



# Odyssey of the Mind®

## Newsletter

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### Educational Standards? They Don't Come Higher Than In Odyssey of the Mind

by Joanne Rompel, Illinois Association Director and Educator of Gifted & Talented

In preparing to meet and exceed each student's needs to the best of our abilities, educators look at learning styles, standards, and student performance. Leaving no child behind is a national decree. "If it's not standard based it's not happening during our class time," is the cry. Educators have found that using Odyssey of the Mind is a way to extend creative experiences in a real work-world environment while aligning with national, state, and school standards.

The Odyssey of the Mind program is able to meld the state and national learning standards while extending academic challenges that employ the processing of thinking skills. Students are required to solve real-world problems in a creative venue designed to fulfill the requirements of the long-term problems offered each year.

The problems encompass the academic skills required by state and national curricula; they are cognizant of the academically talented and challenge students in a variety of genres. Without having to "learn through the seat of their pants," students learn by doing, moving, and sharing. They practice social skills through working in teams, negotiation through validating their ideas, and assessment through the use of their own and problem rubrics.

Educators delight in the thought that they can capture students' *aha!* as they discover new ideas, formulate hypotheses, test many solutions, and, as a team, decide on a final product based on an evaluation that keeps the target in focus.

Many school districts are experiencing serious cutbacks in fine arts and other classes for their special populations — both remedial and challenge groups. Odyssey of the Mind provides standard-based, goal-oriented curriculum experiences that are educationally solid in all subject areas while immersing students at various levels in the learning process.

Students are consumers of education. They are developing not only academically but also socially and skillfully. Specific tasks designed to practice their newly acquired skills are measurable; growth is observable and can be accurately reported through the use of rubric (evaluation). Students learn the real work-world skills of defining the problem, developing many possible solutions, and establishing criteria to evaluate the process. They then decide, as a group, how to implement their solution in a creative way. Not only do they learn what is required, they learn to budget time, resources, and materials to complete and "market" their "product" (solution).

While students across many grade levels receive the same long-term problems, the end product is always unique, and age and academically appropriate. The application of standard-based learning at each age and skill level validates the educational value of the Odyssey of the Mind's creative, social, and interactive learning. Bringing standards to this program or bringing this program to the standards isn't the issue. In standards-based education we have goals. In Odyssey of the Mind, we have fun while learning and meeting those goals. 🏆

*'Odyssey of the Mind provides standard-based, goal-oriented curriculum experiences that are educationally solid in all subject areas . . .'*

Check out next year's long-term problems!



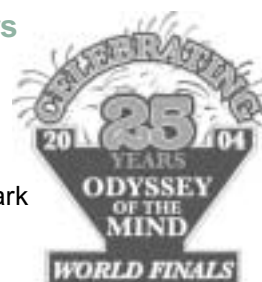
Look what else is in this issue . . .

- 2. FUNDRAISING IDEAS
- 3. '04-'05 LT PROBLEMS
- 4. COACHES PROBLEM
- 5. RENEWAL APPLICATION
- 6. ODYSSEY AROUND THE WORLD

Help Us Celebrate 25 Years of Worldwide Creativity!

Come to the Reunion Bash  
9 p.m., Saturday, May 29  
University of Maryland, College Park

learn more at  
[odysseyofthemind.com](http://odysseyofthemind.com)



## Your team just qualified for World Finals — **NOW WHAT?**

by Jeanne Fessenden, Georgia Association Director

The most exciting moment has arrived. Your team was announced a *champion* at your State Finals! The team members are energized. You are energized. All of the hard work, time, and energy has finally paid off. So, what does going to World Finals entail? Of course, your team members need to perfect their long-term solution and continue to practice spontaneous. They will add the finishing touches to their Style. Then reality sets in. How much will it cost to attend World Finals? Where do you get the funds to be able to go?

There are many ways that a team can fund a trip to Worlds, but, as everything else in Odyssey, it takes some creativity.

There is no right or wrong way to do it, but funds must be secured and usually in a very short time.

Some teams fund-raise all year anticipating that they will reach that ultimate goal – World Finals. I expect that these teams are in the minority. Most are too busy solving the problem and practicing spontaneous to think about World Finals, so they are now faced with raising thousands of dollars in a few months.

If you haven't gotten into your state budget through your state legislature, or you haven't convinced your local school board to sponsor your team, it's up to you to raise the funds. Here are some ideas that have worked for other teams.

- Sell ice cream in the lunchroom.
- Sell soft drinks after school for students staying for an activity: sports, play rehearsal, meetings, or even for those walking home from school.
- Present your team's solution at a civic club and ask for donations from the organization, or, with permission of the program chair, pass the hat.
- Sponsor a spaghetti dinner (have students in the school bring the ingredients or ask local eateries for donations). For entertainment have the team demonstrate its long-term solution.
- Sponsor a "Hat Day." For one dollar, the students are allowed to wear a hat all day long at school.
- Put a teacher in "jail" for a day. Recruit several teachers who are willing to be put in jail for a day. (Choose the most popular teachers). For a fee let the students vote on which teacher they would most like to put in jail. The teacher chosen will be placed in a cell (creatively made by the Odyssey of the Mind team) for the day and the students will be allowed to tease the teacher. With the cooperation of the principal, a substitute will cover that teacher's classes. (This would probably work best in a middle or high school.)
- Some businesses have matching funds for volunteer work that employees do. Ask parents to check at work for any grants that their company might have.
- Write letters to local businesses asking for support. Tell how Odyssey of the Mind fits into the corporate workplace to help businesses understand how they can benefit from sponsorship. If a team member or relative of a team member knows someone in the business, have them sign the letter or write a personal letter to accompany the form letter.
- Appear at local functions selling Blow Pops to "blow them away" at World Finals.
- Sell hot dogs and soft drinks at a popular store on a Saturday. The Saturday before Mother's Day is a good time.
- Get the word out in your community. The more publicity you can get – TV, newspaper, radio, etc., the more people will support the team. Then, if you have a fund-raiser, such as a barbeque at a local fire station, people will be more likely to support it.
- For a fee, team members can paint faces at the school's field day.
- Have a talent show. Open auditions to anyone in school, making sure the students show a talent and/or ability. This would involve one day for auditions, one day for rehearsal and one day to present the show. Students will pay \$1 to get out of class to come to the show. (Great for middle and high school.)
- Sponsor a school dance and sell concessions. Elementary school students especially enjoy this.
- Make up commercials and perform them on the morning TV announcements. Promote the idea that on an upcoming Friday, anyone who brings \$1 can have the Odyssey team take their spelling test for them and get the grade that the team member makes.

*Here are some successful fund-raisers sent to us by Daniel Cayce.*

"We raised over \$400 with a Junior High Mr. and Miss Legs contest. We had the stage covered from the knee up with bulletin board paper so only the legs of the contestants were showing. We had a football as grand prize for the males and stuffed animals for the girls, and other prizes, all donated. We also sold popcorn, candy and soda.

"We sold Easter baskets made up of donated items: candy, toys and stuffed rabbits. We made \$1,000.

"For Mother's Day we make baskets and put sample shampoo, lotion, candles, and a small bear in each one. We wrap the baskets in cellophane.

"We made Valentine boxes like this with a balloon and made almost \$1200.

"We have hamburger and hot dog cookouts on Wednesdays at the high school and charge \$2.50 for hamburgers and \$1 for hot dogs. We clear about \$300 each time.

"We have two fair-like events. We sell donated items and crafts. We dress in costume and read palms and have a game booth of Go Fish and a ball toss. We clear \$400 each event."

# 2004-2005 Long-Term Problem Synopses

*This synopsis is tentative as of April 12, 2004.*

## Problem 1: Stunt Mobiles

The problem is for teams to design, build and run two original Stunt Mobile vehicles that will travel from behind Start Lines and over six obstacle courses. The Stunt Mobiles will operate on different types of power, and they will travel around, over, and through all kinds of obstacles to break balloon targets.

**Divisions: I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: \$140.**

## Problem 2: In Your Dreams

The team will create a performance that includes a dream that, at times, will be cheerful, non-sensical, and nightmarish. The nightmare will include a monster, designed and built by the team, that changes in appearance and performs various tasks, including two designed by the team.

**Divisions: I, II & III. Cost limit: \$125.**

## Problem 3: Classics . . . Get The Message?

For this problem, the team will create and present an original performance that includes a story told using three different forms of communication. Two forms of communication will be chosen from given lists, while the third will be a future method created by the team. The presentation will include a Narrator or Host and a stage set.

**Divisions: I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: \$125.**

## Problem 4: Crazy Columns

Teams will use only balsa wood and glue to create a structure that will be tested for its ability to balance and support as much weight as possible, but here's the twist: The parts of the structure do not have to be connected, although they can be if the team wishes. The "structure" will rest at three different heights, but the top of the structure will be at least 8 inches from the surface of the tester base. The two outer resting spots will be 10½ inches apart. The third spot will be determined by the team, but within a specified area.

**Divisions: I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: \$125.**

## Problem 5: Laugh-a-thon

In this problem, teams will create and present a humorous performance that has team members portraying a puppet, a mime, and an image and its reflection. The performance will also include a comedy routine or humorous sketch, and the effect of something happening much faster than usual. Teams will add two elements of their own choosing to the performance.

**Divisions: I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: \$125.**

## Primary: Fable-us!

For this non-competitive problem, teams will create and present a performance that includes an original fable that has a moral. There will be no "humans" in the performance, only animals and inanimate objects with human characteristics. The moral will teach a lesson or provide advice to help one or more characters in the performance.

**Grades K-2. Cost limit: \$50.**



## COACHES & OFFICIALS PROBLEM

*This year's problem is a blast from the past!*

# Splash Machine . . . revisited

*In the very first years of Odyssey of the Mind, teams solved a warm-up problem where they splashed water out of a pool to put out a candle. The problem was fun and messy and kids loved it. Twenty-five years later, we want to see how the adults would solve a similar problem. We're sure you'll have just as much fun, but with less water and less mess -- we hope!*

### A. The Problem

Your problem is to design and build a device that will put out a candle 20 feet away. The device must put out the candle with water.

### B. Limitations

1. The device must be original; however, it may include commercially produced parts.
2. The device must be safe in its design and in the way it operates. It may not be powered with AC or any source that is prohibited in the *Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide*.
3. The device must be set up entirely behind the taped Launch Line and remain behind that line until the judge signals that the round is complete.
4. The judges will give you approximately one pint of water. Nothing may be added to the water and no additional water, fluid, material, etc. may be used to put out the candle. You must use only your device and the water we give you.
5. Contestants may not share water, cause their opponents to lose their water, or interfere with their opponents' devices at any time.
6. Each contestant will have a candle target. The candles must be no less than 6 inches tall and no more than 12 inches tall when time begins. Candles will be available on-site, or you may bring your own.
7. Each candle must fit into a drilled hole, 1½ inches in diameter and 1½ inches deep. (The 1½ inches is *not* in addition to the length of the candle.) Each candle will be placed in a hole to prevent it from falling over. The bottom of the candle will rest on the floor.
8. You may not throw, project, or launch water in any way using your hands, mouth, or any other part of your body directly or indirectly. For example, filling a cup with water and flinging the water to the candle is prohibited.

### C. The Competition

1. You will be assigned a number when you register at the competition site.
2. When your number is announced you must bring your device and candle, if you supply your own, to the Launch Line. You will be instructed where to set up, and you will be given one pint of water.
3. When all devices are in place, the judges will light the candles. Then, a judge will say, "Ready, set," and then blow a whistle. You will then have 1 minute to put out your candle.
4. Nothing other than a device may put out your candle.
5. You may not practice or start before time begins.

### D. Scoring

1. Any competitor whose candle is put out by water launched by any of the competing devices will advance.
2. You will get a new pint of water for each round you compete in.
3. If necessary, tiebreakers will be as follows:
  - Tiebreaker 1:** Candle put out by own device.
  - Tiebreaker 2:** Candle put out first.
  - Tiebreaker 3:** Fan's favorite device -- poll the audience for applause.

### E. Awards

1. Trophies will be awarded for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in both divisions (Coaches and Officials).
2. A trophy will be awarded to the person with most outstanding STYLE. Every contestant is eligible, even those who place 1st, 2nd or 3rd.

**We'd like to hear your favorite  
Odyssey stories. Submit them at  
[www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com).**



# ODYSSEY OF THE MIND®

## 2004-2005 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Questions? Email [info@odysseyofthemind.com](mailto:info@odysseyofthemind.com) or call 856.456.7776.

For new memberships or renewals, complete this form and return it with a check, purchase order, or credit card information (see below).

**Check one:**

**Divisions I, II and III:**

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

**Division IV:**  All team members must be high school graduates and registered for at least one class at a college or university. They do not have to attend the same institution. May enter one team per problem. May proceed directly to World Finals.

Membership name \_\_\_\_\_ Membership number (for renewal, if known) \_\_\_\_\_

Grades covered by membership \_\_\_\_\_ School district \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person (may be a coach) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address (for newsletter delivery and correspondence) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Province \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Each individual membership costs \$135, but you will receive discounts if you purchase more than one membership. For each membership purchased, you get five competitive **long-term problems**, one **primary problem**, one copy of the **Program Guide**, Odyssey of the Mind and NASA **curriculum activities**, one **newsletter subscription**, and more!*

- Individual 2004-2005 Odyssey of the Mind membership @ \$135**.....
- Additional membership(s) for the same school or community group @ \$100**.....
- 6-10 memberships for the same school district (registered at the same time) @ \$120**.....
- 11 or more memberships from the same school district (registered at the same time) @ \$100**.....

### ODYSSEY OF THE MIND SUPPORT MATERIALS

- \*\*Creative Interaction @ \$19** Discusses the importance of interaction between students .....
- \*\*Applying Your Creativity @ \$18** Discusses different types of creativity .....
- \*\*Creativity + Teamwork = Solutions! @ \$18** Includes tips on building effective teams. ....
- Spontaneous Problem Competitions @ \$7.50** Booklet of practice problems and tips.....
- Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide @ \$7.50** (one is included with membership).....
- Coaches Training Video @ \$20** Tips and techniques for coaches .....
- packs of **Balsa Wood** (premium grade AAA 36" x 1/8" x 1/8") **@ \$20 per 100 pieces**.....

Shipping & handling is \$4 for the first item, \$1 for each additional item.  
Contact CCI for shipping costs outside of the U.S.

**\*There are no shipping & handling charges for membership packets.**

*\*\*These books are a collection of long-term and spontaneous problems from past competition years.*

**Subtotal** \_\_\_\_\_  
**S & H** \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment Method:**

- **U.S. Mail:** Send this completed form along with a check, money order or purchase order, **payable to CCI**, or with your credit card info to: **CCI, 1325 Route 130 S, Suite F, Gloucester City, NJ 08030**
- **FAX:** Send this form along with a copy of your purchase order, or include your credit card information and fax to **856.456.7008**.
- **On-line:** If paying by credit card, go to [www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com).  
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## Odyssey of the Mind

c/o Creative Competitions, Inc.

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*Hey Teams,  
Renew your membership early and  
be one of the first to get the 2005  
long-term problems in the fall.*

OMER

The *Odyssey of the Mind Newsletter* is published by Creative Competitions, Inc. Editor: Carol Ann DeSimine; Assistant, Kristy Kaminsky.

## Odyssey Around the World

*This came to us from Coach Iris Story of Texas. She and her two teams recently returned from a trip to Poland to visit with their former homestay buddies.*

“Who would have ever thought back when they were 3rd and 4th graders that two Texas Odyssey teams would travel halfway around the world to visit their Polish friends? After attending World Finals in 2002, they hosted Polish teams in their homes to give them a taste of Texas hospitality. In 2003, they made it to Worlds again, where they met new international friends: 18 from Poland and 15 from Uzbekistan. Afterwards, this one big happy family headed by bus back to Houston for homestays.

“Saying ‘good-bye’ was difficult, but the teams kept in touch through e-mail. When Poland Odyssey invited the Texas teams to visit and live with their friends for nine days, they could not refuse. ‘I never thought I would ever see them again,’ said Cameron Story through tear-filled eyes. The trip was a life-changing experience that none of us will ever forget.

“We could not participate in Poland’s Finals because they had been rescheduled for a later date, but we learned so much about cultural differences. We spent the last day in a theatre workshop, where our team was videotaped for a coaches training video that Poland will produce. Once again, when it came time to say ‘good-bye,’ there were many, many tears.” 🇺🇸



*OMER is more famous than we thought! (l. to r.) Maine co-AD Alan Robitaille, Mary Dube, co-AD Fern Brown, and Larry Dube happened upon OMER Street in Lewiston, ME, on their way to a pre-tournament site inspection at Bates College.*

**To the teams:** Congratulations on solving your long-term problem and for doing your best at competition. To the teams who will advance to World Finals this year, good luck. To the teams who won’t be there, keep on doing your best and try again next year; we hope to see you at the University of Colorado, Boulder, in ‘05. Remember, in Odyssey of the Mind, everyone’s a winner!