

# STYLE

How do I explain *STYLE* to my team and what is *STYLE* anyway?

- It's the icing on the cake!
- The extra mile!
- The "WOW" factor!
- It reflects the personality of the team!
- *Style* is defined by Odyssey of the Mind as "that which adds to the solution of the problem and relates to the nature of the problem or the solution but is not required to solve the problem."

The *Style* portion of your score is listed separately and is worth 50 points. Five numbered areas are scored with each being worth 10 points each.

*Style* is important in ALL problems, not just the performance problems. When discussing the problem with your team, you should determine strengths of each member and use these skills to solve the technical elements as well as the *style* elements.

For successful *STYLE* scores your team must:

- Be Creative in ideas and materials.
- Be interesting to watch and understand.
- Entertain the judges excite the senses.
- Incorporate the elements into a theme.
- Accurate Selection of the five *style* elements.
- Work together as a team.

## CREATIVE STYLE ELEMENTS

Creative *style* elements are things that the team members create. They are often tangible, but do not neglect items that you cannot "touch."

Some creative elements may be:

- Costumes: simple or elaborate
- Theme: dramatic or humorous
- Paint: on things, people or backdrops
- Auditory: songs, music, poems or rhythm
- Patterned Movement: dance, exercise or a march

There are endless possibilities for your team to showcase their own!

For fairness, remember there is a cost limit on the value of the materials used in the presentation of the solution at the competition. This includes the value of ALL items, except exempt items.

Become familiar with the problem. Read it often and discuss with your team to make sure they understand it. The specifics of your problem and *style* must work together! When choosing your style selections, make sure they are not being already scored elsewhere.

## **PAPERWORK: THE *STYLE* FORM**

Each long-term problem lists five style categories. *Style* categories 1-4 are either specific elements or free choice of the team. Category 5 is always “overall effect”, in which the team is awarded points for how well all the *Style* elements come together to enhance the presentation of the solution. Free choice elements cannot be scored elsewhere. Watch the wording. Be to the point on what the team wants scored, as judges can only score what is asked. For example, if it says clowns hair, only the clown’s hair can be scored not the make-up and the nose. Choose wisely and carefully and be concise.

- Discuss early and often about your choices.
- Be specific and describe as completely as possible.
- Remember the judges can only score what is specified.
- Make selections that clearly stand out!
- Choose area that will have maximum impact when compared to other teams, for example, all teams must have a membership sign. If you choose to have your sign scored for style it should be exceptional.
- The team should show their personality.
- Teamwork shows
- Make sure your style elements don’t look like they “have to be there” rather are there to enhance the presentation.
- Remember that style is not talent, but how your team uses its talent!
- Style may not win you a competition, but it can definitely lose one for you!

## **QUESTIONS COACHES MIGHT ASK THEIR TEAMS**

Remember there is no outside assistance. As a coach you cannot give ideas, but you can ask questions to “spark” the team members thinking. Here are a few you might try:

1. How is this related to your long term problem?
2. What do you mean by...?

3. Do you think any other team will think of this solution?
4. How would this benefit your solution?
5. Are there other possibilities?
6. How might you this be accomplished?
7. How else could this be accomplished?
8. What existing materials/items might you have that can be used in a different way?
9. What additional materials might you need?
10. Can you modify materials to suit your needs?
11. Can you explain how this idea will work?
12. What might happen if you combine your idea with someone else's idea?
13. If you were judging this problem, how would you score your solution?
14. What needs to be learned in order to accomplish this idea? For example, learning how to sew in order to make one's costume.
15. Can this be created without outside assistance? If not, what else could you do?
16. Are you respectful of other team member's ideas?
17. Do you feel like your solution is "in the box" or "out of the box"?
18. Can you think of a good field trip that would relate to your problem?
19. Have you considered where the points are?
20. Will it fit through the door?
21. Can it be transported easily?
22. How many team members will be needed to carry everything?
23. What is the survivability of this item?
24. If the performance is to be funny, is it?
25. Does it make sense? Does everything go together?

## **TIPS**

- Utilize team talents...use what you have...
- Attract attention with dramatic elements
- Use repetition to get the theme or point across
- Label characters in some way if necessary for clarity
- "When in doubt...throw it out"
- Video tape for team critiques. Tape often so the team can see their progress.
- Make contingency plans-Murphy's Law is alive and well!
- Make and bring an emergency tool/repair box.
- Arrange for your team to practice in a venue similar to the competition site.
- Require for your team to have their style presentation totally done at least one week in advance to allow for fine tuning.
- Practice timing.....then practice some more.

- Allow extra time for *style* in your presentation. Plan on using only 7 minutes of the allowed 8 minutes.
- Remind team members to be “proud” of their input and share with the judges when asked at competition.
- Last but not least.....Are we having fun?