the performance until it flows and becomes a smooth interaction between materials and performers. Don't be afraid to take risks adding, deleting, and revising the performance as needed. Deliver the scenario in a dynamic way. Performers need to project their voices to reach the entire audience and know their positions on stage. Body language and movements must be specific. Videotape performances often, and critique each and every detail of the production!

Technical Problems: Unequivocal Determination

When solving technical problems, your team will progress through the process of hypothesizing, building, testing, and elaborating many times. To get started, you might want to do the following:

1. Invite an industrial arts teacher, technology teacher or engineer to teach your team theoretical and practical design, engineering, and technical skills.
2. Ask tough self-analysis questions like: Can we do this? Do we have the technical, engineering and design skills necessary? If not, can we learn these skills? How many ways or methods can we create to solve the problem?
3. Find out what has already been done in this field. Change your questions to statements. These become your hypotheses.
4. Ask: Which hypotheses are the most likely to succeed and why?
5. Have team members design and draw models of each hypothetical solution. Critically analyze each for strengths and weaknesses.
6. Evaluate each hypothesis using the variables of speed, accuracy, strength, flexibility, etc.
7. Select and combine the best hypothetical ideas. This will be a general theoretical solution.
8. Have the team construct specific models or variations on the general theoretical solution. Experiment with the viability and potency of each variation as a solution.
9. Test models and analyze strengths and weaknesses.

Ten Questions for Team to Ask of Planned Solution Performance

1. Did I make constant eye contact?
2. Did I sell the solution?
3. Is the beginning and ending strong?
4. Is the music too loud/soft?
5. Did I check my attitude?
6. How will I enter and leave the site? (organized without the coach)
7. Is my style form an EZ READER?
8. Did I recheck the problem requirements?
9. Did I do my best?
10. Am I smiling?

Style

Style involves areas that will compliment or enhance the long term solution. It assists in understanding the solution. It integrates it and enriches it. It is used to make the solution more complete. Each team gets to select its style solution. The Style solution is part of the Long-Term 8 minute time period.

All categories of style should be well integrated and function smoothly to produce a total quality overall effect. For example, props that are cleverly designed for many uses, creative use of unusual materials, or background scenery that compliments the presentation, are compact, easy to use and portable.

All long-term problems have style components with five categories. Some are mandatory and some are free choice.

1. If it is mandatory, it means all teams that have solved the problem are scored on a particular style category. In the past, appearance of a team member has been a mandatory one for many problems. This still leaves a large amount of freedom to the team to create a style item that is unique to them.
2. Free choice categories are selected by the team but they cannot be anything already scored in the long-term solution.
3. The fifth category is always "Overall Effect" which means how well the first four categories come together and relate to the long-term solution. This makes it important for the teams to create style items that are related.

Common Style Categories

There are several possible Style categories that a team may use. Below is a listing of some of the most often used categories. These categories give you a general idea of what a team can include on the style form.

Teams should be reminded that they cannot use an item on the style form that is already being scored in the Long-Term solution. The team should be careful when filling out their forms to avoid this mistake.

Costumes	Lighting
Script	Original Poetry
Music	Rhyming
Use of Technology	Skits
Background	Movements
Dance	Playbill
Sound Effects	Artwork
Songs & Lyrics	An Original Effect
Membership Sign	Costumes
Appearance of Character(s)	Props
Dialogue	Decorations
Narration	Scenery or Set "Details"
Props	Lighting
Interaction between People	Painting (things, people, backdrops)

Style Guidelines

Here are a few guidelines and reminders that teams need to remember when selecting the categories that they would like to have scored for style.

- Judges are your audience - they are adults
- Evoke some sort of emotional response from the judges
- Clear beginning - clear ending
- All team members integrated into the presentation
- Team members need to come across with "pizzazz"
- Original - innovative - unpredictable
- Prepare - rehearse - integrate all aspects of style
- Style should relate to the Long-Term problem
- Interesting humor, music, visuals, etc. should contribute to the presentation with smooth transitions instead of being just "add-ons"
- Quality, design, and construction of costumes, props, scenery, etc.
- Be sure to include all elements of style that the problem requires on the scoring page.

Completing the Style Form

The style form is a very important part of the team's solution. You should have them consider it carefully and not just throw it together the night before competition. Every team member should have some say in what is included on the style form. In addition, they should all know and understand the categories that the team has selected to appear on the style form as well as those required by the problem in order to answer any questions the judges may ask.

- Be specific on the categories judged (make sure the judge knows what you are talking about).
- List the categories in the order presented by the team.
- Make sure items listed are NOT already being judged in the Long-Term problem.
- In the summary,
 - Be brief and to the point.
 - Type it and use large enough type for easy reading.
 - Use understandable English.
 - Remember the style judges only have a few minutes to read the summary.
- The team members must fill out all of their forms on their own with the exception of Division I, where the coach may write for the team but the team members must dictate what is to be written.

How to Improve Your Style Scores

Style scores are very subjective. Often times something you think might deserve a high score does not get one and something that you think does not will get one. This is the nature of subjective judging.

Remember each of the four items is worth ten points. Make sure the team spends an appropriate amount of time working on each of the four items. Don't be afraid to let the team members reexamine ideas for style once they have started working on their solution. Have them generate numerous ideas for style before selecting final style scoring choices.

Style Forms

Each team must present three or more style forms to the staging area judges. Information included is:

1. The problem and division, membership name and number, city, state and country.
2. The five style categories. It is extremely important that a team be very specific. For instance, if a team listed "costumes" as a style category, do they really want ALL the costumes to be judged or is there one in particular that is more noteworthy? If so, the team should then specifically state that costume.
3. General choices tend to lean towards general or average scores. Even though a team may have ALL wonderful items in that category, it runs the risk of a judge or judges that may not think so. Then the team may receive a lower score because the team asked all the items to be judged rather than the best one.
4. Part III is the Summary. The final segment of the style form asks the team to describe briefly how the style presentation related to the long term solution. The wording and description of style should be clear and stated in the simplest form possible. The purpose is to assist the judging effort as well as the comprehension of the overall performance. A style judge has only 2 or 3 minutes to get the form from the staging area judge, review it as carefully as possible, look up and view the performance. If the description is too long, you force a judge to finish reading after the performance is over.

Integration

Integration of style in the long term solution is: "The ability of a team to develop a long term solution and style simultaneously. As the solution is developed, style can embellish it continuously."

This integration of theme with the long term solution enables certain teams to be more successful than others. A coach's ability to help teams understand this concept and learn to apply it to their problem solution is the reason certain coaches are able to produce successful teams. It also takes a lot of effort, time and work.

After this integration is accomplished, the teams should ask what else they can do to creatively enhance each style category.

Creativity

Creativity is originality and uniqueness. For example: Providing background scenery is not a creative idea, but how a team transforms the idea can be. They can ask themselves: How can materials be used in a different way? How can the background scenery become multi-dimensional? What can be added to the scenery to make it different? How can color and artistic quality enhance the scenery? These are all ways creativity affects the development of style. Questions like these should be asked of each style category.

Teams who strive for divergent and innovative ideas produce style that takes the ordinary and makes it extraordinary. To accomplish this, OMs bring skill, talent and creative thinking to the team.

Scoring Talent

Talent or natural ability like musical, artistic or mechanical can NOT be judged as style. But HOW the team uses this talent to produce the solution can be judged. For example: If a team selects singing ability, the judge needs to ask them to change it. But if they say "use of singing" then the judges can evaluate them on how they utilize their singing to enhance the presentation.

Below are some things that coaches and teams should remember about developing style:

1. Style should be smoothly integrated with the long-term solution and come together coherently like the parts of a puzzle.
2. When developing your style, shoot for the unique creation as opposed to one that will just be OK.
3. When writing the style form be careful to be specific and definitive. Avoid being vague or general.
4. While pizzazz is nice, simple often works just as well.
5. Style development should focus on unique and divergent ways to enhance the solution. Creativity is the difference between good and innovative style.
6. They should elaborate as much as possible. Adding details and extending ideas will produce stronger style categories.
7. A well-coached team should spend a great deal of time deciding on the style categories that reflect the team's best efforts to enhance, compliment, and extend the solution.

Detailing the Solution

What is Style?

1. Help's to tell the story - like the exclamation sign at the end of a sentence.
2. Must relate in some nature to the problem or solution.
3. Special effects, paintings, costuming, drama, songs, dances, poems, etc.
4. Natural ability cannot be judged as style.

Areas of Performance Affected by Style

1. Props - something you can carry, move, add or subtract, and use as part of the solution. Anything that is not part of the background.
2. Background - scenery that functions to set the natural or unnatural environmental tone
3. Costumes - Materials worn by team members
4. Membership Sign - Identifies the team:
 - a. Can serve as a prop or background
 - b. May be judged in long-term - if so it cannot be judged in style

Choices for the Style Form

1. Leftover - select from what is not scored in long-term
2. Pre-designated - part of the initial solution
3. Creative Ideas

How much time should a team spend working on Style?

1. The Style portion of the competition is approximately 14% of the overall score
2. Enough time to create four style choices

Spontaneous

The Three Types of Spontaneous Problems

In Odyssey of the Mind™, there are three basic types of Spontaneous problems: VERBAL, VERBAL HANDS-ON, and HANDS-ON. Odyssey of the Mind™ is constantly incorporating new and different challenges into the spontaneous problems presented at competition. It is important to note that you never know what type of problem - or what combinations of types you may actually face at the meet. Therefore, a team must practice all three types of spontaneous.

Verbal Spontaneous Problems

In a VERBAL spontaneous problem, the team is given a brainstorming-type problem to solve in a specific amount of time and scored according to the number and creativity of responses generated. The order in which members respond can be random or structured. A higher point value is awarded for creative answers than common answers. These problems often have varied wording. Teams need to listen carefully and do exactly as the problem requires.

Examples:

Name things that you can squeeze

Name things that bounce

Name things that are used to cut with and what it is they cut (example: lawn mowers cut grass)

Name different kinds of legs and say something about the leg (example: Men's legs are hairy)

Verbal Spontaneous Methods

There are several methods used in a verbal spontaneous problem. A list of several of these methods follows. Teams should practice all of the methods in preparation for a competition. Teams might not be fluent with all the methods but they should be prepared for any method and maybe some new ones. It is very important that with younger teams that they learn to listen to the directions and to ask questions if they do not understand. It is better to ask than to not understand.

Multiple responses
Word Association

Comparisons
Limited response cards
Improvisation with a picture or prop

Non-verbal communication
Skit & tell a story

Sample Verbal Spontaneous Problems

Name as many ways as you can to keep cool.

List the advantages of having ticks and fleas.

Describe life in the twenty-fifth century.

If you could meet and speak to Thomas Edison, what might you say?

List things an astronaut might take on a yearlong mission.

Create public announcements that might make you want to leave a location.

Name things you might do or say in a snowed-in airport.

Name things with "ear(s)" or use "ear(s)" in a word or phrase.

Complete the following: If I could breathe underwater, I'd.....

Name as many "chips" as you can think of.

Name animals, things, or places that "sweat."

Name things that might make you feel nervous.

Name things that are "cut" or use "cut" in a word or phrase.

New Style of Verbal Spontaneous Problem

Recently, a new style of verbal Spontaneous problem has come into use. It allows competitors to brainstorm and record their ideas and give them a weight for scoring. Below is the clarification that was issued by CCI describing the format of these problems.

"We have added a new procedure in SOME types of verbal problems. In these problems, team members will be given paper and pencils and are allowed to brainstorm during think time. They are allowed to write down the responses that they will use during response time. They may write as many as they wish and are not limited to those responses when it is their time to respond. During response time they will be able to refer to their own lists, so that they may choose the responses they think are the MOST creative or give a new response. Each team member will also have a set of cards with two values on them (for example one card may say 2/4; another 3/6) When they give a response, they will decide if their response is creative and will hold up a card. The judges will then score that response using the lower number if they think the response is common, and the higher number if they think it is a creative response. A card may only be used once. As a result, teams can impact their score by predicting the creativity of their responses. The more creative responses should have higher numbers and questionable responses should have lower numbers."

Verbal Hands-On Spontaneous Problems

In a problem that is VERBAL HANDS-ON, team members are usually presented with an object, or may have to construct one, and asked to suggest or demonstrate its uses. The object is passed from person to person as they generate answers. Like Verbal problems, points are scored not only for the quality of answers in a given amount of time, but also for the creativity of those answers.

Examples:

Here is a ruler and an eraser. Tell or show how they could be used.
Create a creature out of toothpicks and marshmallows, and say something clever about it.
Use these materials to build a _____. Tell what it is used for.

Hands-On Spontaneous Problems

In a HANDS-ON problem, the team is given a task to perform in a short period of time. This task is non-linguistic in nature, that is, points are not awarded for what is said, but rather for what is accomplished. TEAMWORK, figures HEAVILY in the scoring, as do ingenuity and technical success in completing the task.

Examples:

The team is given a length of yarn and a basketball. Without cutting the yarn, they must devise a means of carrying the basketball fifteen feet without touching the ball with their hands.
The team is given an assortment of everyday items and told to create something that can scratch.
The team is each given a piece of aluminum foil and must shape it into one or more things.

Hands-On Problem Flexibility

Not only are hands-on spontaneous problems more difficult to prepare, they are somewhat more difficult to practice. Certainly, teams that work collaboratively achieve better results than those teams, which allow one or two students to solve the entire problem.

Work with your team to develop strategies and plans for their approach to solving hands-on problems. In developing their strategies, team members should use questioning techniques similar to those used when solving long term problems. Team members may want to ask:

- How do we determine what it is that we are being asked to do?
- How can we dissect the problem into component parts?
- How do we scrutinize the scoring elements?
- How can we prioritize tasks? How do we divide the tasks among our team?
- Should we have a team captain to manage our solution?
- How can we use the furnished materials in creative ways?
- How should we manage our time?

Hands-on Problem Exercises

- Practice reading hands-on problems to your team. Have them restate the problem in their own words. Ask specific questions related to scoring, materials or timing. Discuss how to ask questions and receive explanations when there is confusion.
- Have the team solve a hands-on problem. After the performance, ask your team to critique the solution. Have them repeat the problem. Compare and contrast strategies used in each performance. Analyze what happened, what worked and didn't work, and why.
- Utilize one practice session to discuss how to match tasks to the skills of individual team members. Consider who should serve as decision-maker or captain.
- Set up several hands-on spontaneous problems. Invite other teams to participate in a friendly "round robin" tournament. Afterward, lead all participants in a lively discussion of strategies and planning techniques.

Hands-On Problem Questions

- How much time were you allowed? How could you have used your time more wisely?
- What materials were you given? How else could you have used the materials?
- How did you acquire points?
- Did everyone contribute to the solution?
- Were you allowed to talk?
- How long did you take discussing your ideas?
- Could you handle the materials during think time?
- How did you determine who did what?
- What could you have done differently?
- Could you reach over the boundary line?

Structuring the Spontaneous Practice Session

To prepare adequately, the team must practice all the different kinds of spontaneous problems. Whether the spontaneous problem is a verbal, a hands-on or a combination verbal/hands-on problem, the key to success is practice, practice, practice. Devote one or two 15-minute sessions a day, consisting of two or three problems, to your spontaneous practice. You may want to practice them right at the beginning of your team session and use these as a "mind warm-up." Establish this habit early in the season. Small amounts of practice can build skills better than intense last minute cramming.

The more often team members experience tournament conditions the more at ease they will be in the actual setting. Replicate the competition procedures including "think" time, judges, timing, and scoring. Use the same words and phrases that judges use in tournaments when practicing spontaneous problem solving with your team.

One of the biggest challenges for coaches is to find spontaneous problems and put the materials together for practice. Work with your team to establish a library of problems and a stock of hands-on problem-solving supplies. Have them create their own original spontaneous practice problems. An assistant coach or team member may enjoy the task of providing the spontaneous practice problems for each session.

Spontaneous Helpful Tidbits

- Practice in all different rooms and at different tables so the team isn't flustered in a new set up.
- Practice at least 3 spontaneous problems each practice.
- Have someone on the team who will ask the question "ARE WE ALLOWED TO TALK DURING OUR THINK TIME?" At competition.
- Have someone on the team who will ask the question "ARE WE ALLOWED TO HANDLE THE MATERIALS" if it is a verbal spontaneous with something to pass around.
- Practice with balls, finding out what they can do, as it is a very common hands-on problem – in particular tennis and ping pong balls.
- Practice all kinds of spontaneous - don't assume.
- In hands-on spontaneous teach the team to talk about the solution and decide before anyone breaks or changes the shape of any of the materials.
- Give the team judging feedback on their practice Spontaneous problems. This is not OA.

The S.C.A.M.P.E.R. Technique

When the team runs out of responses, work with them on rearranging, adapting, and combining their thoughts to create new ideas.

Substitute - What could be used instead?

Combine - How can I combine this with something else to make it more effective or better?

Adapt - How can this be altered to improve?

Modify - How can the color, shape, or form be changed?

Magnify - How can it be made larger, stronger, or longer?

Minify - How can it be made smaller, lighter, or shorter?

Put to Other Uses - What else can it be used for?

Eliminate some part of the object to give you new ideas?

Reverse or Rearrange the parts of this object to give you new ideas?

Spontaneous Tips for OMER's Friends

- Quiet voices may not be heard from the judge. If the judge asks them to repeat, valuable time is lost.
- Never argue during spontaneous.
- Overly elaborating on answers wastes time and is often unnecessary.
- Don't waste time trying to think of creative answers if you have a common one, give it. Teammates might have a creative one they're just waiting to say.
- Do not speak out of turn. The judge will stop you and not score the response.
- Notice how long thinking time is and use it wisely.
- Ask questions if you are unsure of the problem.
- Don't ask questions unless it is necessary to solve or understand the problem - it cuts into thinking time.

Brainstorming

Rule 1: Withhold judgment of ideas - Allow students to conceptualize freely.

Rule 2: Encourage wild ideas - Allows group members to be imaginative and to expand their thinking.

Rule 3: Quantity counts - The more creative ideas a person or a group has to choose from, the better.

Rule 4: Piggyback - Combining previous ideas can open vast resources for most people.

Team Building Activities

Team building exercises consist of a variety of tasks designed to develop group members and their ability to work together effectively. There are many types of team building activities that range from games to challenges that involve novel and complex tasks that are designed for improving group performance by addressing specific needs.

Team building can range from simple social activities - to encourage team members to spend time together- to team development activities -designed to help individuals discover how they approach a problem, how the team works together, and discover better methods of communication.

A variety of team building exercises can be found online by searching "team building exercises"

Human Knot

Team members stand shoulder to shoulder in a circle. Tell everyone to put their right hand up in the air, and then grab the hand of someone across the circle from them. Everyone then puts their left hand up in the air and grabs the hand of a different person. Check to make sure that everyone is holding the hands of two different people and that they are not holding hands with someone directly next to them. Tell group members to untangle themselves to make a circle without breaking the chain of hands. If group members break the chain they need to start over.

Tennis Ball Pass

Team members must sit in a circle. Give a team member a tennis ball. They will pass the tennis ball to the team member next to them in a clockwise direction until they have gone all the way around. Next tell them that they have two minutes to pass the tennis ball around in the circle as many times as they can. Tell them that they have to do it without dropping the tennis ball. Add a second or third tennis ball; tell them that no team member can be holding more than one ball at a time. Give them two tennis balls of different colors and tell them that they have to pass one in one direction and the second in the other direction.

Block Stacking

Give the team an assortment of blocks. Tell them that they have to build the tallest structure that they can build using only the blocks. The first team member will add one block; team members will continue adding blocks one at a time until every team member has added a block. This process will continue until the structure falls or the last block is placed on the structure.

Word Build Sentences

Give the team cards with various words on them. The challenge is for the team to create a story using the most words that they can use. Each team member must place cards into the story alternating turns.

Newspaper Stretch

Give the team a piece of newspaper and tell them that they have to create the largest unbroken circle that they can build. They then must stretch the circle over a large object of your choice.

Creative Twister

Lay out cards with words or phrases written on them. The team member must place their hands and feet on the four cards and then create a creative response by using the words that their hands or feet are on.

Pencil Structure

Give the team a dozen pencils. Tell them various shapes that they are to make using all the pencils placing one pencil at a time alternating turns.

Developing Versatile Thinking

Practice makes perfect! Try some of these suggestions:

1. Responding to Pictures, Cartoons, Objects, etc.:

Teach team members to look at the problem from different points of view. For example, if they are asked to speak to or about an object, have them look closely at the object and ask themselves questions like: What are the materials used to make the object? . . . What is the purpose of this object?

What unusual experiences or sayings are associated with this object? What associations can be made with the people or things shown in this picture or cartoon?

2. Webbing or Category Thinking:

Teach team members to think in general terms. Categories, such as shapes, colors, professions, athletics, clothing, transportation, books, and celebrities are used as a trigger for a multitude of responses.

3. "Stuck" Strategies:

Your team should brainstorm possible strategies to use in a competition when a student is searching for a response. They should consider their surroundings, including the furniture and decorations, when seeking an idea. The team may consider whether this is the time to give a common response immediately or use the example given in the problem.

4. Audiovisual Aids:

Use video or audiotape to record your team's spontaneous sessions. It also helps to judge the team from the back of the room during practice. This encourages teams to speak loudly and clearly.

5. Multiple Responses:

Get your team members to become prolific with responses by requiring that they give two to five answers with each turn. When turning cards, they must give the same number of answers as the number on the card (1-5). The team can also practice by rolling a die and giving as many answers to the problem as the number rolled. You may also put team members in small groups of two or three and have them respond in turn.

6. Debriefing and Critiquing:

After each problem, critique -- don't criticize -- student responses. Ask questions like: How did you get that answer? What were you thinking? Which answers were most creative? . . . Could any of the common responses have been made more creative by elaborating? Were some of the responses too elaborate? Could the point have been made in fewer words? Critiquing should be used to encourage more answers, not inhibit them.

7. Piggybacking or Hitchhiking:

Teach team members to listen carefully to each other's responses. Ideas can then be combined supplemented, expanded upon or enhanced.

Listening and Imagining Techniques

Paying attention requires mental effort. Real listening is hard work. Good listeners often automatically perform intellectual shorthand.

Train your teams to practice mental summaries, or mental note-taking to aid their retention and comprehension of long or complex spontaneous problems. Instruct team members to recognize specific points such as what, where, when, who, why, how, how many, how much, and how often before listening to a spontaneous problem. Each component of a spontaneous problem must be clearly understood, visualized, conceptualized and stored by each team member. This will help reduce confusion, jumping to conclusions, and making faulty assumptions.

Spontaneous problem listening skills should exceed normal listening skills. Try this. Read a sample hands-on problem to your team. Ask them specific questions relevant to evaluating their listening abilities such as: What is the goal of the problem? How do you begin? How do you end? What rules are important or absolutely critical to remember? What specific strategy would you employ?

You can use a specific technique called visualization by having team members picture a word, object, or main idea in their minds. Introduce this concept by turning on the television or radio to a talk show, the news, a commercial, etc. Instruct team members to close their eyes and listen to a 20-second segment and practice visualizing the information. Repeat the activity. Keep adding five to ten seconds to the time until they can handle visualizing for several minutes.

Controlling emotions is of great benefit to team members. Train your students to relax, ignore distractions, and feel confident.

Here are some listening tips to share with your team:

- Never assume anything.
- Don't jump to conclusions. Listen and understand all the information before deciding your approach.
- Work at listening. It doesn't just happen.
- Concentrate on the problem.
- Be objective.
- Listen to your teammates. They might say something you can build on.

Additional exercises may be used to assist team members in reinforcing listening skills.

Preparing for Competition

Coaches' Regional Competition Survival Guide

COACHES -- This guide contains CRITICAL INFORMATION regarding your Regional Competition. READ IT CAREFULLY and keep it with your team's paperwork and the Rulebook for easy reference. To ensure a delightful conclusion to your team's Odyssey, READ and REREAD your Program Guide, in particular, the Program Rules.

IMPORTANT TIP..... Keep an eye out for emails you will receive from your Tournament Director. These will contain important tournament information and any last minute changes. Make sure to respond PROMPTLY!!!

About Arriving at the Competition

1. All teams must report on time to the designated areas for their events. Failure to report on time could result in exclusion from that part of the competition.
2. Retrieve your CHECK-IN PACKET at the designated area when you arrive at the meet. Only the coach need come to the Registration Desk. Included in the packet will be Participation Certificates for your team members, as well as tournament programs. There may also be important information particular to your problem, so be sure to go through the packet right away.
3. WEIGH IN OF STRUCTURES: takes place at least thirty minutes before performance time.
 - a. Team members should present the structure for weigh-in. The coach may enter the weigh-in room, but is asked to remain in the background.
 - b. Once weighed and approved for competition, your team's structure will be sealed and will be stored until the time of competition.
 - c. Only approved structures will be allowed to compete, but teams will be encouraged to bring their illegal structures into compliance before their scheduled performance time.

About the Long-Term Performance

1. A FRIENDLY REMINDER TO ALL TEAMS: Only team members may participate in all phases of the program. This includes: pinning costumes, combing hair, applying make-up, touching up paint on props, and repairing anything that breaks.
2. DON'T FORGET YOUR REQUIRED FORMS: 4 Style Forms, 1 Outside Assistance Form, 1 Materials Value (Cost) Form, 4 Problem List (if required), Media Release Forms for every team member and coach, and any other paperwork that your problem requires.
3. Many coaches make multiple copies of all forms, and keep at least one spare set in their car!
4. Don't forget to save a copy of your competition forms in case you advance
5. NO FORMS WILL BE RETURNED TO TEAMS AT THE END OF THE COMPETITION
6. ALL REQUIRED FORMS WILL BE GIVEN TO THE STAGING AREA JUDGE just prior to the start of the long-term performance
7. Bring any team submitted problem clarifications your team has received regarding solution/performance and present them to the judges PRIOR to the team's performance. Please do not assume the judges will be familiar with your particular clarification.
8. IN ALL DIVISIONS, A TEAM MAY NOT CONSIST OF MORE THAN SEVEN MEMBERS! Teams that use more than seven team members will be heavily penalized.
9. AT PERFORMANCE TIME: Coaches may remain with the team in the Staging Area until the Staging Area Judge asks them to leave
10. AFTER TEAM'S PERFORMANCE the judges will talk to the team. TEAM ONLY, NO COACHES PLEASE.
11. AFTER YOUR TEAM'S PERFORMANCE, anyone may help the team remove props or other items from the performance site. Please take ALL props and materials to your vehicles following your performances. Do not leave discarded props and scenery at the host school or dumpsters.

12. LONG-TERM SCORING PROCEDURE: Approximately 30 minutes after your team has completed their long-term performance, the coach may pick up a copy of the team's raw long-term score sheet and review it with the Problem Captain/Head Judge. The Problem Captain/Head Judge will note the time of day on your score sheet as you leave the performance area. This sheet will not include Style scores, but will reflect any penalties, which may have been assessed. See Program Rulebook for details on Scoring.
13. ANY PROTEST ON SCORES should first be taken up with the Problem Captain/Head Judge before you leave the performance area. All subjective judging calls are final.

The Spontaneous Performance

- ALL TEAM MEMBERS, ACCOMPANIED BY ONE ADULT (USUALLY THE COACH) SHOULD REPORT TO THE SPONTANEOUS CHECK IN AREA approximately 15 minutes prior to their performance time. NO ONE ELSE is permitted in this area.
- PLEASE KEEP HALLWAYS in the vicinity of the Spontaneous area clear and quiet, and have your team wait in the designated area only. Spontaneous Judges will come to the holding room to call the next team.
- CAUTION YOUR TEAM not to talk about their Spontaneous problem after they have had their turn. The same Spontaneous problem is used for all of the teams doing your long-term problem. It is to your team's disadvantage to be overheard, and may result in penalties as well. You should encourage your team to not discuss the problem until after World Finals.

COACHES OF STATE FINALS - BOUND TEAMS will receive a card containing critical information.

About Primary Teams in Michigan

- AT YOUR REGIONAL COMPETITION, YOUR TEAM WILL PERFORM A SPONTANEOUS PROBLEM. Your team will be provided with the judge's comments and feedback as well as a copy of the Primary Spontaneous Problem.

About the Rest of the Competition

- CLEAN UP IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY! Each group must clean up after itself, not only in the cafeteria, but wherever necessary - THIS INCLUDES RESTROOMS OR OTHER AREAS USED FOR COSTUME CHANGING. Please be courteous to our host school, and leave all areas cleaned up when your team has finished with them. Teams that leave a mess could be subject to penalties for Unsportsmanlike Conduct.
- THE TRADITION OF TRADING is common at our Regional Competition. Teams can bring various items to trade with other teams. This is basically a social activity.

If This is Your First Competition

- BE SURE EVERYTHING GETS TO THE COMPETITION! Have someone make a list of everything that goes with the team to the competition, and have the team make sure everything gets to the site!
- WHERE DO YOU WANT YOUR TEAM, AND WHEN? Set up meeting times and places when you first arrive at the competition. Let team parents know that YOU make the decisions regarding when the kids have free time at the competition.
- ALONG WITH THE ABOVE, ask them what they should do if they are watching a performance and realize they should be meeting you at that time. (Answer: They will have to wait until the performance ends, as no one is allowed in or out during a performance.) Use this example to make them aware of time constraints and planning ahead
- DO "WHAT IF'S" WITH YOUR TEAM, AND TALK THROUGH SOLUTIONS: "what if the scenery falls down?" "What if we don't have an important prop?" "What if someone forgets his/her lines?" "What if one of our devices or vehicles doesn't work?" Have them work out contingency plans for every imaginable disaster!

If This is Your First Competition (*continued*)

- GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP AND APPRECIATION OF OTHER TEAMS' EFFORTS: You can down play the competitive aspect of the competition by having your team point out creative ideas of other teams, and whenever possible, compliment those teams. Good sportsmanship is contagious!
- DON'T LET THE SUCCESS AND ENJOYMENT OF THE DAY HINGE ON 8 MINUTES IN THE SPOTLIGHT
- REMEMBER TO HAVE FUN!! That is, after all, why you and your team have worked so hard to get here!

Team's Top Ten Things to Remember to Bring to Competition

1. Camera for Informal pictures.
2. A list of WHAT IF'S to go through with your team.
3. Well rested team members - Make sure you have all of them!!
4. Display a good attitude.
5. Ideas for Spontaneous warm up: You may wish to bring practice materials with you to use with your team before their Spontaneous performance.
6. TOOL KIT / PROP REPAIR KIT: "Anything and Everything" the team might need.
7. STOPWATCH
8. Props/Costumes: Be sure the team has accounted for every item needed for its solution. Who is responsible for what??
9. PAPERWORK: Be sure you have at least TWO COMPLETE SETS of the following:
 - 4 copies of the Style Form
 - 1 Outside Assistance Form
 - 1 Material Value (Cost) Form
 - 4 Problem List
 - Team Media Release Forms for each team member and coach
 - Other Required Forms, depending on the Problem.
10. REMEMBER: The forms you turn in WILL NOT BE RETURNED TO YOU, so be sure to have at least one extra set in the event that your team moves on to State Finals.

Team Hints for Competition Day

Every team needs to have their own originality and to leave having answered all the questions that the judges have in their heads. Here are just a few examples of methods teams can use to maintain a good relationship with the judges.

- Leave smiling
- Speak clearly - But don't yell
- Clean up
- Have a unique theme
- Answer all of the judges' questions
- Have an attention grabber for the beginning
- Have a strong middle
- Have a good, strong, bold ending
- Constant eye contact while talking with the judges
- Ownership of the Solution

Advancing Teams Guidelines

Item #1: The number of teams competing determines the number of places advancing to State Finals in each problem and division.

1 to 6 teams registered	=	2 places advance (1st & 2nd)
7 to 12 teams registered	=	3 places advance (1st, 2nd & 3rd)
13 to 18 teams registered	=	4 places advance (1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th)
19 or more teams registered	=	5 places advance (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th)

Item #2: In DIVISIONS II & III, for a team to advance to the next level of competition it must score a minimum of 75-points raw score, before penalties, in its Long-Term performance. If no team across the state scores 75 points in a given problem/division, the rule defers to the advancing team formula (item 1 above) and teams advance accordingly from each region. (Note: in the structure problem the long-term performance score includes weight held)

How to Talk to a Judge

Most of the time coaches and judges get along fine. Once in a while the judging team will assess your team a penalty. How could this happen? What do you do now?

Procedures for Appealing a Ruling

- Stay calm. Ask the Head Judge to explain the penalty, showing you the rule that has been violated. Your team members have 30 minutes to INITIATE the appeals procedure if you still don't agree with or understand the ruling. If the Head Judge can't explain it to your satisfaction, you may ask to talk to the Problem Captain. If you are still not satisfied, you may ask for a Tribunal. The Tribunal is made up of at least 3 Tournament Board Members including the Tournament Director.
- You may be asked to put your complaint in writing. Make it brief and to the point. Itemize the section of the problem or clarification that supports your point of view. The Tribunal or Problem Captain will not casually overturn their carefully considered penalties.
- You would be wise to inquire about penalties or scores of zero that you do not understand, especially at the Regional level. When a judging team assesses a penalty or gives a score of zero; they have worked hard to come to consensus that the team has done something against the rules of the problem.

Tactics

- DON'T forget to go back to the long-term site to get your scores. You have a right to see these in a timely fashion. If your team performs early in the day, this might be mid-morning or later. You can't appeal if you don't know how your team was scored.
- DO prepare your kids for judges asking questions such as: How did you do this? Who had this idea? Where did you get that?
- DON'T get in a judge's space. Don't try to intimidate a judge by using your size, loud voice, or hysterics.
- DO stay calm.
- DO REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE A ROLE MODEL for your team. The way you handle your emotions in front of your team, especially when you disagree with the judge's decision, is a powerful teaching opportunity.
- DON'T say, "But they worked so hard!" Of course, they did, or they wouldn't have been able to compete. Hard work is a prerequisite for getting to the tournament, but not a guarantee of winning.
- DO make any appeals at the tournament BEFORE the awards ceremony, even if your team was on last. The judging team must stay around for the 30 minutes after you receive your scores.
- DO advocate for your team, but politely. You are your team's only advocate. Fight for them, but do it in such a way that you remain their best role model.

Of Floors and Doors

Imagine, if you will...Imagine, just imagine, A large educational facility which has at least six auditoriums... each with outstanding acoustics, 300 tiered seats, ample backstage space and multiple entrance/exits. In this same facility are numerous all-purpose ballrooms and gymnasiums with more wonderful seating areas, perfectly level floors, and enough insulation to provide for noise absorption.

There are covered entrances with easy access for vehicle loading. A fully stocked Snack bar and gourmet cafeteria is available. And, all the buildings in this facility are in immediate proximity that no one has to walk very far! Did I mention that there is also a field house large enough to accommodate several thousand people, with an easily assembled stage and a state of the art PA system?

Oh, yes. This facility is less than ten years old, on a level site with acres of parking and hundreds of vacant residential living spaces not to mention its central location and easy accessibility to major airline terminals. Coaches, let me tell you. As our kids say, all of the above is IN YOUR DREAMS!! The perfect reality (trust me on this) does not exist! The site where your team will perform will be less than perfect. And, if you doubt my humble opinion, pick up the phone and call the tournament director.

The Odyssey of the Mind™ adults who have the challenging task of choosing the best of the less than perfect locations suffer and groan, agonizing over each potential site. Should the structure problem be in this building where the floor is great, but there is lots of floor traffic and terrible acoustics? Should Division 1 Classics get the tiny stage with the huge auditorium, or the large stage with little seating space? After all, we must consider the number of spectators we must accommodate.

From personal experience, I have seen stages with steps so narrow that large props got stuck (and it took 30 minutes to free them); sites where the dancers had to perform on stage; floor tiles so warped that remote-controlled devices beeped and swerved; and a vehicle site in a parking garage!

Herein lies the point. Odyssey of the Mind™ is a CREATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING PROGRAM. The creativity and the problem solving don't stop just because your team has developed its "solution to the long-term problem."

Odyssey of the Mind™ coaches must help their team members to consider when planning their long-term solutions, the "What ifs" of performance sites. The first priority, needless to say, is READ the PROBLEM. If the Classics problem clearly states (as it has for years) to be prepared to perform in a 7'x10' space, BELIEVE IT! Which props would the team exclude if they in fact were provided such a limited area? What if the prop's effectiveness depends on being viewed from raised seating, but you are to perform in a large flat-floored room?

Don't forget to read the Program Guide section specifying minimum door sizes and room height requirements. Your team will want to make sure that their props and scenery will fit through a 28" x 78" doorway.

To my regret, I have heard many a negative remark about performance sites from coaches. The coach's attitude cannot help but to influence the team.

Coaches, your tasks are many and difficult. But one of the most important is to instill a sense of "We Can Meet This Challenge!" in your team members. Help your kids to EXPECT the UNEXPECTED and to be mentally and physically prepared to deal with it. If the Ranatra Fusca Award is the "heart" of Odyssey of the Mind™, then the ability to be flexible is the "guts". Help your team brainstorm about things that could go wrong and how we could cope with them.

Prepare your team to perform in any kind of setting, in any kind of weather, in any kind of circumstance. That's what Odyssey of the Mind™ is all about! Then, when the opportunity permits, say "Thank You!" to the tournament officials who have agonized over the site logistics, who have taken into consideration all of the problem specifications, and who truly have chosen the best of the possible locations. And just remember, if you think your site is bad, you should have seen the ones that were rejected.

Preparing for Competitions

Tournament Simulation

An absolute must for all serious teams is to recreate -- as closely as possible -- the exact tournament conditions under which they will compete. This reality simulation is a wonderful pre-tournament experience you can provide for your team. Try to have the team conduct 2-5 dress rehearsals before actual competition. Students can perform for the school and/or clubs. Invite teachers, parents, business leaders, and friends to be the audience!

Work with your team to think through every detail and plan all of the performance details including moving scenery and props into and out of the "staging area", transporting and storing props and equipment, and preparing and maintaining required paperwork. Practice moving all team supplies and equipment through doors, downstairs, onto a stage, and over obstacles. Test your vehicles, performance, Style, etc., under different field conditions or competitive settings such as on a stage, in a gym, on different floor surfaces, in noisy areas, in large rooms and in small rooms.

Non-performing team members may serve as staging area and timing officials. As staging area judge, one member should check the forms, clarifications, membership sign, equipment, Etc., and even interview the team members regarding their solution! The timing judge will announce the team, "Begin" and time the performance. Create mistakes during the performance. Make a disturbance. Have someone knock over a prop, cut the electricity, etc. In other words, practice troubleshooting and developing solutions for the unexpected accidents and failures that could happen.

Videotape the long-term performance whenever possible. Have team members read their rough script or story board into a camera. Do the same with each revision. Have team members run their vehicle(s) and test structures, mechanical devices, etc., while the camera is rolling. Review and critique the video after each production. Performing before an audience will help engender the feeling, the emotion, the intensely and excitement of a real competition! Videotape is the most powerful form of feedback as it allows the team members to objectively analyze their presentation.

Prepare both yourself and your team for being receptive to the competition judges' decisions, rulings, and scoring. If necessary, prepare the highlights of a post-competition discussion with your team members. Remind them of their journey, what they learned, and what they accomplished.

Relaxation Techniques

As your competition time draws near, reducing stress for you and your team becomes an important issue. Here are two activities that may help relax your team members and perk them up for more creativity!

Mental Practice: Select a time when you will not be interrupted. Darken the room. Relax the team by practicing deep breathing exercises. Speak in a smooth, low tone. Visually recreate an entire tournament day. Begin with clear, colorful, verbal pictures that force the team members' minds to conjure up sharp images. Walk your team members' minds through crystal clear thoughts of waking up, washing, dressing, traveling to the school or meeting place, loading the bus, traveling to the competition site, unloading the bus, checking everything for function, repairing props, moving to the staging area, hearing the crowd and the judges, feeling the excitement and, most importantly, performing their solution perfectly. Team members must see themselves planning, speaking, and acting in a way that is successful.

Muscle Relaxation: Ask team members to recline or sit in a very relaxed position. Have students close their eyes and speak to them in a smooth, low tone. Direct them to contract and relax their muscles one at a time, beginning with the feet and working your way up to the head and facial muscles. Have them contract each muscle for five seconds, and relax it for ten seconds. While directing this activity, ask team members to visualize their favorite place for relaxation, such as a beach, the mountains, etc. You may want to practice this technique at the end of practice sessions, as members may become so relaxed they may fall asleep!

Don't forget to schedule some post-competition relaxation!

Preparing for a Tournament

Team members and coach(es) MUST read, read, and REREAD the Program Handbook, the long-term problem description, and Problem Procedures.

Pay attention to rules; believe them and follow every minute detail.

Show videotapes of previous performances to the team, especially to those who are new to Odyssey of the Mind™. Have team practice in different settings. Time the practice sessions.

Do not assume anything at the tournament site. Tournament directors do their best to choose problem sites; however, schools were not designed for Tournaments. Many are less than perfect. Do not assume your site will be a stage, gym, or enclosed room. Sometimes, performances are presented close to each other. The performance area may not be free from background noise. Electrical sockets may not be close to performance areas. The site available for the vehicle problem may have a resilient gym floor, floor tiles, or carpeting.

Discuss with team members that judges will question them about their forms, about their long-term problem solution, and regarding outside assistance. This is the team's opportunity to proudly explain what they have been doing since fall.

Encourage the team to complete finishing touches, pay attention to details on props, costumes, etc. Tell them that whatever it is, it should be done to a level that makes the team proud of their work.

Have a "What If?" session to discuss all possible scenarios and have the team make contingency plans for situations that may arise. Ex: tape recorder batteries are dead, a prop won't stand up, a team member forgets an essential prop/costume, membership sign won't fit in competition area, etc.

Have team pack an "emergency box" with items they feel are needed to solve unexpected problems, i.e., tape, stapler, safety pins, extra batteries, extra extension cord, tools, etc.

During the last couple weeks prior to the tournament, have the team make a list of everything that must go to the tournament. Divide this list so every team member is responsible for bringing some items. Pack all items and load them into vehicles the night before the tournament.

Continue to reinforce the "team" concept. Teams that go into the tournament with an all for one, and one for all attitude handle things that go wrong at the tournament much more effectively and compassionately. A team's unity becomes very important in how an individual student feels about "a goof."

Share with team members those teams, which impress judges the most, are ones that are kind and polite to the judges, to other teams, and to each other. Teams in which members argue among themselves are also remembered in a negative sense.

If you have any questions, call your Regional Director or State Director. It's better to ask than risk making an error that might affect your team.

Tournament Day Progression

Check-In

- 1 Coach only to Check In area with:
 - Signed Media Release Form for every Team Member
 - Signed Media Release Form for every Coach
 - Signed Coach's Code of Conduct for every Coach
- Coach will receive Team Packet containing:
 - Tournament Day Letter
 - Participant Certificates
 - Tournament Programs
 - Color coded Spontaneous Ticket (DON'T LOSE THIS)

Prop Drop

- Check the Tournament Program for the location of your Long-Term problem's Prop Drop Area
- Props may be dropped no earlier the 90 minutes before your scheduled Long-Term performance time
- Store your props only in the designated Prop Storage area for your Long-Term problem
- Please keep hallways and doors clear for traffic
- DO NOT leave cars parked in Prop Drop loading zones even temporarily
- Once your Long-Term performance is finished remove your props through the same Prop Drop area as soon as possible to keep hallways clear

Long-Term Check-In

- Teams should report to their Check-In area at least 20 minutes before they are scheduled to compete.
- Structure teams should have their structure weighed at least 45 minutes before reporting to the Check-In area.
- Props should be moved to Check-In / Pre-Staging Area.
- Anyone may help the team transport props and scenery into this area. If broken only the team may fix it.
- Staging Area Judge will collect paperwork, check for items that might damage the floor, check for footwear and get a contact number for the coach.
- Coaches – This is when you step back and let the team do its thing, now is their time to shine!

Long-Term Staging

- Once the previous team has finished their presentation the props are moved to the Staging Area.
- Anyone may help the team transport props and scenery into this area. If broken only the team may fix it.
- Timekeeper will ask the team if flash photography or videotaping is OK, if strobe lights will be used and how the team will signal that they are finished performing.
- Head Judge will be identified and the coach will be instructed on where, when and how to pick up scores.
- Coaches will be told where to sit during the performance.
- Coaches – Wish your team good luck and take a seat.

Long-Term Performance

- Timekeeper will ask the team, "Team, are you ready?".
- Many teams find a creative way to indicate they are ready.
- Timekeeper will say "Team begin!" – TIME STARTS NOW
- Team ONLY must move props to the performance area and begin their performance. Don't neglect to figure in set-up time.

Long-Term Performance (*continued*)

- Don't forget to consider:
 - What happens if something goes wrong during setup?
 - Who handles what tasks during setup?
 - Is there something someone can do during setup to start the performance?
- Time does not stop if the team encounters a problem. (Except for medical emergencies)
- Coaches – Watch out for accidental Outside Assistance.
- Wrap it Up - Like the beginning, the end is important! Many teams find a “creative” way to indicate they are finished.
- After the performance ends, the judges will talk to the TEAM and ask them questions about their solution. Let the team know to expect it and practice it with them. Coaches need to remember this is a part of the solution. Keep out.
- Once the judges are finished with the team anyone my help move the props from the performance area back to the Prop Drop Area and then packed back into your vehicles.
- 1 (ONE) Coach may pick up the raw Long-Term scores form the Head Judge as soon as they are ready.

Spontaneous Check-In

- All teams will receive a color-coded Spontaneous Card when they register in the morning.
- Teams and 1 coach should report to the Spontaneous Check-In area 15 minutes before their scheduled Spontaneous time.
- Make sure to collect all cellphones, cameras and electronic devices from your team before entering the area.
- Team members and coach will go to Holding Room
- Teams supporters will be directed to meeting area
- When judge comes to collect the team, the coach will go to meeting area and wait for team to finish
- NO ONE but the team enters the Spontaneous Area

Spontaneous Competition

- One of the judges will call the teams membership number, team name, LT problem and division
- Team members should present the Spontaneous Card to the judge to confirm they have the right team
- The judge will escort the team from the Holding Room into the Spontaneous competition area
- When the team enters the room, they will be told which type of problem they will do
- After competing, the team will go to the Meeting Area
- DO NOT ask the team about the problem, THIS IS A SECRET!

Awards Ceremony

- The Awards Ceremony is usually preceded by “Trading”
 - Keep items inexpensive and NOT MESSY; avoid liquids, silly string, pop streamers, air horns, etc.
- Before the Awards Ceremony can start the floor must be picked up and teams seated together
- Remind your team they are all winners
- Remember good sportsmanship
- Ranatra Fusca’s are awarded at the end, don’t leave early
- After the awards are completed 1 coach may pick up the team’s Style scores from the Problem Captain

What's Next???

- Relax, relax, RELAX!
- Start preparing and refining for State Competition

Parents' Role at a Tournament

Your Odyssey of the Mind™ Regional Board also relies on parents and guardians for help. We welcome friends, relatives, and office associates, too!

Here are the opportunities for parents, friends, and relatives to help make the regional tournament possible. We feel certain you will enjoy helping, and few volunteer opportunities directly benefit so many children in an educational program!

WE NEED YOUR HELP on Tournament Day to:

- Be a volunteer (Each team must provide a volunteer to work for approximately two to three hours on Tournament Day.)
- We also ask you to help the team get props in and out of the building, to move your car from loading and unloading areas as quickly as possible, and to bring a sense of humor to the tournament.

We believe that this program offers something unique for your children. We believe that they will learn teamwork, creative problem solving, divergent thinking, persistence, practical skills, and many other abilities through Odyssey of the Mind™. Please remember we are all volunteers working together to make this happen.

- Parents are the drivers, carriers, huggers, cheerleaders, last-minute hardware store runners, door holders, floor sitters and prop protectors. Their role at a tournament is quite complicated. They are expected to be supportive without getting in the way. Until the performance and spontaneous problem solving are over, parents do not own their children; their coach owns them.
- Parents should plan to stay around the periphery of the team work area. That way they can be found if the team needs something that's within your realm to provide. Do not try to make conversation; the students' concentration is completely on Odyssey of the Mind™.
- Parents can help carry items out of vehicles into buildings and even to the staging area. DO NOT repair props that break, cut an extra string off a costume, fix hair, fix make-up, or help students into their costumes.
- Stay away from the spontaneous problem solving rooms. It may be intimidating to teams to have groups of adults hovering in the area. Wait in designated areas. Do not discuss the spontaneous problem or how the team feels they did.
- Be aware that judges are volunteers, just as most coaches are volunteers. They have put time into training, practice judging, and judging teams. They are trying very hard to judge as objectively and fairly as they can. Parents are not allowed to talk with judges; that is the coach's job. If you have concerns, discuss them privately with the coach. If parents confront an official, they risk having a stiff penalty assessed against their team.
- Discourage team members from blaming teammates, coaches, judges or other teams if things go wrong. Make sure you don't blame either. All good teams have lived through major disasters on their way to becoming champions.
- Exhibit good sportsmanship at all times. Cheer for all teams-yours and everyone else's. Offer to help any team in need by loaning tools, materials, etc. Make sure siblings exhibit appropriate behavior and do not disturb teams and spectators.
- Encourage your team members to have a good time. What is important in Odyssey of the Mind™ is the process, not the result

Sportsmanship

The following is an excerpt from Problems to Challenge Creativity by Dr. Sam Micklus, founder of the Odyssey of the Mind™ Program.

In athletics, some adults feel that victory is everything. Perhaps this attitude is acceptable in professional sports, but in my opinion, it is not appropriate for young people. Athletics should be enjoyable and designed to make young people feel good about themselves while developing coordination skills. Young people should not be ridiculed or reprimanded for doing something wrong, or perhaps losing a game. I hope that the number of adults with this 'win at any cost' attitude remains minimal in the Odyssey of the Mind™ program.

The most important part of the Odyssey of the Mind™ is the means, not the ends. It is the growth of the individual that counts, not whether the team receives a trophy. When people accept a challenge to their creativity, work hard to perfect their ideas and feel good about themselves in the process - they have won! There will always be disappointments. Ideas often need more refinement than one expects in the beginning.

Sometimes an idea needs to be discarded after considerable length of time has been spent working on it. Often the unexpected happens, such as something breaking during the competition. These things happen. But when team members look you in the eye and say that they did their best... that's what Odyssey of the Mind™ is all about.

During an Odyssey of the Mind™ competition the spectators always applaud the team's performance or presentation. Most of the time those applauding are the team's opponents. This is an example of true sportsmanship.

When the Odyssey of the Mind™ program was in its earliest years, only five people were allowed on a team. Part of the competition included a spontaneous problem. Here teams were given a problem and had to come up with as many responses as they could in a two minute time period. Once a young lady called the office to ask if an interpreter could be brought in to the spontaneous problem room because one girl on the team was deaf. Carole Micklus, the Executive Director, said, 'O.K., but translating would slow your team down and we can't allow you to have additional time.' The girl replied, 'That's O.K., we don't care if we win or not, the deaf girl is a member of our team and we want her there.' This demonstrates the true essence of the Odyssey of the Mind™ program.

The team's expectations are influenced greatly by the coach. Very few coaches who expect their teams to win are happy at the close of the competition year. This means that thousands of coaches and teams are unhappy because their expectations were set to win. Therefore, it is more realistic and healthier to emphasize to team members that doing one's best is the most important aspect of competition.

At tournament time, parents and coaches need to resist the temptation to "help out" from the sidelines. Teams will receive penalties for signals, directions (verbal or non-verbal) or negative comments to other teams during performance of long-term and style presentations. Coaches should stress to teams that if a problem arises during their performance, they must solve it themselves as coolly and creatively as possible; teams who have been able to do this have even been awarded Ranatra Fusca Awards.

The most important part of a team's participation in the Odyssey of the Mind™ program is what they have accomplished. **THEY HAVE SOLVED A LONG-TERM PROBLEM.** If they have given their best effort that is what Odyssey of the Mind™ is all about.

Judges

LOOK NOW FOR JUDGES

DON'T WAIT THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT TASK THAT NEEDS YOUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION

1. How many judges are required for Competition?
 - a. One per team (usually team provided)
PLUS
 - b. One per membership (frequently provided by membership coordinator)
2. Who makes a good judge?
 - a. A people person
 - b. Past OM team members
 - c. Past Coaches
 - d. Parents from previous OM team members
 - e. Administrators, Teachers, Professionals
 - f. Anyone that would have a related background experience with any of the problems
 - g. Likes to be around young people for several hours.
3. What does a judge have to do?
 - a. Volunteer two days – one training day and one competition day
 - b. Be committed - if he/she says yes then let them know how important it is that they be at the training and the competition.
 - c. Smile and have fun with the young people.
 - d. They might have to be on their feet all day long
 - e. Be able to judge fair from the morning till the late afternoon - from the first team to the last team.
 - f. Be fair and unbiased
4. When you have decided on a judge have them fill out the required online registration form
5. Encourage your judge or judges to judge more than just one year. This helps them to better understand the program.
6. Stress that this is a very IMPORTANT JOB that they have agreed to do. Teams are all counting on them. If they don't show up they are not only letting your team down but they are letting a lot of OMers down.

A Few Things about Judges

- Judges are ordinary people. Parents, teachers, aunts, uncles, friends, and just about anyone.
- Judges are volunteers.
- Judges receive training at an official Odyssey of the Mind Training EVERY YEAR.
- Judges will make interpretations of the teams' solution and the problem. They might not always agree with you or your team.
- Judges can make mistakes. It is your job as a coach to make sure your team is prepared for the questions the judges will ask them. This means that your team needs to understand the problem.
- Judges aim for consistency throughout the day. If the attempt to keep the same environment for each team.
- Judges will NOT be able to see their teams compete



Appendix

Participation Forms

SAMPLE Odyssey of the Mind™ Membership Application
Michigan Odyssey of the Mind™ Membership Application
Emergency Medical Release
Student-Parent Contract
Conduct Code
Pssst... Odyssey of the Mind™ Parents
What is an Odyssey of the Mind™ Judge?
What is an Odyssey of the Mind™ Volunteer?

Competition Forms

Code of Conduct for CU in MI Coaches
Style Form
Outside Assistance Form
Materials Value (Cost) Form
Media Release Form
Tournament Information for Team Supporters
Creativity Unlimited in Michigan - Program Rules from Policies and Procedures

Other Helpful Tools

Sample Story Board
Sample Evaluation Matrix



Odyssey of the Mind®

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Questions? Email: membership@odysseyofthemind.com or call 856-256-2797

How did you hear about us: ___renewal ___website ___social media ___other:_____

For new AND renewing members, complete this entire form and return it with a check or purchase order. **Check one:**

Divisions I, II, and III:

- _____ Individual school: Must register in the school name. May enter one team per problem per division in competition.
- _____ Two or more schools: Must share the same principal to be under the same membership. Use school district name. May enter one team per problem per division in competition.
- _____ Home-schooled students: Must include at least four home-schooled students. May also include up to three members from other schools. May enter one team per problem per division in competition.
- _____ Community Group: May enter one team per problem per division in competition. May not be an organization established solely for the purpose of participating in Odyssey of the Mind. Please submit by-laws if this is a new membership.

Division IV:

- _____ All teams must have a majority of members who are high school graduates and registered for at least one class at a college, university, accredited technical school, or member of the military. Other team members must be enrolled in one of the above. They do not have to attend the same institution. May enter one team per problem. May proceed directly to World Finals.

Membership name _____ Membership number (for renewal, if known) _____

Grades covered by membership _____ School district _____ County _____

Contact person (may be a coach) _____ Mailing address (for correspondence) _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Zip _____ Country _____

Daytime phone _____ FAX _____ Email _____

**Each individual membership costs \$290, but you will receive discounts if you purchase more than one membership. For all memberships purchased, you get access to five competitive long-term problems, one primary problem, the Program Guide, and more! Membership packets are download-only. Once processed, log in to the Member Area to access the problems.*

_____ **Standard Odyssey of the Mind Membership @ \$290**

_____ **Additional membership(s) for the same school or community group @ \$190**

_____ **6-10 memberships for the same school district (must register at the same time) @ \$240**

_____ **11 or more memberships from the same school district (registered at the same time) @ \$190**

Subtotal _____

FIND OM SUPPORT MATERIALS & SOUVENIRS AT WWW.ODYSSEYOFTHEMIND.COM

Total _____

Payment Methods (Sorry we do not accept phone orders.)

- U.S. Mail: Send completed form along with a check or Purchase Order, **payable to Creative Competitions, Inc.:**
CCI: 406 Ganttown Road Sewell, NJ 08080
- FAX: Send completed form along with a copy of your Purchase Order and fax to (856) 256.2798.
- Online: Pay by credit card or upload a Purchase Order at www.odysseyofthemind.com.

This is a SAMPLE -- Please download the current membership application at www.OdysseyoftheMind.com



Michigan Odyssey of the Mind™ State Membership Application Due January 10 (yearly)

The annual Michigan Odyssey of the Mind™ state membership fee is \$60.00 per membership. The funds generated are used to run the program and provide regional and state tournaments.

Please complete this form and mail with a check or money order made out to Creativity Unlimited in Michigan (CU in MI) or pay by credit of debit card directly from the website:

Creativity Unlimited in Michigan (CU in MI)
Paula Mittner, Treasurer
1017 Paradise Lake Dr. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
treasurer@michiganodyssey.com

This form and the state membership fee must be received by CU in MI's treasurer by January 10 (yearly)

Please print or type

Membership #: _____ Membership Name: _____
(Please enter as they appear on your membership card)

- Check here if you are unable to provide your membership number because your national membership application has been submitted but you have not yet received your membership card. Even if you haven't received your membership card, send this state membership application and fee in by the January 10 deadline.

Information for all Membership Communication:

School District/Sponsoring Org: _____ Region: _____

Contact Person's Name: _____

Address: _____

Evening Phone: _____ Day Phone: _____

E-mail address: _____ Fax #: _____

It is the responsibility of the Membership Contact to check Michigan's Odyssey of the Mind web site, www.miodyssey.com for updates and important information and to share the information with coaches, teams and judges in a timely manner.

.....
Payment of \$60.00 provided by:

- Check or Money Order written to Creativity Unlimited in Michigan included with this form
 Credit or debit card payment via the www.miodyssey.com website

Emergency Medical Release

In order to provide your son/daughter with medical care in the event of illness or injury, you are requested to complete this form.

Name of Student: _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Mother's Name: _____

Phone Number: (home) _____ (work) _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Father's Name: _____

Phone Number: (home) _____ (work) _____

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Other Contact Person: _____ Phone Number: _____

Family Physician: _____ Phone Number: _____

Insurance Information

Carrier: _____ Plan #: _____

Policy #: _____

Medical History

1. Date of last Tetanus booster: _____

2. Allergies: Insect Food Drug Other: _____

3. Is your son/daughter under the care of a physician for a medical problem? Yes No

If yes explain: _____

4. Is your son/daughter taking medication prescribed by a physician? Yes No

If yes explain: _____

5. Any additional Information we should be aware of: _____

Parental Permission

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Relationship: _____

Odyssey of the Mind™ Student Contract

My School supports Odyssey of the Mind™, its team members and their coaches as they work towards completion of their problems. To show my support of my fellow team members, coaches and my school,

I will:

- Encourage my fellow team members, always supporting them
- Listen to and consider their ideas, suggestions and concerns
- Show respect for the feelings of my team members

I will:

- Solve the problem with my team members, working together
- Talk with my coaches when I am not clear on what assistance is acceptable
- Support other Odyssey of the Mind™ teams and team members, at my school and other schools as well
- Remember that if a suggestion I make to the team is not used, this does not mean that the suggestion was not valuable, it may be used later.

I understand that:

- Odyssey of the Mind™ is a commitment. I must be willing to attend meetings, participated and work toward all goals set by the team.
- I have a responsibility to the team to remain committed until the problem is solved.
- If I quit the team, my team may not replace me, and I hurt the team, who may have to compete with fewer members than desired.
- I understand this year's tournament will be held on _____, and I will make plans to be there.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Odyssey of the Mind Parents Commitment

I understand:

- Odyssey of the Mind™ is a long-term commitment and I will insure my child will attend and participate at each team meeting. If there is a conflict, I or my child will notify the coach in advance if possible.
- I cannot assist with the actual development or construction of the team's long-term problem solution, including hints or ideas to help them. It is their project, and only their mind can solve the problem.
- No outside assistance is permitted, including creations, decorations, costumes, ideas, inventions or any other practical advice. The solutions must come from the team.
- Odyssey of the Mind™ is a volunteer program and relies on volunteers to coach teams, judge tournaments and volunteer at meets. I will volunteer and support all those who do.

I agree to support the Spirit of Odyssey of the Mind™, including good sportsmanship, team cooperation and proper manners. I will support the coach and assist the coach when needed.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Conduct Code

As students and members of our larger communities, students participating in the Odyssey of the Mind™ program are expected to set an example of good citizenship at all times. Therefore, we ask you to carefully consider and agree to the following.

- 1) ODYSSEY OF THE MIND™ is a TEAM problem solving activity requiring full, active participation on the part of each individual for as long as your ODYSSEY OF THE MIND™ Team opportunity continues. Your team goal can only be achieved when each member attends each scheduled meeting. Please notify your coach if you are involved in other activities such as sports, dance, scouts, etc. before ODYSSEY OF THE MIND™ begins. We understand that conflicts do arise. It is your responsibility to get any necessary absence cleared with your coach(es) prior to the scheduled meeting. This should be done by either you personally telling your coach(es) or your parents notifying the coach(es). Do not rely on others to tell your coach(es) for you. You will be held personally responsible for any of your missed practices. You will also be held responsible for finding out when the next practice will be if you happen to miss a practice. If you have more than three unexcused absences from practice your coach(es) reserve the right to dismiss you from the team. You can contact your coach at the following number: Phone Number.
- 2) In order to maintain high academic standards (i.e., grades), especially close to competition times, ODYSSEY OF THE MIND™ members have to responsibly manage their available time wisely. Realistically, your education comes first! If you are experiencing academic difficulty or pressures, it is your responsibility to bring this to the attention of your coach(es).
- 3) OMers and their coach(es) are busy, involved people. Therefore, meetings must be productive. It will be at the discretion of the coach(es) to cancel (or "call to an end") any unproductive meeting.
- 4) All teams have the potential of competing at all three levels. Therefore, team members must be available to compete at the Regional, State and World Competitions. A team is officially formed after all members and their parents agree to and sign this ODYSSEY OF THE MIND™ code.
- 5) As members of schools, OMers have already agreed to abide by the School Student Conduct Policy and are subject to any conditions there in. Any violations outside the realm of school policy will be reviewed and settled by all current participating coach(es) with prior notification of parents.
- 6) Team members will be responsible for certain expenses; such as a matching T-shirt/sweatshirt and expenses to help finance the world trip, team pictures, etc.
- 7) TEAM MEMBERS HAVE TO BE AVAILABLE TO WORK ON SATURDAYS.

Competition Dates & Locations

Regional Tournament _____ @ _____
State Finals Tournament _____ @ _____
World Finals _____ @ _____

Odyssey of the Mind™ Conduct Code

Signature of Team Member: _____ Date: _____
Signature of Parent: _____ Date: _____
Signature of Parent: _____ Date: _____

Psst... Odyssey of the Mind™ Parents

Yes, you, the ones who are driving the carpools, forking out money for pizza, opening closets for major scavenging, waiting while the team cleans up after a meeting, postponing dinner because one more prop needs to be finished, and generally watching from the sidelines while the team "gets creative!"

DID YOU KNOW...You are the team's secret weapon for success? You are the "wind beneath the wings" of the team and the coach? You are a vital part of Odyssey of the Mind™?

DID YOUR CHILD TELL YOU THAT YOU MAY NOT HELP??

That is absolutely wrong! That is absolutely right! (Well..... which is it???)

BOTH! You may do many things to help the team, but there are also things you might want to do that would cost the team penalty points. So... how do you know the difference? Here is your own handy, dandy, just-for-parents guidelines!

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO:

- Help provide snacks
- Transport the team to buy things
- Transport the props
- Teach the team members a skill if the team asks, such as:
 - Sewing
 - Art
 - Electronics
 - Engineering
 - Welding
- Help get props into the building for the Tournament, even to the staging area
- Bring spontaneous problem supplies
- Provide a place to meet/store props
- Provide lots of encouragement
- Open attics, closet, basements for materials

WHAT PARENTS CANNOT DO:

- Suggest what to buy
- Repair props if broken in shipping
- Suggest to the team which skills to use to solve problem
- Suggest to the team which skills would result in a better looking or better functioning solution
- Give the teams any ideas for their problem solution
- Sew anything, paint anything, do anything to contribute to the team's problem solution
- Expect perfection from a solution not done by adults (or from a solution done by adults for that matter!)
- Fix anything that breaks
- Suggest what materials to get from the attic, closet or basement
- Criticize any part of the team's solution
- put emphasis on scores instead of fun

Parents ARE important, as resources for learning skills, helping get materials, providing moral support, supplementing working brains with nourishment, and generally facilitating the logistics of a working team. Without your encouragement, your child will not develop the self-confidence that Odyssey of the Mind™ promotes.

What is an Odyssey of the Mind™ Judge?

A job description for the OotM Judge

The Odyssey of the Mind™ (OotM) judge is an essential part of the volunteer staff that makes an OotM tournament a success. Judges can be parents, teachers, aunts, uncles, grandparents, neighbors, or anyone who has a love for children.

- Commitment:
 - As a volunteer judge you MUST commit to 2 days: 1 day for training and 1 FULL day for competition. The tournament day can begin as early as 7am and may run as late as 6pm
 - Judges Training: _____
 - Regional Tournament: _____
 - If the team that you represent advances to the state finals, you will be asked to commit to another full day of judging at Michigan Odyssey of the Mind State Finals.
 - State Tournament date: _____
- Duties:
 - Online Registration: This is where your commitment begins. You (not the coach) MUST access the online registration by following the judges' links on www.miodyssey.com to judges' registration for your particular region.
 - Attend Training: THIS IS MANDATORY! This is where you will meet and discuss the problem which you will be judging. It is your duty as a judge to fully understand the problem so that you can fairly and accurately administer a score. Judges' training is the time for the judging team to get together and discuss any questions or concerns that they may have about the problem with their Problem Captain.
 - Scoring: You must be able to CONSISTENTLY adhere to the scoring guidelines laid out by the problem and your Problem Captain.
 - Code of Conduct: You must be willing to sign and abide by the Michigan Odyssey of the Mind™ Judge's Code of Conduct.
 - Punctuality: You must be committed to being on time for all trainings and tournaments and stay until dismissed by your Problem Captain.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact any Michigan OotM tournament director or problem captain. Contact information can be found on the website at www.miodyssey.com.

If you have a child competing, you will NOT be able to watch your child compete

What is an Odyssey of the Mind™ Volunteer?

A job description for the OotM Volunteer

The Odyssey of the Mind™ (OotM) volunteer is an important part of the staff that makes an OotM tournament a success. Volunteers can be parents, teachers, aunts, uncles, grandparents, neighbors, or anyone who has a love for children.

- **Commitment:**
 - As a volunteer you commit to a 2-3 hour shift the day of competition. This shift can begin as early as 7am and may run as late as 7pm (Note: If you have a child competing, we will do our best to ensure that your volunteer time DOES NOT conflict with your child's long-term presentation time).
 - Regional Tournament Date: _____
 - If the team that you represent advances to the state finals, you may be asked to commit to another volunteer shift the day of Michigan Odyssey of the Mind State Finals
 - State Tournament date: _____
- **Duties:**
 - **Online Registration:** This is where your commitment begins. You (not the coach) **MUST** access the online registration by following the volunteer link on www.miodyssey.com to volunteers' registration for your particular region.
 - **Punctuality:** You must be committed to being on time and stay until your shift ends and you are dismissed by the volunteer coordinator.
 - **Volunteer Jobs:** Your volunteer job can range anywhere from making sure that a door is not opened while a team is performing to helping park cars in a parking lot. You will have an opportunity to let us know of any issues that may prevent you from fulfilling certain duties (i.e. the inability to stand/sit for long periods of time) when you register online. You will be given your volunteer job upon checking in at the tournament's Volunteer Registration site.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact any Michigan OotM tournament director. Contact information can be found on the website at www.miodyssey.com.

Code of Conduct for CU in MI Coaches

Preamble

- Creativity Unlimited in Michigan (CU in MI) requires that all coaches observe the highest standards of professional ethics.
- The code presents guidelines for coach conduct and outlines the obligations of CU in MI coaches.
- Ethical conduct is not a passive process, but requires you to make conscious choices and decisions. A few basic guidelines to keep in mind:
 - Always act with respect and sportsmanship.
 - Never place the value of winning above the value of instilling the highest ideals of character.
 - Always treat others in a courteous and professional manner regardless of their gender, ability, or cultural background.

Basic Standard of Conduct

- As a CU in MI coach, I believe that it is my duty to promote important life skills and the development of good character. I believe that essential elements of character-building are embodied in the concepts of respect and sportsmanship.
 - **Respect:** I will treat all people, including team members, parents, and officials with respect all the time and will require the same of my team. I will use positive coaching methods to make the experience enjoyable, increase self-esteem and foster a love and appreciation for the program. I will encourage team members to pursue victory with honor, to think and compete as a team, and to do their best. I will discourage selfishness and put less emphasis on the final outcome of the competition, than upon effort, teamwork, and character.
 - **Sportsmanship:** I will be a good sport by demonstrating support of all CU in MI teams, coaches, and officials at practices and tournaments. I will remember that CU in MI is operated by committed volunteers who will always try to act in the best interest of team members, and I will support those volunteers and understand that their time and effort is important to all team members.

Conduct Within CU in MI

- I understand that in my position as a CU in MI coach, I must act in accord with the following code:
 - **Training:** I will attend a CU in MI sponsored coaches' training session or obtain all necessary coaches' training information from either the CU in MI website or my regional director. I understand that I am responsible for all information passed along at coaches' training regardless of whether I choose to attend.
 - **Knowledge:** I will maintain a thorough knowledge of the competition rules as outlined in the current year's "Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide" which is available through my membership contact person or on the web at www.odysseyofthemind.com. I will also maintain a thorough understanding of the rules outlined by my specific problem including any team-generated or public clarifications. I understand that it is my responsibility to assure that my team members know and understand the rules as well.
 - **Outside Assistance:** I will not participate in or knowingly allow Outside Assistance as outlined in the Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide. I understand that by allowing Outside Assistance it takes away from the team's ownership of their solution. I understand that if I provide, or allow someone else to provide, Outside Assistance to any team member, I will either (1) adversely affect the potential success of the team's solution because they must disclose my assistance on the Outside Assistance Form which will result in penalty points or (2) I will cause each team member to lie when signing the Outside Assistance Form.

All coaches wishing to register a team for a CU in MI competition are required to sign a code of conduct form. This form requires coaches to agree to abide by the "Code of Conduct for CU in MI Coaches".

I have read this "Code of Conduct for CU in MI Coaches" and agree to abide by it while serving as a CU in MI coach at this year's Regional, State, and World competitions.

Print Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Style Form

Team members must complete this form. Adults may help fill it out for Division I team members only. **A minimum of four copies is required for each competition.** These must be presented to the Staging Area Judge.

PLEASE PRINT. *Note that no element scored in the Long-Term problem may be selected.

Long-Term Problem _____ Division _____

Membership Name _____ Membership # _____

City _____ State/Prov. _____ Country _____

Judge(s) _____

Style Category (Team fills in #1 to #4)	Possible Points	Points Awarded (Judge fills in)
1.	1 to 10	1. _____
2.	1 to 10	2. _____
3.	1 to 10	3. _____
4.	1 to 10	4. _____
5. Overall effect of the four Style elements in the performance	1 to 10	5. _____

Briefly tell how the four Style elements combine to enhance the long-term problem solution. **Please print or type and use only the space below.**

TOTAL STYLE SCORE =
(Maximum possible = 50 points)

NOTE: This form may be photocopied or scanned into a computer, but the information may not be altered in any way.

Outside Assistance Form

Long-Term Problem _____ Division _____

Membership Name _____ Membership Number _____

City _____ State/Prov. _____ Country _____

We understand that it is against the rules for anyone other than the team members to design, build or present the long-term problem solution.

We understand that any team member who was ever on our team must remain on our roster and will count as a team member.

We realize that we may get instruction in various areas of design and construction or in performance techniques, but know that these instructions may not be specific to the long-term problem solution. By signing below, we testify that we have followed all of the rules regarding outside assistance. If there are any exceptions, we have listed those.

WE HAD HELP WTH: (Please describe any assistance with **your specific problem solution** if you had any. State **NONE** if no assistance was received. Also, please list names of former team members no longer on your team (if the roster exceeds seven) and when they last worked with the team.

Coach # 1 _____

Coach # 2 _____

Coach # 3 _____

Team Member _____

Birthday: _____ Grade _____

Team Member _____

Birthday: _____ Grade _____

Team Member _____

Birthday: _____ Grade _____

Team Member _____

Birthday: _____ Grade _____

Team Member _____

Birthday: _____ Grade _____

Team Member _____

Birthday: _____ Grade _____

Team Member _____

Birthday: _____ Grade _____

Note: This form may be photocopied or scanned into a computer, but it may not be altered in any way.

COST FORM

Team members must complete this form and list all items used in the presentation of their problem solution, including those exempt from cost and assigned a value. Adults may help fill it out for Division I team members only. Do not include sales tax.

Long-Term Problem: _____ Division: _____

Membership Name: _____ Membership #: _____

City: _____ State/Prov: _____ Country: _____

Judge(s): _____

Name of Item (e.g. wood, fabric, etc.)	Used For (e.g. costumes, props, all areas, etc.)	Value (used value)
1. _____	1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____	5. _____
6. _____	6. _____	6. _____
7. _____	7. _____	7. _____
8. _____	8. _____	8. _____
9. _____	9. _____	9. _____
10. _____	10. _____	10. _____
11. _____	11. _____	11. _____
12. _____	12. _____	12. _____
13. _____	13. _____	13. _____
14. _____	14. _____	14. _____
15. _____	15. _____	15. _____
16. _____	16. _____	16. _____
17. _____	17. _____	17. _____
18. _____	18. _____	18. _____
19. _____	19. _____	19. _____
20. _____	20. _____	20. _____

TOTAL VALUE OF MATERIALS USED: \$ -

COST FORM (Page 2) (If Needed)

Team information below is repeated automatically from page one. Only enter items below here if your list of materials includes more than will fit on one page. If you do not go over 20 items, you need not print this page.

Long-Term Problem: _____ Division: _____

Membership Name: _____ Membership #: _____

City: _____ State/Prov: _____ Country: _____

Judge(s): _____

Name of Item (e.g. wood, fabric, etc.)	Used For (e.g. costumes, props, all areas, etc.)	Value (used value)
21. _____	21. _____	21. _____
22. _____	22. _____	22. _____
23. _____	23. _____	23. _____
24. _____	24. _____	24. _____
25. _____	25. _____	25. _____
26. _____	26. _____	26. _____
27. _____	27. _____	27. _____
28. _____	28. _____	28. _____
29. _____	29. _____	29. _____
30. _____	30. _____	30. _____
31. _____	31. _____	31. _____
32. _____	32. _____	32. _____
33. _____	33. _____	33. _____
34. _____	34. _____	34. _____
35. _____	35. _____	35. _____
36. _____	36. _____	36. _____
37. _____	37. _____	37. _____
38. _____	38. _____	38. _____
39. _____	39. _____	39. _____
40. _____	40. _____	40. _____

TOTAL FROM PAGE ONE:	\$	-
TOTAL FROM PAGE TWO:	\$	-
TOTAL VALUE OF MATERIALS USED:	\$	-

Creative Unlimited in Michigan Media Release

Each participating team member, coach and official at Regional Tournaments and State Finals must fill out and sign a copy of this form and bring it to their Odyssey of the Mind™ Regional Tournament registration desk on competition day. Persons under 18 years of age must have their parent or guardian sign. Your signature on this form permits the organizers and sponsors of the Odyssey of the Mind™ program to use videotapes and photographs of participants in public showings.

I hereby give consent to Creativity Unlimited in Michigan, sponsor of the Odyssey of the Mind™ program in Michigan, to use my image in trainings sessions, for publicity purposes, for purposes of trade or for any lawful purpose whatsoever.

Name: _____

I am a: Team member Coach Official

Home address: _____

City: _____ Michigan Zip code: _____

Home phone: _____ - _____ - _____

Signature of team member or coaches: _____

Date: _____ Phone Number: _____

Membership name: _____

Membership number: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____

If team member, coaches' name: _____

Person under 18 years of age must have the consent of a parent or guardian.

I, the undersigned, being the parent or guardian of the above minor, do hereby consent to, and agree to be bound by, the above release.

Parent or Guardian signature: _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____

Do not fax or mail in this form.

Turn in this form at the Registration Desk at the Regional Tournament

Teams may not compete at regional or state competition unless they have a signed release form on file for each team member and coach. Please direct questions to Information Director at info@michiganodyssey.com.

Tournament Information for Team Supporters

Teams and Coaches may wish to use this form to provide information about the tournament to Parents, Grandparents, Friends and Supporters:

Our team's Membership Name is: _____

Our team's Membership Number is: _____

Our Coaches Name(s): _____

Our team's Long-Term Problem is: _____

Our team's Division is: _____

Our Long-Term performance time is: _____

The Location of our performance is: _____

Our Spontaneous performance time is: _____

Only our coach can take us to spontaneous. We will meet you afterwards at: _____

BUT PLEASE DO NOT ASK US QUESTIONS ABOUT SPONTANEOUS

Please remember:

- Anyone can help us bring our props into the school and take them to the Staging Area. Once we are in the Staging area, only the team members can handle the props.
- No one can help us prepare for our performance:
- You can't fix our hair, put on our makeup, repair our props, or do anything that might be considered Outside Assistance. We can do it ourselves!!! We really can.

After we perform:

- Anyone may help us remove our props from the performance site. We would really appreciate your help then.

Coaches' notes to Parents:

Creativity Unlimited in Michigan
Program Rules from Policies and Procedures - Revised July 2021

Each problem has its own specific set of rules teams must follow. The general program rules that apply to all Odyssey of the Mind teams are laid out in the annual Program Guide found at www.odysseyofthemind.com. Finally, states such as Michigan may have rules that all teams in their state must follow. In Michigan, teams must observe the following rules:

2. Registrations/State memberships

- a. Tournament Late Fees:
 - i. Incomplete registrations for teams that are not electronically submitted by the due date will be assessed a \$50.00 late fee and will not receive their scores and may not advance, until the fee is paid. A complete registration includes electronically submitted team, judge, and volunteer registrations and payment of the team registration fee. If all forms are completed, but the fees have not been received by the due date, the Tournament Director contacts the coach and gives them one week or less to provide the fee before the late fee is assessed. NOTE: For Virtual tournament, no volunteer is required.
 - ii. Judges: If the team does not register a judge or the team's judge cannot attend tournament day, the team may be assessed a \$100.00 fee, and any team not providing a judge may not be allowed to advance to the next completion level.
 - iii. Provisions of 2a apply to both Regional Tournaments and State Finals.
 - iv. All penalties and late fees listed will be levied at the discretion of the Tournament Director.
- b. State Membership Fee is set at the Summer Meeting.
- c. Unpaid State Membership Fee:
 - i. Teams may not compete at the Regional Tournament if the State Membership fee is not paid. Final determination of payment comes from the Treasurer.
 - ii. Treasurer should notify RD's of any memberships not paid by January 20th each year.
 - iii. Treasurer will continue to monitor any unpaid memberships through the week prior to the tournament.
 - iv. If necessary, arrangements can be made for memberships to pay at the tournament.
- d. Teams that have not paid their fees are not covered in the insurance policy issued to CU in MI by CCI, and, therefore, may not be at the competition site.
- e. Regional Registration Fee is set at the Summer Meeting.
- f. There is no State Finals Registration Fee.
- g. Unpaid CCI Registration Fee:
 - i. Treasurer will advise Regional Director of any membership who has not paid CCI. Teams who have not paid CCI or have unregistered team members are not covered in the insurance policy issued to CU in MI by CCI and therefore may not be at the competition site.
 - ii. Arrangements can be made for memberships to provide payment or proof of payment to CCI at tournament registration.
- h. Refund Policy
 - i. Regional Fees:
 - 1. Schools must submit a written request via email or letter (not text or phone call). It must be received in writing by January 31st of the current tournament year.
 - 2. Refunds will be issued according to our guidelines minus any fees charged to CU in MI, ex. Credit card fees.
 - ii. State Membership Fees:
 - 1. Schools must submit a written request via email or letter (not text or phone call). It must be received in writing by January 31st of the current tournament year.
 - 2. Refunds will be issued according to our guidelines minus any fees charged to CU in MI, ex. Credit card fees.
 - 3. Additional refunds may be provided at the discretion of the Treasurer and the AD.
- i. Each year the Board shall approve a Coaches Code of Conduct that must be signed by every Michigan coach prior to his/her team competing in any tournament.

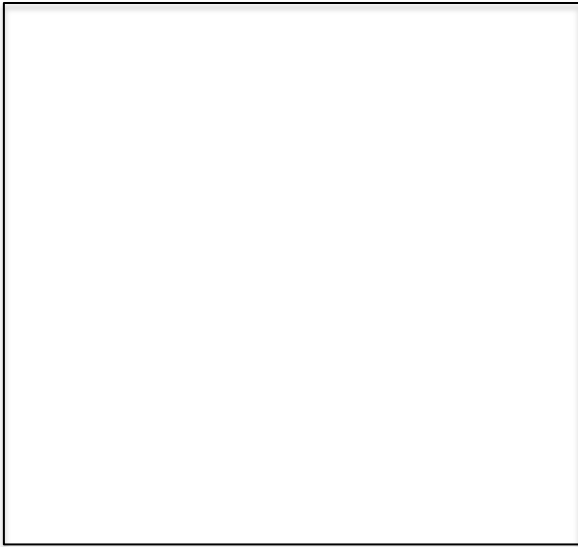
5. Regional and State Tournaments

- a. Teams will provide a judge and volunteer for both In-Person Regional and State Finals. Memberships may be required to provide one additional judge or volunteer for Regional Tournaments. For Virtual Tournaments, teams will be required to provide a judge only.
- b. The number of volunteers is determined by the Regional Director and Association Tournaments Director respectively.
- c. Regional and State Team Registration, Judges Registration and Volunteer Registration are required to be submitted on-line through the www.odysseyofthemind.com or www.miodyssey.com websites.
- d. Packet Pick Up – Only one coach may pick up the team packet at an In-Person tournament.
- e. Long-Term Raw Score – only one coach, or team captain for Div. III, may receive the long-term raw score sheet from the Head Judge. For Virtual Tournaments, this information is sent via the CCI communication system.
- f. Tournament Programs shall include the following:
 - i. “Creativity Unlimited in Michigan, sponsor of the Odyssey of the Mind™ program in Michigan.”
 - ii. A list of CU in MI Board members
 - iii. The Odyssey Pledge
 - iv. CU in MI Mission Statement
 - v. An explanation of advancement to the next level of competition
 - vi. An explanation of the Ranatra Fusca and OMER Awards
 - vii. The State Finals program will also include a list of the CU in MI Scholarship winners.
- g. In order to comply with laws to protect student identity including The Family Educational Right to Privacy (FERPA), no tournament program shall include student names, addresses or demographical information of any type unless signed release of liability forms are obtained prior to printing.
- h. Problem Captains – Each Regional PC receives one free t-shirt. State PCs receive a free dinner after the State Finals tournament; value not to exceed \$21.00. Alcoholic beverages are not included.
- i. Trading time may be scheduled at any In-Person tournaments prior to the Awards Ceremony.
- j. Teams advancing to State Tournament – The number of places advancing in each problem and division is determined by the number of teams competing. Prior to each Regional Tournament season, the Board will review the following criteria:
 - 1 through 6 teams registered = 2 places advance (1st & 2nd)
 - 7 through 12 teams registered = 3 places advance (1st, 2nd & 3rd)
 - 13 through 18 teams registered = 4 places advance (1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th)
 - 19 plus teams registered = 5 places advance (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th)
- k. If there is a tie, both qualifying teams advance in that place. Long-term and Spontaneous Ranatra Fusca winners also advance whether it is a team or an individual award.
- l. Team Performance Recording – At in-person tournaments, any recording of the team’s performance will not be viewed for judging purposes or to settle disputes by judges or tournament officials
- m. In order for a Division II or III team to advance to the next level of competition, it must score a minimum of 75 points raw score, before penalties, in its Long-Term performance (including Weight Held in Problem 4). If no team across the state scores 75 points in a given problem/division, the rule defers to the advancing team formula (5, j) and teams advance accordingly from each region.
- n. Only outside sales that provide direct service to tournament operations will be considered.

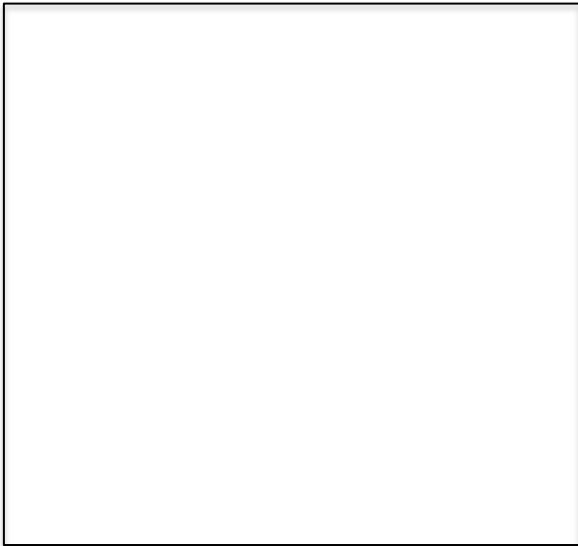
14. Due Dates

- a. All due dates for fees and/or paperwork must be designated “postmarked by” for regular mail submissions and “no later than midnight” for electronic submissions.
- b. The cut-off dates for clarifications that will be honored at a Michigan tournament are:
 1. Midnight on the Friday before a Regional Tournament.
 2. Midnight on the Wednesday before a State Finals Tournament.

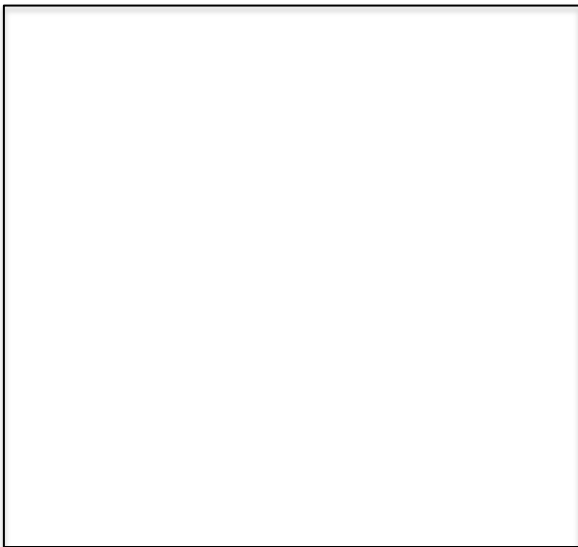
Sample Story Board



Frame: _____



Frame: _____



Frame: _____

Sample Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Matrix	Team Idea #1	Team Idea #2	Team Idea #3	Team Idea #4
Cost				
Creativity				
Availability of Materials				
Ease or Difficulty				
Humor				
Team Knowledge				
Artistic Value				
Time Required				
Uniqueness				
Originality				
Audience Appeal				
Judge Appeal				



International Odyssey of the Mind™

www.odysseyofthemind.com

- ✓ Problems
- ✓ Guide Book
- ✓ Forms

- ✓ State Association Links
- ✓ Clarifications
- ✓ Alumni Info



Michigan Odyssey of the Mind™

www.miodyssey.com

- ✓ State Information
- ✓ Regional Information

Association Director - Pam Gombert.....Director@MichiganOdyssey.com
 Association Tournaments Director - Karen McCombs..... StateTournament@MichiganOdyssey.com
 Treasurer - Paula Mittner.....Treasurer@MichiganOdyssey.com

Region 1 Director - Toni Martin..... Region1@MichiganOdyssey.com
 Region 2 Directors – Lynn Zimmerman Region2@MichiganOdyssey.com
 Region 3 Director - Kim Samkowiak Region3@MichiganOdyssey.com
 Region 4 Director - Peg Edverson Region4@MichiganOdyssey.com
 Region 5 Directors – Stacy Zachar Region5@MichiganOdyssey.com

Program Expansion Director - Martha AtwaterProgramExpansion@MichiganOdyssey.com
 Alumni Director – Sue JobaAlumni@MichiganOdyssey.com
 Information Director - OPEN Information@MichiganOdyssey.com
 Sales Director - Erin Gillis MichiganOMSales@gmail.com
 State Problem Captains Representative – Wende Randall WendeRandall@comcast.net

Get Creative!



Odyssey
of the
Mind