

# How To Create Effective Odyssey of the Mind Style Elements

November 2012



# What Will I Learn?

- What is an OotM Style element
- How do I coach the team to develop effective style elements
- What else should I know



# What is an OotM Style Element?

- Style elements are intended to enhance the Long-Term Solution that your team will present
  - Cannot be something scored in Long-Term Problem solution
  - Opportunity to capture points for something the team creates that is not scored in the Long-Term solution but greatly enhances the overall presentation
- Style elements can be created from any activity your team members enjoy doing such as:
  - Creative writing
  - Performing arts
  - Artwork of any kind
  - Sewing or clothing design
  - Any creative endeavor
  - Building or making things
  - Science and technology
  - Humor
  - Song or Dance
  - Scene Transitions ( how the skit is constructed )



# How do I Coach Style?

- Read problem with team
- Have the team list all of the required long-term scored elements
  - These will convey the Creative Emphasis and Spirit of the Problem
- Brainstorming session:
  - Lead the team in selecting a general theme for their long-term solution (skit)
    - Almost any theme will work so long as the theme gets the team excited to create
    - Suggestion – theme should naturally accommodate a part or task that each team member is interested in doing
  - Lead the team in developing the story that will become their skit
    - The story should include all required elements
- Now ... Lead the team in brainstorming additional content for skit that would be fun to create
  - Original song lyrics or music
    - Have your team start by telling a story and morph this into a rhyme or rhythm
  - Building a clever backdrop or prop
    - Have the team discuss the use of (cheap) materials
  - Dialog or other spoken content that enhance the theme and story
  - Costume
  - Anything a team mate would find fun to do that enhances skit
- Have team explain any description of a Style idea with:
  - How it *ENHANCES* OUR LONG-TERM SOLUTION

Any of these  
Can be used  
As  
Scored Style Elements



# What Else Should I Know?

- Style category is worth 50 points out of the total 350 points available
  - 5 Style elements are each worth 0 to 10 points
- Style element scoring is subjective
  - Judges will assign a score in the range 0 to 10 points based upon their personal impression of how well each Style element enhanced the team's long-term solution
  - Usually 3 ( or more ) judges scores are averaged
  - Therefore, quality is important
- Style elements express each team's unique talents!



# Example Long-Term Problem

In Your Dreams, OotM Problem #2, 2005

- Long-Term problem required elements:
  - Create an original performance that includes a dream
    - Cheerful
    - Nonsensical
    - Nightmarish
  - Creative Emphasis
    - Nonsensical portion of the dream
    - Method used to create the sound
    - The monster
    - Team-created task
  - Spirit of the Problem
    - Present a performance about a dream that includes
      - Sounds
      - A monster



# LT Scored (Required) Elements

In Your Dreams, OotM Problem #2, 2005

	Item	LT Points	Element of LT Solution
1	Creativity of the Performance	1 to 20	Quality of the Story and Dramatic Presentation is Important
2	Quality of the Performance	1 to 20	
3	Cheerful part of dream	1 to 25	Creative Writing is Important  Story ( Skit ) has 3 distinct parts
4	Nonsensical part of dream	1 to 20	
5	Nightmarish part of dream	1 to 25	
6	Originality of monster	1 to 10	Technical Solution is Important  Greatest number of points are associated with technical elements
7	Monster change of appearance	1 to 10	
8	Monster picks something up	1 to 15	
9	Monster turns around	1 to 15	
10	Monster 1 <sup>st</sup> team-created task	1 to 20	
11	Monster 2 <sup>nd</sup> team created task	1 to 20	



# Workshop Exercise

In Your Dreams, OotM Problem #2, 2005

- Let's pick a theme and setting for the story
  - Theme should accommodate a 3-part story
    - Dream with cheerful, nonsensical, nightmarish parts
      - And enough characters to give each team member a part
- Let's describe the monster
  - It should be consistent with the theme
- NOW, let's add style elements
  - Should help to convey the theme
    - Song, Dance, Costume, Prop, Humor, Backdrop, ...
    - Specific examples from prior years:
      - *Out of the Box* → Bach's music theme → dress made with sheet music
      - Costume made of trash → Mad Scientist character's lab coat is mosaic of candy wrappers → pattern is periodic table of the elements





# Style Form Content

In Your Dreams, OotM Problem #2, 2005

- Style Element descriptions
  - BE SPECIFIC
    - Good → The RED and YELLOW costume ... ( judges immediately know which one )
    - Bad → Joey's costume ... ( judges don't know who Joey is )
  - EASY TO READ
    - Judges have only a few minutes to read so be clear & concise

	Item	Selection Criteria	How It Enhances Our Solution
1	Costume	Required by problem	
2	Appearance of Membership Sign	Required by problem	
3		Free choice of team	
4		Free choice of team	
5	Overall Effect	Required short paragraph that explains how our selected style elements taken together enhance our skit's theme	Our visual Style elements help to set our theme and our dramatic Style elements help to tell our story ...