



Odyssey of the Mind®

Newsletter

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PROBLEM SOLVING — YES WE CAN!

Odysey of the Mind teaches children invaluable lessons about creativity, problem solving, and teamwork while instilling in them the knowledge that they can accomplish anything they put their minds to.

Imagine how many fascinating or truly indispensable inventions would never have happened if great minds were made to believe that they “can’t” do something or that an invention was impossible. Having tools like creative problem-solving abilities and teamwork can do little without the feeling of empowerment that comes from the “yes we can” attitude.

We can now communicate instantly with people from around the world. We can live in buildings that reach previously unimaginable heights. We can travel quickly in airplanes and can even travel in space and to other planets. We learn more everyday about our Earth using NASA satellites that can actually take pictures of our planet from space. New cures to diseases are discovered; prosthetics technology is becoming more advanced, and organ transplants more successful. All of these advances happened because someone had the confidence to explore ideas previously thought to be impossible.

Fortunately, the word “impossible” is not in an Odyssey of the Mind team’s vocabulary. This is the same attitude that has propelled technological advances throughout history.

“We often hear stories from parents that are surprised at just how much their children have accomplished. They start the school year worried that the problems are too difficult, but in the end they are always surprised and proud of their children’s ideas and blossoming creativity,” said Program Director Sam Micklus.



Association Director Allen Ball recently had a pleasant reminder of this very concept with a story from one of his new Tennessee teams. Its school had little to no enrichment programs and even less funding. Only students living below the poverty line or currently failing at least one subject in school were eligible to attend.

Others who thought the students wouldn’t be able to handle solving an Odyssey problem discouraged the teacher who brought the program to the school. She pushed the students to continue and they chose to solve *As Good as Gold...berg*. After much hard work, they ended up placing in the state tournament.

“I cannot tell you what a special day it was for our team. This is an event they will remember for the rest of their lives. For some it was the first time they had won an award or some it was a first to travel, for others it was an amazing self-awareness exercise, but for our whole team it was truly an honor and something we will always cherish. My kids are so inspired by what they saw, felt, and learned today,” the team’s coach said.

This is just one example of what happens each year with Odyssey students around the world. They learn that their ideas have value – especially the “crazy” ones. Ball saw those same qualities in his team, “They were told they could never succeed, that they should just give up so as not to embarrass themselves. Boy did they ever prove those people wrong.”

And as we see everyday, those crazy ideas — and self-confidence in them — are what push society to new, even greater heights.

“My kids are so inspired by what they saw, felt, and learned today.”

Also in this issue . . . 2. MAX MANSFIELD AWARD * GREAT MINDS * 3. 2011-2012 PROBLEM SYNOPSIS
4. WORLD FINALS COACHES PROBLEM * 5. 2011-2012 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION * 6. NEW PRODUCTS

Max Mansfield Memorial Award Winner Announced

California is this year's award winner for membership growth. It has steadily increased for the past eleven years.

Association Director Richard Price believes it is important to grow Odyssey of the Mind memberships for multiple reasons, but especially because it's good for students, "most importantly, growth means that there are more and more kids participating in and learning important skills from the program, therefore growing their potential as well."

While the association attends numerous conferences to present Odyssey of the Mind to potential new schools and/or parents, Price believes the key to increasing memberships is by keeping the current members happy.

"The best way to bring more memberships is by word-of-mouth, which is best done by coaches. That means it is critical that we put on good coaches trainings and run a smooth tournament that emphasizes fun. If the kids and the coaches have a good time, they will spread the word favorably."

This approach has worked well for California with a its membership numbers steadily climbing.

"Winning this award feels great — certainly not because of anything I did personally, but because I get to share it with all of the Regional Directors who are the real strength of the program," said Price.

Creative Competitions, Inc. created this award in honor of Max Mansfield and rewards membership growth.

Max will always be remembered as someone who selflessly volunteered for Odyssey so that as many people as possible could experience creative problem solving. This award is CCI's way to honor his years of dedication and hard work as well as all Odyssey associations attempting to do the same.



Great Minds

AUGUSTIN MOUCHOT'S SUN ENGINE

While we may never power our cars with mousetraps, there have been many innovations in what types of power we do utilize. One that continues to fascinate inventors is solar energy — which is not as recent as most think.

The first patent for a solar-powered vehicle was created in the 1860's by French teacher and inventor **Augustin Mouchot**.

In the 1800's the trains that France depended on ran from steam created by burning wood or coal. Mouchot believed there was a way to harness energy from the sun to make steam and allow for a less costly, unlimited fuel for trains.

One of his most successful inventions was unveiled at Napoleon III's **Great Exhibition of 1867**. This exhibition was a celebration to showcase all of the most modern technologies from around the world. Many attendees were amazed at inventions such as the rocking chair sent from America or products from Britain made out of a newly-utilized lightweight metal — aluminum. A huge crowd gathered at Mouchot's "solar engine" device. It had a huge light-capturing apparatus that could gener-

ate enough steam to power a small engine. In his book, *The Power of Light: The Epic Story of Man's Quest to Harness the Sun*, Frank Kryza said of the device, "When Mouchot put it on display, the reaction was one of stupefied amazement — a motor that ran without fuel, on nothing more than sunbeams! It struck observers as bizarre — even magical."

Mouchot won a first place medal at the exhibition and received funding from Napoleon himself to continue his work. Through the years he refined his ability to power engines with solar energy by inventing ways to concentrate solar heat and capturing it in a glass globe. By combining these two concepts, his devices became smaller and more efficient.

While the use of Mouchot's devices never became widespread, he discovered many other ways to help others with his inventions. He created a solar cooking device and a way to distill water with solar energy. These inventions were used by French and others in need of clean water and power.

In his years of experimenting with solar energy, he came across many obstacles, but never gave up his belief that his idea was plausible. He struggled with size and practicality of his inventions, pessimism of others, funding, and even war. Through all of it, he continued his work and many of his theories and inventions paved the way for future developments. Even today, scientists continue to innovate the use of solar power with his ideas.

As the world changes, surely the energy we use for transportation will also have to evolve. Fortunately, there will be many more great minds interested in vehicle power that are well-prepared to take on this challenge!

2011-12 Long-Term Problem Synopses*

**Tentative as of April 15, 2011. All problems have an 8-minute time limit.*

Problem 1: Ooh-Motional Vehicle

The problem requires teams to design, build, and drive a vehicle that will travel a course where it will encounter three different situations. The vehicle will display a different human emotion for each encounter and one will cause it to travel in reverse. The team will create a theme for the presentation that incorporates the vehicle and the different emotions. The emphases will be on the technical risk-taking and creativity of the vehicle's engineering for travel, and change of emotional appearance.

Divisions: I, II & III. Cost limit: \$145.

Problem 2: Weird Science

The team will create and present a performance about a team of scientists on an expedition to uncover the cause of mysterious events. The team will select the location of the expedition from NASA Earth Observatory Photographs to be posted at http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/odysseyofthemind/event_selector.php. The scientists will collect two samples and will report on their findings. The performance will also include a technical representation of the mysterious events, a moving backdrop that helps portray traveling, and a team-created device that the scientists use on the expedition.

Sponsored by NASA.



Divisions: I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: \$145.

Problem 3: Classics . . . To Be or Not To Be

In this Classics problem, teams will put a musical theatre spin on one of William Shakespeare's most famous lines: "To Be Or Not To Be." Hamlet, the title character, ponders this question and realizes that the easy way out is not always the correct choice. An original "Hamlet" character will face a team-created dilemma. Unlike Shakespeare's Hamlet, the team's character will take the easy way out only to discover that it was the wrong choice. Teams will also incorporate a character that portrays Hamlet's conscience, a creative scene change, a creative costume change, and use of a "trap door." A portion of the performance will include musical theatre elements.

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

Problem 4: You Make the Call

For this problem, teams will design and build a structure made of only balsa wood and glue that will balance and support as much weight as possible. The structure may have a maximum weight of 9 grams and will receive 2 times the weight held, or 12 grams and receive 1 ½ times the weight held, or 15 grams and receive the actual weight held. The testing of the structure will be presented in a performance that includes mathematics in its theme.

Divisions: I, II, III & IV. Cost limit: \$145.

Problem 5: Odyssey Angels

The team will create and present a performance where a group of students travel throughout one or more team-created places where they encounter negative situations. These "Odyssey Angels" change what they find and turn them into positive situations. On their journey, they help two individuals with different problems and help save an entire community from a bad situation. One Odyssey Angel cannot speak, and another has a special team-created power.

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

Primary Problem: Hide and Peek

The team is to create a device that uncovers three surprise objects by lifting a team-decorated container off of each of them from 5, 8, and 10 feet away. The containers may be raised at any time, in any order, and may be raised simultaneously. The demonstration of the solution will be presented during a performance that integrates raising the containers and the surprise objects in its theme. There will be a narrator character and a setting.

Grades K-2. Cost limit: \$125.



COACHES & OFFICIALS PROBLEM

Closest to the Pin



A. The Problem

Your problem is to create a device that will propel a plastic golf ball through the air and into a target.

B. Limitations

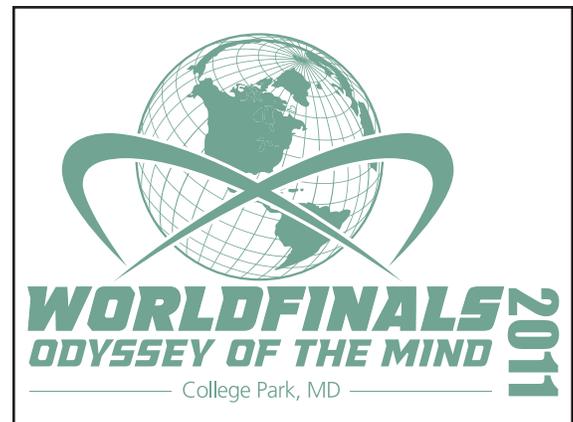
1. Your “golf club” device:
 - a. must be original, however, it may include commercially produced parts.
 - b. must propel a golf ball into the air from behind a line and have it come to rest in a target.
 - c. must be safe in its design and use. It must not include anything sharp that can harm yourself or others and must not be able to damage the floor. If it is judged to pose potential harm to anyone or the competition site, it will be prohibited. See *2010-11 Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide* pages 39-40.
 - d. must not cross the Start Line at any time.
 - e. may include indirect human power. For example, just like a golfer swings a club, you may provide energy for your device if you wish.
2. The target:
 - a. will be a 3-ft taped square.
 - b. will be 25 ft away from the Start Line.
 - c. will be resting on the floor.
 - d. will have a flag in the middle to represent the “pin” in golf.
3. The ball:
 - a. must be a lightweight plastic golf ball. You may use your own or you may use one provided at the competition.
 - b. will be at rest on an artificial grass surface, you are not allowed to move it by hand. For example, you are not allowed to load it into or onto your device.
 - c. must become airborne after being hit by the device.
 - d. must come to rest in the target.

C. The Competition

1. You will be assigned a number and given a ball when you register at the competition site.
2. After you receive your number, you will take a seat until a judge directs you otherwise.
3. Then, you will line up according to number with your golf club device and ball behind the taped line.
4. Hitting the golf ball:
 - a. A judge will blow a whistle to start the game of golf.
 - c. Competitors and devices must stay behind the taped line at all times after the official round begins.
 - d. Nothing but the device must touch the ball when attempting score.

D. Awards

1. You will be scored as follows:
 - a. The team who is closest to the “pin” will win.
 - b. In the event of a tie, the audience will choose the winner through applause. Bring your cheering section!
2. Trophies will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place.
3. A trophy will be awarded to the person with the most outstanding STYLE. In this problem, Style will be the appearance of the competitor and the golf club device. Every contestant is eligible, even those who place 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in competition.





ODYSSEY OF THE MIND® 2011-12 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Questions? Email info@odysseyofthemind.com or call 856.256.2797.

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

Check one:

Divisions I, II and III:

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

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

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

Grades covered by membership _____ School district _____ County _____

Contact person (may be a coach) _____

Mailing address (for newsletter delivery and correspondence) _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Zip _____ Country _____

Daytime phone _____ FAX _____ Email _____

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

- _____ **Individual 2011-2012 Odyssey of the Mind membership @ \$135**.....
- _____ **Additional membership(s) for the same school or community group @ \$100**.....
- _____ **6-10 memberships for the same school district (registered at the same time) @ \$120**.....
- _____ **11 or more memberships from the same school district (registered at the same time) @ \$100**.....

ODYSSEY OF THE MIND SUPPORT MATERIALS

- _____ **A Creative Experience** — Odyssey of the Mind promotional video DVD @ \$9.95
- _____ ***Lots of Problems . . And Tips to Make You More Creative @ \$17** tips on problem-solving
- _____ ****Creative Interaction @ \$17** Discusses the importance of interaction between students.....
- _____ ****Applying Your Creativity @ \$15** Discusses different types of human creativity
- _____ ****The Spirit of Creativity @ \$15** Anecdotes about OotM written by Dr. Sam.
- _____ **Spontaneous Combustion @ \$7.50** Booklet of problems and tips
- _____ **Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide @ \$7.50** (one is included with membership)
- _____ **Coaches Training Video @ \$20** DVD with tips and techniques for coaches.....
- _____ packs of **Balsa Wood** (premium grade AAA 36" x 1/8" x 1/8") @ \$20 per 50 pieces.....

** Spend \$40 or more and get free Shipping & Handling. Orders under \$40, add \$7.50 Shipping & Handling.
Contact CCI for S & H outside of the U.S.*

***There are no Shipping & Handling charges for membership packets.**

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

Subtotal _____
S & H _____
Total _____

Payment Method:

- **U.S. Mail:** Send this completed form along with a check, money order or purchase order, **payable to CCI**, or with your credit card info to:
CCI, 406 Ganttown Road, Sewell, NJ, 08080
- **FAX:** Send this form along with a copy of your purchase order, or include your credit card information and fax to **856.256.2798**
- **On-line:** If paying by credit card, go to **www.odysseyofthemind.com**
____ VISA ____ MasterCard ____ American Express ____ Discover

Acct. no. _____

Exp. _____ CVV (security) Code _____

Signature of cardholder _____

SHIPPING ADDRESS (For UPS Delivery)

Is this a residence? _____ yes _____ no

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Address _____

City _____ State/Prov _____

Zip _____ Country _____



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c/o Creative Competitions, Inc.

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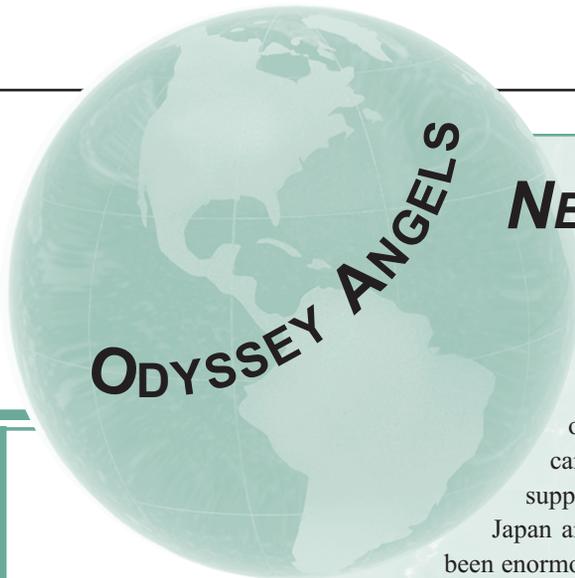
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*Hey Teams,
It's that time again! Renew your
membership now and be one of the first
to get next year's long-term problems.
Your friend,
OMER*

The Odyssey of the Mind Newsletter is published by Creative Competitions, Inc.



NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

Odyssey of the Mind is fortunate to have members that are not only creative, but also caring. The outpouring of support for those suffering in Japan and around the world has been enormously generous.

The Odyssey Angels program is inspired that so many are willing to reach out to help others in need. It hopes that participants will approach their communities with the same zeal when planning their Odyssey Angels project.

Unfortunately, there are often people or organizations suffering that would not otherwise be recognized by the world stage. This is where the Odyssey Angels program can help.

Participants will be able to uplift communities in need. Perhaps there is a family suffering from its own personal tsunami that is homeless, sick, or in need of aid — what better way for students to see their charitable actions benefit others first-

hand? They will be able to see direct results of their hard work and creative ideas.

As a reminder, the Odyssey Angels program will be unveiled this summer — so now is the chance to take note of someone that could benefit from a creative, caring friend. Joining the program is not only your chance to become someone's hero, but an opportunity to improve your community while using your creativity!

There are no limits to who or what you choose to take on — as long as you are helping someone in your community. There are also no limits as to who can be an Odyssey Angel as long as one person in the group is an Odyssey of the Mind participant. Your group can have as many people as you wish. It could be a class project, a family activity, or a solo mission!



Be on the lookout for the release of the Odyssey Angels website this summer: www.odysseyangels.org.

Until then, please direct any questions to pressroom@odysseyofthemind.com.

"Creativity is the defeat of habit by **originality.**"

~ Arthur Koestler
Hungarian Writer