



What's a coach to do? If you have reviewed your membership materials and are wondering, "What do I do next", here are some tips. Keep in mind that everyone involved should have fun.

Coach Manual

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Tips for Coaches

Create a practice schedule and set basic rules. Stress the importance of attending meetings and practice sessions. Set down rules for good sportsmanship and constructive criticism. (Remember: There's no such thing as a bad idea)

- **Encourage team members to work cooperatively.** Teamwork is one of Odyssey of the Mind fundamental principles. All teams go through growing pains, but members will learn to work together as time goes on.
- **Do not help the team solve the problem.** The coach's role is to help team members develop problem-solving skills, not to help solve the problem. Before adding your input, ask yourself if it would create or improve an aspect of the team's solution (outside assistance), or if it would enhance the team members' creative problem-solving abilities (good coaching).
- **Learn about the spontaneous competition and practice spontaneous activities regularly.** Books of practice problems are available from Creative Competitions Inc. There is a section in this manual with information on what and how to practice. We have a spontaneous kit with 20 verbal, 20 verbal hands-on, and 20 hands on problems as well as some of the supplies needed for the problems.
- **Read the entire [Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide, the complete long term problem](#) and stay up-to-date with [long-term problem clarifications](#).** Refer to the guide often and check clarifications on a regular basis. Your school contact should provide you with the long term problem which is 6 pages long,
- **If an aspect of your team's solution seems questionable, it is not outside assistance to suggest submitting a problem clarification.** The cutoff for teams to submit questions is February 15th of the current Odyssey of the Mind tournament year. But continue to check the clarifications, as general clarifications may be posted after that date. See pages 24-25 in the Program Guide for more information on clarifications.
- **Arrange a performance for the student body and faculty.** Let the school see what your team has learned through Odyssey of the Mind. This is also good rehearsal for teams before they go to official competition, and it helps them feel comfortable performing before an audience.

The Coach's Role

Many coaches, particularly new ones, wonder about what their job actually is. Here's a list of some of the major responsibility that an Odyssey of the Mind coach should assume:

- ✓ Organize and schedule meetings of the team
- ✓ Set rules and regulations for behavior at meetings
- ✓ Set up a timeline for task completion
- ✓ Guide activities
- ✓ Be sure the team has all of the updated problem clarifications
- ✓ Secure materials requested by the team (but don't select things for them)
- ✓ Secure experts to demonstrate/teach the team new skills, if necessary
- ✓ Ensure the team completes all paperwork for the tournament

Remember that someone may teach basic skills like wiring or how to work with a sewing machine, but the team members (and only the team members) must apply those skills to their solution themselves!

Meet with parents to explain rules, philosophy and your meeting schedule. Stress the importance of each member's attendance. Distribute information on tournaments, directions and schedules to parents/relatives.

Instill the Odyssey of the Mind spirit in your team. Remember, if you emphasize the score as the only measure of their success, you could be setting up your team to feel like failures. Please emphasize that the learning process, the experience, and FUN are the worthwhile goals to achieve.

Remember that we are here to help you. If you have any questions, please get in touch so we can be of assistance.

- ✓ Each team must have at least one adult (18 years or older) registered as its head coach.
- ✓ Each membership has the right to determine who this person will be.
- ✓ The coach is generally responsible for selecting and training the team.
- ✓ The coach may not work on the long-term problem's solution unless, as may be the case in Division IV, he/she is also a team member.
- ✓ Once the team is selected, the coach presents the long-term problems, conducts brainstorming sessions to select the team choice of problems and develop solutions to the long-term problems, conducts and evaluates spontaneous problem practice sessions, helps the team obtain the materials and knowledge necessary to solve the long-term problem, supervises practice sessions, and accompanies the team to competitions.

- ✓ The coach can help the team by having guest speakers visit and talk about general principles which may be useful in solving the problems, by showing films, and by providing books that also give the team basic techniques with which it may work.

Team members must:

- **Design and produce their own problem solutions.**
- Limit their solutions to the use of materials and methods which they can handle without help.
- Other persons may show team members basic skills necessary to produce their solution to the problem – that is, sewing, nailing, sawing, photography, acting, etc. However, no one except the team members on the team's roster, a total of seven in one competition year, may work on the problem solution.
- Costumes, as well as problem solutions, may consist of ready-made pieces put together in a manner designed by the team. It is the final product which the team must design and produce, not necessarily each of the parts.

Parental Involvement

Frequently parents coach or assist the coaches. Parent coaches of assistant's help foster parental interest in the school and give parents an opportunity to contribute to their child's education. Sometimes there are more students who want to participate in the Odyssey of the Mind program than a teacher coach can handle. Having parent coaches allows participation by more students.

It is helpful for coaches to call a meeting of the team members' parents to explain the Odyssey of the Mind program to them and to go over the rules for outside assistance. They can also find out what skills and facilities the parents have that teams may use. Coaches should rely on parents to be resource persons for the team. Parents can teach skills that team members need to execute their solution – carpentry, sewing, dancing, etc. They can also give general information on such subjects as engineering and scientific principles. If the team plans to enter competition, the coaches should tell parents the competition and practice schedules. The coaches also need to tell the parents what the coaches expect from them regarding transportation, money, time, etc.

Parents often ask what they can do to help. They want to assist, but are afraid of going over the line. You can get a list of what parents can and cannot do at the "Parents" section of our web site. Print out the list and share it with parents at an upcoming meeting.

How Can I Find Judges?

Each Odyssey team is responsible for providing one judge who will commit to attending training and judging at the Regional Tournament. Sometimes the

school contact will handle this and sometimes the teams have to find one. Check with your school contact to determine if you need to recruit one. If you do, here is more information on judges.

It takes almost 100 judges to successfully operate a Tournament so that teams are treated fairly. A mix of new and experienced judges makes for the best experience for students, as is a mix of judges from different areas of the region. Make sure the judge you solicit has a clear understanding of their commitment. They must attend training and they must be there on Tournament Day. They will not judge the team they are representing, and they will not be able to leave the judging assignment to see other teams perform. The pay is minimal: lunch and snacks at training and the Tournament, and an "Official" button (sometimes a t-shirt) are the only remuneration, but the rewards of helping a team and seeing real creativity at work is more than worth it! Officials who judge at the regional level may be invited to judge at state tournament if they are willing.

- Start with teachers and others at school. Explain that each team needs a judge and may not be able to participate unless one is found. Some teachers have coached teams before and are familiar with the program; you can begin with them.
- Ask family members who want to support the team. Make sure they understand that they will not be able to judge the team they are representing, nor will they be able to see their family member perform.
- If you or a parent has a co-worker or other person who expresses an interest in Odyssey, suggest that judging may be a fun and helpful way to learn more about the program.
- See if there is an Odyssey alum (over 18) connected to the school or a team member. Former team members usually make great judges, as they understand the program.
- The School Coordinator may be willing to be a judge.
- Ask the PTA/PTO if someone might be interested in helping the team by being a judge. Again, some of those parents may want to find out more about the program and can learn much from this experience.
- If someone on the team has a connection to a community group, see if there's someone who especially likes to volunteer.
- Some school administrators are willing to judge for their school(s)' team to keep them involved in the program.
- If there's someone who seems to have a particular interest – building, technical projects, theater – suggest that they might make a great judge for this interesting and positive opportunity for students.
- Locate people who used to coach an Odyssey team. Former coaches understand the need the teams have in finding a judge.

- Have the team members ask one of the above to be a judge, but make sure an adult follows up with the person to make sure their commitment was certain.
- If there is a retired teachers group nearby, or a senior citizens' group, ask if someone would like to judge. Often seniors really appreciate the work that children do.

How Can I Find Volunteers?

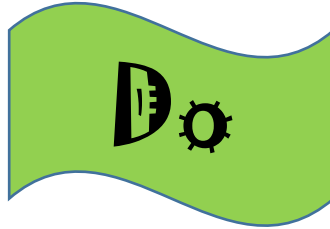
Volunteers are critical to a successful Tournament. They stand watch at doors, keeping people from interrupting team performances, work at our sales table, bring lunches to our judges, act as "gophers" and perform other needed tasks. The easiest source for volunteers is family members and friends who will be attending the Tournament in support of the team. Like potential judges, they should be approached early. Unlike judges, though, they do not have to attend training, and they will be scheduled around the performance of the team they are representing. Volunteers are able to see their team(s) perform and are only committed for 2-3 hours on the Tournament day, so it is easier for someone to agree to take on this role.

So, who can you ask to be your team's Volunteer?

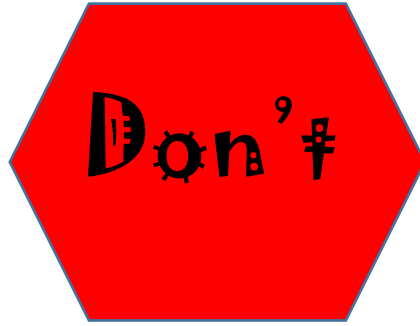
Ask parents or family members who will be attending the Tournament. See if anyone from school is planning on coming to the Tournament to watch a team (a Teacher? Aide? Administrator?). If they are taking their time to be at the Tournament, they might be willing to donate a few hours to help out.

Is there someone the team knows who attends a College or will be in the area? They might be able to stop by, see the team and work to help out.

Coaching Do's and Don'ts



- ✓ Help students generate ideas through brainstorming, refining and selecting
- ✓ Help student stay on task. Be sure they all have jobs
- ✓ Assist in organization
- ✓ Foster responsibility among team members: clean-up, cooperation, listening skills
- ✓ Help students with work schedule: long-term and short-term goals
- ✓ Keep tabs on progress. Check the progress of specific tasks.
- ✓ Encourage positive behavior among team members. You have the right to remove unruly participants
- ✓ Communicate with sponsoring teacher or school contact
- ✓ Communicate with parents
- ✓ Keep in touch with team members and families. A calendar and phone tree can make your life much easier
- ✓ Let parents know your ideas about snacks. Will they take turns providing them? Will they contribute a certain amount toward food expenses? Will they leave a supply of snacks at the meeting place? Will there be no snacks?
- ✓ Have fun as a coach
- ✓ Recognize that stress increases as competition draws near. Do recognize that the team will not be ready as early as you would like them to be
- ✓ Keep your sense of humor
- ✓ Make clear your expectations of the team: be on time, be respectful, be reliable, etc.
- ✓ Ask lots of open-ended questions: Are there any other ways you could...? What are the strengths of this solution? What talents does each of us bring to the problem? How can we use these talents? What do you think of the solution (or component)?
- ✓ Remind the team to read the problem. Then read it again. Then read it again.
- ✓ Try to start and end your regular meetings on time
- ✓ Help the team stay on top of forms and paperwork
- ✓ Keep track of due dates
- ✓ Encourage risk taking, it's the heart of the program
- ✓ Encourage brainstorming: Look for multiple solutions. No one criticizes ideas during the brainstorming sessions
- ✓ Celebrate accomplishments
- ✓ Encourage kids to take responsibility as a team for what they do and do not do
- ✓ Let the team provide the answers
- ✓ Teach or find someone to teach skills if the team asks, such as: sewing, woodworking, calligraphy, art, electronics engineering, principals of simple machines, welding,
- ✓ Practice spontaneous as often as you can
- ✓ Have fun and Laugh A lot!



- Allow the team to waste creative energy by blaming
- Suggest what to buy
- Repair props if broken in transport
- Suggest to the team which skills to use to solve a problem?
- Suggest to the team which skills would result in a better looking or better functioning solution
- Give the team any ideas for their problem solution
- 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 (or a solution done by adult's for that matter!)
- Suggest what materials to get from the attic, closet, basement or storage closet
- Fix anything that breaks
- Make suggestions for cute lines
- Make it neater
- Criticize any part of a team's solution
- Steer toward solutions
- Do any work for the students related to the solution of the problem. No hammering, sewing, drawing, etc. You MAY demonstrate skills or provide people who can.
- Contribute specific ideas.
- Accept lack of task commitment. Work with sponsoring teacher and/or parent to correct the problem
- Put emphasis on scores instead of fun

Outside Assistance

Coaches need to organize the team, maintain order and discipline, and sometimes motivate the kids. They may serve as a “recording secretary” to a team (no matter what division) as long as they write only what the team members say. Only Division I coaches may fill out official forms for the team. Division II and III team members must fill out the forms themselves.

Coaches are allowed to ask the team members questions to prod them to think about their solutions and how to improve them. However, these questions must not lead the students.

For example, a coach could not ask, “Don’t you think it would be better to narrate your play, rather than act it out?”

The correct way to state the question would be, “How many different ways are plays presented?”

This will encourage the team to think creatively and not indicate that the coach thinks the way the play is presented should be changed. By asking broad questions, the coach stimulates the team members to think. This is the heart of the OM program.

Below are some scenarios that help explain what is allowed and what is considered Outside Assistance.

Scenario 1: For a Div. I team a parent plugs in a power tool for one of the students because it is a rule in their house that no children are allowed to plug in any appliance.

Question: Is it Outside Assistance (OA) for any non-team member to plug in a power tool that the team uses to complete its solution to the problem?

Answer: *No, it’s not OA for a parent to plug a cord in an outlet for practice. (The parent may not use the power tool to work on the problem solution.) However, it is OA if someone other than the team plugs a cord in during the team’s performance time.*

Scenario 2: Kids try to assemble two boards (fourth graders) using screws and nails, but they keep falling apart.

Question: Is it OA for the team to ask an adult who is familiar with carpentry how to fix the problems?

Answer: *An adult can tell and show the team members various ways to connect boards. He/She must not show the team one specific way to connect the boards for the team’s solution. An adult should give the team many possible ways to assemble the boards and must allow the team to determine what it will do in its solution. There is a principle that if information can be found through research, an adult can tell the team.*

Scenario 3: A team decides it will center its skit on a CELL theme. The coach gives the team members a homework assignment to come up with as many words as possible that contain the word CELL, such a 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: *Although the coach should not give the team any examples, the assignment is one of the types of things the coach should do to help the team develop its creativity.*

Scenario 4: A Div. I team is spray-painting a prop.

Question: Is it OA for the coach to hold a team member's hand for about 2 seconds (out of a 30-minute job) to help show the proper way to spray paint?

Answer: *Yes. The coach may not help spray paint anything used in the solution. However, the coach may teach the team member how to spray paint by using something that is not part of the solution such as a scrap piece of wood.*

Scenario 5: With proper training, it is possible to examine a structure and determine which element failed first and why.

Question: Is it OA for someone other than a team member to examine a failed structure and provide this information for the team?

Answer: *Not if the team asks the person and all he/she does is tell the team members what part failed. He/She cannot tell the team why it failed or what to do to keep it from failing in the future.*

Scenario 6: A goal for a team is to learn how to take a complex problem apart, test each component in a controlled manner, then reintegrate the resulting solution and validate if it performed as expected.

Question 1: Is it OA for the coach to encourage the kids to approach the problem this way?

Answer 1: *No, the coach may encourage the kids to approach the problem this way.*

Question 2: Is it OA for the coach to build jigs or testers to facilitate testing the alternatives the team came up with in its sub-components?

Answer 2: *No for the testers and yes for the jigs. Anyone may make a tester but only team may make jigs because they are construction aids.*

Scenario 7: A Div. I team has decided to use what it thinks is tasteful bathroom humor in its skit. The coach has made sure everyone is aware of the rule about vulgarity.

Question: The team doesn't think it's vulgar but does not have a clue what adults think is vulgar. (TV examples abound in the arguments as examples of what adults think is acceptable). Is it OA for them to tell other adults what their jokes are and to ask if they think it's vulgar.

Answer: *No, this is okay to do. But keep in mind that even a clarification will not be able to state what any particular judging team will deem is acceptable versus vulgar.*

Scenario 8: The performance has been taped. Four kids think they need to schedule an extra practice; three think they do not and the performance cannot be done with just four.

Question: Is it OA for the coach to make the decision? Is it OA for the coach to say “Majority rules?” Is it OA for the coach to say they must come to a consensus (meaning every person but one must agree)?

Answer: *It is up to the coach to make the decision or to decide on how the decision is to be made. Practice schedules are entirely within the coach’s purview. The coach should create this structure when the team is first assembled.*

Scenario 9: A local group of several different OM teams are convened for the purpose to practice 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: *The teams may present their solutions to each other and may be scored. They may be given verbal comments. (Verbal comments would tend to give the team more specific direction in no 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.”) Comments should state what they saw, not suggest changes.*

When in doubt, don’t “help”.

The Art of Asking Questions or How **Not** to Provide Outside Assistance

Coaches need to be aware that the WAY a question is asked may limit the creativity of the answers. Here are some general, all-purpose questions you can use with your team(s):

- Do you think any other team would think of this?
- Can you think of a more creative way to do this?
- What other materials could be used to (create this effect, to make this move, to make it lighter in weight, to make it funnier, etc.)?
- What kinds of things do we need to find out in order to do this?

And now, for some ideas to use when you want to say something you're not allowed to say!

- How else could you...?
- Why did this happen?
- Where could you find out?
- Is this your best...?
- Does this meet the standard?
- Is this job done?
- What do we mean by style?
- What should be done?
- When should it be done?
- Who should do it?
- Can this be tested?
- Can we combine ideas?
- Why is it necessary?
- How else could this be arranged?
- What should come next?
- What makes sense? What makes nonsense?
- What could be said? What could be left unsaid?

Good questioning can really help elevate your team's solution and enjoyment of creative problem solving, without introducing outside assistance. We hope this helps you this year. If you have any tips you've picked up along the way, please pass them along and we'll share them with other coaches.




Brainstorming

The most straightforward technique for gathering ideas is brainstorming. The idea is to collect as many ideas as possible in a short period of time. You can go around the group in 'round robin' fashion to make sure everyone participates evenly. Capturing the ideas and posting them on flip charts on the wall helps the group see the progress they are making. There is one rule in brainstorming: every idea is a good idea. Simply write them all down without discussion and in a few minutes, you can have 20 or 30 good ideas. Stop when the group runs out of steam or you sense that the quality of the ideas is waning.

Brainstorming is by far the most widely used tool to stimulate creative thinking. It was developed in the 1940s by the American advertising executive Alex Osborn who believed that anyone could learn to generate creative solutions for a wide variety of problems. Following Osborn's beliefs, below are some tips that will help you have brainstorming sessions that generate results. They have been edited for your OM team.

Step-by-Step to Brainstorming:

1. Distribute a copy of the rules of brainstorming before the meeting begins. The rules are:
 - 🚫 Criticism of ideas isn't allowed
 - 👍 All ideas, no matter how wild, are encouraged
 - 👍 The more ideas, the better
 - 👍 Every participant should try to build on or combine the ideas of others
2. When scheduling the brainstorming session, allow 30 or 40 minutes. Brainstorming sessions can be tiring and if you haven't discovered a satisfactory idea after 40 minutes then it's best to move on to another activity. Let the participants leave with the understanding that there will be another session. They can think about the problem because great ideas can come anytime and anywhere - in the shower, in the car or in the park.
3. At the beginning of the session, explain the meaning of Killer Phrases and emphasize that they won't be permitted.
 - 🚫 You might provide two cards for each participant as they enter the room. One has a green circle on it, the other a red circle. Like traffic lights, when the flow of ideas is positive, participants hold up the green cards. If someone mentions a Killer Phrase, all of the other participants must hold up the red cards. This helps the group identify its "killer" behavior and lets participants know when they should be more supportive of others' input.
4. Write the objective of the meeting where everyone in the room can see it. Put it in a question form, starting with either "How can we ...?" or "What can we ...?" For example:

- a. How can we use what we know about vehicles to design an original vehicle?
 - b. In what ways could we use the knowledge of vehicles to create an original vehicle?
 - c. Let's break down how a vehicle works: what would you need to use in order to start building an original vehicle?
5. Be sure to capture all of the group's ideas. A whiteboard is ideal for brainstorming since ideas are displayed on the whiteboard surface (which can stimulate additional ideas), and easily edited. Be sure either you or a team member copy down the information. Be sure that they're saved for future reference. After all, what good is generating ideas if nobody remembers them after the session ends? The team may want to reconsider the ideas later if the chosen idea doesn't seem to be working
 6. If the flow of ideas begins to fizzle, the leader should step in. Some ideas:
 -  Re-read every third idea. This may spark additional ideas.
 -  Ask a participant to select an idea and give reasons why he likes it. This will generate conversation around the idea and provide an opportunity to build on it.
 -  If you're the session leader, keep an idea or two to yourself. When the conversation dies, share these ideas to initiate more discussion.

After the session, edit the brainstorming notes, arrange the ideas in related groups and send a copy to each participant as soon as possible. Ask each participant to select the five ideas he thinks are best. Request that they also explain why these ideas are most promising and how they would implement them. Be sure to include a deadline for when you'd like the ideas returned.

More Ways to Brain Storm

Caught with a problem you cannot solve? Need new ideas and solutions? The process of brainstorming requires you to think out of the box that is keeping you in the problem.

The idea for this post was triggered by [a question from a reader](#), who asked me on my thoughts of the best brainstorming methods to achieve the best results. Because brainstorming is applicable to all kinds of contexts and there is no one size fits all method, I thought it'll be more helpful to write a post on the different possible types of brainstorming techniques we can use instead.

Here is a list of 25 brainstorming techniques you can use to get out of the situation you are in. From this list, you can assess what's the best method for the issue you are facing and apply it accordingly.

1. **Time Travel.** How would you deal with this if you were in a different time period? 10 years ago? 100 years ago? 1,000 years ago? 10,000 years ago? How about in the future? 10 years later? 100 years later? 1,000 years later? 10,000 years later?
2. **Teleportation:** What if you were facing this problem in a different place? Different country? Different geographic region? Different universe? Different plane of existence? How would you handle it?

3. **Attribute change.** How would you think about this if you were a different gender? Age? Race? Intellect? Height? Weight? Nationality? Your Sanity? With each attribute change, you become exposed to a new spectrum of thinking you were subconsciously closed off from.
4. **Role storming.** What would you do if you were someone else? Your parent? Your teacher? Your manager? Your partner? Your best friend? Your enemy? Etc.?
5. **Iconic Figures.** This is a spinoff of rolestorming. What if you were an iconic figure of the past? Buddha? Jesus? Krishna? Albert Einstein? Thomas Edison? Mother Theresa? Princess Diana? Winston Churchill? Adolf Hitler? How about the present? Barack Obama? Steve Jobs? Bill Gates? Warren Buffet? Steven Spielberg? Etc.? How would you think about your situation?
6. **Superpowers.** This is another spinoff of role storming. What if you suddenly have superpowers? Superman? Spiderman? Wonder Woman? X-Men? The Hulk? One of the Fantastic Four? What would you do?
7. **Gap Filling.** Identify your current spot - Point A - and your end goal- Point B. What is the gap that exists between A and B? What are all the things you need to fill up this gap? List them down and find out what it takes to get them.
8. **Group Ideation.** Have a group brainstorming session! Get a group of people and start ideating together. More brains are better than one! Let the creative juices flow together!
9. **Mind Map.** Great tool to work out as many ideas as you can in hierarchical tree and cluster format. Start off with your goal in the center, branch out into the major sub-topics, continue to branch out into as many sub-sub-topics as needed. [Source Forge](#) is a great open-source mind mapping software that I use and highly recommend.
10. **Medici Effect.** [Medici Effect](#) refers to how ideas in seemingly unrelated topics/fields intersect. Put your goal alongside similar goals in different areas/contexts and identify parallel themes/solutions. For example, if your goal is to be an award-winning artist, look at award winning musicians, educators, game developers, computer makers, businessmen, etc. Are there any commonalities that lie among all of them that you can apply to your situation? What worked for each of them that you can adopt?
11. **SWOT Analysis.** Do a SWOT of your situation - What are the Strengths? Weaknesses? Opportunities? Threats? The analysis will open you up to ideas you may not be aware before.
12. **Brain Writing.** Get a group of people and have them write their ideas on their own sheet of paper. After 10 minutes, rotate the sheets to different people and build off what the others wrote on their paper. Continue until everyone has written on everyone else's sheet.

13. **Trigger Method.** Brainstorm on as many ideas as possible. Then select the best ones and brainstorm on those ideas as 'triggers' for more ideas. Repeat until you find the best solution.
14. **Variable Brainstorming.** First, identify the variable in the end outcome you look to achieve. For example, if your goal is to achieve X visitors to your website, the variable is # of visitors. Second, list down all the possibilities for that variable. Different variations of visitors are gender/age/race/nationality/occupation/interests/etc. Think about the question with each different variable. For example, for Genre: How can you get more females to your website? How can you get more males to your website? For age: How can you get more teenagers to your website? How can you get more adults to your website? And so on.
15. **Niche.** This is the next level of variable brainstorming method. From the variations of the variable you have listed, mix and match them in different ways and brainstorm against those niches. For example, using the example in #14, how can you get more male teenagers to your website? (Gender & Age) How can you get more American female adults to your website? (Nationality, Gender & Age)
16. **Challenger.** List down all the assumptions in your situation and challenge them. For example, your goal is to brainstorm on a list of ideas for your romance novel which you want to get published. There are several assumptions you are operating in here. #1: Genre to write: Romance. Why must it be that romance? Can it be a different genre? Another assumption is for a novel. #2: Length of the story: Novel. Why must it be a novel? Can it be a short story? A series of books? #3: Medium: Book. Why must be it a book? Can it be an eBook? Mp3? Video? And so on.
17. **Escape Thinking.** This is a variation of Challenger method. Look at the assumptions behind the goal you are trying to achieve, then flip that assumption around and look at your goal from that new angle. For example, you want to earn more income from selling books. Your assumption may be 'People buy books for themselves'. Flip the assumption around such that 'People do NOT buy books for reading'. What will this lead to? You may end up with people buy books as gifts, for collection purposes, etc. Another assumption may be 'People read books'. The flip side of this assumption may be people look at books (drawings). Escaping from these assumptions will bring you to a different realm of thought on how to achieve your goal.
18. **Reverse Thinking.** Think about what everyone will typically do in your situation. Then do the opposite.
19. **Counteraction Busting.** What counteracting forces are you facing in your scenario? For example, if you want to increase traffic to your website, two counteracting forces may be the number of ads you put and the page views of your site. The more ads you put, the more users will likely be annoyed and surf away. What can you do such that the

counteraction no longer exists or the counteraction is no longer an issue? Some solutions

may be 1) Get ads that are closely related to the theme of your site 2) Get contextual ads that are part of your content rather than separate, and so on.

20. **Resource Availability.** What if money, time, people, supplies are not issues at all? What if you can ask for whatever you want and have it happen? What will you do?

21. **Drivers Analysis.** What are the forces that help drive you forward in your situation? What are the forces that are acting against you? Think about how you can magnify the former and reduce/eliminate the latter.

22. **Exaggeration.** Exaggerate your goal and see how you will deal with it now. **Enlarge it:** What if it is 10 times its current size? 100 times? 1000 times? **Shrink it:** What if it is 1/10 its current size? 1/100? 1/1000? **Multiply it:** What if you have 10 of these goals now? 100? 1000?

23. **Get Random Input.** Get random stimuli and try to see how you can fit it into your situation. Get a random word or image from a dictionary, webpage, book, magazine, newspaper, TV, etc. a random object from your room, house, workplace, neighborhood, etc. and so on.

24. **Meditation.** Focus on your key question such as 'How can I solve XX problem?' or 'How can I achieve XX goal?' and meditate on it in a quiet place. Have a pen and paper in front of you so you can write immediately whatever comes to mind. Do this for 30 minutes or as long as it takes.

25. **Write a list of 101 ideas.** Open your word processor and write a laundry list of at least 101 ideas to deal with your situation. Go wild and write whatever you can think of without restricting yourself. Do not stop until you have at least 101.





Team Building

Here are a couple of team building activities:

Lighthouse

Pick a team member to become a lighthouse and one to be a ship. The rest of the team members are rocks. Blindfold the ship. In the boundary area (ocean), have the rocks sit in a spot and freeze. Stand the lighthouse at one end of the ocean and the ship at the other end. Have the lighthouse guide the ship, by giving verbal directions through the rock hazards to safety. Make sure the rocks spot the ship in case of it sinking by running into the rocks.

Standing Twister or Knots

Put the group in a huddle. Each person extends his or her right hand and grabs the hand of another person in the huddle. Each person then extends his or her left hand and grabs a different person's hand. No two people should be holding the same hand. The object is to have the group untangle themselves slowly without ever letting go of hands. Some people will have to step over other people; some will go under people; some will get twisted and have to untwist and turn to unravel themselves. --- It is important for your team to both work together and to laugh together. We hope your group is working well and that they - and you -are having fun.

Connecting Stories found at www.icebreakers.ws/small-group/connecting-stories.html

Connecting Stories is a fun team-building activity and get-to-know-you game that is all about finding common experiences or themes between people. This activity works best in small groups of 6-8 people. Materials required: Pens and Post-it Notes. Notecards or other small slips of paper will also work.

Have everyone divide into small groups of 6-8 people. Ensure each table has several post-it notes and pens. The goal of the game is to connect mini-stories in an interesting way. Each person must share at least one item that connects to the other mini-stories. The longer the chain of items that can be created, the better. Write down a few words on a post-it note to keep track of each part of the story.

Escape Rooms

If your students can afford it, consider a trip to an Escape Room

Suggested Topic and Length of Meetings

Meeting #1: (1 ½ hours, including snack for first 15 minutes)

- Meet with kids AND parents
- Go over the Student-Parent Contract
- Discuss dates of all competitions
- Distribute and discuss calendar for meetings for at least the first month, including days, times, and who is the snack provider
- Discuss the importance of meeting attendance
- Do a few spontaneous problems

Meeting #2: (1 ½ hours, including snack for first 15 minutes)

- If team is solid – begin reading all problems available to the team
- Brainstorm ideas for each problem and possible themes for the performance
- It may take another meeting to finalize problem selection, or they may know right away

Meeting #3: (1 ½ hours, including snack for first 15 minutes)

- Brainstorm ideas for theme
- Team building activities
- Spontaneous problem solving

Meeting #5: (1 ½ hours, including snack for first 15 minutes)

- Brainstorm ideas for theme (perhaps begin to limit to 3 – 5 choices)
- Team building activities
- Spontaneous problem solving

Meeting #6: (1 ½ hours, including snack for first 15 minutes)

- Begin developing 3 – 5 themes)
- It is important not to make final decisions too quickly

How to solve the problem: Team Timeline

These are **suggestions** for organizing your team's time. Please note that the steps overlap so more than one step may occur at a meeting. If you are unsure of the team, you may want to have the first few meetings comprised of spontaneous problems and skill workshops. Do some team building. Once you have a solid team, start looking at the problems. This way, if someone drops out you can still replace them. Once the team chooses a problem and begins to solve it, you cannot go over 7 team members, even if 2 drop out. The following steps apply to meetings once you are sure about your team.

Step 1. The team should read all the Problems and team decide on which one they want to do.

Step 2. Read through the selected Problem (First 2-3 meetings, as needed after)

Step 2. Brainstorm Possible Solutions (Meetings 2-5)

- Go through each section of the problem
- Make sure each participant understands what is required
- General ideas are OK, but don't focus on Brainstorming solutions yet
- Understand how each of the parts interact
- Generate lots of ideas (keep track of them)
- Don't evaluate them yet... just keep track of them
- Break the problem down into manageable pieces
- Encourage wild, creative solutions

Step 3. SCAMPER (Meetings 4-6)

The SCAMPER technique was developed by Bob Eberle. SCAMPER is an acronym for idea-spurring verbs to improve objects or generate ideas. The letters represent the words:

- ☺ "**s**ubstitute,"
- ☺ "**c**ombine,"
- ☺ "**a**dapt,"
- ☺ "**m**odify," "**m**agnify," "**m**inify,"
- ☺ "**p**ut to other uses,"
- ☺ "**e**liminate,"
- ☺ "**r**earrange," and "**r**everse."

Questions associated with these verbs, as well as examples of objects that illustrate them, are listed below:

- ☺ **Substitute:** What can you use instead of the ingredients, materials, objects, places, or methods now used? Vegetarian hot dogs and disposable diapers are examples of products which illustrate substitution.
- ☺ **Combine:** Which parts or ideas can you blend together? Televisions with built-in VCRs and musical greeting cards are examples of combinations.
- ☺ **Adapt:** What else is like this, what can be copied or imitated? Air fresheners that resemble shells and children's beds that look like racecars illustrate adapting.
- ☺ **Modify:** Can you change an attribute such as color, sound, taste, odor, form, or shape or perhaps add a new twist? Parabolic skis and scented crayons illustrate modifying.
- ☺ **Magnify:** Can it be stronger, larger, higher, exaggerated, or more frequent? Extra-strength medicines as well as over-sized sports equipment and televisions are examples of products that have been magnified.
- ☺ **Minify:** Can it be smaller, lighter, less frequent or divided? Wrist-band televisions and 12-hour pain relievers are examples of minifying objects.
- ☺ **Put to Other Uses:** Can it be used in a way other than how it was intended to be used? Old tires used for fences, swings, and bird feeders, and the development of snowboards illustrate "put to other uses."
- ☺ **Eliminate:** What can you take away or remove? Sodium-free and fat-free foods and cordless telephones are examples of eliminating something.
- ☺ **Rearrange:** Can you interchange parts or change the pattern, layout, sequence, or schedule? The new surround sound (360-degree) stereo speakers and vertical paper staplers are examples of rearranging.
- ☺ **Reverse:** Can you turn parts backwards, inside out, upside down, or around? Reversible clothing is a classic example of reversing something.

After making children aware of these verbs and how they have been applied to existing objects and products, encourage them to use the SCAMPER verbs to identify new solutions to their problem. For example, a young child looking for a solution for keeping squirrels out of a bird feeder thought of eliminating the pole entirely by attaching the bird feeder to balloons filled with helium, which would enable the feeder to float approximately four feet off the ground.

Step 4. Evaluate Ideas (Meetings 4-6)

- Which ideas does the team like best?
- Evaluate, but don't criticize
- Select a preliminary solution

Step 5. Determine Tasks & Timeline (Meetings 5-8)

- What types of tasks, skills, props, contraptions, needed to complete this solution?
- Who and how will they do these things?
- Determine a basic time-line for completing the solution.
- Continue to evaluate the solution and refine/revise as needed.
- Do the items decided upon fit the problem specifications?

Step 6. Begin Construction (Meetings 6-)

- Start building things and writing a script.
- Revise/refine (continuously) and as necessary.

Step 7. Put it Together

- As props, tasks are near completion, or are completed, test them out.
- Continue to refine/revise.
- Does the proposed solution fit the problem?

Step 8. Finish it up and Practice (2-3 Meetings before Tournament)

- Celebrate major accomplishments as they happen.
- Test things out... do they work? Can they work better?
- Practice the whole skit. Timing.
- What happens if something goes wrong? Background tips over?
- Revise/refine.

Finally, . . .Plan, plan, plan

- Look at "what-if" situations.
- What if the scenery falls down?
- What if someone gets laryngitis?
- What if the structure doesn't break?
- What if the vehicle runs into an obstacle?
- Thinking about these possibilities ahead of time can make the team more relaxed if something should actually happen.

The most important part of the planning is reading the problem and the rules. Every year teams are penalized because they did not read the problem or did not understand the rules.

Spontaneous

A team's spontaneous score can make the difference between going home with a trophy or going home empty handed. IT'S THAT IMPORTANT. It is very easy to overlook spontaneous while getting the team on track with the long-term problem – skit, props, costumes, etc. But spontaneous practice should be a part of every meeting.

Start and/or end each meeting with this. Having the team practice a verbal, verbal hands-on, and hands-on at each meeting is ideal. At a minimum, they should do a verbal and either a hands-on OR verbal hands-on.

When practicing spontaneous problems, try to focus on a specific skill.

For example: remove the time limit in verbal problems and just look for five great answers, no matter how long it takes. In a hands-on problem, weight the points so that "how well the team works together" becomes the most important component of their solution.

If you have set goals with your team at the beginning of the season, do periodic check-ins to see if you are on a path to achieving those goals.

Here is a brief description of each type of spontaneous problem.

Verbal

Choose verbal problems that incorporate a variety of different ways for the team to respond.

Teams may be asked to:

- Respond in order seated
- Use playing cards (Ace,2,3,4, & 5- sets of 10). Cards are stacked in a random order and team members respond according to their seat number
- Respond by rolling a dice to see who responds
- Respond by turning in a card from a set provided to each team member. Each time they respond they place a card in a basket. Sometimes a pass card is included.
 - This method is one of many that limits the number of responses and slows down the answers, making it easier for the judges to record the score. Teams need to learn to pace themselves and make the best use of the time allotted and not respond as quickly as they can, finishing with extra time available.
- Pass an item to the next team member after their response.

In most problems, the judge will say, "You may not skip your turn, or repeat, or pass. If one member of the team is stuck, the team is stuck." Have the team discuss options for how to handle it when one team member is stuck, so that the team can continue to respond.

The responses are scored based on if the response is Common or Creative. Common typically receives 1 point, creative 3 points.

Hands-on

This style requires the team to physically create something. Often, the problems are divided into two parts. Part I, the team can ask the judges questions, discuss strategy, devise a solution, and practice it. In Part II, team members usually are not allowed to speak to each other, but this can vary from problem to problem.

Scoresheets are more involved and are often included with Hands-on problems. In addition to objective scoring (was the task accomplished), they can also be subjectively scored on how well the team works together and the creativity of the solution.

Verbal/Hands-on

The combination verbal/hands-on problems require the team to create something tangible and to give verbal responses as well. Sometimes they will create one item, sometimes each team member will create an item.

Spontaneous Team

When the team enters the spontaneous room, the judges will inform the team the type of problem they will be solving. The team will then be given a limited amount of time to choose which 5 team members will participate. Some teams will decide ahead of time which team members will participate for each type of problem. It's up to the coach and the team.

If you have a team member who has physical limitations, the team or coach will need to evaluate the ability of that member to participate in each type of problem.

It's important to note on your team registration if there is a team member who needs special consideration. If they are non-English speaking and we are informed at the time of team registration we will do our best to accommodate this, based on our pool of judges.

Resources for Finding Spontaneous Problems

The official Odyssey of the Mind website has long-term and spontaneous archives:

National Website: <http://odysseyofthemind.com/practice/>

Florida's Website: <https://www.flodyssey.org/>

Arizona Website: <http://www.azodyssey.org/spon.htm> Lots of spontaneous problems and tips to help your teams.

Connecticut's Spontaneous Zone: <http://www.ctom.org/sponzone.htm>

Virginia's Website:

<http://va.odysseyofthemind.org/weekproblemarchive.html>

We've found a wonderful new site for on-line spontaneous problems for your teams to solve at <http://www.geocities.com/nepaootmspon>.

Frequently Asked Questions

During the course of the creative problem season, many coaches have questions about rules, what to expect at the Tournament, etc.

Note: The policies and procedures described here are for Space Coast and Florida State Finals Tournament.

- Other associations may have slightly differing procedures.
- When in doubt about the long-term problem, send for a clarification.
- When in doubt about regional procedures, consult your regional director.
- When in doubt about your coaching sanity, take your team out for pizza.

→ **Q. How do I learn more about how to coach at team?**

A. Space Coast Odyssey region holds a series of trainings in the fall. To learn where the closest training may be held, check our website at <http://www.spacecoastodyssey.org/>. If you aren't receiving emails from Space Coast contact your regional director to be sure you are on his or her mailing list and to get information about regional trainings. You can find your regional director's e-mail on the Space Coast website and the Florida website <http://floridaodysseyofthemind.org/>, under "Contacts" on the main menu and select "Regional Directors".

→ **Q: How many team members compete in Spontaneous?**

A: 5 members compete in Spontaneous.

→ **Q: Is it the same 5 team members who compete, regardless of the type of spontaneous problem?**

A: The team decides which 5 members will compete. For some teams, it is the same five, regardless of the type of problem. Other teams have a specific 5 who compete if it is a verbal problem, a different 5 who compete if it is a hands-on problem, and perhaps still a different 5 if it is a verbal/hands-on problem. It is suggested that the team make this decision before Tournament Day.

→ **Q. My team started out full of enthusiasm, but now they are dragging their feet. What can I do to restore the initial fun and excitement?**

A. Every team has periods of frustration: they often learn more from failure than success, but failure requires a time for regrouping and rethinking.

If your team doesn't seem to be happy with working on the problem, then talk to them honestly about it, and ask them: what is making this difficult for you right now? Listen to their answers, help them identify the problem(s) and let **THEM** brainstorm solutions to

the problem(s). They may need your help in asking the right questions. (“Is there something you worry that you cannot do?” “Do we need to meet longer/shorter time periods?”, etc.)

They may need support in abandoning a plan altogether and starting all over again on something. No one likes to admit that something has failed, but you, as the coach, can encourage them to evaluate the vehicle that didn’t run/the structure that didn’t hold weight/the backdrop that won’t stand up/the costume that just doesn’t look like a duck, and lead them to renewed interest in figuring out how to solve the problem. They may want to go back to their brainstorming ideas and see if another idea shows more potential now.

→ **Q. My team is working well on the problem solution, but is not working well TOGETHER. What can I do to help them get along?**

A. This is a problem for every team once in a while, and sometimes just a little fun activity and relaxation (like a pizza party or a “game day”) will help them relax with one another again.

Sometimes, however, there are more fundamental issues. Team building activities might help these, to encourage them to trust one another. Even spontaneous activities can help build teamwork, but you might also want to look on the Internet or into books to find activities that will help.

Occasionally the problem is even more serious than helping the team to trust each other enough to work with one another. There may be one team member who is creating difficulties for all of the team. In this instance, you will need to step in and help them work this out. It may be necessary to enlist the aid of the parents, teachers at school, or the school counselor in more serious instances. Some Odyssey groups ask the students and parents to sign behavioral contracts. These are useful because they clearly lay out expectations, and enable a coach to request a team member be removed from a team if those expectations are not met without the decision seeming arbitrary.

The primary objective should be to identify teamwork issues before they become too great to solve, and to attempt some resolution.

→ **Q. Why is my team’s long-term performance time so long after / close to the spontaneous performance time?**

A. It is extremely difficult to schedule a tournament so that every team’s times are perfect! Keep in mind that spontaneous groupings may be different.

(e.g. All of Problem 1 Division I may be grouped with all of Problem 2 Division I for spontaneous. Every team in the same problem and division will have the same spontaneous judges ... but another problem and division may have the same judges as well.)

- There are the teams who must have earlier or later times because of travel time, band festivals, or other difficulties.
- There are teams who have siblings on another team and want to watch them, or coaches who coach two teams (and want to be with both teams for both long-term and spontaneous).
- Officials' lunch times must be staggered (because everyone cannot fit into the judges' lunchroom all at once).


This makes for a number of scheduling difficulties when there are two portions of competition to schedule.

Tournament directors attempt to allow at least 1 hour between spontaneous and the team's long-term performance. This is to give time for getting props into the building and to get to the check-in area.

- If your team's times are too close together, then you should notify the regional (or state association) director, or tournament director.
- Less than 45 minutes before a long-term performance (after spontaneous) or less than 30 minutes before a spontaneous performance (after long-term) does not allow for a site's running late, and unless you requested such close scheduling (because of everyone's heading to a Band Festival, for example) you might be able to request a change.
- Otherwise, any such request will probably not be honored, since it would possibly mean changing the times of up to 10-20 other teams in both long-term and spontaneous (especially if spontaneous groupings are not the same as long-term groupings.) This is next to impossible.

If the times seem too far apart, this may be because of the need to juggle all the teams' times and because of special requests, etc. Take advantage of the break and watch some other teams, practice some spontaneous, or have lunch or a snack. Keep in mind that a tournament is not just two performance times for your team, but is a festival of creativity, and enjoy the day!!

→ **Q. Why do some of the officials seem to be paying no attention to our performance? (If they are scoring us, shouldn't they be watching us?)**

-  About one third have positions that are non-scoring, such as Staging Area Judge, Score Compiler, Head Judge, Timekeeper, and so forth. All officials are vital to having a smoothly run tournament, but not all will be watching your team while they perform. Some officials are assigned specific elements to score and may be watching for those elements.

→ **Q. Why can't we have a better long-term performance site with less noise pollution (better lighting, more space, etc.)?**

A. It is extremely difficult to find a tournament site that has enough large areas for 8-10 long-term sites, plus spontaneous rooms, plus parking and, especially, a space with seating capacity for 2,000 or more people for closing ceremonies.

Even at World Finals, we have had performance sites in large universities where there were posts in the room, or small stages, or three performances in one large area with a lot of noise interference (such as the armory at the U. of Maryland.) In an ideal world, we could build a facility just for Odyssey, but in the real world, we are confined by which school has a large enough gym or auditorium for closing, which school doesn't have a school play in the auditorium on the date in question, which school doesn't have athletics scheduled in the gym on days we want to have a tournament, and so forth.

Each team should be aware that performance conditions may be less than ideal and that they may have to adjust to poor acoustics or a small space: but solving problems and being positive about spontaneous challenges is what Odyssey is all about! Officials will also know the difficulties teams are facing, and know that it is the same for all teams in their problem/division, and try to help things run as smoothly as possible.

→ **Q. My team's solution seemed almost perfect. Why wasn't the long-term score higher?**

A. First, you might ask yourself, "what is "almost perfect?" Long-term problems offer teams the opportunity to be very creative, and what one person feels is creative may not be what another considers creative. Officials know that they have an entire range of scores to use. They will generally try to use the entire range as much as possible, in order to truly evaluate the teams' performances in respect to all the scored elements in a long-term problem. Using the full range means that very few times will judges give the highest possible score to any team in any given category. (The exception, of course, is an objective score where something receives either "0 or 5," for example.)

Many OM scores are subjective. This means that what one person might score 9 out of 10, another person might score 5 out of 10. So long as both judges are consistent in their opinions and evaluations throughout the day, this is OK.

Please keep in mind that scores are relative: your team will not know, until final scores are posted, how their numbers compare with everyone else's. Alumni judges, especially, tend to score low (as they have high expectations from having competed and worked very hard themselves as participants). Again, so long as they are consistent, this is fine. The top total, raw score of the day, out of a possible 200, has sometimes been as low as 130. This is why scores are "scaled" by the computer, and why your team should not be discouraged if its scores were not as high as expected. Remember, scores should be viewed more as feedback on how the team met the problem's requirement than as an evaluation of what they have achieved. Every team that

successfully solves the long-term problem has won an enormous amount of self-confidence, problem-solving skills and ability to work with others that no score can truly evaluate.

→ **Q. OK, so I know scores are relative, but every parent on my team saw the top long-term performance and we all know our team should have scored higher. What if we truly believe there was a scoring error?**

A. When the coach receives the scores from the Head Judge, that is the time to ask questions if you truly believe a score was inappropriately low.

- For example, if your team received a “zero” score for something that was present in its performance, you should discuss this with the Head Judge and ask him/her to review the scores with the other officials on site.
- Once scores are posted at the end of the day, however, if another team scored higher in long term, and you feel that was not appropriate, you will just have to remind yourself and the team that some scores are subjective, and while **YOU** may not have scored the other team higher, the officials on this day did, and questioning another team’s scores would be unsportsmanlike.
- After you have received and discussed your scores with the Head Judge you have 30 minutes to review the scores and penalties with the team. If the team feels that there is an error in the scoring the coach should return to the head judge to discuss the team’s concerns. If the team is still not satisfied, then it would be appropriate to inquire politely that the tournament director look into this and let you know the results. Some penalties can be applied after scores have been presented to the team, such as no-show workers or unsportsmanlike conduct.

→ **Q. Why is my team’s long-term raw score just 1-2 points higher (or lower) on the posted scores than what I was given by the Head Judge?**

A. Sometimes rounding errors are corrected in the score room. Keep in mind that at least 3-4 officials check over scores, and since we are all human, an error may occasionally be found. Usually it is only a rounding error (such as .6666 needing to be corrected to .67) but sometimes the on-site Score Compiler may have made a greater mistake that is caught when all scores are checked and verified in the Score Room before computer entry.

If the change is greater than one or two points, a score correction report is sent to the Head Judge. When possible, the Head Judge will find the coach to explain, but this can be difficult at a busy tournament. If you have not been informed about it, and there is a wide discrepancy in what you were given and what is posted, this would be the appropriate time to inquire politely of the tournament director about what happened. The

Score Room Problem Captain will have a record. Keep in mind that scoring errors seldom occur, and when they do, they are just as often in a team's favor as not.

It is also certainly a good idea for you to "check the math" yourself within the 30-minute time period in which you may return to the Head Judge and ask questions about the scores, before they are sent to the Score Room.

→ **Q. How are scores checked; how do I know the scores I see are really my team's; and how can there be errors if a computer calculates the scores?**

A. A computer calculate the scaled (percentage) scores. But humans may make errors up to the point of data entry.

However, we have several checks against that happening.

- ✓ Each team in a given problem and division has a unique identification number (which may include the TM A or TM B designation ... so it is important to have that on all paperwork if you have more than one membership)
- ✓ Each official makes sure that the label on the score sheet matches that number, name and TM A or TM B designation (and the team's membership sign)
- ✓ Scores are entered by each official and then given to a Score Compiler
- ✓ The Score Compiler transfers the scores into an excel scoresheet
- ✓ The Score Checker observes the Score Compilers entries and verifies the entries match the judges score sheet.
- ✓ The score sheets
 - Masters and individual officials' sheets and all mathematical checks are sent to the Score Room
 - The membership numbers on all score sheets are again checked to be certain they all match
 - Penalties are checked and it is verified that all officials agreed on the same penalty amount/reason
 - After all scores for long term, spontaneous and style have been entered for a problem/division, the computer scales the scores. If there is not a score for a team, the computer tells us and does not calculate until all are entered
 - After scores are printed, someone once again checks to be sure that the scores on the printout match the master score sheets for each team and that the individual score sheets also have the same membership name and number
- ✓ Errors can still happen, but they are rare. Most errors are math errors caught in the score room, and are usually rounding errors or averaging errors that happened on site.

To help prevent errors, please be sure you **ALWAYS** use your correct membership name and number (including TM A or TM B or TM C designation) on all paperwork so programs and printed score sheet labels will be correct and in agreement.

→ **Q. Why can't the Closing Ceremonies begin earlier at our tournament?**

A. Read the description of how scores are checked. Then think about the fact that the last team of the day has 30 minutes to return to discuss any scoring issues. If the last team performs at 4:00, that team finishes at about 4:15; those scores don't usually reach the score room until 5:00. Then they must be checked, verified, and entered into the computer before ANY scores for that entire problem/division can be calculated and printed out. Verification takes some time; printing takes some time. And there are scores coming in after 4:30 for other problems (probably) and possibly for spontaneous. By the time all of those are checked and associated, membership numbers and math verified, and so forth, it is usually about 5:45 or later ... IF no sites are running late and there have been no tribunals. Most tournament directors will allow at least 2 hours after the last team finishes to be confident of having scores printed before starting Closing Ceremonies.

→ **Q. Why can't we ask for clarifications after February 15? Our team got a wonderful idea after that, but now we can't ask if it is "legal!"**

A. Some states hold regional tournaments and even state finals tournaments in February. In order for the rules to be the same for all teams, and to avoid "surprise" interpretations of the rules for teams about to compete, it is necessary to have all clarifications clearly stated in advance of all tournaments. This has been determined to be February 15. Of course, because issues may arise AT these tournaments, there will continue to be the possibility of clarifications posted all the way up until World Finals. When you leave the door open for creativity, you are likely to have teams interpret the problem in ways that surprise even the people who wrote the problem ... and it is occasionally necessary to clarify the problem after something arises at a tournament to make the playing field level for all future tournaments even though teams themselves may no longer ask questions about their solutions.

→ **Q. What if the team gets a really creative idea AFTER the clarification cut-off date?**

A. This is one of the toughest questions in Odyssey of the Mind. OM IS about risk-taking, but you generally want to take risks in your thinking about how to solve the problem and not with the problem limitations or rules.

Once the clarification deadline has passed, your team needs to discuss all of the ways other people (mainly officials) might interpret the issue at question, and then discuss what risk they might be taking with how officials would interpret the issue. It must be the team's decision, at that point, whether to continue with a solution they feel may be risky. They must understand that officials (who can only interpret the problem according to the same information teams have available, and sometimes "official's clarifications" that explain solutions to officials that may be allowed) will have to make an on-the-spot decision at a given tournament and that decision is final.

It does sometimes happen that officials who must make a judgment call at a given tournament will make it differently than officials in another state or even at a later tournament in the same state or at World Finals. This is part of the risk the team must take, and they should take it knowing that this is their choice. It has even happened that different sites of the same long-term problem at World Finals have allowed different things (although that is NOT something anyone wants to have happen.) What is important is that the team knows it is the TEAM'S decision whether or not to take a risk with an interpretation, and to know that it is a risk they have agreed to take. You should tell them that they should be prepared to defend their interpretation of the problem, but also that they should be prepared to accept that officials might not accept the interpretation.

Odyssey of the Mind teaches life skills, and one of those is the ability to make tough choices (which may or may not work out in your favor!)

→ **Q. Can we ask the state or regional Problem Captain a question?**

A. Yes, but only a question about problem procedures or the tournament site. A question requiring a clarification must be sent to CCI, as state and regional Problem Captains are not certified to issue clarifications (and would be in trouble and feel bad if they told a team something that was not the same as what the national clarifiers would rule.) You can find the State Problem Captain contact information on the state website. If you have a concern, it is always OK to ask ... but you may be told that the question is not one a PC is allowed to answer.

→ **Q. Do all teams have the same spontaneous problem at a tournament?**

A. No, that almost never happens. Each Spontaneous Problem Captain at a tournament is sent 8-10 problems from which to choose.

- Sometimes choices depend on the sites (is there enough space for a wide-ranging hands-on?) and
- Sometimes choices depend on the amount of time allowed in the schedule (is there enough time to do problems that require more than 12-15 minutes?)
- Sometimes all the teams in a given problem will all have the same spontaneous problem, and sometimes they will not.

The only rule you can count on is that ALL teams in a GIVEN PROBLEM AND DIVISION MUST have the same spontaneous problem and the exact same judges. (So what happens if an official gets ill in the middle of the day? We go back and remove all of that official's scores for all teams. And the score room officials will deserve a vacation after that tournament!)

→ **Q. Why don't you use the school's PA system at a tournament to make announcements about a lost camera, wandering team member, etc.?**

A. If a team were in the middle of a spontaneous problem, the interruption of the PA system might cause them to perform poorly, or, at the very least, would be an unfair disadvantage for something closely timed. For that reason, we cannot use the PA system at all, as spontaneous problems are being performed continuously. (An interruption would also not be welcomed in long-term performances, of course.) The exception would be a serious emergency, or fire alarm. If the building must be evacuated, all teams with performances in progress will begin again when readmitted to the building.

Resources for your teams

Balsa Suppliers:

- SIG Manufacturing: 1-800-524-7805
- Balsa USA: 1-800-225-7287
- Superior Aircraft Materials: 1-310-865-3220

Books:

Your school library, your local library, Border's Books, Amazon.com, and Creative Competitions, Inc.

Internet sites:

- ✓ www.spacecoastodyssey.org
- ✓ <https://www.flodyssey.org/>
- ✓ www.odysseeyofthemind.org

Raw Materials:

Home Depot, local hardware stores, Michael's, local hobby stores, mail-order suppliers, Jo-Ann Fabrics, recycling centers, etc.

See if your school has a membership for Reusable Resource Adventure Address: 2255 Meadowlane Ave, West Melbourne, FL 32904 Phone: (321) 729-0100

Skills:

Ask shop, drama, art, and home economics teachers, or parents who can teach how to act, sew, put on make-up, dance, wire batteries to a motor, etc. Just make sure that the person teaching a skill knows that he or she may NOT teach directly to the problem that the kids are trying to solve. Showing the kids how to operate equipment or several ways to put something together is OK, though. Consider a workshop on a Saturday for all the Odyssey teams at your school.

Hints for Creating a Successful Style Presentation

What, exactly, is “Style”?

Style is the third scored component of a long-term solution.

Style scores are scaled to 50 points, with each of four categories receiving up to 10 points, and “Overall Effect” also receiving up to 10 points.

Each team must fill out three copies of the “Style Form” to give the Staging Area judge(s) at each competition.

So ... what IS style, exactly?

Style is the unique elements that each team adds to the basic long-term problem solution. Style enhances the problem presentation. It is what “sells” the product. Study the style scoring categories in the General Rules.

NOTE: items to be judged for style cannot be scored elsewhere in the long-term presentation. Inventory the student’s talents to determine what skills and talents each can offer. Perhaps one can dance, another might play a musical instrument, or a third might be good at writing. Utilize the talents to your team’s advantage.

There are one or two “mandatory” elements listed in style section of each long-term problem. Then the team may select other “free choice” elements.

The team should ask itself, “what have we made or done that is not scored in the long-term problem specifically, but which enhances our presentation in a unique and ‘stylish’ way?”

The answer may be a creative costume, a clever way of introducing themselves, an unusual use of materials ... almost anything may be listed for style score so long as it is not already included in elements scored in a section of the long-term problem.

It is good to select a theme and weave it throughout all aspects of the solution. Consider the opening and closing, unity and continuity, pizzazz (how do the characters come across?), and originality. Choose a style that the audience can identify with. Remember, the judges award the points and need to be able to understand your message. Use the following questions to help guide your team in developing their style:

Costumes:

- Are costumes well keyed to given time period or style?
- Are everyday materials used in different ways versus store bought fancy items?
- Are costumes as well constructed as can be expected from age level involved?
- Do costumes integrate with total effect?
- Is there evidence of innovation and imagination in design?

Music:

- Is music integrated into total solution?
- Are lyrics creative and imaginative?
- Was execution of vocal and/or instrumental music clear and easily understood?
- Did it contribute to overall effect?

Background Scenery/Props:

- Is setting designed to coordinate, extend, and develop overall solution of problem?
- Are graphics clear, easily read, and coordinated with theme?
- Are elements of setting designed to be used efficiently without breaking?
- Is setting readily established, indicating careful planning?
- Are details, scene changes, and prop utilization well executed?

Additional Suggestions for "Free Choice":

- Dance
- Skit
- Playbill
- Foreign Accents
- Mime
- Use of Color
- Narration of Action
- Painting (things, people, backdrops)
- Makeup
- Decorations
- Membership Sign (theme Related)
- Props (Quality and use of)
- Acting Ability (stage presence, etc.)
- Special Effects (lights, media, sound)
- Appearance of Character of Choice
- Songs (originals or parodies)
- Introduction of Characters
- Integration and/or Synchronization of Music (live or recorded)
- Original Poetry, Choral Reading – Puppets (integrated into skit)

Successful Style will:

- Be interesting to watch and understand
- Excite the senses in many ways
- Entertain the audience/judges
- Demonstrate pizzazz
- Show Elaboration on basic ideas

Judges are impressed by such things as:

- The quality of the performance
- The uniqueness of ideas
- The actualization and execution of ideas

Coaching Strategies for “Style”

- Solve the long term portion of the problem ***first*** then decide on an appropriate theme for your Style. In this way, you can incorporate as many aspects of your long-term solution into the Style presentation as possible.
- The highest scoring Style presentations *always* evoke some sort of emotional response from the judges, and teams should be directed to work toward this goal.
- Remember who your audience is, the judges. Themes that might be considered funny or serious by students in particular age group might not evoke the same response from judges who tend to be older.
- Have the team thoroughly read the rules for Style presentation. (Found in the Program Guide and at the end of each long-term problem.) cover, in depth, these rules until all team members have a feel for Style.
- Conduct a team discussion regarding the specific long-term problem. Encourage students to try and relate the Style to the basic theme that has been chosen for the long-term solution.
- Urge the team to brainstorm ways of presenting and implementing the chosen theme. Consider costumes, music, dialogue, acting, dancing, comedy and mime. Have team members identify individual strengths. Consider these strengths when creating Style.
- Assign script writers to the task of developing a rough draft copy which is to be brought to the next team practice. All team members critique the rough draft – add, delete, change – until a final script meets the approval of all of the team members.
- Allow ample time for the team members to practice various roles created for their Style presentation. At the next practice, team members may try out for Style parts.
- Videotape Style practice sessions so students can see themselves as others see them. Team members should critique their performances.

- Practice Style in front of different groups such as teachers, peers, etc. This tends to build confidence, reduce tension and helps the team gauge the audience reaction.

Appropriate Questions Coaches may ask of the Team to Help Clarify Ideas

- Do you have a script to practice with?
- Have you thought about using music?
- What kinds of costumes will you have?
- Have you thought about using scenery or props?
- What kind of makeup will you use?
- Can you include some (more) humor?
- Did you remember that presentations should be visual as well as verbal (or vice versa)?
- Can you include rhyme?
- Could you include dance as part of Style?
- How else might you elaborate on the long-term problem solution?
- Is your presentation within the time limitations?
- Do you have your Style form completed?
- Are there any aspects of; your style which are actually part of the long term problem solution?
- What else could you do to the visual presentation of the long-term problem to make it more interesting? More colorful? More unusual? More realistic?

Here are some things to think about:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ➤ What would you like to use for your free choice elements? | ➤ What additional materials will you need? |
| ➤ Why are these elements special? | ➤ What is the neatest part of your solution? |
| ➤ What are you most proud of? Why? | ➤ What makes your performance really shine? |
| ➤ How is this related to your long-term problem? | ➤ Is there anything else that can be done? |
| ➤ What do you mean by...? | ➤ Can you explain how this idea will work? |
| ➤ How would this benefit your solution? | ➤ What would happen if you combine your idea with someone else's idea? |
| ➤ Are there other possibilities? | ➤ Can you extend this idea any further – what else is possible? |
| ➤ How might you accomplish this? | |
| ➤ What existing materials/items might you have that can be used in a new way? | ➤ Good questioning can really help elevate your team's solution and enjoyment of |

creative problem solving, without introducing outside assistance.

Coaching Tips for Successful Style:

- Before beginning style, itemize team talents – use what you have...
- Attract attention with dramatic elements
- Use repetition to get the theme or point across
- Label characters in some way if necessary for clarity
- Make sure the audience/judge understands your theme, or “get the point”
- Use common sense on appropriateness of outfits and language
- “When in doubt, throw it out”
- It is the coaches’ responsibility to make sure the team is within the rules, and appropriate. You should point out potential problems to your team. This is NOT outside assistance.
- Videotape for team critiques. Do this on an ongoing basis so the team can see their progress.
- Make contingency plans – Murphy’s Law DOES exist in Odyssey of the Mind
- Make and bring an emergency tool box
- Arrange for your team to practice in a simulated competition area (stage, etc.)
- Require your team to have their style presentation totally ready at least one week before the tournament to allow time for fine tuning.
- Practice timing, and practice some more!
- Allow extra time for style in the presentation, plan on using only seven of the eight minutes allowed, for example.
- Remember.... style judging is subjective and that the judges are doing the best they can
- Last but not least, remember this is supposed to be fun!

Who reads the Style Form?

Only the officials who are judging style will read the Style Form. The Problem Judges will not see it, and therefore a team should use the space at the bottom of the form to better explain their Style elements, not a summary of the entire theme or script (unless that is a part of what they wish to have scored for Style, of course.) Only the Master Style form is returned to the team.

1. Treat the creation of the style performance as a "spontaneous" problem.

For example, for the structure problem called "A New Twist," we thought of everything that could twist, including licorice, the dance, Oliver Twist - and settled on a story that was filled with twists and turns.

2. Think about the strengths and weaknesses of the team.

Have them list their individual strengths, then have the rest of the team talk about what each person can do well.

- You may discover that someone has a vast knowledge of the Civil War - can that be used in the style presentation?
- Can someone compose original music?
- Can they write poetry?
- If a member is a gymnast, think about whether their skill can be incorporated.
- Conversely, if painting is not a strength, you may want to think about working with other media.

If the team wants music but no one sings well, can they talk or rap the song? Although you cannot suggest these uses, the questions "How could we use Billy's talent?" or "How can we get around our lack of musicians?" may bring the team to some creative solutions.

3. Have the team get an image of what they would like their performance to look and feel like.

Do they want it to be funny? poignant? dramatic? colorful? stark? Use this as an opportunity to set goals for the team, and refer to the list as you go about creating the style presentation. If the team says they want their style to involve large props, items that move and a black & white motif, is that what they are developing? They may want to refine the list as they go on, but prominently posting the list can help in guiding the creation of the style presentation.

4. Pay attention to details.

Practice setting up. Practice again. Then practice again. A refined set-up creates a good tone for the performance and gives it polish. Each team member should know what their job is and where they should be. Who will plug in the extension cord? When will the background be brought in? Add special touches that reflect care and elaboration. If you are using music, does it relate to the style or is it just "there"? Are the props on the stage for a reason or just to fill space?

5. Style presentations should be seen and heard.

Can the judges hear the actors? Practice projection by standing in the back of the room and seeing if you hear what the performing members are saying. Can your props be

seen? During our first year we had some nice props, but you couldn't tell what they were at a distance. Call attention to aspects of the performance you want noticed.

6. Be unique.

Ask the team if they think their theme will be unusual or if everyone else will think of it. Some of our best ideas came from looking at our brainstorming list and putting together parts that do not seem to go together. Our performance two years ago was Romeo & Juliet told from the point of view of shoe puppets. We knew that no one else would have an identical theme. Common themes are okay if they can be handled in a novel way. Novelty, however, is the key.

7. Remember who the judges are.

Judges are adults. Ask the team if adults will find what they are doing funny. Adults usually do not find toilet jokes funny, although fourth graders may think they are hysterical. Beware smacking each other and running around aimlessly. A talented team can pull off a Keystone Kops routine with style, but this can run the risk of looking disorganized (and knocking down props along the way).

8. Be sensitive.

Humor is subjective. Think about whether what you do and say may offend someone. Ask the team whether anyone's feelings might be hurt by this presentation. Be aware of language. Are there potential slurs or words adults may consider swears in the performance? This may work against your performance. Many judges are also offended by gratuitous violence. It is the team's choice as to how they present themselves, but you can reasonably ask if anyone might be offended by their performance. They may still choose to proceed in the same way, but they have been forewarned.

9. Keep a lot of stuff in your house.

You never know what you'll need. Go to your local recycling center and collect up assorted "junk". You can never tell which items will become just the right treasure. Some supplies that you might want to have handy are:

- refrigerator and other cardboard boxes poster board duct tape
- "house wrap" or Tyvek or Typar. Can be used for backdrops. It is lightweight, paintable & sturdy.
- markers Velcro fasteners masking tape
- paint brushes, primer paint newspapers (to protect work glitter
- standard workshop tools: screwdrivers, areas and for paper mache) tempera paints
- hammer, pliers, glue gun and glue white and carpenter's glue aluminum foil

- sticks, tape measure, nails and old white sheets pie pans
- screws, hooks and eyes, band or other paper towel rolls fabric scraps
- saw, utility and x-acto knives construction paper batting, poly-fil
- wood scraps
- And, most importantly, pizza!

10. Read all materials carefully.

Make sure that the team understands what they are to do. Read and be familiar with the rules. Read and re-read the problem. Don't lose points because of carelessness in following rules.

11. Be wary of things that are "good 'nuf".

Think quality. Ask the team repeatedly, "Is there anything you can do to make this better?" Encourage them to stretch and surpass what they ever thought they could do. Have them evaluate what they think they might score on each element; it may point up their strengths and/or shortcomings and encourage the team to put that little extra into their performance.

12. Filling out that style form.

Make sure the team fills out forms in advance and tells their story.

Think about the items the team wants the judges to score. Have the team think critically about their presentation. Most problems specify at least one area of style to be judged, for example the costume of a specific character. Look up what is required by your problem and write to type that directly on the style form in the appropriate area.

13. Remember that the judges are looking for creativity.

A team member may play the violin very well, but this is considered "talent" and not creativity. If, however, they write the composition that will be played, judges will see this as being more creative. Each year there are teams that score very well or very poorly in style, often because of the way they have completed their style forms. Call attention to your strengths. If there is a known weakness to your performance, do not ask to have it judged.

14. Remember that judges only have a few moments to read the section about how the style relates to the problem solution. They shouldn't have to wonder what your performance means or what you were getting at. Make it clear.

15. Free Choice of Team

- Discuss this early and often, don't wait until the night before
- Be specific and describe as completely as possible
- Remember a judge can only score on what is specified

- Choose areas that clearly stand out
- Easily identifiable by judge
- Strong points of presentation
- Choose areas that will have maximum impact when compared to other teams, for example, all teams must have a membership sign. If you choose to have yours scored for style it should be exceptional.
- Remember that style is not talent, but how your team uses its talents

16. Overall effect

- This is the general impression of the judges
- Includes smoothness of delivery – this can be improved by practice
- Includes the cohesiveness of message and delivery
- Did the judge understand what was going on? If the judge didn't get the point...
- Describe Overall Effect
- This is a brief description to “tell how the style presentation related to the long-term problem solution”. “How” the action related to the problem solution.
- Opening and closing, is there a clear beginning and ending to the presentation?
- Integration of team members, does one dominate?
- Do team members present themselves with confidence?
- Originally, is it innovative and unpredictable?
- Are style elements smoothly integrated throughout?
- Is style interesting and cohesive? Or are bits of action just strung together?
- Are concepts and points clearly emphasized?
- How thoroughly is style connected to the long-term problem solution?
- Does the style evoke emotion? Does it make the judge think, laugh, cry?
- What is the quality of design, construction and workmanship of costumes and props?
- Is there unity, continuity and believability?
- Does the judge “get the point”?
- Is there repetition or enlargement of dominant theme?
- Can mode of production be defined (melodramatic, tragic, romantic, scientific, futuristic, historical, comical)?

- Do parts of production function to produce total effect?
- Do participants move in defined manner indicating studied behavior and characterization? Do they know where they are supposed to be at all times?
- Are transition parts smooth?
- Is speech of participants clear, accurate, easily heard, and understood?

17. A winning Style will be the one that has a “unique” presentation. The final total package, with the emphasis on those special touches, will be the one that enhances, attracts and adds pizzazz to the long-term solution. It is a combination of many things – music, lights, laughter – that has a special zing. Style is one that is well prepared, well-rehearsed, and pleasing to the overall spirit of Odyssey. In essence, it is a successful stage production that should be fun for the team.

REMEMBER:
THE LONG-TERM PROBLEM IS THE HOW,
BUT STYLE IS THE WOW!

Tournament Day!

Team Registration

- ❖ Coaches register their own teams at the tournaments. Do not pick up other teams' packets.
- ❖ At Space Coast Regional Tournament, you will need to show that your team has all of the forms needed for Long-Term when you register.
- ❖ At registration, you will receive a Coach Nametag/Button. You will need this to pick up your teams scores from their Long-Term site.

Around campus

- ❖ In the event of a medical emergency, contact a tournament official immediately.
- ❖ Show respect and good sportsmanship to all other competitors, coaches, judges, media, audience members, and tournament officials.
- ❖ Silence or turn off your pagers and cell phones when in a performance room.
- ❖ Do not attempt to enter any competition site after the Door Monitor has shut the door.
- ❖ Show respect for the competition site, and help us keep it clean.
- ❖ Enjoy yourself and have fun!

Long-Term Competition

- ❖ Coaches and all team members report to the Pre-Staging Area judge 15 minutes prior to your scheduled performance time.
- ❖ Teams will need the following forms. Number of copies listed are what is usually required. Final numbers will be announced at the Mandatory Coaches meeting about 2 weeks before the tournament. FORMS: One (1) copy each of the Outside Assistance Form Cost Form, and Problem Clarifications. Four (4) copies of the Style form and the Team Created List Form (Problem 4 does not have this form).
 - Have a couple of additional sets of all the forms and give each set to another responsible person or two ahead of time. It will save panic when you realize the forms are sitting on a desk at school or left in your garage.
 - Be sure and keep an additional set for the team to use at the next level of competition.
- ❖ The Timekeeper will ask the team, "Team, are you ready?"
 - Many (especially experienced) teams come up with a clever response.
- ❖ What Setup Time?
 - Don't make the mistake of neglecting to figure in set-up time.
 - What happens if something goes wrong during setup?

- Who handles what tasks during setup?
 - Is it better to have a complicated setup, or a simple setup and more performance time?
 - 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).
 - All cell phones (& any noise makers), watches and camera **MUST** be collected and given to someone to hold while students are performing their long-term solution and during spontaneous. If they are using any of these items in their solution or performance they must be listed on the cost form. See the Program Guide for how to cost these items.
- ❖ **Wrapping It Up**
- In some (not all) problems, the team needs to signal the Judges that the performance is over (read the rules specific to your problem under B, usually the last numbered item. Sometimes referred to as the "List".
 - Like the beginning, the end is important. Experienced teams find a "creative" way.
 - Tell it to the Judge!
 - After the performance ends, the judges will talk to the team and ask them questions about their solution. This is a part of the solution. Let the team know to expect it and practice it with them.
 - Don't forget the Membership Sign... Are there specific references in their problem? Don't leave this for the last minute. Have the team brainstorm about what their sign should look like. Can they incorporate it into their props?
- ❖ After completing your long-term problem and discussing the solution with the judges, clean up the site and remove all your costumes and props so that the next team can start on time in a clean site. Your coaches or other non-team members may help with this.

Spontaneous

- ❖ The coach will go to the check-in area to let officials know the team has arrived.
- ❖ There will be an area outside where the team can wait until they are called.
- ❖ When the team is called, the coach goes with the team to the holding area if one is being utilized. Be respectful of others who are competing.
- ❖ When the Official comes to escort the team to the competition room, the coach will return to the outside area to await the teams return!
- ❖ Remember, the team cannot discuss the problem they were given. Not only to prevent giving an advantage to a team waiting to compete, but to protect the integrity of the problem. These problems are used by regions throughout the program.

Forms for Tournament Day

As the coach, make sure that you have the following forms for the team to turn in at the Long-term site to the Staging Official (also known as Team Check-in). Include the following. The first three also included in the FORMS section of this manual. Clarifications are printed out when answered. Team Required List will be available in January. All these forms are available on the Internet for you to print out. They can be obtained at the National "www.odysseyofthemind.com" webpage on the Team page..

1. 1 copy of the **Outside Assistance form (to be signed by each team member** and coach(s)) Do not have one person print all the names, each team member must sign,
2. 4 copies of the **Style form** (Make sure it has specific items listed as "Free Choice". They cannot be what is already being scored in Long-term solution).
3. 3 copies of the **Materials Value form**
4. **Clarification form.** This form is to be used by the team if they have a special question, which cannot be answered by reading the problem. It has to be filled out by the team on the Odyssey of the Mind website and submitted online. Print out any team clarifications to have at competition.
5. **Team Required List** – specific to each problem, this list helps the judges know what key items or actions will be in the team's performance.
6. **Give two complete sets of the above listed items to someone you can trust, in case you, the coach, cannot locate your copies.**
7. Forms included in this packet: Outside Assistance, Style, Materials Value,
8. The Team Required List will be available sometime in January.
9. Florida Odyssey of the Mind and Space Coast Region no longer have a media release form. The team controls who is allowed to take pictures during their performance. All other areas of the competition are a public venue. If you have a team member with issues regarding this, please notify the Regional Director in writing.

FORMS

FORMS

FORMS

FORMS

FORMS

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	Possible Points	Points Awarded
(Team fills in #1 to #4)		(Judge fills in)
(If the category is "Free choice of team," do not include anything that is scored in long-term problem scoring.)		
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 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: \$ _____ -

Outside Assistance Form

Long-Term Problem _____ Division _____

Membership Name _____ Membership # _____

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 WITH: (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 not on your roster, if any, 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.

Florida Odyssey of the Mind Association The “OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE” Rule

Odyssey of the Mind believes teams learn the most when they solve problems themselves.

Therefore, TEAM MEMBERS must design ALL problem solutions. Props, costumes, membership signs, skit presentations, and technical requirements (vehicles, balsa structures, etc.) all must be devised and produced ONLY by the team members.

This includes, but is not limited to, styling hair, applying make-up, taping, gluing, nailing, sawing, painting or otherwise adjusting or repairing anything related to the team’s solution or presentation of the solution.

The Outside Assistance Rule applies to all non-team members including, but not limited to, coaches, school personnel, siblings, friends and parents.

Outside Assistance penalties will be assessed ONLY by a tournament official.

Outside Assistance is strictly prohibited in OM!

Our website has current information, forms and our calendar.

Facebook has weekly updates.

Check it out.

	http://www.spacecoastodyssey.org/
	https://www.facebook.com/SpaceCoastOM/
	spacecoastom@gmail.com
	twitter.com/spacecoastom/
	instagram.com/spacecoastodysseyofthemind

Coaches “Coaches”:

AREA	COACH	CONTACT INFO
General Coaching	Jill Grimm	(321) 537-1662 grimm.jill@brevardschools.org
	Lisbeth Clark	lnclark58@gmail.com
Structure Coach	Joe Gerding	gerdingengcorp@aol.com

Space Coast Region of Florida Odyssey of the Mind would like to thank Maine Odyssey of the Mind (<http://www.meodyssey.org>) and Florida Buc Bay Region for this contribution to assist coaching of Odyssey of the Mind teams.

The Odyssey of the Mind Coaches BILL OF RIGHTS

Yes, even Coaches have 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 OM 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 monthly meetings, and **expect them to attend**.
3. You have the right to expect the parents of your team members to help. You are a volunteer 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 you will be needing help, and they will respond.
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. This also includes **FOOD!** When you make up your monthly meeting calendar, include **SNACK ASSIGNMENTS** along with meeting times.
5. You have the right to remove a child from a meeting if she/he is unable to behave appropriately. Find a safe place in the room for the child to sit, and insist that she/he stay there for the duration of the meeting. Don’t leave her/him unsupervised.
6. You have the right (and the responsibility) to call the child’s parent 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. Don’t be afraid to call. Alert the school contact to the issue.
7. You have the right to remove a child from your OM 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 OM, especially during the last few weeks before the Regional Tournament! (This will be news to some of you!). It’s true-you can and should step back from your team and it’s 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?

Our advice: GET a life!