

# Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide

2002-2003

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*This guide is intended for use by teams and coaches as an informative tool. It contains information that will help them understand the basics of the Odyssey of the Mind program and prepare them for competition.*

**New rules and program changes for 2002-2003 are underlined.**

***Edited by Carol Ann DeSimine***

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# *Introduction*

***T**he mission of Creative Competitions, Inc. is to provide creative problem-solving opportunities for everyone and to foster original and divergent thinking. Through the Odyssey of the Mind program, we promote creativity by challenging teams to solve divergent problems, that is, those with more than one solution. By working in teams, participants learn teamwork, the appreciation and understanding of others, and that a group is a more powerful thinking force than an individual. They develop a sense of self-respect and respect for others through preparatory activities such as brainstorming and role-playing.*

*While the ultimate goal for most teams is to present their problem solutions in official competitions, this is not a requirement of participation. The purpose of the program is to provide students with an exciting learning experience that promises to be challenging and fun.*

*Welcome to the Odyssey of the Mind.*

## Chapter I

# Coaching an Odyssey of the Mind Team

**C**oaching an Odyssey of the Mind team is an experience like no other. You'll witness young people growing intellectually, developing long-term friendships, and using their minds in a way that is both fun and enriching. Team members will rely on you, the coach, for guidance and encouragement. It is the coach that makes it possible for team members to reap the full benefits of participation in this creative problem-solving program. You will help them learn how to solve problems without helping them to create their solutions. Your reward will be in knowing that they are working to their full potential and watching the amazing things that kids can do when given the opportunity.

Each Odyssey of the Mind team must have at least one adult, 18 years of age or older, registered as its head coach. This is usually determined by the person in charge of the membership. Having an assistant coach will reduce the demands assumed by one individual.

Coaches come from all professions and from all walks of life. Although a team must have the support of the member school or organization, coaches do not have to be teachers. Many teams have more than one coach and, often, these are parents of team members. Frequently, a child's involvement in the program will generate the interest of the parents. Coaching an Odyssey of the Mind team allows parents to get involved in their children's education.

### ***Role of the Coach***

The most important thing for a coach to remember is that Odyssey of the Mind is an activity for students. Teams must succeed and fail on their own merits, and achievement is rated on effort, as much as it is on results. The role of a coach is to offer guidance and encouragement to team members. Coaches are to teach team members how to open their minds to new ideas, how to accept the suggestions of others, and how to evaluate potential solutions. They are not to give the team ideas or tell how to solve a problem. Responsibilities of a coach usually include recruiting, selecting and training team members. Other responsibilities include:

- (1) explaining the long-term problem to the team.
- (2) supervising all practice sessions.
- (3) conducting brainstorming sessions for long-term and spontaneous problems.
- (4) holding and evaluating spontaneous problem practice sessions.
- (5) helping the team obtain the materials and knowledge necessary to solve the long-term problem.
- (6) contacting your local Odyssey of the Mind organization for information.
- (7) registering the team for competitions.
- (8) accompanying the team to competitions.
- (9) representing the team if a problem occurs.

Team members must design and produce their own problem solutions. Other individuals may teach them basic skills to use to produce a solution, such as sewing, sawing, acting, etc. However, only individuals on the team's roster -- a maximum of seven in any one competition year -- may work on the long-term problem solution. Coaches may show films, suggest resources that may be useful in solving the problems and, if available, arrange for guest speakers to visit and discuss general principles.

Elements of a team's problem solution, such as costumes and props, may consist of ready-made pieces, so long as the final product is designed and made by the team. For example, a team may use parts of a toy car or a Lego<sup>®</sup> set to create an original vehicle of the team's own design.

## ***Generating Interest In the Program***

When a coach is starting a new Odyssey of the Mind season at a school and is trying to organize a team, he or she should be familiar with the current year's long-term problems. A copy of the problem synopses should be duplicated and handed out to students to generate interest. The synopses are included in the membership packet and can be found at [www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com).

Coaches should ask teachers, school administrators, and/or parent groups to help identify students who are creative thinkers and who might enjoy being on an Odyssey of the Mind team. The coach may also present an Odyssey of the Mind awareness session to the student body in an assembly and ask those interested to sign up to participate.

Another way to stimulate interest in the program is to ask teachers to conduct classroom lessons using Odyssey of the Mind materials. This will introduce a large number of students to the creative problem-solving process and bring new methods of learning into the classroom.

## ***Selecting Team Members***

Ultimately, each membership's school administration controls team-selection policies. However, the coach is responsible for selecting the best students for his or her team under the guidelines set by the administration.

All students should be encouraged to participate in the Odyssey of the Mind program. It is important for coaches to recognize that a student's performance in the classroom does not directly correlate with success in Odyssey of the Mind. Many students have highly developed creative problem-solving abilities but do not have the opportunity to apply them in the classroom. Participation in Odyssey of the Mind removes the apprehension and self-consciousness that often inhibits students from becoming more involved in the classroom. Students who are not high achievers in the classroom often discover, through solving divergent problems in Odyssey of the Mind, that the knowledge they attain in school can be applied to hands-on challenges.

The benefit of involving all types of students is to give teams a wide talent base. By working together, the team members learn to recognize and appreciate the abilities of others. There are many methods of selecting team members. Following are a few suggestions:

- Recruit as many students as possible, and allow them to form their own teams and compete against each other to determine who will represent the school in official competitions.

- Hold a creativity “play-off,” where candidates are presented with problems that require creative thinking.
- “Compose” each team with a selection of students with varying skills -- for example, an artist, a musician, a computer expert, a writer, a scientist -- depending on the nature of the problem.

Sometimes, the students will organize Odyssey of the Mind within a school. In this case, the team may be formed before a coach is designated, so team members choose the coach. If a school has more teams than the number allowed, it can purchase additional memberships (see page 11).

## ***Team Training***

Coaches must prepare teams for three phases of competition: the long-term problem, Style, and the spontaneous problem. Many teams will work on their own to develop their long-term problem solution but may need guidance in building creative-thinking skills or practicing solving spontaneous problems. Also, expect newly formed teams to take time to become a cohesive group.

To prepare team members for the mental rigors of competition, training should include exercises based on basic creativity principles. These develop self-confidence and divergent thinking ability. The coach can help improve a team’s divergent thinking ability through brainstorming sessions and exercises that involve the appropriate statement of a problem, functional fixedness, and previously conditioned experiences.

In addition to these types of exercises, the coach should teach discipline, management and organizational skills to the team members. Oftentimes, generating ideas to solve a problem comes easy, but selecting and executing a solution is much more difficult.

Some situations to avoid are when team members design props that are too large to transport to competition, when team members do not agree to one solution and work against each other, or when one or two members dominate to the point of frustration for the others. It is the coach’s responsibility to provide stability and to ensure that each team member has equal input to the problem solution. The following suggestions may help to ensure fairness for all team members:

- Rotate team captains.
- Have members vote on issues that are impeding progress.
- Schedule meetings where team members work on only one aspect of the solution.
- Form committees with each team member in charge of one group responsible for a team-determined contribution (e.g., artwork, music, costumes).

Although all seven team members may present the long-term problem solution, teams should be prepared to present their solution with less than seven in case of an unexpected absence at a competition.

## ***Brainstorming***

Many people, when trying to solve a problem, develop a mental block. This may be a result of “thinking too hard.” Then, later, without conscious effort, a solution comes to mind. One way to overcome a mental block in the problem-solving process is to hold a brainstorming session.

The purpose of brainstorming is to generate as many ideas as possible. The more ideas a team has to choose from, the greater the chances are of finding one that is successful. Ideas are generated rapidly, which prevents individuals from dwelling on why an idea might not work. Evaluation of the ideas comes at a later stage of solution development. Coaches should teach students how to hold brainstorming sessions and may serve as moderators of the sessions. Following are some guidelines.

- (1) **Allow no criticism.** Some people become self-conscious when they feel they may be criticized, which inhibits them from offering ideas. For this reason, it is important that ideas are not judged at this time.
- (2) **Encourage outrageous ideas.** This often results in team members going beyond the normal thought process.
- (3) **Encourage piggybacking of other ideas.** One idea often stimulates a better one.
- (4) **Evaluate the ideas** at the end of the session or after a day or two. Eliminate those that are not feasible.

Any criticism of ideas must be constructive. The team should know that it is okay to have fun while discussing the ideas. Keep in mind that decisions made at this time are not always final; ideation is an ongoing process.

Besides the coach as moderator, each brainstorming group should select a leader to direct the discussion. If a leveling off of ideas occurs, the leader should encourage new ideas by asking questions such as,

- “By altering the materials how could we . . .?”
- “What might happen if we changed its shape?”
- “How could we adapt it to make it move faster?”
- “How can we make it smaller, lighter, etc.?”

One team member should record all ideas and useful comments.

## ***Spontaneous Practice Sessions***

Another responsibility of the coach is to schedule spontaneous practice sessions. Following are some tips for preparing team members for the spontaneous competition:

- Work on listening skills. Team members should not “think ahead” and presume what the problem requires; they should listen carefully until the judge has read the entire problem.
- Brainstorm verbal responses. Ask the students what made them respond the way they did, then develop that skill further.
- Improvise non-traditional uses for various items.
- Familiarize students with various materials and their uses.
- Practice building structures out of various materials.

## ***Statement of the Problem***

The way a problem is stated often influences the way a problem is solved. Essentially, there are two types of problems: analytic and divergent. An analytic problem is convergent in nature, that is, it has a single correct answer. Divergent problems allow for many possible solutions.

Many problems can be stated in a way to either encourage or discourage creative responses. A common trait among creative individuals is their ability to redefine a problem without changing its objective. For example, if a problem were given to “Design a new toothbrush,” a typical solution would be an adaptation of a utensil with a handle and fibers at one end. However, a creative person may restate the problem to “Find a better way to clean teeth.” He or she could then brainstorm different solutions and reduce the chances of coming up with the preconceived idea of the stereotypical toothbrush. Coaches should train team members to redefine the problems presented to them, and stimulate and nurture this thinking approach.

Redefinition is the opposite of “functional fixedness.” Functional fixedness is a mind-set, or the tendency to perceive an object as being able to carry out only the function for which it was designed. The tendency to apply only one function to an object limits the number of possible resources an individual can use when faced with certain tasks. Although not designed for these functions, a toothbrush can be used to clean golf clubs, a coin can be a screwdriver, an old sock can be a rag, or a rubber band can be used as a hair band.

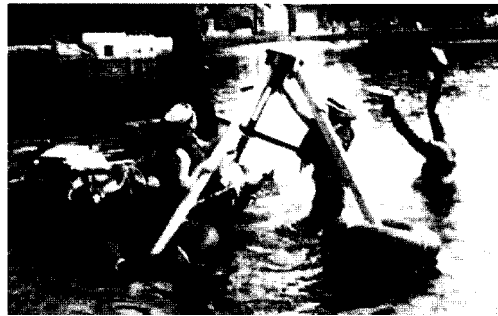
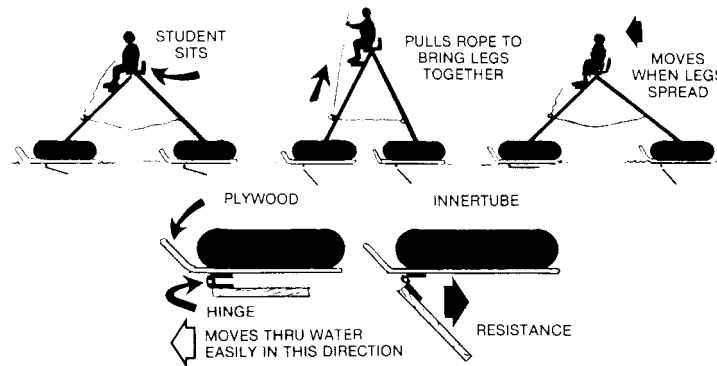
Coaches should be careful when restating problems and make sure the objective of the problem is not changed or reinterpreted. For example, if a team is presented with a problem to “Design a baseball glove,” an image, concept or solution that will most often come to mind is a typical fielder’s glove, a catcher’s mitt, or a two- or three-fingered glove with a large web. The problem could be restated as “Think of different ways to catch baseballs,” which would encourage creativity and allow for an endless array of usable solutions. Restating the problem to “Design a new glove” will result in solutions that do not serve the intended purpose of catching a baseball.

Another way to help stimulate ideas is to pose problem limitations. Asking someone to invent something is too broad a statement, which may cause an individual to feel overwhelmed. On the other hand, asking someone to design a red ride-on toy fire truck is too restrictive. Taking a middle ground and asking someone to design a pull-toy leaves a great deal of latitude for creative thinking. Including limitations for cost, size and safety will keep the ideas practical.

Consider the following problem: “Design a boat.” This statement inhibits creativity because of preconceived ideas of the characteristics of a common boat. A way to encourage creativity would be to restate the problem as, “Build a device to transport one person around a pond.” To further encourage creativity, impose certain limitations such as:

- (1) No gasoline engines may be used.
- (2) The value of materials used may not exceed \$5.
- (3) The project must be completed within three weeks.
- (4) The device must keep the individual safe and dry.
- (5) The device must navigate over a given course.

The following is a solution developed by students at Rowan University in New Jersey in their attempt to solve the problem.



## ***Parental Involvement***

Remember that coaches do not have to be teachers; they can be parents of team members. In fact, oftentimes it will be a parent who gets the Odyssey of the Mind program started in their child's school and takes on the responsibility of coach. Parents can also serve as assistant coaches. This is especially helpful to the person who coaches more than one team.

Even if parents do not want to assume the responsibility of coaching a team, they can still help, but they must know their limitations. Once a team is formed, the coach should call a meeting of all team members' parents to explain the Odyssey of the Mind program and the rules for outside assistance. Stress that their child will reap the full benefits of creative problem-solving if the team members create the solution themselves. Coaches should also explain what is expected of the parents regarding money, time, transportation, and so on, and they should inform parents of the team's practice schedule and competition dates.

Holding a meeting of parents is also a way for coaches to learn about resources, skills and facilities that the parents have to offer. Coaches should rely on parents to teach skills that team members need to execute their solution -- carpentry, sewing, dancing, etc. Parents can also supply general information on subjects such as engineering and scientific principles.

Coaches may solicit parents to be judges, scorekeepers, or tournament assistants. Volunteering for Odyssey of the Mind is a great way for parents to get involved in their children's activities.

## Chapter II

# Membership Information

Anyone may join the Odyssey of the Mind program. However, members that choose to enter teams in official Odyssey of the Mind competitions must abide by certain rules and requirements. Members may photocopy Odyssey of the Mind materials for distribution within the membership during the program year; however, these materials are copyrighted and may not be distributed beyond the membership and without permission for future use.

### ***Age Divisions***

Each long-term problem is designated appropriate for certain divisions. Official competitions are held only for the divisions shown on each problem. In competition, each membership may enter one team per problem for each division it covers. A team can only compete within its division and only in problems designated for its division. Teams are formed by division according to age or grade and compete against other teams in the same division and problem. Division eligibility is as follows:

**Division I** - Each team member is less than 12 years of age or is in a grade no higher than 5<sup>th</sup> grade (USA standard\*) on May 1, 2003.

**Division II** - The team does not qualify for Division I AND each team member is less than 15 years of age or in a grade no higher than 8<sup>th</sup> grade (USA standard\*) on May 1, 2003.

**Division III** – The team does not qualify for Divisions I or II AND each team member is attending school (K-12) full time on May 1, 2003.

**Division IV** - Collegiate. All team members must have a high school diploma or its equivalent and be enrolled in at least one course at a two- or four-year college or university.

Each team member is evaluated for age and grade to determine the lowest division in which he or she may compete. The team must participate in the lowest division for which ALL team members qualify. Thus, it is possible for team members to participate in a division above the one in which they qualify. Example: If five members of a team qualify for Division I and the other two members do not qualify for Division I but qualify for Division II, the team must participate in Division II.

\*In general, the USA standard is that children begin school in kindergarten at 5 years old. There are 12 subsequent grades (1-12) before graduating from high school. High school students are usually 18 years old when they graduate from high school. Ages can differ based on individual school retention and promotion policies.

### ***Team Member Participation***

Odyssey of the Mind teams are comprised of up to seven members. **Only five team members may compete in the spontaneous portion of competition, but all seven may participate in the presentation of the long-term solution.** If a team has a full complement of seven members and has started working on the problem, no team member can be replaced except under penalty for outside assistance. However, if a team starts out with less than seven members, it may add members until it reaches a full complement of seven.

If a membership exceeds the one team per problem per division limit, it may purchase additional memberships and designate them Team B, Team C, and so on. Or, a school district may have its own intramural competition to determine which teams will represent the membership in official Odyssey of the Mind competitions.

Once a team submits a roster for a competition, it may not change the roster for that competition unless approved by the tournament director. Any team member may compete in more than one problem; however, a team member may not enter competition in the same problem for more than one team.

Most teams fall under the individual school membership. Multi-school teams -- those made up of students from different schools -- are permitted under certain circumstances. Please contact CCI for information. First, check with the respective school administrators regarding liability concerns of fielding a team with students from more than one school.

### ***Community Groups and Home - School Teams***

Community groups may be composed of current members of an established community organization. A community group may not be organized for the purpose of competing in Odyssey of the Mind, and the group must have a mission other than participating in Odyssey of the Mind. A community group may enter one team per problem.

Home-school teams must be comprised of home-schooled students. In competition, they may enter one team per problem.

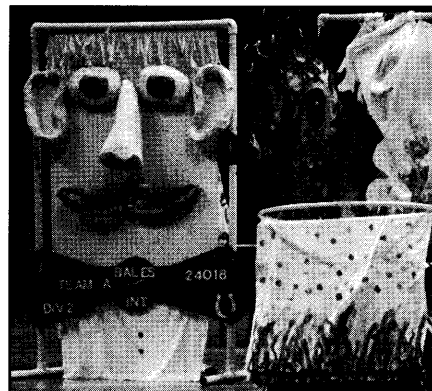
### ***Membership Withdrawal, Transfer or Name Correction***

If, for some reason, a member withdraws from the Odyssey of the Mind, to be eligible for a refund it must return all materials to Creative Competitions, Inc. within 30 days of receipt and include a written notice of withdrawal. There is a \$25 charge for each canceled membership.

To transfer a membership, an application must be made in writing and received by CCI at least 30 days before the member's first official competition.

Each paid member receives a membership card that it must show at official competition. If the card is not included with the membership packet, CCI will send it upon receipt of payment for the membership. If the team has not received its card within 30 days of its first competition, check with the business office of the organization responsible for payment. There is a \$5 replacement fee for each misplaced membership card.

Membership names must identify the school or group the team represents. They may be abbreviated but must be recognizable by others. For example, Walden High School may use its full name or Walden H.S. or Walden High Sch, but it may not use W.H.S. If the membership name is incorrect on the card, it is the member's responsibility to notify CCI. The incorrect card must be returned, and CCI will issue a corrected card. Name corrections will not be made once a team enters competition.



*The team's membership sign must include the same information that appears on its membership card.*

## Chapter III

# Odyssey of the Mind Long-Term Problems

In an Odyssey of the Mind competition, teams are awarded score in three areas: the **long-term problem** solution, the **Style** component of the long-term solution, and how well they solve the **spontaneous problem** given on the day of competition.

Each membership packet includes five competitive long-term problems, whose subject matter varies from the technical to the artistic to the classical. Teams choose the problem they wish to solve and create a solution to be presented in competition against other teams in the same age/grade division. Long-term problems require teams to begin preparing their solutions weeks or months before competition. Each problem includes one or more objectives, a set of limitations and requirements, and specific scoring categories.

### **Primary Problem**

Each membership packet also includes a non-competitive primary problem. The intent of this problem is to introduce younger children to the creative problem-solving process and to prepare them for Odyssey of the Mind competitions in later years. If a primary team is invited to present a solution at an organized competition, it is for practice or demonstration purposes only. The format of the primary problem is very similar to that of the competitive long-term problems and includes scoring and Style categories. Although there is no competition at the primary level, teams may be invited to display their solutions at a tournament.

### **Long-Term Scoring**

The highest score for each problem and division in a competition is percentaged to 200 points unless the problem states otherwise. Every other team receives a percentage of points based on its raw score in relationship to the highest raw score. Any penalty points are deducted **AFTER** scores are percentaged. No team ever receives a score less than zero.

### **Style**

Creative problem solving is the basis for all Odyssey of the Mind problem solutions. The Style portion of the competition gives teams an opportunity to further showcase their creative skills through the elaboration of their long-term problem solution. In Odyssey of the Mind, *Style* is defined as, “That which is added to the problem’s solution and relates to the theme of the problem or the solution, but is not a requirement of the long-term problem.” Style categories provide incentive for teams to be creative in different areas by allowing them to choose which elements they want the judges to score, in addition to being scored for meeting the requirements of the problem.

## **Scoring Style**

Each long-term problem lists five Style categories. Categories one through four are either specific scoring elements or “free choice of team.” The fifth category is always “overall effect,” in which the team is awarded points for how well all of the Style elements come together to enhance the presentation of the solution for the long-term problem. Each Style category is worth up to 10 points, for a maximum of **50 points**. The team scoring the most Style points receives a score of 50; every other team receives a percentage of 50 based on its raw score.

To receive score for Style, the team must complete a Style Form (see Appendix) and present two copies to the Staging Area Judge. The team must list the five areas to be scored and explain how the Style elements relate to the long-term problem solution, as well as how categories one through four contribute to the overall effect.

In technical problems, a team may present its Style elements even if the technical components of its solution are not successful. A skit or performance is not required to receive score for Style.

## **Defining Style Categories**

For “free choice of team” categories, teams must choose any items that are not scored as part of the problem’s requirements or as a “mandatory” Style category. These should be the most creative aspects of a team’s solution. When defining a Style category, a team must be very concise in its explanation. Following are some guidelines, using a clown as an example:

- If the team would like the clown’s overall appearance to be scored -- costume, makeup, hairstyle, etc. -- it should state, “Appearance of the clown.”
- If a team would like a specific aspect of the clown scored, it might list on its Style Form, “Appearance of the clown’s costume.”
- If the team used items in a non-traditional way to make the clown’s costume and would like this scored, it should state, “Materials and technique used to make the clown’s costume.”
- If the team states, “The clown,” the judges will consider all aspects of the clown, including its performance, which could result in a lower score than having specific elements scored.

Some general “free choice of team” categories include special effects, artwork, costumes, music, dance, poems, lighting, or the integration of a specific dramatic or humorous element. In technical problems, appropriate Style categories could be a drawing, and/or model of the solution; the unveiling of a model of the solution; or other special enhancements of the solution itself.

For mandatory Style categories, the same element is scored in every team’s solution. However, a different aspect of that element may be scored from team to team. For example, if a mandatory Style category is “Costume of one team member,” the team may choose the overall costume of one team member, or some aspect of the costume. If it would like a specific element of a costume scored, it must state *exactly* what that element is and identify the team member wearing the costume. For example, a team might state, “Appearance of the cowboy’s costume,” “Construction method of cowboy’s costume,” or “Materials used for cowboy’s costume,” and provide enough information so judges will know precisely which part of the cowboy’s costume is to be scored.

## **Problem Clarifications**

In keeping with the Odyssey of the Mind philosophy, problem limitations are written to provide just enough guidance to solve the problem without limiting creativity. If the problem does not specify that something *cannot* be done, most likely it *can* be done. Often, however, a team may question the interpretation of a limitation, or it may be unsure that an aspect of its solution is allowed or meets the problem's requirements.

**General clarifications** amend or further explain a problem's limitations without revealing information about a team's possible solution. To find general clarifications, team members may go to [www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com). If they do not find the answer to their question there, they may submit their question to CCI. This may be done either by mail or electronically. All clarifications will be answered by CCI within 7 days of receipt. Teams may also mail in a request for a complete list of general clarifications.

**Team-specific clarifications** pertain to a particular team's solution. These are confidential and **are not published**, since teams must describe details of their solution to ascertain an accurate reply. If the answer to a team's clarification allows for a very creative solution, it may be distributed to judges only. These are never made available to other teams.

To request a clarification by mail, submit your question on a Problem Clarification Form (see Appendix). List only questions pertaining to the same long-term problem on each form. Mail the form, along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope, to CCI (address is on the form).

To request a clarification electronically, connect to [www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com), click on "Clarifications" and follow the directions for submitting questions regarding the problems. The website does not give specific information about a tournament site and cannot provide answers to site-specific questions such as, "Where will the audience be seated?" and, "What type of floor is there?" You must contact your Tournament Director for this information.

Copies of all clarifications are sent to the International Problem Captain for the long-term problem in question, and the Association Director for the state from which the question came. If a team receives a clarification, it is important that it presents the signed, written clarification form, or a printout of the e-mail, to the judges at competition to avoid any scoring discrepancies. Only problem clarifications issued by CCI are official. No other person is authorized to issue problem clarifications. However, you may contact your Tournament Director for questions about the competition site, for example, dimensions or available equipment.

## **Team Competition Checklist**

In competition, each team must provide the following items for its long-term solution:

- Two completed copies of the Style Form.
- One completed Material Values Form.
- One completed Outside Assistance Form.
- Problem clarifications specific to the team's solution.
- All props, costumes, etc. necessary to complete the problem solution, except those listed in the problem under "Tournament Director Will Provide."
- Any items listed in the problem under "Team Must Provide."

## Chapter IV

# Spontaneous Problems

**B**y solving spontaneous problems, students learn how to “think on their feet.” The problems are presented to the team on the day of competition. They are considered “top secret” because teams do not know what type of problem they must solve until they enter the spontaneous competition room. Teams participating in the same long-term problem and division must solve the same spontaneous problem, so it is critical that no one discusses the problem outside the room until *all* teams have competed. Anyone who reveals a spontaneous problem is subject to disqualification and/or disciplinary action taken against the entire team.

The nature of the spontaneous problems varies, with each having its own set of specific rules. Teams should practice for the three most common types of spontaneous problems as listed below, but they should also be prepared for the unexpected.

- **Verbal** spontaneous problems require verbal responses. They may incorporate improvisation or dramatization. Teams receive score for responses.
- **Hands-on** spontaneous problems require teams to physically create a tangible solution. Each hands-on problem has its own specific scoring categories.
- **Verbal/hands-on** spontaneous problems require teams to create a tangible solution *and* include some type of verbal component, for example, creating a story about the solution. Teams are scored for both the tangible solution and the verbal presentation.

Teams that compete in a technical long-term problem may have to solve a verbal spontaneous problem and vice versa. The type and complexity of the spontaneous problems vary at each level of competition. (See Appendix for sample spontaneous problems.)

### ***The Spontaneous Competition***

At its assigned competition time, the entire team enters the spontaneous room. Though teams may consist of up to seven members, only five may participate in solving the spontaneous problem. This way, the team is not at a disadvantage if a member is unexpectedly absent from a competition or is unable to participate in the type of problem given. The judge states the type of problem the team must solve, and the team then decides who will participate. The nonparticipating team members have the option of leaving the room or sitting quietly to watch. If they stay, they may not talk, signal, or intervene in any way. We recommend that all team members remain in the room. This way, all will feel as if they were part of the solution and it may eliminate the desire to discuss the problem.

Every team should find its best formula for competing in each type of spontaneous problem. It is a good idea to prepare every team member for any type of problem in case a team member cannot attend a competition. Once a team decides which members will solve the problem, it may not make changes. Five team members must participate in the spontaneous solution. If a team has less than five members, all must participate in spontaneous.

In most spontaneous competitions, the team receives a copy of the problem to follow as the judge reads the problem aloud. The team may refer to its copy throughout its competition time.

In a hands-on spontaneous problem, teams may designate one member to review the rules of the problem while the remaining members work on the solution. That team member makes sure the team understands the intent of the problem and is solving it properly. If judges are aware that a team obviously does not understand the problem's intent or rules, they will bring this to the team's attention and tell them to read the problem carefully. The judges will help the team understand the problem but will not help the team solve the problem.

## ***Scoring Spontaneous***

In competition, the spontaneous problem is worth up to **100 points**. The team with the highest raw score in each problem receives 100; every other team receives a percentage of 100 based on its raw score. Spontaneous scores are the decision of the judges in the room.

In **hands-on** spontaneous, team members are scored for how they solve the problem and, oftentimes, for how well they work together and the creativity of their solution. In **verbal** spontaneous problems, creative responses are scored higher than common responses. However, if a creative response is slightly modified by another team member, it will be scored as common. Team members should be aware that a judge might consider a slight modification of a response a duplicate answer and require that team member to give an entirely different response. For example:

- The judge reads the problem to the team: "Name different kinds of trees."
- Responses include "apple tree," "crab apple tree," then, "Delicious apple tree."
- The judge stops the team and says, "Repeat. Give a different response," and explains that "apple tree" and "crab apple tree" are acceptable, but "Delicious apple tree" is too similar and no more apple trees are allowed. The team member who said, "Delicious apple tree" would have to give another response and the team would lose the time taken to do this.

## ***Tips for Solving Spontaneous Problems***

Coaches should ask the team to practice solving spontaneous problems as part of every meeting. Following are some tips to relay to all team members:

- Before entering the spontaneous room, know which members will compete in each type of problem.
- Listen carefully to the judge reading the problem. Refer to the team's copy often and be sure to stay within the problem's intent. If there is any uncertainty about an aspect of a problem, ask the judges questions. Time will not be stopped, but a misunderstanding or wrong assumption can lead to a low score.
- There are many possible skills that could be applied in hands-on problems, including building, strategy, measuring, communication, etc. Try to include specialists for various skills when choosing who will compete in hands-on.
- In verbal spontaneous, speak loudly and clearly. Some verbal problems allow for only a limited number of responses. It is best to take time to think of something creative and earn more points for each response, rather than responding quickly with common responses, scoring low points and leaving time remaining.

## Chapter V

# The Competitions

Typically, teams will first compete at the **regional** level. Those who place at this level will advance to Association Finals, at the **state/province/country** level. Teams that place there are eligible to compete in the annual **Odyssey of the Mind World Finals**. In 2003, World Finals will be held at Iowa State University in Ames from May 28 to 31.

Teams in areas that do not provide official competitions before World Finals may compete in the World Finals on a first-come, first-served basis. These teams must apply to CCI by April 1 of the program year to be eligible. These teams may also be invited to participate in a nearby state's official competitions, with champions being selected from each state represented.

### ***Special Considerations***

Every attempt will be made to accommodate any special requirements. To request special accommodations, teams must provide the following information at the time of registration for an official competition and check with the tournament director two weeks in advance of competition to make sure the requests will be honored.

- Names of team members who are competing in more than one problem.
- If any of the members do not understand and speak the language used in competition.
- If the team includes a member who is disabled, the team must provide the nature of the disability and the areas (long-term and/or spontaneous) in which the team member may be participating. For some spontaneous problems, a disability such as color blindness or a reading or learning disability may affect the team's performance.

### ***Competition Scoring***

The team that earns the highest raw score in its division and long-term problem is awarded the maximum score. All other teams receive a percentaged score based on the maximum raw score. The same percentage-based scoring applies to the spontaneous problem competition and Style.

The total **combined long-term, Style, and spontaneous** percentaged scores (with penalties deducted) determines the winners in each problem, within each division. Final scores are carried to two decimal places. Ties are declared when a team's score is within one point of the highest score in that place. Example: final scores are 294.51, 293.57, 293.11. First place is 294.51. However, 293.57 is not a full point less than 294.51, so this becomes a tie for first place. The score 293.11 is more than one point less than the highest first-place score (294.51), so it is considered second place.

### ***Questions About Scoring***

On competition day, before the awards presentation, judges will give coaches the opportunity to be informed of their team's long-term raw scores, not including its score for Style. This will be done in a manner decided by that tournament's governing body. Coaches will be asked to initial the scoresheet as agreement to the time that they received it.

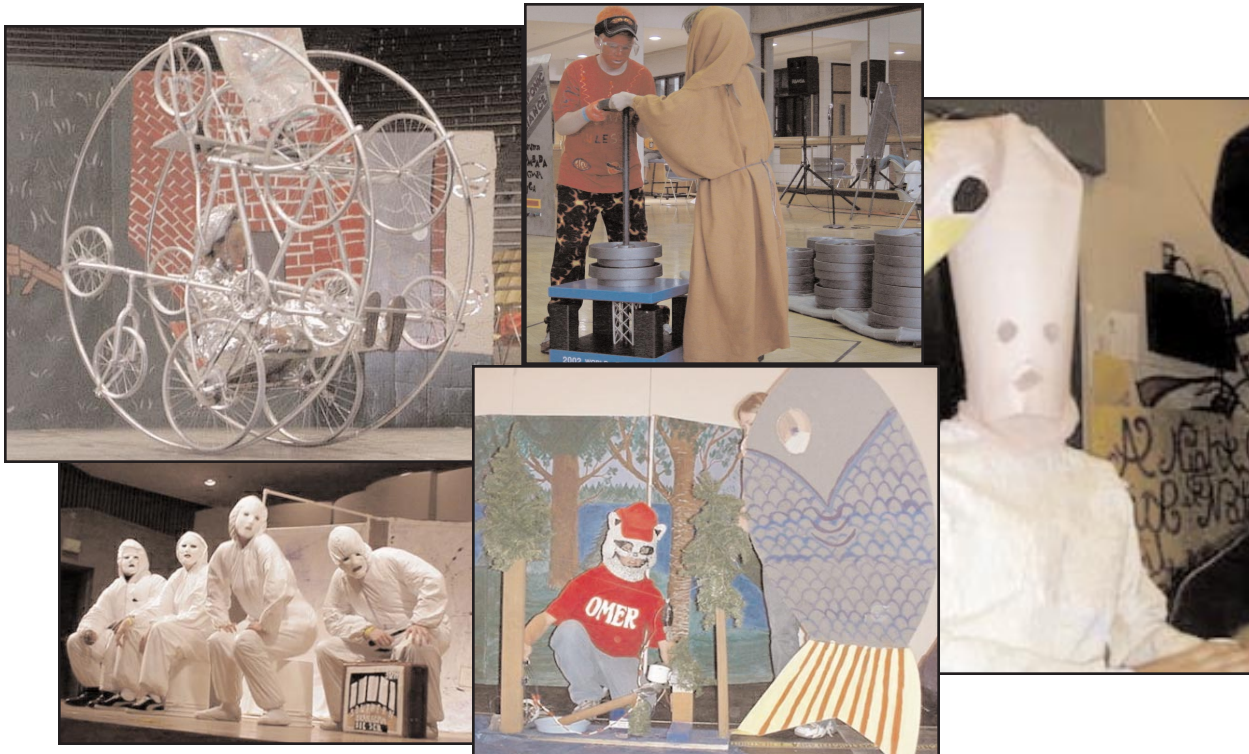
Once coaches review their team's long-term raw scores with the judge, they have 30 minutes to raise any questions. If the judges or tournament director have not offered the coaches the opportunity to review the team's long-term raw scores before announcement of the placements, placement of teams is unofficial until each coach is given that opportunity. All raw long-term scores become official 30 minutes after the last team in a problem and division has competed, even if a coach has not taken the opportunity to review the team's long-term score.

Should a team question a scoring element, it should discuss it with the Head Judge and, if necessary, the Problem Captain. If the question involves an interpretation of the rules and, if the team is not satisfied with the explanation given, the team may ask that a tribunal is convened. A tribunal usually consists of three persons who have a thorough knowledge of the problem's rules. The tribunal will review the rule in question and, if necessary, talk with the coach, team members and/or judges involved. Once the tribunal makes a decision, its decision is final unless more information comes to light after the tournament. Tribunals will not be convened for questions regarding subjective scores or questions in such areas as to whether something or someone is across a line or within a certain area. In no case will a videotape be used to make a decision.

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*Below are examples of teams' solutions from the Odyssey of the Mind 2002 World Finals at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Clockwise from top left:*

*Problem 1: The Chameleon, Problem 4: It's a Snap!, Problem 5: The Ostrich Factor, Problem 2: OMER's Earthly Adventures, Problem 3: Classics . . . Center Stage.*



## Chapter VI

# Program Rules

Following are the general rules for competition. These apply to every problem in every division. Each specific problem has its own set of rules, or limitations, that the team must consider as well. Those rules supersede the following if they are contradictory. However, problem clarifications supersede both of these.

### ***Outside Assistance***

Only the seven team members may contribute to the long-term problem solution. Once the team begins working on its long-term problem solution, if a team member leaves the team for any reason, that person's name must remain on the roster. Teams of less than seven may add members until they have a full roster.

Team members must design and create all aspects of their problem solution, including membership signs, props, all technical requirements (vehicles, structures, etc.), and costumes. These must either (1) be made by the team members or (2) be put together by the team members from commercially made parts. If team members are not able to make a solution, prop, costume or sign that they have designed or if a coach has determined that the tools the team members wish to use to make the item are too dangerous for the team members to operate, then the team members must redesign it so they can make it themselves or find another way of constructing the item.

Coaches are to facilitate the team in creating their solution, but they are not allowed to provide suggestions on how to solve the problem. They should ask thought-provoking questions that stimulate thinking, but they should never hint at a solution. For example, instead of stating a question, "Wouldn't this be better if you painted it blue," they should ask, "Are there any other colors that you think might work." Even repeating the first question would imply that the color the team has chosen is not sufficient. If the team asks the coach's opinion on which color he or she thinks is best, the coach should respond, "You decide." Unless a situation is deemed potentially dangerous, always let the team make the final decisions on developing a solution.

Parents and supporters may act as tutors or instructors, but advise them that they may not suggest to the team members how to solve the problem. When it comes to solving problems, Odyssey of the Mind is a "hands-on" experience for kids and a "hands-off" experience for adults.

### ***Membership Identification***

The team must have a membership sign visible during the presentation of its long-term problem solution. The sign must be visible at a minimum of 25 feet during the entire presentation. It must show the membership name and membership number as it appears on the membership card. It may contain anything else the team wishes and change appearance during the presentation; that is, it may rotate, blink, flip, etc. The team may have multiple membership signs, but at least one must be visible to the judges and audience during the entire presentation. The membership sign, and all other materials, must be able to fit through a standard doorway (28" x 78" or .71 m x 1.98 m).

## ***Presentation Time***

The maximum presentation time for all long-term problem solutions is 8 minutes. Generally, in technical problems, the timekeeper will stop the team at the end of 8 minutes. In performance problems, most often the team is allowed to continue until its presentation is finished, but it will be penalized if it exceeds the time limit. If a problem permits that a team may continue beyond the 8-minute time limit, the penalty will be listed in the problem.

In most spontaneous problems, teams have several minutes to think about and create a solution, and an additional time period to present their solution.

## ***Material Values***

Each problem has a cost limit specific to that problem. This is the maximum allowable total value of the items used in the team's final problem solution. Only those materials included in the team's presentation are counted in this value. The team must include an item's value even if it is borrowed or donated; however, items may be valued at "garage sale" or "yard sale" prices. This is a used, or second-hand, price.

The general criterion for pricing an item is its standard value. That is, could any other team duplicate the problem solution for the same amount of money? This is subject to determination by the judges; therefore, teams should be able to verify an item's value through receipts and/or price lists if any questions arise.

Each team must give the Staging Area Judge a copy of its completed Material Values Form (see Appendix) before it begins its long-term presentation. The value of materials used must be listed on the form in the currency used by the country in which the competition is held. Cost limits are given in United States dollars. Non-USA associations or teams may set an official date for setting the exchange rate. Teams within an association must use that date for determining material values. Teams that are not covered by a licensed association may use the official exchange rate for their national currency on any selected date in January. They must be prepared to document their exchange rate.

## ***Itemizing Materials***

On the Material Values Form, teams may combine items used in small amounts such as duct tape, glue, string, staples, crayons, paper clips, paper, cardboard, paint and small hardware items (nuts, bolts, nails, screws, etc.), and calculate them as miscellaneous items.

The team must count the value of items such as crutches, wheelchairs, etc. if these items are used as part of the problem solution. This applies even if any of the team members must use them out of necessity. However, if the items are used because they are needed by team members and are not part of the problem solution, they do not have to be counted.

Rental equipment, such as fog machines or lights, used in the presentation must be counted for a one-day rental fee. Teams must present a receipt or price list for a one-day rental.

Certain items are exempt from having to be counted in the materials' value as long as they remain intact. These are items that are considered accessible to all teams without a cost associated with them. They are limited to the following items. Anything not listed below must be shown on the Material Values Form.

- (1) All types of musical instruments, including music stands, keyboards, amplifiers, and speakers.
- (2) Computer systems and components, including cables, printers, etc.
- (3) Audiotapes, videotapes, filmstrips, records, compact discs, laser disks, microchips, computer discs, and similar paraphernalia.
- (4) Projectors of any type.
- (5) Projection screens.
- (6) Radios.
- (7) Television sets.
- (8) Any type of audio or video recorder or player.
- (9) Cameras.
- (10) Microphones with amplifiers, or karaoke machines.
- (11) Audio-visual carts.
- (12) Extension cords and multiple plugs.
- (13) Batteries (see specifications on pages 23-24).
- (14) Chairs or stools.
- (15) Tables or desks.
- (16) Easels or flip charts.
- (17) Trash cans, wastepaper baskets, dustpans and brooms.
- (18) Small folding ladders (not to exceed 6 feet or 2 meters in height).
- (19) Items such as casters or dollies may be used to move props from the staging area to the competition site, as long as they are not used in the presentation. However, these aids must be removed immediately after the item they are moving is placed in the competition area. If they are not, their cost will count in the cost of the problem solution.

The following safety items are also exempt from being counted in the materials' value:

- (1) Personal prescription items of team members such as eyeglasses and hearing aids.
- (2) Floor coverings, such as drop cloths, that are used only to protect the floor, or mats used to prevent injury to a team member.
- (3) Required foot coverings that are worn as they are commercially produced. If anything is added to the foot coverings, the value of the additions must be counted (see page 23). This exemption does not apply to shoes with built-in wheels. These must be counted in the cost and must also be approved for use in the competition facility by the tournament director.

Trash items, that is, items that are usually discarded, such as cardboard cartons, milk containers and small scraps of wood, may be altered from their original state and are exempt from cost.

## **Pre-Made Visual or Audio Enhancements**

Teams must present their problem solution live. They may not pre-record an entire problem solution in any medium. The team may use commercially produced records, tapes, slides, photographs, and videotapes if, in the judge's opinion, they are not a major part of the problem solution or Style and if they are not copyright violations. Persons other than the long-term team members may appear on team-made recordings as long as they do not play a featured role.

Team members must make any visual or audio enhancements, such as videos, photos, slides, and tapes, that are specifically scored as part of the team's problem solution or Style. The team may use non-team-made visuals if they are incidental to the problem solution.

If a team writes its own music or words, or adapts a standard piece of music to fit its presentation, no one other than one or more of the seven team members may transpose the music for the team or perform the altered words or altered music on the recording. If the team members alter only the words, although the team members must say or sing them, anyone may play the unchanged music.

## **Copyrights**

In all areas -- music, visuals, written word, characters -- it is the team's responsibility to avoid copyright violations. It is illegal to use and reproduce copyrighted materials without the owner's permission. The team should find out if a work is copyrighted and obtain permission to use the work. Judges will not require teams to produce a letter of permission to use a copyrighted work, since they cannot ascertain who holds the copyright. Therefore, they will not penalize a team for not producing a letter of permission. However, teams must be aware that they could be prosecuted by copyright holders if they use copyrighted material without obtaining permission. It is up to the team to determine what, if any, copyright laws apply to any non-team-originated material it wishes to use. Neither CCI, nor its affiliates, can assist teams seeking such information or permission.

Current Odyssey of the Mind members are allowed to use the following trademarks, which are federally registered to Creative Competitions, Inc., in their problem solution, for fund-raising purposes, and for program awareness:

- Odyssey of the Mind®
- Creative Competitions®
- OMER®



## **Safety and Damage Control**

No part of the problem solution may cause damage to the facility or injury to anyone. If the judges deem any act or item as potentially dangerous, they may make a team demonstrate that it will not cause injury or damage. If not satisfied by the team's demonstration, the judges will not allow the team to include that part of the solution.

If an unacceptable risk of personal injury or a hazardous situation occurs during a presentation, judges will stop that portion of the presentation. They may also assess a penalty. The following items are not allowed to be used in the team's problem solution:

- Lighter-than-air balloons (e.g., helium)
- Items that are excessively hot or cold (including dry ice)
- Items that leave a residue (some types of fire extinguishers or fog machines)
- Internal combustion engines
- Flammable fuels
- Fires in any form, including lighted candles and sparklers
- Smoke bombs or similar paraphernalia

Due to health and safety regulations at many competition facilities, the **bottom of the feet must be covered** by a material that is generally non-penetrable. This means that the foot covering should prevent splinters and shards of glass from penetrating the foot. If the foot covering comes off during the presentation, the team member who loses the foot covering may not continue with his/her portion of the performance until the foot covering is replaced. Judges may help the team member retrieve the foot covering.

Teams must be careful not to cause damage to a competition site at any time. Judges should examine the condition of the floor before each performance. If a team causes **damage to the floor**, whether intentional or non-intentional, it is subject to penalty in the following degrees:

- Scuff that is removable with soap and water will not be penalized.
- Scuff that cannot be removed with soap and water, but there is no other damage: -15 points.
- Damage to the floor that requires new varnish: -25 points.
- Damage to the floor that requires sanding and new varnish: -50 points.
- If, during the presentation, the team causes damage to the floor and does not stop after being warned by the judges: -100 points and the judge will call “time” and stop the presentation.
- If, prior to the presentation, the judges determine a solution or part of a solution will likely cause damage to the floor, that solution or part of the solution may not be presented by the team.
- If the team causes intentional damage to the floor: -200 points and the judge will call “time” and stop the presentation. The team will be held responsible for the expense of any repairs.

## **Batteries**

Unless a problem states otherwise, only unmodified, commercially available sealed batteries may be used. These are limited to the following types: zinc-carbon, alkaline, lithium, nickel-cadmium (NiCad) and nickel-metal hydride (NiMH). If these types of batteries are not available in a team’s country, the team may submit the specifications of a similar battery for approval via the problem clarification process. No other type of battery is allowed. For example, prohibited batteries include **but are not limited to**: lead-acid batteries (sealed or not sealed), zinc-air, zinc-mercury, silver zinc, metal chloride, etc.

Since almost every battery-powered device does not use just one cell at a time, teams may group permitted cells together to form higher voltages or currents. Commercially produced battery packs that fall in the allowed battery types may be used. Teams must ensure that each battery system is safely designed for all conditions encountered during use and otherwise completely appropriate for the desired application.

### ***Battery Charging***

Do not overcharge your battery. A manufacturer-approved battery charger should be used to recharge batteries. Adults should perform or directly supervise battery charging. Batteries may not be charged at the competition site.

### ***A Little Common Sense***

- Wiring that conducts electricity and all connectors to batteries must be insulated.
- Regardless of what a battery is made of, keep it away from open flame and extreme temperature variations. Explosion is a real threat for batteries that reach their boiling point. Do not let a battery get hot to the touch.
- Do not short circuit batteries.
  - Batteries should be kept isolated from each other and metal objects to prevent external short circuits. Do not store batteries loosely, and do not place batteries on metal surfaces.
  - Before batteries are inserted into a circuit, the circuit should be tested to avoid short-circuiting or charging the battery.
- Be environmentally conscientious: dispose of batteries properly in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations. For example, NiCad should be recycled as the cadmium in NiCad batteries is a toxic metal.

### ***Additional Rules That Apply to All Problems***

- (1) If a team does not present a long-term problem solution, it will not be scored for long-term or Style in the competition. It may participate in Spontaneous, but it will not be ranked.
- (2) If a team omits a portion of the solution that is required for score in long-term or Style, it will receive no score for that portion. If the omitted required portion is not scored under either long-term or Style, judges will assess a Spirit of the Problem penalty.
- (3) No live animals may be used at any competition site.
- (4) Judges may not become part of the problem solution or Style presentation. During its presentation time, the team must proceed as if the judges were not present. Nothing may be given to the judges during the team's presentation.
- (5) During the competition period, teams may ask the audience for a reaction, such as applause, boos or laughter. However, if the audience is involved in more than a general way, for example, specific dialogue between the team and a member of the audience, judges will assess an Outside Assistance penalty. Nothing may be thrown into the audience.
- (6) No nudity, profanity, vulgarity, or ethnic or racial slurs are permitted. This includes the inappropriate use of potentially offensive words or actions. Words, phrases, topics and scripts will NOT be approved through the problem clarification process. If a team has a question in this area, it must decide on its own whether or not to take the risk.

- (7) Once competition time begins, team members may go into the audience and interact from there with the team members remaining in the performance area.
- (8) Judges will not assess any penalty more than five times unless the problem states “each offense.” However, the value of the penalty may increase with each offense if the penalty is listed in a range of points (e.g., -5 to -100).
- (9) For out-of-bounds penalties in long-term problems, boundary lines are considered on a vertical plane. An out-of-bounds penalty will be assessed whenever the boundary is crossed at any height unless the problem states that the item or team member must make contact with the floor in order to be penalized. This also holds true if something is required to be within bounds. Contact with the tape that marks the boundary line is not considered out-of-bounds. The team may not cover boundary lines in a way that obstructs the judges’ view.
- (10) If a problem states that you may not touch the floor in a certain area, that means directly or indirectly. For example, you may not step onto a piece of paper on the floor in that area.
- (11) All parts of a problem solution must fit through a doorway that measures 28" x 78" (.71 m x 1.98 m). They must also be able to stand or be placed in an upright position in a standard room (ceilings 7.5-8 feet high or 2.28-2.43 meters high). Tournament directors may not be able to accommodate problem solutions that exceed these dimensions.
- (12) **Three-minute rule:** There are two possible areas in a competition where the Staging Area Judge will meet with the team: the pre-Staging Area and the Staging Area. Generally, if a competition site is in a room where the doors are closed when the team is performing, a pre-Staging Area outside the room will be used before the team comes to the Staging Area inside the room. If the competition site is in a room where spectators may come in while the team is performing, generally only a Staging Area inside the room is used. If a pre-Staging area is used, then, when the team is called to come forward to the Staging Area, it has 3 minutes (in addition to its 8-minute presentation time) to move all of its materials out of the pre-Staging Area or the judges will remove any remaining materials. If only a Staging Area is used, then the team must remove all of its materials within the first 3 minutes of its 8-minute presentation time or the judges will remove any remaining materials.
- (13) In problems that require one or more specific characters, various team members may play the required character(s) within the presentation unless the problem states otherwise. However, teams need to be aware that a required character(s) must remain the same character throughout the presentation. For example, Superman has long been a cartoon character. However, although he has been portrayed in movies by different actors, he has always been Superman and retained Superman's characteristics.
- (14) No one may read aloud to the audience the team's synopsis of its solution prior to the team's presentation. If the team wishes this to be done, it may do so during its presentation time.
- (15) Because of the restrictions many competition facilities have placed on weapons, both real and imitation, coming onto their premises, teams cannot be guaranteed that they can bring these types of items to their tournament. If they wish to do so, they must contact their tournament director to obtain information as to what is allowed at their competition site. This can change from tournament to tournament because of the change in facilities used.
- (16) In addition to the above rules, teams must comply with local, state/provincial and federal regulations, including regulations for specific facilities.

## ***Potential Reasons for Discipline***

Disciplinary action may be taken against a team in certain situations. This is a decision of the judges and/or tournament director. Possible reasons for disciplinary action include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Copyright violation -- copying Odyssey of the Mind materials for non-members.
- Entering teams in competition beyond the number allowed for the membership.
- Using anyone other than the original seven team members.
- Entering a team that includes students not permitted by the rules to be on the team.
- Entering a team in the incorrect division.
- Having a performance videotaped with the intent of using other people's ideas.
- Excessive outside assistance.
- Serious or multiple Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalties assessed during a competition.
- Revealing the spontaneous problem in violation of the rules.
- Coaching misconduct or intentional violation of the rules.
- Violation of federal, state/provincial or local laws.

## ***Possible Disciplinary Actions***

**Warning of future action:** The team will be informed of the action that will be taken if an infraction reoccurs. A written warning to the coach and the member's Association Director must precede any of the following actions:

*Probation:* Specific time period where repeat infractions will lead to automatic suspension and/or denial of participation of a coach, team member, team and/or membership.

*Suspension:* For a specific time the suspended party may not compete or be associated with a competing team, but may perform/participate as a demonstration, in an official tournament. This may be a one- to three-year period. The suspended party may appeal the decision to Creative Competitions, Inc. The suspended party has 15 days to file a written appeal from the time of receipt of a written discipline procedure from the licensed association. The appeal will be presented to CCI and be reviewed in a timely fashion. CCI's decision is final.

*Denial of membership or participation:* A team, coach or team member may be denied participation in the Odyssey of the Mind program for a specific period of time. However, the team, coach or team member will be afforded the opportunity to defend any claims against them.

**Disqualification:** The team will be disqualified from the competition in which the violation takes place. If the decision to disqualify is made after competition is over, the licensed association, or the competition tribunal, has the right to declare a team ineligible to move to the next competition level and may send another team in its place. This effort should be coordinated through the Association Director.

## Chapter VII

# Awards

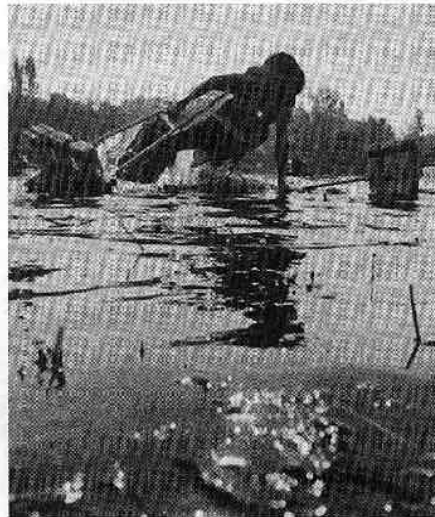
Creative Competitions, Inc. encourages the tournament director of each competition to present every participant with a certificate of participation and to present awards to top-placing teams, that is, first, second, and third place. These awards may be trophies, plaques, ribbons, medals, or special certificates.

### ***Ranatra Fusca Creativity Award***

*Ranatra Fusca* is the term for a classification of water insect. Although this may seem a remote association to creative thinking, the name has a special meaning in *Odyssey of the Mind*. The *Odyssey of the Mind* was born from a college class taught by its founder, Dr. Sam Micklus, in which he assigned students to create a flotation device to transport them across a pond. One student designed a water strider-like contraption. The device did not solve the problem because of its inability to maintain proper balance; however, if given the time and opportunity to “go back to the drawing board,” the student would have been able to correct this and cross the pond. Even though the device did not work properly, the idea was exceptionally creative.



*The design limitations disallowed gasoline engines. This student used an auto starter with a battery as his propulsion. He is sailing along here at 6 m.p.h.*



*Student tried to walk on water. Good Luck.*



*The uniqueness of this design was the use of cardboard to construct the device. In the background a “Hamster Cage” design allows students to run inside as a means of propulsion.*

The *Ranatra Fusca* Creativity Award represents the essence of the *Odyssey of the Mind*. It is presented to teams or individuals who exhibit exceptional creativity, either through some aspect of their problem solution, or an extraordinary idea beyond the problem solution. A successful problem solution is not a criterion for winning the award; rather, the award is a way to acknowledge and encourage creative thinking and risk-taking. Teams that earn a *Ranatra Fusca* Creativity Award at the state/province/country level of competition may be eligible to advance to World Finals. *Ranatra Fusca* winners at the World Finals level have their names engraved on the *Ranatra Fusca* trophy, joining winners of past years since 1981.

## **OMER's Award**

OMER's Award is not intended to reward creativity; instead, it is named for the Odyssey of the Mind raccoon mascot, OMER, in recognition of individuals or teams who demonstrate outstanding sportsmanship, exemplary behavior, and exceptional talent. Recipients of this award may be coaches, team members, parents, officials or anyone else that tournament officials or directors feel exhibit these traits. Anyone may inform a judge or tournament official of a possible OMER's Award candidate. That judge or official will then determine if that person should be nominated. All nominees are reviewed by a panel that determines the final winner.

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## **Odyssey of the Mind Creativity Award**

Each year the Odyssey of the Mind recognizes an individual and/or organization for extraordinary creative achievement or exceptional endeavors. This award is presented during the Awards Ceremony at World Finals. Past winners are: **Blue Man Group**, for the application of innovative and artistic techniques to entertain others; the **National Association for Gifted Children**, for its support of gifts and talents in children from all cultures; **Ronald McDonald House Charities**, for its innovative methods of helping families in need; **Joan Gantz Cooney**, founder of the Children's Television Workshop; **John R. Costanza**; **Jerome H. Lemelson**; **William Lishman**, artist, naturalist, and inspiration for the film, *Fly Away Home*; **Marv Creamer**, who sailed around the globe without navigational instruments; **Dr. C. Samuel Micklus**, founder of the Odyssey of the Mind; **NASA**; **Chuck Jones**, co-creator of Bugs Bunny and Woody Woodpecker; **Chuck Francis and the IBM Corporation**; **Ann Lewin**; **Dr. Paul MacCready**, considered the Father of Human-Powered Flight; the **MacArthur Foundation**; **Walt Disney and the Walt Disney World Corporation**; **Bill Jones and the Chevron Corporation**, for its creativity exhibit and television series; **Dr. E. Paul Torrance**, founder of the Future Problem-Solving program; **Dr. Sidney J. Parnes**; **Charles Clark**; and **Arthur Lipper III**.



## **Odyssey of the Mind Spirit Award**

Each year Odyssey of the Mind recognizes an individual involved in the program who, through personal action, demonstrates the encouragement and development of cooperation, self-respect, and the appreciation and understanding of others. At the Odyssey of the Mind 2002 World Finals, this award was presented to **Dr. Athelene Carter**, whose extraordinary efforts helped to move the Odyssey of the Mind forward.



# Appendix

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The following pages contain practice spontaneous problems and the forms necessary to enter official competitions.

- Style Form
- Material Values Form
- Outside Assistance Form
- Problem Clarification Form
- Verbal Spontaneous Problem: *Destroyers*
- Verbal/Hands-On Spontaneous Problem: *Clay Improv*
- Hands-On Spontaneous Problem: *Decision Package*
- Frequently Asked Questions

# Style Form

Team members must complete this form. Adults may help fill it out for Division I team members only. **A minimum of two copies are required for each competition. At World Finals, and in some other competitions, three copies are required.** These must be presented to the Staging Area Judge.

**Please print.**

Long-Term Problem \_\_\_\_\_ Division \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Name \_\_\_\_\_ Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Judge(s) \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Style Category</b> (Team fills in #1 to #4)	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Points Awarded</b> (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	1 to 10	5. _____

To describe your Style presentation, briefly tell how it enhances the long-term problem solution. **Please print or type and use only the space below.**

**TOTAL STYLE SCORE =**  
(Maximum possible = 50)

# Material Values (Cost) Form

Team members must complete this form. Adults may help fill it out for Division I team members only.

Long-Term Problem \_\_\_\_\_ Division \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Name \_\_\_\_\_ Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State/Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Name of Item</b> (e.g. wood, fabric, etc.)	<b>Used For</b> (e.g. costumes, props, all areas, etc.)	<b>Value</b> (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.)

Coach #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Coach #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Coach #3 \_\_\_\_\_

Team Member \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday:

Team Member \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday:

Team Member \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday:

Team Member \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday:

Team Member \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday:

Team Member \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday:

Team Member \_\_\_\_\_

Birthday:

# Problem Clarification Form

To request clarifications by mail, use a separate form for each long-term problem. A problem clarification printout is sent to everyone submitting a Problem Clarification Form with or without a question. Use a copy of this form to request a problem clarification printout or to submit your questions. Send it along with a **self-addressed, stamped envelope** to: Problem Clarifications, CCI, 1325 Route 130 South, Suite F, Gloucester City, NJ 08030. **Please include your membership number on your return envelope.** Problem Clarification Forms must be postmarked no later than **March 1, 2003**, to be answered.

Membership Name \_\_\_\_\_ Membership # \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State /Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Country (If Not USA) \_\_\_\_\_ Person Making Inquiry \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Problem Name & Number \_\_\_\_\_ Div. \_\_\_\_\_

**Please print or type and number your questions.** Cite the location of the rule in question, for example, Problem 1, B.7.a. **Do not write on the back of this form, as you will receive only a copy of the front.** You may send additional materials; however, they must be marked with the team's membership name and number. Original forms, drawings or other materials will NOT be returned.

## QUESTIONS

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**REPLY ONLY. DO NOT WRITE IN THIS AREA.**

Person Replying: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Spontaneous Problem:*

# Destroyers

A. *When the team members enter the room, tell them this is a verbal problem.*

**B. JUDGE READS TO TEAMS:** (Do not read material in parentheses.)

1. You will have 1 minute to think and 3 minutes to respond. You may ask questions during your thinking time; however, time continues. No other talking is allowed.
2. You will receive 1 point for each common response. Highly creative or humorous responses will receive 3 points. This will be a subjective opinion of the judges, and the judges' decision is final.
3. Your team is to take turns in sequence. You may not skip your turn, or repeat, or pass. If one member of the team is stuck, the team is stuck.
4. Once the time begins, it will not be stopped. If the judge asks you to repeat a response, or to clarify it, or to give a more appropriate response, it counts against your time. Speak loudly and clearly.
5. Your problem is to name something that destroys something else and what it is that it destroys. For example, you might say, " Bombs destroy cities." (*Repeat number 5, "Your problem is . . ."*)

**C. FOR JUDGES ONLY:**

1. Be sure to give exactly 1 minute to think and 3 minutes to respond. Timing is critical. Students responding at the buzzer can finish and be scored.
2. Score: 1 point for each common response, 3 points for each creative response.

3. **Examples of Common Responses:**

*Physical things that are designed to destroy things:* Wrecking balls destroy buildings; Torpedoes destroy ships; Bombs destroy cities.

4. **Examples of Creative Responses:**

- ☺ Babies destroy disposable diapers.
- ☺ Revolutionists destroy existing governments.
- ☺ High tension wires destroy the scenery.
- ☺ Termites destroy houses.
- ☺ Poor reviews destroy Broadway shows.
- ☺ Hurricanes destroy beach homes.
- ☺ Falls on my rollerblades destroy my knees.
- ☺ A job poorly done destroys my faith in one's ability.
- ☺ A rainy day destroys plans for a picnic.
- ☺ Sweets destroy teeth.
- ☺ The ravages of time destroy paintings.
- ☺ Smoking cigarettes destroys lungs.
- ☺ Static on the radio destroys good music.

## *Spontaneous Problem:*

# Clay Improv

A. When the team members enter the room, tell them this is a combination verbal and hands-on problem.

### **PART I**

**B. JUDGE READS TO TEAMS:** (Do not read material in parentheses.)

- (1) This is a two-part problem. In Part I you will be given 3 minutes to think, discuss strategy, and create solutions to the problem. Part II will be read to you when Part I ends.
- (2) Once time begins, it will not be stopped. You may ask questions, but time continues. You may not talk to each other during Part I.
- (3) Your problem is for each team member to shape a piece of clay into one or more things. Each team member will create one solution to be scored.
- (4) Each of you has a number at your seat. When you are finished, or when Part I ends, each of you will place your solution on the table next to the number that matches your seat number and tell the judges what it is. The judges will score each solution on a scale of 1 to 10, depending on its creativity and originality. Scoring will be a subjective opinion of the judges.

*(Do not begin time for Part II until everyone is ready.)*

### **PART II**

- (5) You will be given 4 minutes for Part II. Once time begins, it will not be stopped. You may not talk to each other, but you may ask the judge questions. However, time will continue.
- (6) Each of you has cards numbered 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. You will take turns responding in order, beginning with the person on my left. You may respond to any solution for which you have a card. Before you give your response, you must give the judge the card whose number is the same as the solution's number. You may not exchange the cards.
- (7) Each team member will make one statement about each solution. You will receive 1 point for each common response. Creative or humorous responses will receive 3 points. This will be a subjective opinion of the judges and the judges' decision is final.
- (8) After each team member has responded to each solution, you may continue responding in order to any solution you wish. You must first indicate the card number of the solution you will respond to, then give your response.

### **C. FOR JUDGES ONLY:**

1. Be sure to give exactly 3 minutes for Part I. Timing is critical. Warn the team members when 30 seconds remain so they may finish working on their clay shape and respond to be scored.
2. Give each team member one piece of clay, approximately 2" x 2".
3. Before the first team enters, tape a number on the table in front of each chair.
4. After the team places its solutions on the table and says what each represents, each judge will score each solution on a scale of 1 to 10 points.
5. Make sure each team member has seven of each card marked 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. You may then begin reading Part II to the team.

6. Be sure to give 4 minutes for Part II. Before each response, the team member must surrender the card corresponding to the appropriate solution number. This will help you to prevent someone from giving more than one solution per problem. After each member has responded to each solution, the team may continue responding in turn to any solution.

7. Score: 1 point for each common response, 3 points for each creative or humorous response.

8. **Examples of Common Responses:**

*\*Similar objects:*



a marble, globe,  
tennis ball



cigar, cigarette



a bowl, a cup,  
a wok



coin

*Non-specific responses:* e.g., a piece of jewelry instead of a ring, a stick instead of kindling, an oval instead of an egg.

\* The first response on a shape should generally be scored as creative.

9. **Examples of Creative Responses:**



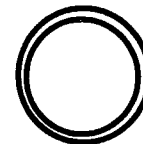
an egg



an "s" (additional  
letters/numbers  
would be com-  
mon)



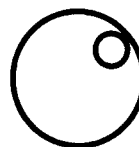
golf ball on a tee



ring for a giant,  
earring



a rocket



an olive



baton, walking  
crop, drumstick



pancake, coaster

## *Spontaneous Problem:*

# Decision Package

A. When the team members enter the room, tell them that it is a hands-on problem.

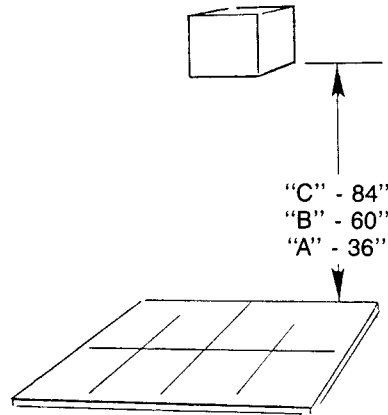
### **B. JUDGE READS TO TEAMS:**

1. You will have a maximum of 5 minutes to work on the problem. The faster you work, the more points you will earn.
2. You may talk to each other, but you must work at the table.
3. Once time begins it will not be stopped.
4. Your problem is:
  - a. You will be given an envelope with materials enclosed. You are to protect the lightbulb from breaking when tossed into the target box and dropped onto the bricks. If it misses the bricks, you must toss it again. If it breaks, you are to begin again; however, time continues.
  - b. You may select which target box you wish to toss your lightbulb into. At "A" you will receive no bonus points. At "B" you receive 25 bonus points. At "C" you will receive 50 bonus points.
  - c. A team member will toss the bulb. After the solution drops onto the bricks, the judge will remove the lightbulb from the materials and will then examine it to see if it is broken. If it is not broken, the judge will then thread it into an outlet to see that the bulb will light. Time will stop and the problem will be scored.
  - d. If the lightbulb breaks, you will be given another lightbulb and envelope with materials. Time continues and you may change your next height.
  - e. You may not attach or add any materials to the target box.
5. Scoring:
  - a. If you select the target box marked B +25, you will receive 25 bonus points only if the lightbulb doesn't break.
  - b. If you select the target box marked C +50, you will receive 50 bonus points only if the lightbulb doesn't break.
  - c. There are no bonus points for using target box A.
  - d. You will select height A, B, or C, and toss the bulb through the target box. Then, if the lightbulb lights and stays lit for 5 seconds, you will receive a 15 point bonus.
  - e. Speed counts for score. You will receive 1 point for each 5 seconds under the five minute time limit.

### **C. FOR JUDGES ONLY:**

1. Verify that the lightbulb is not broken before each team comes into the room.
2. Read Part A, 1-4 to the team. Before reading #5, Scoring, show the team the target box marked A 0, B +25, and C +50.
3. Be sure to repeat No. 4, "Your problem is."
4. After reading the problem a second time, give the team the envelope and begin timing.
5. After your lightbulb has been threaded into the outlet, stop the clock when it lights or is seated.

6. Give each team an envelope containing:
- one mailing label
  - one piece of 8 1/2" x 11" paper
  - one rubber band
  - one 12" piece of string
  - one paperclip
  - one 1" piece of tape which keeps the envelope closed



**SCORING: Example:** team selects B +25 and completes the task in 3 minutes and 12 seconds. The lightbulb lights and stays lit for 5 seconds.

1. Target box selected:

A -0- B -25- C -50-	}	successfully protected the bulb	+25 points
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2. The lightbulb lights for 5 seconds [] yes [  ] no +15 points

3. Time formula:

(a) Max. time: 60 x 5 minutes = 300 seconds.

(b) The team used (3) minutes and (12) seconds

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \underline{x60 \text{ seconds}} \\
 (180) \\
 + (12) \text{ additional seconds} \\
 \hline
 192 = \text{total seconds used}
 \end{array}$$

(c) 
$$\begin{array}{r}
 300 \\
 \underline{-192 \text{ total seconds used}} \\
 (108) \text{ divide, 5 seconds per point}
 \end{array}$$

(d) 21.6 (round to the nearest tenth) 22 points

$$\begin{array}{r}
 5 \overline{) 108.0} \\
 \underline{10} \phantom{0} \\
 8 \phantom{0} \\
 \underline{5} \phantom{0} \\
 30 \\
 \underline{30} \\
 0
 \end{array}$$

30 Total raw score = 62 points

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. Where is my membership card?

A. If the membership was prepaid, the card should be enclosed in the membership packet. If the membership was ordered by purchase order, CCI will send the card upon receipt of payment.

Q. If a membership has more than one team, how does each team get program information?

A. The membership provides CCI with the name of a contact person who is responsible for disseminating information to all teams. General program information can be found at [www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com) and at your association's Web site. In addition, anyone within the membership can subscribe to and receive the *Odyssey of the Mind Newsletter* at home for \$4 (see form in membership packet).

Q. How many team members must be on a team?

A. There is no minimum. However, we recommend that each team has at least five members. Teams may not have more than seven members.

Q. What division does our team compete in if one or more team members qualify for two divisions?

A. Consider the example of this seven-member team: Five members are 11-year-old 5th graders, which makes them eligible for Division I. One team member is 11 years old but in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. She too is eligible for Division I since *members* must compete in the lower division for which they qualify. However, the other member is 12 years old and in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Because she does not meet the criteria for Division I, she must advance to the Division II level. Hence, the team must compete in Division II, since a *team's* eligibility is based on the division of the oldest team member.

Q. How many teams can we have for one membership?

A. Anyone within the membership can participate in the Odyssey of the Mind, but each membership entitles you to enter one team per problem per division in official competition. You can have any type of competition in your school that you wish to determine which teams will compete at the official level.

Q. What happens if we have two teams in the same problem and division and both want to participate in an official competition?

A. Purchase a second membership at a discounted rate and identify that member as the same membership name followed by Team B. That second membership allows one other team per problem and division. In fact, you may purchase as many memberships as you like and name them Team C, Team D, and so on.

Q. Is Problem 5 now available to Division III teams?

A. Yes, as of the 2002-2003 program year.

- Q. My team has a question about whether something is allowed in our long-term problem solution? How do we find out?
- A. Go to [www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com) to see if the issue is addressed in a general clarification. If you do not find the answer there, you may submit a clarification via e-mail or U.S. mail on the Problem Clarification Form found in the *Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide*. All clarifications are answered within seven days.
- Q. We e-mailed our question to [clarifications@odysseyofthemind.com](mailto:clarifications@odysseyofthemind.com) but haven't received a response. What do we do?
- A. If seven days have passed since you submitted the question, double check that you sent your question to the correct e-mail address. E-mailed clarifications are replied to the address from which they were sent, so make sure that e-mail account is up and running. If you discover a typing mistake or a malfunction, resubmit your question, noting the previous error.
- Q. What is a spontaneous problem? When does my team solve it?
- A. The spontaneous problem is a short-term activity given to teams when they enter the competition room. Teams have no prior knowledge of the type of problem they will have to solve. It may be verbal, where it requires only verbal responses; hands on, requiring manipulation of materials; or a combination of verbal/hands-on. At official Odyssey of the Mind competitions, your team will be given a time to participate in spontaneous. You should arrive at the spontaneous competition area early, and when the judges are ready, they will call in your team. At that time you will learn of the type of problem you will have to solve, and you will decide which five team members will solve the problem. The judges will read the problem and you will have a limited time to solve it.
- Q. Can we replace a member who leaves the team?
- A. No. Once a name is added to your team roster, it must remain there. If your roster exceeds seven team members, even if you have only seven active team members, you will be assessed an Outside Assistance penalty.
- Q. Whom do I contact about training and tournament information?
- A. Someone within your association should contact you. However, contact information for your association director can be found in the membership packet, and most associations have a Web site and e-mail link, which is accessible through [www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com).
- Q. Are there any materials available to help our team prepare for competition?
- A. Yes. Information about team training can be found in Chapter I of the *Program Guide*. CCI also has available a *Coaches Training Video* and several publications featuring practice problems. You can find an order form at [www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com) and in the *Odyssey of the Mind Newsletter*.
- Q. Are educational scholarships available through Odyssey of the Mind?
- A. Yes. Your membership packet includes a Scholarship Application form. Feel free to duplicate it and distribute it to current and former participants.