



Primary VHS 2020

*Spring 2020 NY State Division III team presenting a solution to the Primary Problem.*

# Coaches' Corner

## Tips from your CTOM Coach!

January 2021

*Preparing skillful, team-playing, out-of-the-box thinkers!*

# Planning and Competing in a Virtual Odyssey!

By Kim Kempton

In early December, CTOM announced that the 2020-2021 CT Odyssey of the Mind program would be 100% virtual. Hosting a Virtual Tournament will enable students across Connecticut to participate in Odyssey of the Mind and develop their creative problem solving and STEAM skills, even when circumstances prevent in-person events. While a Virtual Tournament sounds vastly different from an In-person Tournament, the goal remains the same — to provide a learning experience that is engaging, hands-on and team driven.

## Standard Across the Globe

Odyssey of the Mind is working to ensure that the experience for both judges and teams is the same at all competition levels, regardless of location. To compete in a virtual Odyssey of the Mind competition, teams will need to do the following:

- Purchase a membership from [Odyssey of the Mind](#)
- Register for 40<sup>th</sup> Annual CTOM State Tournament ([here](#))
- Record the team's Long-Term Problem performance

- Compile forms and photographs for the judging teams.
- Submit the video, forms and photographs online.

This year, in addition to the team's 8-minute performance, the team may submit up to 7 additional minutes of detailed descriptions and explanations of the scored elements.

## Practice and Record

One of the great benefits of performing and competing virtually is that teams can create their solution videos in multiple ways, to suit local health guidelines and the safety level which is most comfortable for the team. Adhering to the procedures required by Odyssey of the Mind, performances may be filmed in-person as a group or separately,

through any video call or conferencing service.

## Submit Your Virtual Solution

Teams submissions will come in the form of three file sharing links, copied to your team registration: [Virtual Tournament Procedures](#)

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## For More Information

*CTOM is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to Odyssey of the Mind in CT*  
Please visit our website at [www.ctom.org](http://www.ctom.org)



# It's Not Too Late to Start!

## Start a Team in January

Many school districts have announced that they will continue distance learning procedures into the start of the Spring Semester. Reach out to families at your school and form a new Odyssey team to supplement at-home learning. The registration deadline has been extended to February 27, 2021.

## CTOM Supports our Coaches

CTOM will provide virtual support throughout the year.

Anyone... a parent, teacher, grandparent, or neighbor can coach an Odyssey team. There is no experience required, just an open-minded approach to creativity and teamwork. Coaching is rewarding and fun! Our websites, [www.ctom.org](http://www.ctom.org), and [www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com) are loaded with hints and resources.

Coaches can host weekly team Zoom calls to stimulate and inspire students and team members can work independently or in small groups (virtually or in person) to complete the script, costumes and props. Even in a virtual world, no "outside assistance" is allowed as the team works together to solve its chosen problem. Team members use their creativity to design and build everything!

## You will INSPIRE young minds.

It should be no surprise that 'Zoom fatigue' has and will continue to be a serious challenge for many students. Introducing Virtual Odyssey is not about scheduling yet-another screen-based meeting. It's about offering students a creative outlet that requires lots of hands-on, sometimes messy, learning. It's about inspiring the students to find a way to communicate and share their ideas beyond the screen. It's about encouraging them to unplug and get lost for a little while creating an alien costume or an underwater backdrop. Whatever their Long-Term solution requires!



## You will foster CREATIVITY!!!

Odyssey is about accommodating absurdity, and strangeness and newness... it is about breeding genius. Above all else, Odyssey is a creativity program. That's what it's all about. Thinking methodically, yes (there's an engineering process and a plan for writing a script for a reason), but also thinking a little bit crazy, searching for that out-of-the-box solution, in every situation. Think of Odyssey as a team sport that targets makers, do-ers, thinkers, and tinkerers! Coaching is an adventure, where the reward is creative kids!

## OM Supports Common Core Standards

The CTOM program aligns with the Connecticut College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for K-12 in reading, writing, speaking and learning, including:

- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure
- Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
- Range of Reading and Level of text Complexity
- Production and Distribution of Writing
- Research to Build and Present Knowledge
- Comprehension and Collaboration
- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

In addition, the program can be used to create a hybrid learning environment in support of Connecticut Standards for Mathematical Practice, including:

- Model with Mathematics
- Reason Abstractly and Quantitatively
- Construct viable arguments and Critique the reasoning of others

## Odyssey of the Mind Complies with Social Distancing

OM teams can be formed and develop solutions in compliance with various levels of social distancing guidelines. Its small group nature and focus on "no outside assistance" makes Odyssey the ideal enrichment activity for the 2020-21 school year. Meetings can be held in-person or on a digital platform.

# What About Spontaneous?

By CTOM Spontaneous Problem Captain, Dave Schaller

## Spontaneous is coming!

The 2021 Virtual Tournament will include a Verbal Spontaneous Challenge. Teams will be able to compete in the verbal problem anytime from March 20 – 28, after which judges will review the team's responses. Like the in-person competition, the same judges will be judging problems for teams in the same problem and division. This ensures fair judging.

## Solving A Virtual Challenge

The entire team may participate in solving the spontaneous challenge which will be administered online. During the competition window, the verbal problem will be accessed by logging into the Members Area of [Odyssey of the Mind](#).

Once the team starts the problem, a timer will be started, so be sure to have a plan to be together either in person or virtually and ready to solve the problem. Teams will have 20 minutes to think, discuss, and generate responses which the coach will enter into the online web form. It is also very important to ensure you have a reliable internet connection - once time starts there is no turning back. More information on how to compete in this year's virtual Spontaneous will be published before the competition.

## Practice Often

Once you log into the Members Area of [Odyssey of the Mind](#), coaches can also find a link that will allow the team to practice on the virtual system. This will allow teams to be ready for the real spontaneous online challenge. While this year's spontaneous challenge will only be verbal, we highly encourage teams to continue to practice spontaneous with different kinds of problems. It is beneficial (and fun) to practice hands-on and verbal hands-on problems to unlock team creativity and inspire solutions for the Long-Term problem.

Check out the [Spon Zone](#) section of our website for sample problems, team strategies and additional details. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact CTOM Spontaneous Problem Captain, Dave Schaller at [dschaller@ctom.org](mailto:dschaller@ctom.org).

## Virtual Tournament Procedures

Be sure to visit the [Virtual Tournament Procedures](#) to learn more about competing virtually, including registering, creating a team video and submitting the Long-term performance.

# CTOM 2021 Tournament

Members of the CTOM Board of Directors, Problem Captains and a selection of former coaches are working to finalize the details of our 2021 virtual CT state tournament. OMers share a collaborative and creative spirit, and we are approaching this challenge with the same. Please be sure to check [CTOM.org](#) frequently and follow us on [Facebook!](#) Our goal is to develop a solution that creates a safe and effective opportunity for our OMers to share their creative solutions with one another, our judges, family and the larger community. We look forward to sharing more details!

**Note: Teams will not be required to provide judges or volunteers for CTOM's virtual tournament.**

## Dates, Details & The Drill

**Saturday, February 27, 2021**  
[Tournament Registration Closes](#)

**Saturday, March 20, 2021**  
[CT State Tournament - Deadline to submit competition materials](#)

**Saturday, March 20 - 28 2021**  
[Verbal Spontaneous Competition Window](#)

**Saturday, March 29, 2021 - Sunday, April 11, 2021**  
[Raw Scores for Long-Term Performances provided to Coaches. Coaches have 48 hours to respond.](#)

**Saturday, April 17, 2021**  
[Virtual Awards Presentation](#)

**Sunday, April 18, 2021**  
[Virtual World Finals Coaches Meeting](#)

**Partnership with KHK**  
Connecticut Odyssey of the Mind (CTOM) is pleased to announce a partnership with [Kids Helping Kids](#) a fellow 501(c)(3) organization focused on developing leadership skills through youth-led service projects. The new partnership enables interested students from across Connecticut to participate in the 2020-2021 Odyssey of the Mind program as members of teams representing KHK. Visit our website for further details.

Have questions or want to learn more? Contact our Coaches' Coach, Kim Kempton at [kkempton@ctom.org](mailto:kkempton@ctom.org)