

**Mulberry
Middle
School**

2012-13 Odyssey of the Mind information newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 2

10/10/2012

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Hi parents!	1
What is OotM?	1
Commitment Dates	1
Benefits	1
Parent Commitments	2
The oh-so-EVIL "Outside Assistance"	2
Long-Term Problems	2

Commitment Dates for ALL Team Members

- Saturday December 8, 2012
- Saturday February 16, 2013
- Saturday April 6, 2013
- As many of the Wednesday after-school practices as possible, 3:50 - 5:30 PM

Hi parents!

Your student has shown interest in a new club at Mulberry Middle School called Odyssey of the Mind! This is a great opportunity for your student to have a creative adventure!

What is Odyssey of the Mind (OotM)?



Odyssey of the Mind performance

Founded in 1978, Odyssey of the Mind is an international, creative problem-solving program for students in kindergarten through college. Teams of 5 – 7 students will pool their diverse talents and

find innovative solutions to the “long-term problem” they choose (from a selection of 5 possible choices).

Teams will develop and practice their solution, which will be presented in 8 minutes or less at the regional competition Saturday, FEBRUARY 16th.

The judges will score their long-term solution on two factors: the overall **long-term** presentation and **style**. The long-term score is based on the creativity of the performance and the team’s meeting all the published requirements. The style points are earned for a piece of the performance

that the team picks, that they feel is particularly original. It might be a costume made entirely of recycled items or a prop that ingeniously serves multiple purposes.

Finally, the team will be scored on their **spontaneous** performance. On the day of the tournament, each team will enter a room and face a creative challenge never seen before. In the limited time provided they are judged according to the creativity of their answers and their teamwork.

Benefits

What Odyssey of the Mind really means to team members is creative learning, building new skill sets, working as a team and having FUN! Team members each get to showcase their creative flair and unique abilities and build upon everyone’s ideas

to enhance their solutions. Odyssey encourages participation and innovative thinking and the team environment gives everyone a chance to have his or her ideas heard.

Odyssey also inspires:

- Complex technical and artistic problem solving

- Intellectual curiosity
- Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills Communication
- Problem Solving & Creative and Critical Thinking
- Self-Direction
- Authentic Assessment Accountability and Adaptability

Parent Commitments

Parents must commit to pick up their student at 5:30 on the Wednesdays we have team meetings. Each team member must also have an adult commit to at least **one** of the following:

- ⇒ Selling a \$25 ad for the competition program.
- ⇒ Help work the day of the competition - Feb 16th (2 hr shift) - might include sales, registration, or hospitality *THE TEAM MUST HAVE 2 WORKERS*
- ⇒ Help judge the competition

- Feb 16th - might include any of the 5 long-term problems, the spontaneous problem, or working in the scoreroom *THE TEAM

MUST HAVE ONE JUDGE*

- ⇒ Once a month bring snacks for team meetings
- ⇒ Assistant coach
- ⇒ Teach skills to team (carpentry, mechanics, construction, sewing, painting, script writing techniques, architectural design etc.)

- ⇒ Make a financial contribution to the team



OotM is a creative problem-solving program for students.

“Outside Assistance” (this is bad... very, very bad...)

Coaches and parents can always ask questions that get the team members to think about their solutions and how to improve them. However, they may not ask questions in a leading way, e.g. "Don't you think it would be better to narrate your play, rather than act it out?" The correct way to state the

By asking broad questions, the coach and parents stimulate the team members to think.

question would be, "What are some other ways you could present your play?" By asking broad questions, the coach and parents stimulate the team members to think. This is the heart of the Odyssey of the Mind program. Because coaches and parents never want to place a

team in jeopardy due to their own misinterpretation of what Outside Assistance is or isn't, Odyssey of the Mind Association was recently asked to clarify just what does and does not constitute Outside Assistance in various scenarios. I will be sending home some of these scenarios after our next meeting (Issue 3 of our newsletter) so please discuss this important topic with your student.

2012-13 Long-Term Problem Synopses

Problem 1: Design, build, and run three vehicles that will deliver parts to an Assembly Area. A signal lets the audience know which vehicle is about to travel and deliver a part. The parts will be assembled into a pet animal. Once assembly is completed, the animal will perform a trick.

Problem 2: Create and present an original performance that includes a technical representation of messages being sent by email. A Sender character will send three emails: one that requires a return receipt, one with a work of art as an attachment, and one that goes through a SPAM filter

Problem 3: Create and present an

original performance that includes a replica of a documented architectural structure that was built between 1,000 AD and 1,600 AD. The performance will include three works of art that “disappear” and two characters that go on a quest to find them. The performance must also include two songs that are accompanied by some type of choreographed movement.

Problem 4: Design and build a structure made of only balsa wood and glue that will balance and support as much weight as possible. Before weight placement begins, the team will present a commercial that includes the structure rolling

down a ramp. The structure will be scored for how far it rolls and for how much weight it holds.

Problem 5: Create and present an original humorous performance that includes two characters that act naturally — to them — but odd to those around them. One scene will establish the “normal” behavior of one character that, at some point in the performance, finds itself among others who react to the out-of-place behavior. The other character’s behavior will stand out too, but this character will end up in a setting where its odd behavior is considered normal.