



Maryland/DC Odyssey of the Mind

Verbal Spontaneous Problem: Pathways

A. *When the team members enter the room, tell them, “This is a verbal problem. All team members may compete. Those who choose not to participate must sit quietly in these seats (indicate seats) and watch or leave the room. They cannot participate in any way.”*

B. JUDGE READS TO TEAMS: *(Do not read material in parentheses.)*

- (1) You have 1 minute to think and 4 minutes to respond. You may ask the judges questions; however, time will continue. **You are not allowed to talk to each other at any time.**
- (2) Speak loudly and clearly. Once time begins, it will not be stopped. You may not repeat a response that has already been given.
- (3) **There are 35 tokens on the table. With each response, you will place one of the tokens in the container.**
- (4) **You will be finished when response time ends or when you have used all of your tokens.**
- (5) You will receive 1 point for each common response and 5 points for each creative response.
- (6) **Your problem is to name a road that someone walks down.** For example you might say “a kid walks down the sidewalk to school.”

(After reading the entire problem aloud, repeat the items in boldface. Begin by saying, “I repeat.”)

C. FOR JUDGES ONLY:

1. Judges should discuss and practice solving the problem before the first team competes. Make any necessary decisions and or notes. All decisions must be applied uniformly to all teams.

2. Practice reading the problem out loud before the first team competes. When reading to the team, illustrate the problem by indicating items and portraying actions.

3. Place two copies of the Team's Copy of the problem in full view of all team members before reading the problem to them. They may use them as a reference.

4. Randomly place 35 tokens on the table. Tokens can be small wooden blocks, poker chips, small rocks, large paper clips, etc. Anything that is easily picked up and placed in the container after each turn, but not something that distracts team members.

5. Place a container or two within reach of all team members. Make sure it is large enough to hold all 35 tokens. Make sure team members place a token in the container with each response.

6. No matter how many team members participate, there are still 35 tokens on the table.

7. Be sure to give exactly 1 minute to think and 4 minutes to respond. Students responding as time ends can finish and be scored.

8. Examples of Common Responses:

- General statements that do not have much improvisation.
- Statements that do not relate to the problem.
- Statements that relate to the problem but are not original/humorous.
- Statements that don't make sense.
- Statements similar to previous ones.

9. Examples of Creative Responses:

- Statements/improvisations that are original or humorous.
- Statements that incorporate the problem in an original way.
- Statements that use puns in creative ways

Note: Once a response is given, if the same or a very similar response is given, count it as common, but do not stop the team. Time continues. Do not ask teams to explain their answer, or to give a different response. You should only ask a team member to repeat a response if you didn't hear them.

Team Copy

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