



Odyssey of the Mind™

***So... What is  
Odyssey of the Mind ???***

# Welcome !!!

Perhaps you are wondering if Odyssey of the Mind would be a good fit for your group. Or you know the program would be great to have, but wonder what is involved.

This is a brief overview of Odyssey where we will try to answer those questions.

# What is Odyssey of the Mind ???

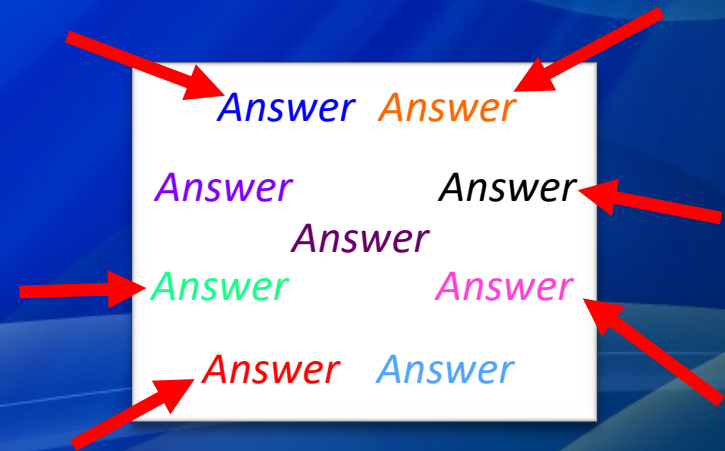
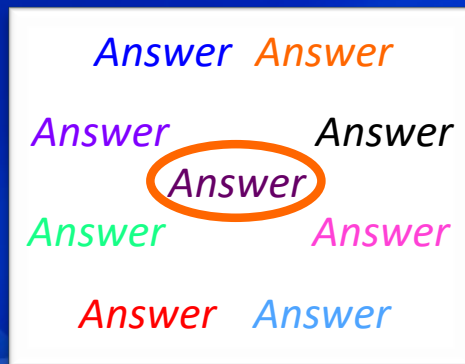
Odyssey of the Mind is a creative problem-solving competition for students and community group members of all ages and learning levels.

Teams of students select a problem, create a solution, then present their solution in a competition against other teams in the same problem and division.



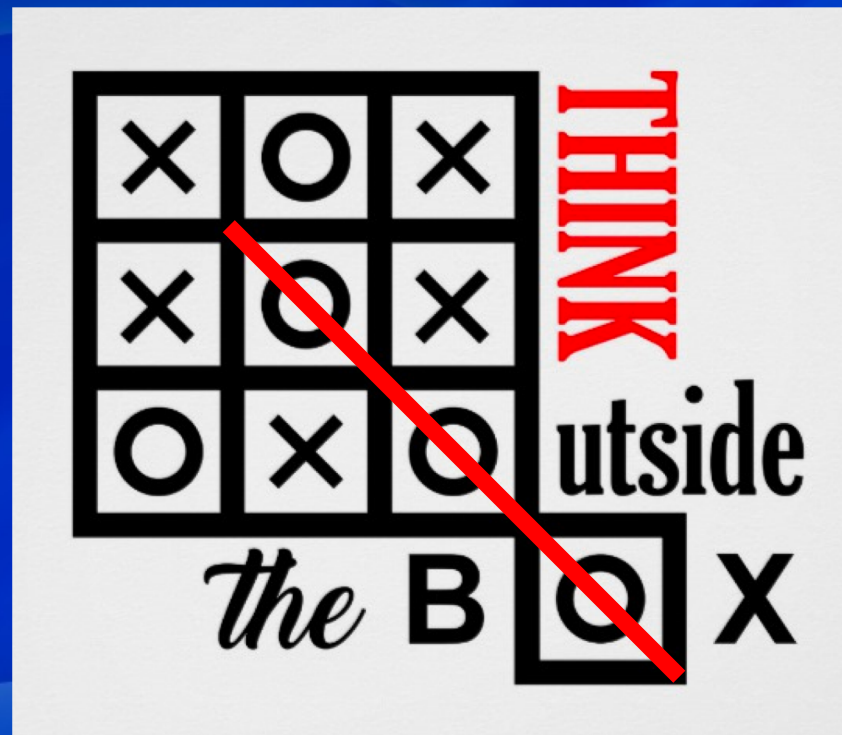
# There is no ONE Right Answer

Often we try to solve problems thinking there is only one right answer, but most problems have several possible solutions.





# Why Odyssey of the Mind ???



Odyssey encourages students to  
**"Think Outside the Box"**

# Why Odyssey of the Mind ???



Because there are no wrong solutions, teams are free to take calculated risks in attempting to solving the problem

Odyssey of the Mind allows kids to use their imaginations to interpret and solve complex problems in a FUN way!

# Oh the Things You Will Learn

Teams discover the importance of teamwork as they share ideas and work together to create their solution.

Students also discover hidden talents and how to put all those talents together

It takes a team to solve the problem by writing a script, building scenery and making props



# Odyssey in the U.S.

Founded in 1979, Michigan has one of the longest running programs in the world. Currently Odyssey of the Mind is in 41 states...

## *MICHIGAN*

|             |               |                |                |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Arizona     | Illinois      | Missouri       | South Carolina |
| Arkansas    | Indiana       | New Hampshire  | Tennessee      |
| California  | Iowa          | New Jersey     | Texas          |
| Colorado    | Kansas        | New Mexico     | Utah           |
| Connecticut | Kentucky      | New York       | Vermont        |
| Delaware    | Louisiana     | North Carolina | Virginia       |
| D.C.        | Maine         | Ohio           | Washington     |
| Florida     | Maryland      | Oklahoma       | West Virginia  |
| Georgia     | Massachusetts | Pennsylvania   | Wisconsin      |
| Idaho       | Minnesota     | Rhode Island   | Wyoming        |

# Odyssey Worldwide

*And in 29 countries around the world!*

Argentina

Bangladesh

Belarus

Canada

China

Czech Republic

El Salvador

Germany

Greece

Hong Kong

Hungary

India

Indonesia

Japan

Liberia

Malaysia

Mexico

Moldova

Philippines

Poland

Qatar

Russia

South Korea

Switzerland

Turkey

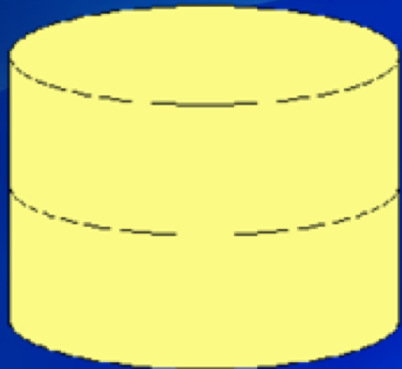
Ukraine

United Kingdom

United States

Venezuela

# The Three Components of OotM



## Long-Term (LT)

Specific rules

Open-Ended

Solutions presented

In skit form (8-min)



## Style

Elaboration of

Long-Term solution

Pizazz, sparkle, polish

Team chosen elements



## Spontaneous

On the spot

Anything goes

3 Types: Verbal,

Hands-on, Hybrid

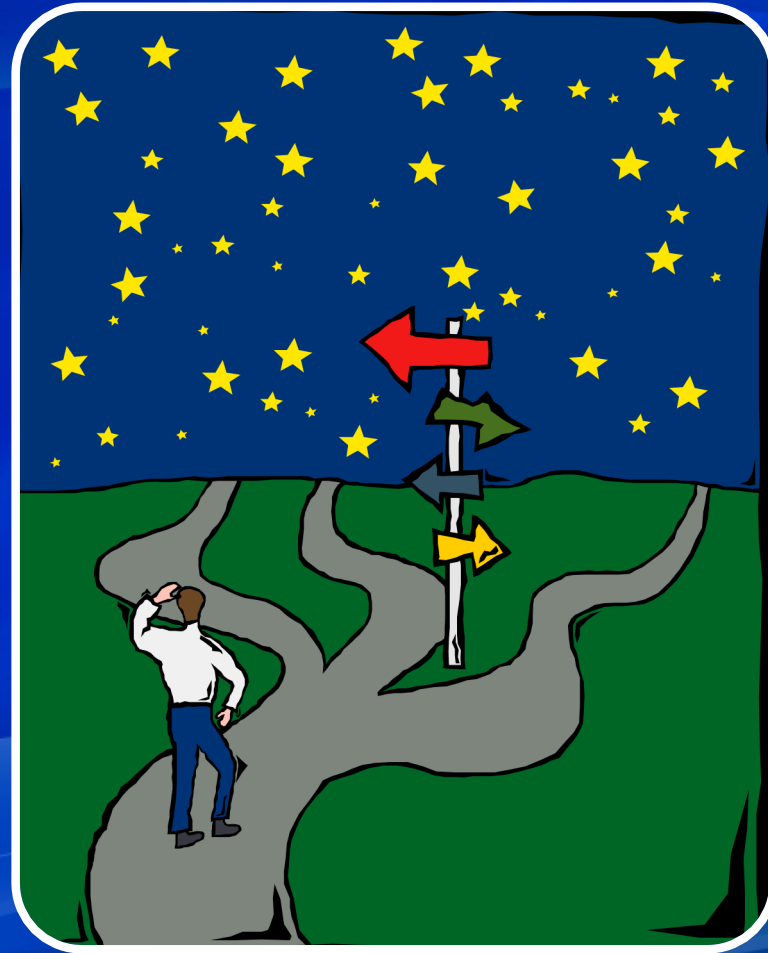


# The Three Components of OotM



**Long-Term + Style + Spontaneous = Total Score**

# The Long-Term Problems



*Every year there are 6 new Long Term problems...*

# The Long-Term Problems

## Problem #1 – **Vehicle**

Teams design, build and operate one or more vehicles. Sometimes they're small, other times they're big enough to ride on and transport other items. Generally the vehicles are scored on their propulsion system, and for traveling and completing different tasks.





# The Long-Term Problems *Continued...*

## Problem #2 – **Technical**

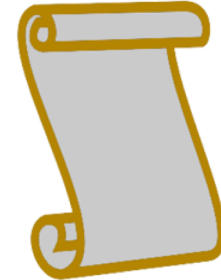


Teams are scored for performance elements as well as for some type of technical achievement. Usually, this problem requires the team to create one or more devices that perform certain functions or tasks.

# The Long-Term Problems *Continued...*

## Problem #3 – Classics...

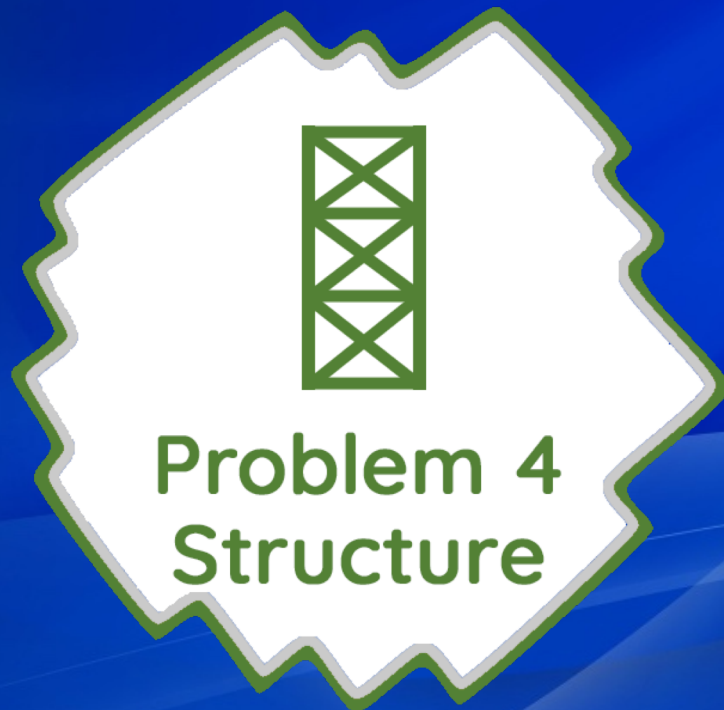
This is a performance problem based on something “classical.” It could involve mythology, art, music, archaeology, or anything else that is classical in nature.



**Problem 3  
Classics**

# The Long-Term Problems *Continued...*

## Problem #4 - **Structure**



Teams design and build a structure out of only balsa wood and glue. They test the structure by adding Olympic-size weights until it breaks.

Each year there are different structure design criteria that set it apart from previous years.



# The Long-Term Problems *Continued...*

## Problem #5 - Performance

This is a performance problem, where scoring is based mostly on the performance and elements within the performance. It sometimes requires a specific character, sometimes humor, sometimes an original story, but it's always fun!



# The Long-Term Problems *Continued...*

## Primary Problem



Non-Competitive

Designed to introduce younger students (Grades K-2) to the creative problem solving process.



# Style





# Style

**Style is the place for the team to showcase their strengths and talents.**

- Style is the elaboration of the Long-Term Problem
- It is how the team makes their solution stand out
- Style is presented during their Long-Term Problem Solution performance.
- What makes this performance really shine?
  - Artistic design, music, songs, choreography
  - Construction, creative use of materials
  - Humor, rhyme .....

# Spontaneous





# Spontaneous

- On competition day, each team will be given a Spontaneous problem to solve
- All teams members are encouraged to participate
- Teams do not see these problems ahead of time
- Teams will have 10 – 15 minutes to solve their Spontaneous problem
- We highly recommend that teams practice a couple Spontaneous problems at every meeting
- There are many resources online to help find practice spontaneous problems
- There are three types of Spontaneous problems....



# Spontaneous Problem Types

- **Verbal** - problems require verbal responses. They may incorporate improvisation or dramatization. Teams are scored for common and creative responses.
- **Hands-on** - problems require teams to physically create a tangible solution. Each problem has its own specific scoring categories.
- **Verbal/Hands-on (Hybrid)** – problems require team to create a tangible solution and include some type of verbal component. Teams are scored on both the tangible solution and verbal presentation.

# What does the Coach do?

- Keep the team on task
- Be a scribe for all their ideas
- Provide a place to meet
- Coordinate snacks from the parents
- Keep the peace!
- Find spontaneous problems to practice (more about that later)
- Find experts to bring in when the team wants to learn a new skill like sewing, carpentry, acting, putting on makeup, etc.

# What does the Coach **NOT** do?

- Solve the problem in any way
- They may NOT write the script
- Make suggestions
- Make the backdrops or props
- Sew the costumes or put on makeup
- Coaches/parents/teachers (anyone not on the team) may NOT help or even offer advice
- If the team doesn't know how to do something – encourage them to learn how to do it or find a different way

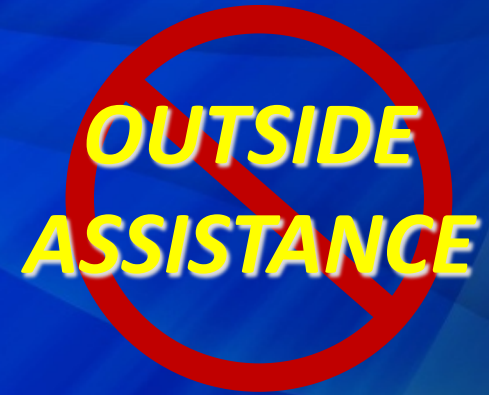


# Outside Assistance (OA)



# Outside Assistance (OA)

OotM is Hands-On for Kids,  
but Hands-Off for Adults!



- One of the most important parts of OotM is that the team **must** conceive, design, construct, and perform **their own ideas**. Help external to the team is termed “Outside Assistance”.
- The solution is the **team’s** design, **their** work, **their** performance, and **their** score. The **team** is responsible for **their** results, **not the coach**.
- It’s **VERY** important that parents know OA rules too!

# Outside Assistance (OA) *Take two...*

Please remember,  
it is the....

Team's design

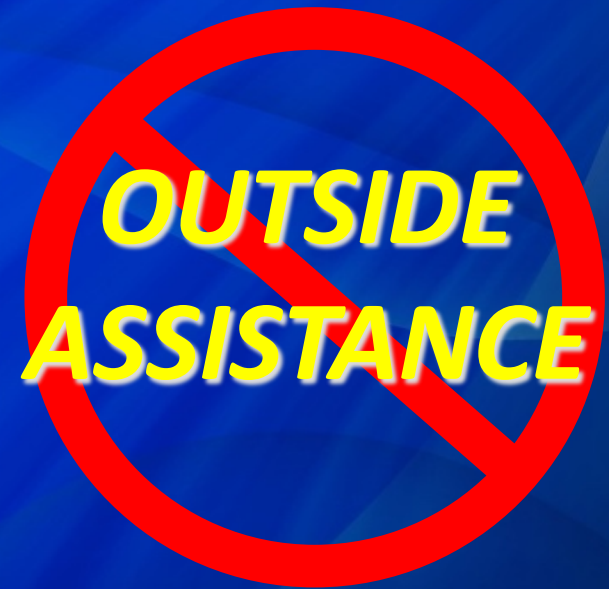
Team's work

Team's words

Team's performance

Team's score

Team's results





# What Parents Can Do...

- Transport the team to buy things
- Transport the props
- Teach the team members a skill IF the team asks:
  - Sewing
    - Woodworking
      - Principles of simple machines
      - Calligraphy
        - Art
          - Electronics
            - Engineering
              - Welding

# What Parents Can Do...

- Help provide snacks
- Bring spontaneous problem supplies
- Help get props into the building for the Tournament, even to the staging area
- Open attics, closets, basements for "garage sale value" materials
- Provide lots of encouragement
- Provide a place to meet/store props
- Get everyone and everything to the Tournament
- Help get props offstage afterwards
- ***Applaud A LOT!***

# What Parents Can **NOT** Do...

- Suggest what to buy
- Suggest to the team which skills would result in a better-looking or better functioning solution
- Suggest to the team which skills to use to solve a problem
- Suggest what materials to get from the attic, closet or basement
- Repair props if broken in shipping
- ***Give the teams any ideas or suggestions for their problem solution***



# What Parents Can **NOT** Do...

- Sew anything, paint anything, do anything to contribute to the team's problem solution
- Analyze why something failed
- Expect perfection from a solution not done by adults
- Fix anything that breaks
- Criticize any part of a team's solution
- ***Put emphasis on scores instead of fun***

**Remember, this is the team's solution!**

# Typical Timeline

Sep – Nov

Membership Coordinator:

Purchase memberships

Form teams, recruit coaches

Pay tournament fee



Nov - Dec

Coach: Attend coaches training  
(Yes, it's free)

Nov - Mar

Team: Work on LT solution, practice Spontaneous

Dec - Jan

Coach: Sign-up for tournament (early if possible)

Jan 10

Coach: Deadline to register for Regional Tournament

Early Feb

Regional Tournaments

Mid Mar

Michigan State Tournament

End of May

World Finals

# Program Structure - Divisions

- Teams are grouped and participate within divisions
- A team's division is based upon the grade level of the team's oldest member
  - Primary (usually K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade)
  - Div I (team members in K-5<sup>th</sup> grade)
  - Div II (team members in 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade)
  - Div III (team members in 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade)
  - Div IV (all members with high school diplomas and taking at least one college course)

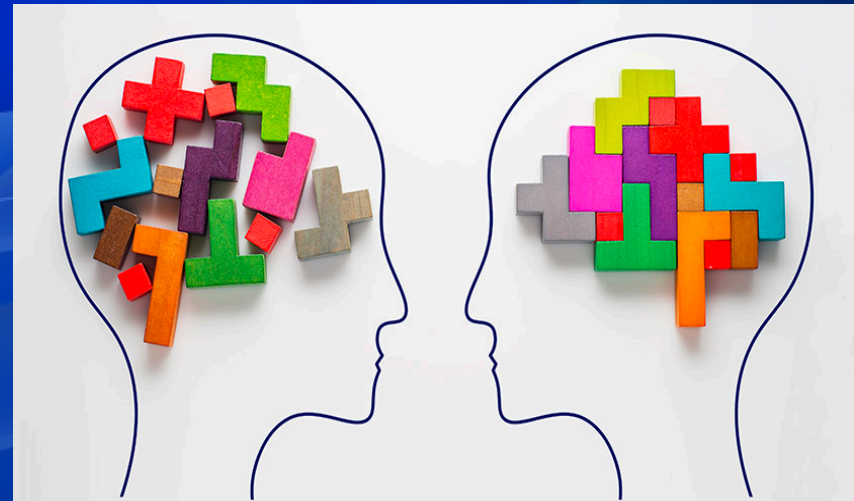


# Program Structure - Memberships

- Each membership must:
  - Pay National Membership fee ( \$290 )
  - Additional memberships are available at a reduced cost
  - Pay State Membership fee ( \$60 )
- Each Team must:
  - Pay Regional Tournament fee ( \$50 )
- Each membership allows you to have 1 team in each of the Long Term problems/divisions, and an unlimited number of Primary teams

# Program Structure - Teams

- Teams of up to 7 students participate in:
  - Team's choice of the Long-Term problems
  - A Spontaneous problem assigned to them on the day of competition
- A maximum of 7 “minds” can work on the team's Long-Term problem. ( **In other words, No Outside Assistance!** )



# Websites &



# Resources



# Odyssey of the Mind Website

[www.OdysseyoftheMind.com](http://www.OdysseyoftheMind.com)



# Odyssey of the Mind®

(856) 256-2797 | [info@odysseyofthemind.com](mailto:info@odysseyofthemind.com) | 406 Ganttown Road, Sewell, NJ 08080



## Your Odyssey Begins Here

Odyssey of the Mind (OM™) teaches students how to develop and use their natural creativity to become problem-solvers. Imagine being faced with a problem that requires an original solution. It can be frightening. Now imagine not being afraid to solve that problem – that is what OM members learn. This skill and self-confidence will carry over to all areas of their lives. OM brings the classroom to life as students apply what they learn and combine it with their interests and passions to solve our unique open-ended problems. OM also emphasizes teamwork, budgeting, time management, public speaking, and so much more. This international program is designed to help students at all learning levels grow as individual learners, grow as team members, and to reach their full potential.



Plan your Odyssey

Let us help you get started!



Join Odyssey of the Mind

Let's make it official



Explore the Problems

# Michigan Odyssey Website

www.MIOdyssey.com

Home Coaches Judges Parents and Volunteers Team Members Who We Are Program Information Contact Us



## It's a Michigan Odyssey



### *Curious about Long Term and Spontaneous?*

Long Term Process

Spontaneous Process

Video player for the Long Term Process. It features the Michigan Odyssey of the Mind logo with a play button icon overlaid. Below the logo, the text reads: "Creativity Unlimited in Michigan" and "MIOdyssey.com".

Video player for the Spontaneous Problem Process. It features a dark background with the text "Spontaneous Problem Process" in white, with a play button icon overlaid.

# Odyssey Academy Videos

[www.odysseyofthemind.com/odyssey-academy](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com/odyssey-academy)



Found on the Odyssey of the Mind website, the Odyssey Academy has 15 videos each targeting specific questions that you might have:

- The Long-Term Problems
  - Creativity and Brainstorming
    - How to Write a Skit
      - Spontaneous
        - How to Compete



# Michigan Coaches Manual

[www.MIOdyssey.com](http://www.MIOdyssey.com)



Coaches'  
Manual

Found on the homepage of the Michigan Odyssey of the Mind website, our Coaches' Manual has a wealth of information on all things Odyssey.

# Michigan Odyssey Facebook

Search Michigan Odyssey of the Mind

Lots of useful information and reminders



**Michigan Odyssey of the Mind**  
1.5K likes · 1.5K followers



[Contact us](#) [Liked](#) [Message](#)

# Other Helpful Resources

Michigan Odyssey Regional Directors:

Region 1 – Kent County

[Region1@MichiganOdyssey.com](mailto:Region1@MichiganOdyssey.com)

Region 2 – Mid Michigan

[Region2@MichiganOdyssey.com](mailto:Region2@MichiganOdyssey.com)

Region 3 – Northern Michigan & Upper Peninsula

[Region3@MichiganOdyssey.com](mailto:Region3@MichiganOdyssey.com)

Region 4 – Southwest Michigan

[Region4@MichiganOdyssey.com](mailto:Region4@MichiganOdyssey.com)

Region 5 – Southeast Michigan

[Region5@MichiganOdyssey.com](mailto:Region5@MichiganOdyssey.com)

Other Coaches

Zoom Question & Answer sessions



# Contact Us

For more information, or to register:

Michigan website:

<http://www.MIOdyssey.com>

Association Director: Pamela Gombert

Email: [Director@MichiganOdyssey.com](mailto:Director@MichiganOdyssey.com)

International site

<http://www.OdysseyoftheMind.org>

Odyssey of the Mind Headquarters

Email: [info@OdysseyoftheMind.org](mailto:info@OdysseyoftheMind.org)



# Odyssey of the Mind



Be Creative!