Eastern Region – North Carolina Odyssey of the Mind

Tech Skills Fair Saturday, November 8, 2014
Brainstorming and Time Management

Brainstorming basically means ensuring that everyone's ideas are obtained and valued! It is a way to ensure that the most ideas are considered before making final decisions – this is important for your long-term problem! **Time management** is important for your long-term and spontaneous problems (and for life in general)!
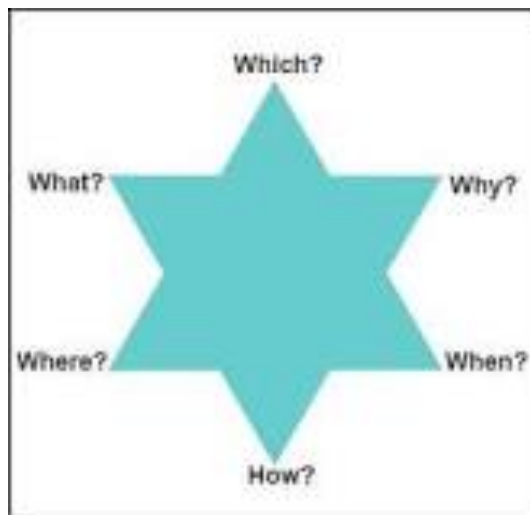
Ground rules for brainstorming:
1) Withhold judgment (if someone says something you do not agree with, no comment; if they say something funny/creative, feel free to laugh/enjoy)
2) Give wild ideas, the wilder the better
3) Quantity of ideas counts!
4) Piggy-back on the ideas of others

Approaches to brainstorming:
A) *Round table discussion* – all of the rules above apply: Question: **What can you do with the item on your table?** Go around the table and give your ideas…
   a. Now try this: – consider the component parts of the item (i.e., dissect it). Go around the table and try this approach.
   b. Now try this – SCAMMPER – Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Magnify or add, Modify, Put it to another Use, Eliminate, Rearrange, Reverse. Go around table, are answers richer?
   c. Now try this - Location Modification – move the answers to a new location such as the zoo, the kitchen, Antarctica, a Forest, Desert, the Moon, etc.
   d. Now try this - Provocation – state the opposite of another idea; where does that take you?

B) *Use sticky notes to collect LOTS of ideas* - instead of just yelling out ideas, we could have done each of these exercise with sticky notes or lists and then we could have moved them around and blended our ideas in related or unrelated classifications and groups. With the paper on your table, try listing on your own **What the item is and its special skills.** Compare your ideas. Blend your ideas.

C) *Use the Starburst approach to generate ideas* – Consider the Which? What? Where? When? Why? and How? questions. Could be used to consider the previous question (what item is and special skill).

Timekeeping – why it matters and what approaches you can use
   A) Long term problem – stay within 8 minute time limit or get penalty
   B) Spontaneous problems – most problems have time limitations. In particular, hands on problems and any problem that includes telling a story. Stories are better if they have a beginning, middle, and end
      a. Having a time keeper will ensure that your story has these components and will make for a better story for judging.
      b. Let's try: As a group, going around in a circle, you have one minute to think (on your own) and 3 three minutes to tell a story. I will start the story… **Elmo wasn't sure he could teach an elephant to play soccer…**