

Printed handouts: example style form, example cost
Available to pass around: blank style, cost, OA

Introduction:

- Introduce self and co-presenters
- Goal of presentation: I want to give you all a good idea of how forms fit into an OM competition, the types of forms that are out there, what you need to know about filling out the forms, and some tips on how to make them easy on your team and possibly score some extra points.
- Why important: Forms won't make or break your presentation, but they're one of the best ways for a team to stay organized and communicate their hard work effectively to the judges. Well filled-out forms will help your team succeed.
- What are forms: Forms are document the team fills out *before* competition and gives to the staging area judge. They are required in each problem. There are two types of forms: general and problem-specific.
- Purpose of forms: Forms allow judges to understand performances more effectively and ensure teams are competing fairly.

Overview of types of forms:

- General forms: there are two general forms:
 - Materials value or cost form which teams used to itemize the cost of resources used in their presentation
 - Outside assistance form which teams use to self-report any outside assistance
 - Also, every team is required to have a team sign with some specific information regarding their school and team name
- Specific forms:
 - Style: each problem has its own unique style form with several scoring categories
 - Required list form: the majority of problems have a form where teams describe several of their scoring components and their theme. Balsa has a few unique categories on this form
- Clarifications:
 - General clarifications: clarifications released on the website
 - Team submitted clarifications: clarifications teams submit, usually unique to their solution

General forms:

- Cost (47-49): To maintain an equal playing field, each problem has a cost limit ranging from \$125-\$145. This cost is calculated from what materials are actually used in the presentation (not what was used previously or in practices). Anything that team members wear is counted. Leave \$5 of "wiggle room" in case judges are picky. Teams must fill out a specific form detailing how much they spent on different types of materials in their performance. Categories:
 - Cost:
 - What you actually paid for the item (on the receipt).

- Garage-sale value if used (use Ebay/Amazon/common sense to get estimation or go to a Thrift Store). Examples:
 - Drill in your garage - \$20 (shiny new DeWalt, maybe more like \$50 though...)
 - Nails from tool-chest - \$2 for the rest of the box
 - PVC pipe under house - \$5-10 for five long pieces
 - Remote controlled car from last Christmas - \$10
 - Assigned value: program guide lists several items which have assigned values of \$5 or \$10 like musical instruments, computers, smartphones, and projectors.
 - Exempt: program guide lists several items which are “free” if used for their intended purpose. Extension cords, batteries, trash.
- Outside assistance (49-50): teams must own their solution and not receive help from parents or coaches. There’s a specific session on Outside Assistance, but basically you can help guide the process of thinking or creating a solution, but you cannot help create the solution itself. All team members and a coach need to sign an Outside Assistance form. Please be honest on the form – judges will ask kids about their solution, and kids will tell judges the truth.
- Team sign: each team must have a sign so that judges and the audience can clearly identify the team. You need your membership number and membership name, though the name can be abbreviated. Many teams use creativity when designing their team sign to decorate it or make it into a prop. However, it must remain visible at all times or judges will assess a penalty.

Problem specific forms:

- Style (22-24): All teams fill out a style form. Each problem has two unique style items and two free choice of team. In the style session you’ll go through what makes a good style item in more detail. In writing up your style items, keep these tips in mind:
 - ○ For assigned items:
 - Don’t pick these items the night before the presentation. When building props and costumes, realize that the style items are specific (all trash or a specific character’s costume).
 - Build something unique, and put time into it. Good style items bleed into long-term scoring
 - ○ For the free choice of team:
 - You can’t score anything that’s already scored in the long-term problem
 - Judges score **WHATEVER YOU PUT**. Be *specific* in what you want scored. The team did a great job in painting the backdrops. Say “the artistic quality of the front of the backdrops,” not “the backdrops.” The later will include the support system, the tears on the edges of the sheets, and the stand (everything).
 - Ask me specific questions afterwards about good style items or go to the style session.
- Required: each problem has a “Team’s Required List Form” to give to judges which guides judges as they score. This form let’s judges know things like in what order certain

events will take place, who the characters are, and sometimes a brief description of the performance's plot. You want judges to concentrate on the performance and not constantly trying to figure out what's happening.

- Problem 1: description of vehicles and propulsion, obstacles, end signal
- Problem 2: engineer character and element of mystery, technical failure, seven tasks, devices and rubber bands, end signal
- Problem 3: theme, avatars, sounds, Power Meter, Hope (lots)
- Problem 4: none
- Problem 5: villain character, villainous acts, director character, team-created instrument, when trailer, begin and end of silent movie

Clarifications:

- General: on the main OM website general clarifications are posted throughout the year up until world finals (there are already some out now). Check every week if any clarification comes out for your problem and influences your solution. As a coach you can check and notify the team of a clarification, but you couldn't interrupt how it would impact them (just facilitate the discussion).
- Team-submitted: For any question you don't think is answered in the program guide, general clarifications, or problem, you can submit a clarification through the member section of the website. There's no penalty for a bad clarification; they will either say "look here" or they will give you a straight yes or no. USE CLARIFICATIONS - judges have to respect them when judging.

General tips:

- Timeline:
 - Finish your forms at least two days before competition. DON'T fill them out 15 minutes before. You can really lose points in style with poorly-worded items, and you don't want to stress your team out
 - Thinking about forms early gives team members some framework on solving all parts of the problem, especially with style and the required list.
- Electronic resources
 - I strongly encourage teams to hand in typed copies of forms. Not only are they easier for judges to read and understand, but typed forms allow for more room to write, document for future competitions or years, and are easier to make copies of.
 - The member site has digital copies of the style form and materials value form.
- Help from coaches
 - For division I, a coach can physically write or type up a form. However, for any division (including division I), coaches cannot assist in generating the content of the forms, picking style items, or choosing the elements described in the required list form.
 - Devote a significant part of one practice to choosing style items, talking through the required list form, and discussing any potential outside assistance. However,

I would recommend only 1-2 team members actually fill out the forms (she/he would be in charge and then present forms to staging judge).

- Tournament day:
 - Bring multiple copies of each form. At least 4 copies of style and required list, and I would bring at least 2 copies of outside assistance and materials value. In addition, I would create a whole other duplicate “backup” forms packet.
 - Have the forms ready to go when staging area judge asks for them. Don’t stress a team out by losing the forms. Division I coaches could even hold onto the packet until judge asks for it.
- Finding cheap materials
 - Meeting the cost requirement is difficult, especially for solution with lots of props and costumes. But that’s where team members get to be creative! Always try and find used items first (look in garages, attics, closets, etc.). Team members can ask neighbors if they don’t need a certain item anymore or offer to buy it.
 - Places to find cheap stuff:
 - Garage sales
 - Thrift stores (check several, especially for costume material)
 - Ebay
 - Scrap Exchange in Durham (Lakewood Shopping Center near Duke)
 - Keep stuff from previous years, especially more expensive items like screw, hinges, wheels, motors, PVC, etc. New one year is used the next!