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Why Odyssey of the Mind is Good for Kids

The Odyssey of the Mind teaches students to learn creative problem-solving methods while having fun in the process. For more than twenty five years, this unique program has helped teachers generate excitement in their students. By tapping into creativity, and through encouraging imaginative paths to problem-solving, students learn skills that will provide them with the ability to solve problems -- great and small -- for a lifetime. The Odyssey of the Mind teaches students how to think divergently by providing open-ended problems that appeal to a wide range of interests. Students learn how to identify challenges and to think creatively to solve those problems. They are free to express their ideas and suggestions without fear of criticism. The creative problem-solving process rewards thinking "outside of the box." While conventional thinking has an important place in a well-rounded education, students need to learn how to think creatively and productively.

In the Odyssey of the Mind . . .

- Students develop team-building skills by working in groups of as many as seven students per team.
- Students learn to examine problems and to identify the real challenge without limiting the possible solutions and their potential success.
- The creative-thinking process is nurtured and developed as a problem-solving tool.
- Students of all types will find something that will appeal to them.
- The fun of participation leads to an elevated interest in regular classroom curricula.
- Teachers have a program to further provide students with a well-rounded education.

Who Participates?

Millions of students from kindergarten through college have participated in the Odyssey of the Mind. Since the Odyssey of the Mind eliminates the fear of criticism, even shy students are afforded the opportunity to open up and express

themselves. Students learn to work in teams. Each year, five new competitive problems are presented for the teams to solve. These long-term problems are solved over weeks and months. Some of the problems are more technical in nature, while others are artistic or performance based. Each long-term problem rewards "Style" in the solution. This helps teach students that they should not simply try to solve problems but take the next step of enhancing their solutions. The teams are invited to participate in competition and present their solution with other teams. At the competition, the teams are given an on-the-spot "spontaneous" problem to solve. The combination of long-term problem-solving, Style, and spontaneous problem-solving produces a confident, able student.

Age Divisions

Teams are formed by division and compete against teams in the same division and problem. Grade level determines the division for teams in the U.S. and in countries with an educational structure that corresponds to the U.S. Except for Division IV, teams from countries with a different grade system ("Other International") will have their division determined by the ages of the team members. In competition, each school membership may enter one team per problem for each division it covers. Community groups and home-schooled members may enter one team per problem.

The team must compete in the lowest division for which it qualifies. For example, if a team qualifies for Division II it cannot compete in Division III. The team member in the highest grade (U.S.) or the oldest (Other International) determines the team's division as follows:

- Division I -- Grades K-5 (U.S.): Less than 12 years of age on May 1, 2015 (Other International).
- Division II -- Grades 6-8 (U.S.): Less than 15 years of age on May 1, 2015 (Other International).
- Division III -- Grades 9-12 (U.S.): Oldest team member does not qualify for Divisions I or II and is attending regular school--not a college or university or anything similar (Other International).
- Division IV -- Collegiate for ALL TEAMS. 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.

High school students taking accredited courses do not qualify for Division IV. There is a division finder at [online](#) to use to determine the division of "Other International" teams for

Divisions I, II and III. No special exceptions will be granted to allow a team to change its division.

An International Extravaganza

The Odyssey of the Mind is truly a worldwide competition. Participants include teams from Argentina, Australia, Belarus, Canada, China, Czech Republic, DoDDS Europe, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Mexico, Moldova, Poland, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, South Korea, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan, and practically every state in the U.S. The annual Odyssey of the Mind World Finals is an event to behold. It embodies the international spirit of creativity!

Membership Costs

A member may be a school, a recognized community group, or a college or university. A membership fee is \$135 (U.S.). With each membership, you receive:

- Five long-term problems that are challenging, user-friendly, and cover a wide variety of subjects.
- One non-competitive primary problem, designed to introduce younger students to creative problem solving.
- An Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide, which provides coaching information, rules, sample spontaneous problems . . . AND MORE!
- The Odyssey of the Mind Newsletter, a quarterly publication loaded with valuable program information.
- The opportunity to enter official competitions.
- A chance to attend the annual World Finals.
- The opportunity to win educational scholarships.
- All mailings and program updates.
- Support services from International Headquarters.

Membership Savings

You'll receive the following discounts if you purchase more than one membership:

- Each additional membership for the same school or community group @ \$100
- 6-10 members from the same school district (registered at the same time) @ \$120
- 11 or more members from the same school district (registered at the same time) @ \$100

Referring to the Odyssey of the Mind volunteers:

"Behind each one of our finalists is a volunteer support network that can proudly claim to be one of those thousand points of light that I like to talk about." - George Bush, President of the United States

Odyssey of the Mind Associations

Typically, a chartered affiliate is a state, province, or country that holds a competition in that geographical area. It is headed by an Association Director. Teams advance from regional competitions to association finals, and the champions are invited to compete at the Odyssey of the Mind World Finals. Members not represented by a chartered affiliate may compete at the World Finals on a first-come, first-served basis. All Division IV teams compete directly at World Finals. Odyssey of the Mind International Headquarters provides support services and materials to its affiliates. These include publications and trained consultants to conduct workshops and training sessions, and videotapes to train judges. Odyssey of the Mind tournament officials are properly trained at judges workshops to ensure uniform standards at all competitions.

[Click here](#) to locate local contacts.

Odyssey of the Mind Problems

The problems are designed for competition, with scoring components and limitations, or rules to be followed. The long-term problems change every year. They fall into five general categories. These are mechanical/vehicle, technical performance, classics, structure and performance.

Mechanical/Vehicle

Teams design, build and operate vehicles of various size and with various power sources. Sometimes they drive the vehicles, and sometimes the vehicles perform tasks, such as overcoming obstacles or visiting other "countries" to retrieve artifacts.

Classics

The theme of this problem is based on the classical -- from literature to architecture to art. Whether it's writing an additional chapter to Moby Dick or bringing paintings to life, it's always a terrific learning experience.

Performance

In this problem, teams present performances that revolve around a specific theme and incorporate required elements. Past themes include "morphing" objects, animals that express human emotions, and originating folktales.

Structure

Teams design and build structures, using only balsa wood and glue. They test them by supporting and holding as much weight as possible -- sometimes more than a thousand pounds! Teams usually present a skit as part of the Style presentation.

Technical Performance

Teams make innovative contraptions and incorporate artistic elements into their solutions. They might be asked to write an original musical score to play on a "new" type of instrument, or to build a robot with human characteristics, or to perform tasks using a chain reaction of snapping mousetraps.

A Brief History

The Odyssey of the Mind has its roots in the Industrial Design classes of Dr. Sam Micklus, Odyssey of the Mind founder. As a professor at Rowan University in New Jersey (formerly Glassboro State College) Dr. Micklus challenged his students to create vehicles without wheels, mechanical pie throwers and flotation devices that would take them across a course on a lake. He evaluated them not on the success of their solutions, but on the ingenuity applied and the risk involved in trying something new and different. Students had fun. Word spread and the students' activities attracted attention from the local media. Soon, people on the outside wanted a part of the action. This public interest led to the development of a creative problem-solving competition for school children. The Odyssey of the Mind was on its way. Since then, Dr. Micklus's life has been happily consumed with developing problems for other people to solve. His rewards are in the joy and pride of the millions of participants who rise to the challenge of solving those problems.

[Register Online](#)

Odyssey of the Mind Video:

A Creative Experience (27MB) | [View](#) | [Download](#) |



Odyssey of the Mind® 2015 World Finals

| Teams | Media | MSU

Odyssey of the Mind® 2015 World Finals
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan
May 20 - May 23

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Over 800 teams from around the world will compete in the 36th Odyssey of the Mind World Finals. The competition emphasizes creativity and teamwork and has grown into the largest international creative problem-solving competition worldwide.

Millions of kids have been working hard all year perfecting their solutions to OotM problems and competing within their regions and states. Only a few will advance to World Finals — these teams represent the best of the best creative minds.

While the competition is fierce, there is also a feeling of camaraderie among competitors. Many students form life-long friendships that span the globe. At World Finals, teams have the chance to learn about other cultures through a common goal . . . to be as creative as they can!

Best wishes to teams, coaches, and volunteers — have fun in Michigan!

Stay up to date with WF from OdysseyHQ on FB and Twitter

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June 5
2:00



Odyssey of the Mind® 2015 World Finals

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Tentative Schedule of Events

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- Souvenir Pre-orders
- Getting to Campus
- Team Stories
- Coaches Competition
- Fun Things to Do
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The tentative competition schedule will be posted April 30 for review. The final competition schedule will be posted May 4. Any scheduling questions/concerns during that time must be directed to: schedule@odysseyofthemind.com

Date & Time	Activity	Place
<u>Tuesday, May 19</u>		
noon -- midnight	Team Registration	International Center
<u>Wednesday, May 20</u>		
8 a.m. -- midnight	Team Registration	International Center
4 p.m. -- 6 p.m.	Coaches Meeting w/ IPCs	Wharton Cobb, Great Hall
7:30 p.m. -- 9 p.m.	Opening Ceremonies	Breslin Event Center
<u>Thursday, May 21</u>		
8 a.m. -- noon	Team Registration	International Center
10 a.m. -- 7 p.m.	World Finals Competition	
noon -- 5 p.m.	Creativity Festival	Jenison Fieldhouse
9:30 & 11 a.m, 12:30 & 2 p.m.	NASA E-Theatre	Aker's Auditorium
10 a.m. -- noon, 1 -- 5 p.m.	NASA Classroom Activities	Aker's Classroom, 134
7:30 p.m. -- 9 p.m.	Float & Banner Parade	Breslin Event Center
<u>Friday, May 22</u>		
8 a.m. -- 7 p.m.	World Finals Competition	
9 a.m. -- 5 p.m.	Creativity Festival	Jenison Fieldhouse
11 a.m., 2 & 3:30 p.m.	NASA E-Theatre	Aker's Auditorium
9 a.m. -- noon, 1 -- 5 p.m.	NASA Classroom Activities	Aker's Classroom, 134
7 p.m. -- 9 p.m.	Graduation/Coaches Comp.	Breslin Event Center
<u>Saturday, May 23</u>		
8 a.m. -- 4 p.m.	World Finals Competition	
9 a.m. -- noon	Creativity Festival	Jenison Fieldhouse
noon -- 4 p.m.	International Festival	Jenison Fieldhouse
9:30 & 11 a.m.	NASA E-Theatre	Aker's Auditorium
9 a.m. -- 1 p.m.	NASA Classroom Activities	Aker's Classroom, 134
7:30 p.m. -- 9:30 p.m.	Awards Ceremony	Breslin Event Center
9:30 p.m. -- 12:30 a.m.	Pre-teen Party	Cherry Lane Park
9:30 p.m. -- 12:30 a.m.	Teen Party	Cherry Lane Park
9:30 p.m. -- 1 a.m.	Coaches Recovery Party/Officials Party	Kellogg Center
<u>Sunday, May 24</u>		



**Odyssey of the Mind
2015 World Finals
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan**

May 20 – 23

Air Flights (American Airlines) ~ Approx. \$6,410.00

Baggage Fee's ~ Approx. \$650.00

Meals for traveling days ~ Approx. \$320.00

**Shuttle (Airport to Michigan State University) ~ \$50.00 round trip for
10 people ~ \$500.00**

Rooms & Food on Campus ~ \$5,550.00

**DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION FOR ROOMS & FOOD DUE APRIL 24,
2015**

2015 World Finals Total: Approx. \$13,430.00



Odyssey of the Mind

2015 World Finals

Michigan State University

East Lansing, Michigan

Registration Deadline April 24, 2015

Learners:

Noah Hinojos

Zachary Minyard

Jaci Inzer

Julia Hernandez Valls

Katlin Parrot Hammerman

Javier Pena

Jasmine Lopez

Falcilitators:

Elias Martinez

Heather Hull

Dean of Students:

Gerardo Ramirez