

# SPONTANEOUS & LONG-TERM PROBLEM PROCEDURES

*What to do when competing at an Odyssey of the Mind tournament.*

▷ **THE HOLDING ROOM:** you will see a Spontaneous competition time on the tournament schedule. Report to the area marked Spontaneous Holding Room 10 minutes before your scheduled time. One coach may accompany you. Here, one team member will register the team by telling the judge your long-term problem, division, and membership name and number. All of you will wait in the Holding Room until a judge escorts you to the competition room. Your coach will remain in a designated area until you are finished. If you haven't already decided, your team should decide which members will compete depending on the type of problem.

▷ **ENTERING SPONTANEOUS:** Every team member may enter the room; however, only five will compete. The judge will tell you the type of problem you will solve: hands-on, verbal, or verbal/hands-on. The members competing will go where directed. If your team has five or fewer members everyone must compete. Those not participating can stay and watch or leave the room. If staying but not participating, you must not talk, signal, or intervene. If that happens, you will be asked to leave while time continues.

▷ **STARTING SPONTANEOUS:** You will get a copy of the problem for reference. The judges will then read your problem aloud – be sure to listen carefully because each problem has its own set of rules. Then, the judge will say “Begin” and time starts. You may ask questions, but your time will continue. Judges will make every attempt to clarify the problem to make sure you understand what it requires; but, judges cannot help you solve the problem. Judges will also interrupt you if they cannot hear you during a verbal or combination problem.

▷ **THE FASTEST FEW MINUTES:** once you have finished your problem, leave the room quietly and meet your coach! While it is exciting to complete Spontaneous, it is important not to discuss the problem with others outside of your team until after World Finals. Spontaneous problems are not subject to the grievance process; but if you have a concern, someone from your team should ask to speak to the Spontaneous Problem Captain, who will then speak with the judges and the entire team, if necessary.

~Joy Kurtz, International Spontaneous Problem Captain.

**B**e sure to read these procedures before competing. Contact your local Tournament Director about site specifics such as height of ceilings, handicap accessibility, type of floor, etc. Read the problem carefully as well for any problem-specific procedures. Remember to relax, have fun, and be creative. Good luck!

▷ **THE CHECK-IN AREA:** location will be marked at your tournament. This is where you will meet at least 15 minutes before you are scheduled to compete. Bring everything you need to compete and your paperwork: four completed copies of the Style Form and Team list Form; and one copy of your Cost Form, Outside Assistance Form, clarifications specific to your solution, and any other paperwork listed in the long-term problem. Remember, if you don't have your Team List Form, there will be extras on hand.

▷ **THE STAGING AREA JUDGE:** will check that your paperwork and membership sign is in order, that you are wearing foot coverings, and that your props are safe to use. The SA Judge will pass your paperwork to the Timekeeper, who will then pass it on to the rest of the judges. Feel free to ask questions! The SA judge will also explain to your coach how and when to pick up your scores, and where to sit during the performance.

▷ **THE STAGING AREA:** is where you will wait to compete. Once the SA Judge finishes checking your paperwork, you must move all of your competition materials into this area as quickly as possible. (Depending on your tournament location, this may be the same place.) Others can help you; however, once everything is in the Staging Area, no one can assist you until your performance ends.

▷ **THE TIMEKEEPER:** will meet you in the Staging Area. The timekeeper will introduce you to the audience and ask that all cell phones and electronic devices are turned off. The Timekeeper will announce if you are allowing flash photography and/or video recording of the presentation. No one, including the Timekeeper is allowed to read a description of your solution, but you may do so during competition time if you wish.

▷ **THOSE MAGIC WORDS!** Once the clock starts and the Timekeeper announces “Team Begin,” you will have eight minutes to set up your props and present your solution to the judges. At the end of the eight minutes, judges will call “Time” unless you are in Problem 3 or 5. In these problems, the judge will call time after one minute of overtime. An overtime penalty will be assessed, but teams are still scored for items presented during that time. There is no overtime in problems 1, 2, and 4. All activity must stop at the end of the 8-minute time period.

▷ **WHEW...COMPETITION ENDS:** Once your presentation is over, the judges will meet with you to ask questions or ask for a demonstration. Here's your chance to show off any special aspects of your solution. Once you are finished, you must quickly clear the competition site, leaving it clean and dry for the next team. Others may assist you. Make sure to bring any clean-up materials you may need. There will be a three prong electrical outlet for use, but you must bring any extension cords or adapters as needed.

▷ **SCORES:** The head judge will review the team's raw long-term score and any penalties with your coach. After the review, coaches have 30 minutes to return if any questions arise.