



Maryland/DC Odyssey of the Mind

Verbal Spontaneous Problem: What's the Purpose?

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 will have 1 minute to think and 4 minutes to respond. You are not allowed to talk to each other at any time. You may ask the judges questions; however, time will continue. Each of you has paper and pencil. During think time, you are allowed to write down your ideas. You are not allowed to share your ideas.

(2) During response time you are allowed to refer to the list of responses that you created. You are not allowed to share your lists.

(3) There are 35 tokens on the table. With each response, you will place one of the tokens in the container. *(point to the container(s))*

(4) Speak loudly and clearly. Once time begins, it will not be stopped.

(5) You should not repeat a response that has already been given. A Judge may ask you to repeat an answer if it was not clearly heard.

(6) You will be finished when response time ends or when you have used all the tokens.

(7) Your problem is to look at the image *(point to pictures)* and say what the item in the image might be used for. For example, you might look at it and say "I use it to stir something."

(After reading the entire problem aloud, repeat the items in boldface. Begin by saying, "I repeat." After reading boldface items, say "Begin think time now." Then, for response time say, "Begin response time now.")

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 the picture and two copies of the Team's Copy of the problem in full view of all team members before you read the problem to them. They may use them as a reference during the competition.

(4) Also give each team member a piece of paper and a pencil to use during think time. If you see a team member not writing any ideas down, remind them that it could be helpful during response time. Team members are NOT allowed to talk in Part I and may NOT work on lists together.

(5) Place 35 tokens randomly on the table. Tokens can be small wooden cubes, small straws, poker chips, small rocks, etc. Anything that is easily picked up and placed in a container, but not something that distracts team members.

(6) 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.

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

(8) Be sure to give exactly 1 minute to think and 4 minutes to respond. Timing is critical. Team members responding as time ends may finish and be scored.

(9) Examples of Common Responses:

- Basic descriptions of the picture or obvious correlations.
- Statements or correlations that have little or no relation to the picture.

(10) Examples of Creative Responses:

- Unexpected or humorous responses.
- Use of puns or plays on words.

Team Copy

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