



It's a Michigan Odyssey!

Odyssey of the Mind

What is Odyssey of the Mind?

Odyssey of the Mind is an international educational program that provides creative problem-solving opportunities for students from kindergarten through college. Kids apply their creativity to solve problems that range from building mechanical devices to presenting their own interpretation of literary classics. They then bring their solutions to competition on the local, state, and world level.

How is the competition run?

There are two aspects to the competition. The first a long-term problem that teams will work on for several months leading up to the competition. These problems might involve making something or writing and acting out a performance. Attached are the 2009-2010 problem synopses. They may also be found online at:

<http://www.odysseyofthemind.com/materials/2010synopsis.pdf>

The second part of the competition is a spontaneous problem in which the team will be asked to creatively solve a problem on the spot.

Who can participate?

All students are welcome to participate. The competition is broken down into the following divisions:

Primary: K-2 (this division is non-competitive and not scored)
Division I: 3-5
Division II: 6-8

Students from multiple grades can be on the same team but they will compete in the division of the oldest student.

What time is the team practice?

Once the teams are formed, parents will be contacted to coordinate a meeting time and location that will work for those families.

How can I help?

There are two ways you can help our St. Patrick School Odyssey of the Mind teams.

First, we encourage parents to consider helping coach a team or host meetings. The really fantastic thing about coaching a team? *No skill required!* That's right; it's actually even better if you don't know anything about the long-term problem question since you are not allowed to help.

Odyssey of the Mind has very strict guidelines about no outside assistance, meaning the team cannot be directed or critiqued by anyone off the team. Any outside assistance must be declared prior to competition, and the team is penalized. The main role of the coach is to encourage active participation by all team members, take notes for the team if requested and ask open-ended questions to jumpstart brainstorming.

The second way you can help is to be a judge on competition day. Each team is required to provide a judge for the regional competition. The judge must attend a training prior to the event and be available all day for the regional competition. The judge will not have the opportunity to see the team perform since they will be assigned to a different event for the day. If the team advances to the state competition, the judge may be asked to judge then as well.

How much does it cost?

There is also a \$40 fee for each team to compete in the regional competition. Parents may be requested help pay this fee if alternative funding is not available. Depending on the team size, this will be at most \$8 per student. If your child would like to participate but the fee poses a problem, please contact the school to make other arrangements. This information will be kept strictly confidential.



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IMPORTANT!!!

Odyssey of the Mind only allows "7 brains" to touch a problem. Once a student has looked at the full long-term problem, they cannot be replaced even if they decide later not to compete. Instead, if a team member drops out, the team must compete a member short. Please keep this in mind as your child(ren) decide whether to compete and which event to request. Every effort will be made to honor problem choices. Thank you!

___ Yes! I would like to compete in the Odyssey of the Mind regional event.

Name _____ Grade _____

Requested Problem: First Choice _____

Second Choice _____

Third Choice _____

Preferred Meeting Time _____

Parent Name _____

Parent Signature _____

Comments/Suggestions _____

Please call Maryalene LaPonsie at 897-5942 with any questions.