



Odyssey of the Mind at Wolftrap

Call for student interest



What is Odyssey of the Mind?

Odyssey of the Mind (OM) is an international educational program that provides creative problem-solving opportunities for students from Kindergarten through college. Students apply their creativity to solve problems that range from building mechanical devices to presenting their own interpretation of literary classics. They bring their solutions to competition on the local, state, and world level.

How does it work?

Teams comprising 5-7 students and a coach register with the International organization to receive the year's five long-term problems. Every year the problem categories are: vehicle, technical, classical, structural and theatrical. Each team chooses a single long-term problem to solve. A sixth category (non-competitive) is available for K-2 students who may present their work at the regional competition, but it is not judged. Last year 3 Wolftrap teams competed and one team made it to World Finals!

What do students get out of this?

Students learn to solve problems with clearly defined goals. Producing a creative solution within the boundaries of the problem is emphasized. This kind of skill will last students a lifetime. OM also gives students an extra curricular activity that stresses teamwork and interpersonal skills. The team learns to work together to produce a problem solution. This leads to increased confidence in the ability to solve problems.

Odyssey of the Mind is appealing to students, teachers and parents because it combines technology and artistry, competition and cooperation, risk-taking and research, humor and analysis, individual talents and team-building. Most important, the children have fun and are encouraged to use their wonderful creative talents.

More information on the benefits and history is available at the Odyssey of the Mind website:
<http://www.odysseyofthemind.com>

Is there a competition?

Each March, teams have the opportunity to present their problem solutions in a competitive regional tournament. Qualifying teams may advance to State finals, and even to World Finals. Teams are judged in three areas: creativity to their solution of the long-term problem, the style in which they presented it, and the team's solution to a spontaneous problem

What is the time commitment?

The program runs from Oct.-Nov through March (or April if the team advances!). Generally teams meet once per week after school and then on some weekends towards the competition date in March. This is a team effort, so all of the kids are encouraged to take their participation seriously (and they will want to!).

What is the cost?

Each team has a project budget of \$125-\$145. In addition to this, there are extra costs each team might incur for t-shirts, snacks, etc. These total costs are divided among the families of each team (5-7 members per team) and generally run **\$50-\$75 per family**.

How can parents help?

So glad you asked. This program cannot be run without the help of parents. Most importantly, parents are coaches and co-coaches. Wolftrap will not be able to offer this program without volunteering parents, so please consider this great opportunity to work and have fun with your children. Other important opportunities include being competition judges, competition volunteers and, of course, moral support for the kids who are working so hard. Both the parents and kids find the program exciting and very rewarding.

How do I sign up?

If this program sounds interesting to you and your child, please contact:

Diane Long
tel. 703-865-6944
or email: dianeslong@yahoo.com