Primary Problem:

Stir the Pot
Stir the Pot  
Primary Problem: Grades K-2

Introduction
In many children’s stories beloved toys or objects magically come to life: Pinocchio, Frosty the Snowman, Velveteen Rabbit, etc. Often they have to learn how to navigate in the real world with the help of a friendly human. Now, teams get the chance to make their imaginations a reality by creating their own magic item that makes an object “come alive” — with humorous results.

A. The Problem

The problem is to create and present an original humorous performance about an object that comes to life when it is touched by something magical. While it is animated, the object will meet three other items that dramatically change its behavior. There will be a narrator character that explains what is happening and another character that becomes friends with the object. The performance will also include a team-created poem, song, or dance.

The creative emphases of the problem are on the performance, the object that comes to life, narrator character, and the poem, song, or dance.

The Spirit of the Problem is for the team to create and present an original humorous performance about an object that comes to life when touched by something magical. Once animated, the object will encounter three items that change its behavior. A narrator character will explain it all and another character becomes friends with the object. The performance will also feature a team-created poem, song, or dance.

B. Limitations (Italicized words/terms are defined in Glossary or in the 2015-2016 Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide.)

1. This problem cannot be solved without referring to the Program Rules section of the 2015-2016 Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide. No problem clarifications will be issued for this problem.

2. The time limit for this problem is 8 minutes. Time starts when the Timekeeper says, “Team begin” and includes setup, Style, and presentation of the problem solution.

3. The cost limit for this problem is $125 (U.S). The combined value of the materials used during the demonstration of the team’s solution, including Style, cannot exceed this amount. The Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide explains the cost limit and lists items that are exempt from cost.

4. The team will create an original humorous performance that includes:
   a. an object that comes to life when it touches something magical.
   b. three items that change the animated object’s behavior.
   c. a narrator character that explains what is happening.
   d. a character that becomes friends with the animated object (friend character).
   e. a team-created poem, song, or dance.

5. The required object that comes to life:
   a. may be portrayed in any way.
   b. will come to life when it touches something magical. It is not allowed to be portrayed as alive (animated) before it touches something magical.
   c. does not have to remain in contact with something magical to remain alive. The performance may portray that it comes to life or stays alive in any way after it touches something magical and comes to life.
   d. must return to its original state (inanimate) at least one time in the performance.
   e. will change its behavior each time it encounters three other items. The changes of behavior:
      (1) may be portrayed any way the team wishes.
      (2) must be observable.
      (3) must be different for each of the three items.
      (4) does not have to be caused by touching the three items. It may be through contact, sight, or any other type of encounter the team wishes.

6. The three items:
   a. may be anything the team wishes — animated or not animated or any combination. Team members in costume are allowed.
   b. must be encountered separately in the performance to receive score in D4a. It is allowed to encounter them in groups but those encounters will not count for score in D4a.
   c. must be three different items that cause three different changes in behavior.
7. The narrator character:
   a. will explain what is happening including what will cause or caused the object to come to life.
   b. will indicate to the judges and audience when the animated object is about to encounter or has encountered each of the three items that change its behavior.
   c. may play a role in the performance in addition to providing the narration (except for the character in B8).
8. The friend character:
   a. may be portrayed as anything and in any way the team wishes.
   b. will become friends with the object that comes to life.
9. The poem, song, or dance:
   a. must be an original creation of the team. Only one (poem or song or dance) will be scored in D7.
   b. can be performed any time during the performance.
   c. can be of any length.
   d. must be presented so the judges and audience can observe it.
10. The team should present the Staging Area Judge with four copies of a list on one side of one or two sheets of 8-1/2" x 11" or A4 paper. This list must be hand-printed, typed, or computer generated and must include:
   a. the team’s membership name and number, the problem and division.
   b. a brief description of the object that comes to life and what it touches to come alive.
   c. a brief description of the three items the animated object encounters that change its behavior.
   d. a brief description of the three changes of behavior.
   e. the friend character to be scored in D6.
   f. a brief description of the poem, song, or dance and when in the performance it will occur.
   g. the signal the team will use to indicate it has finished its performance.

C. Site, Setup and Competition
1. A stage or floor area a minimum of 7’ x 10’ (2.1 m x 3 m) will be used, but a larger area is desirable. This will not be marked. Teams must be prepared to perform in a 7’ x 10’ area. If space permits, the team may perform and/or place equipment, props, etc. outside the 7’ x 10’ area. If a drop-off exists beyond the 7’ x 10’ dimensions, a caution line may be taped 30” (76.2 cm) from the edge of the drop-off. This will serve as a warning, not a boundary.
2. All props must be provided by the team. If teams are to demonstrate their solutions at a tournament, the Tournament Director will advise them if any standard items, such as tables and chairs, will be available. (Teams wishing to present their solutions at a competition must make arrangements with the Tournament Director in advance of the competition date.)
3. Team members will remain in a Staging Area until the judge says, “Team begin.” It will be the team’s responsibility to complete the problem solution within the 8-minute time limit. The team must give a signal when it is finished. Exceeding the time limit will result in Penalty #6.
4. Prop disassembling and cleanup can be done after time ends.

D. Scoring
Although there is no judging or scoring for this problem, teams should be aware of the types of categories that would most likely be scored if this were an Odyssey of the Mind competitive problem. Coaches are encouraged to review these categories with the team to evaluate how well the solution matches up with the sample scoring.

1. Creativity of the overall performance (originality, effectiveness) ...................................... 1 to 20 points
2. Quality of the performance (audibility, movement, stage presence) ...................................... 1 to 20 points
3. The object that comes to life ........................................................................................................ 2 to 35 points
   a. Touches something magical and comes to life ................................................................. 0 or 5 points
   b. Returns to its original state at some point ........................................................................... 0 or 5 points
   c. Creativity of its portrayal of coming to life (scored one time only) ....................................1 to 10 points
   d. Effectiveness of its performance .......................................................................................1 to 15 points
4. The three items that cause changes in the animated object’s behavior ........................................ 2 to 30 points
   a. Three items cause three changes in behavior (0 or 5 points each) ................................. 0, 5, 10, or 15 points
   b. Overall effectiveness of the changes in behavior in the performance ............................1 to 10 points
   c. Overall degree of difference in the object’s behavior ......................................................1 to 5 points
5. The narrator character ............................................................................................................... 1 to 25 points
   a. Explains how the object comes to life ............................................................................... 0 or 5 points
   b. Indicates when all three required changes in behavior take place .................................... 0 or 5 points
   c. Creativity of its role and how it enhances the performance ..............................................1 to 15 points

Page 2 of 3
6. The friend character ........................................................................................................................................ 2 to 30 points
   a. Becomes friends with the object that comes to life .................................................................................. 0 or 5 points
   b. Originality of the character .................................................................................................................... 1 to 15 points
   c. Effectiveness in the performance ........................................................................................................... 1 to 10 points
7. The poem or song or dance ......................................................................................................................... 2 to 25 points
   a. Is presented ............................................................................................................................................. 0 or 5 points
   b. Overall creativity ....................................................................................................................................... 1 to 10 points
   c. How well it is incorporated into the performance ................................................................................... 1 to 10 points
8. Overall Humor in the performance ............................................................................................................ 1 to 15 points

E. Penalties (Deducted from percentaged scores.)
   1. “Spirit of the Problem” violation (each offense) .................................................................................... -1 to -100 points
   2. Unsportsmanlike conduct (each offense) ................................................................................................. -1 to -100 points
   3. Incorrect or missing membership sign .................................................................................................... -1 to -15 points
   4. Outside assistance (each offense) ............................................................................................................. -1 to -100 points
   5. Over cost limit .......................................................................................................................................... -1 to -100 points
   6. Over time limit: -5 points for each 10 seconds or fraction thereof over time limit (e.g., 17 seconds = -10 points) .......................................................................................................................... maximum -30 points

Omission of scored problem requirements carries no penalty except loss of score.

F. Style (Elaboration of the problem solution; use the Style Form from the Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide.)
   1. Artistic quality of the magical item described in B5b ........................................................................... 1 to 10 points
   2. Creative use of one type of material in the narrator’s costume ............................................................... 1 to 10 points
   3. (Free choice of team) ................................................................................................................................ 1 to 10 points
   4. (Free choice of team) ................................................................................................................................ 1 to 10 points
   5. Overall effect of the four Style elements in the performance ................................................................... 1 to 10 points

G. Tournament Director Will Provide (if presented as part of a tournament)
   1. A 7’ x 10’ (2.1m x 3m) presentation area (larger, if possible).
   2. A three-prong electrical outlet.
   3. A judging team and materials necessary to judge this problem.

H. The Team Must Provide
   1. Four copies of its Style Form, one Cost Form, and one Outside Assistance Form.
   2. Four copies of the list as stated in B10. These items are to assist the judges. If the team fails to provide them, there will be no penalty; however, it benefits the team to have them because without them the judges might miss a scored aspect of the performance.
   3. Any necessary extension cords or outlet adapters.
   4. Cleanup materials as needed.

I. Glossary
   Change Its Behavior – An observable difference in the way the character acts, moves, sounds, reacts, or responds.
   Come to Life – The process of transforming from an inanimate object (not alive) to an animated object (alive) that displays some human characteristics such as walking, talking, etc.
   Something Magical – A physical object (not a team member or character) that when contacted makes something else come to life. It does not have to display any other magical properties, but it can if the team wishes.
   Touches – Physically contacting a tangible object.

No clarifications will be given for this problem.

Problem by Sam W. Micklus and Dr. C. Samuel Micklus. © Copyright 2015 — Creative Competitions, Inc.

© Odyssey of the Mind, OotM, the Odyssey of the Mind logo, and OMER are federally registered trademarks of Creative Competitions, Inc.

Creative Competitions, Inc., its licensees, and the problem authors assume no responsibility for damage or injury incurred as a result of attempting to solve this problem.