



## 2020-21 CABIN JOHN MIDDLE SCHOOL ODYSSEY OF THE MIND

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Registration: **<https://tinyurl.com/CJMS-Odyssey2020>**

### What is Odyssey of the Mind?

Odyssey of the Mind (OotM) is an international program aimed at developing creative problem solving skills in children of all ages (kindergarten through college). There are two general categories of problems: spontaneous and long-term. For spontaneous problems, children work as a team to solve a problem in a few minutes. For long-term problems, children work as a team over the course of several months to solve a more involved problem (see back for synopses of the long-term problems for this year).

Odyssey of the Mind is designed to align with STEM, Common Core, and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills initiative. The program encourages intellectual curiosity, teamwork, critical analysis of ideas, learning how to listen to one another, effective conflict resolution, flexible creative thinking, and on-stage performance skills. For more info: [odysseyofthemind.com](http://odysseyofthemind.com), and the Maryland state program website at [mdodyssey.org](http://mdodyssey.org).

### How does it Happen?

Success in the program depends on *innovation*, *parent volunteerism*, and *hard work*. Student members will learn creative thinking and must also expect to put a lot of effort into their long-term problem. The program is run entirely by parent volunteers. The OotM coaches (all of whom will be trained) will provide spontaneous problems and offer teaching in skills relevant to the program. However, work on the long-term problem is entirely team-driven – no one but the team members can generate ideas for solving the problem. Parents who do not serve as coaches can instead volunteer to help with many other necessary tasks throughout the year. Teams of 5-7

students will be formed based on grade level, interests, child preferences, and balance.

### When and Where

Program meetings for 2020-21 will be scheduled in consultation with the coach of each team, but are expected to be virtual and/or socially distanced, possibly for the whole season. The fall meetings will begin in October. Beginning in January, teams may add a few weekend meetings at parents' homes (depending on safe practices) to do additional work on the long-term problem for things like set and prop production. The Maryland State Tournament will be held on a weekend in late Spring (likely virtually by video submission, but possibly in-person). For any teams that qualify and decide to attend World Finals, those will be held either virtually or in-person at Michigan State University in May 2021.

### Who is Eligible?

All students are encouraged to participate. Middle school teams compete in Division 2.

### Cost

Fee is \$60, payable via PayPal (after registration and start of program). Fee covers team registration fees, t-shirt, materials for spontaneous problems, and other needs that arise.

### Sign up by Friday, October 9th

Please go online to register at:

**<https://tinyurl.com/CJMS-Odyssey2020>**

After that, we can only accommodate additional children if there are open slots. Signing up your child also indicates willingness on the part of at least one parent or guardian to help in one of the volunteer roles.

### Checklist:

- Contact coordinators promptly ([CabinJohnOdyssey@gmail.com](mailto:CabinJohnOdyssey@gmail.com)) if you are willing to be a Coach
- Sign up child online (no later than October 9)
- \$60 payment via PayPal or mailed check

## 2020-21 CABIN JOHN MIDDLE SCHOOL ODYSSEY OF THE MIND LONG-TERM PROBLEM SYNOPSES

### **Problem 1: OMer the ROMER**

OMers are always looking for new fun — and funny — experiences! Teams will design and build a ride-on vehicle that takes an OMer character on an adventure in search of humor. The vehicle will use stored energy as it is propelled forward and in reverse. At each stop, the vehicle and the OMer will react to something humorous before traveling to the next destination. The humorous performance will also include an unplanned stop where the OMer character takes a selfie, a creative physical representation of the selfie, and a vehicle-produced special effect.

### **Problem 2: Virtual Odyssey**

Creativity is boundless as teams create a performance that includes a Virtual Reality World. As part of the world, they will design and build various technical effects, which include changing something that is two-dimensional into three-dimensional. During the performance, a character will unknowingly enter the Virtual Reality World where it will encounter a nefarious creature. It will learn the rules of collecting credits in the virtual world as the odyssey progresses. Finally, the character will escape the “clutches” of the creature and earn the last credit that allows it to journey back into the real world. The team will also create a special effect indicating to the judges and audience when the performance goes into virtual reality.

### **Problem 3: Classics... OMER and the Beanstalk**

Storybooks come alive when a special bean grows into a magic “beanstalk” that takes a youngster into a storybook land. There, a creative host will guide them around as they meet different storybook characters and encounter objects from selected stories that exist together in this mystical land. Teams will use ARM & HAMMER™ Baking Soda to create works of art relating to the stories. A set piece or prop that grows or appears to grow and an original Life Lesson learned by the youngster in storybook land will be part of the performance.

### **Problem 4: It’s a Trap!**

Oh no, it’s a trap! Or is it? In this problem, teams will design and build a structure made of only balsa wood and glue, if desired, that holds as much weight as possible after it is used to trap a moving object. However, an oblivious character will unwittingly avoid traps it does not recognize in a humorous performance. The performance will also include a narrator character that alerts the audience to the action and the traps.

### **Problem 5: Superhero Socks: A Cliffhanger Beginning**

Get ready for a story that begins with a cliffhanger “ending.” A Superhero is in peril and needs help to escape. Just as all hope seems lost, the Superhero puts on a pair of Super Socks that give the hero a special power. The Superhero uses the power to escape and fend off an adversary who caused the cliffhanger situation. Teams will also create an extreme weather setting, a humorous character, and a sound effect that occurs whenever the character activates the Super Socks.