



Odyssey of the Mind™

2013-2014

Problem No. 2: The Not-So-Haunted-House



The Not-So-Haunted House

Problem No. 2: Divisions I, II, III & IV

Introduction

A haunted house is a building often perceived as being inhabited or visited by ghosts or spirits of the deceased. Characteristics include strange noises, obscure figures moving in shadows, creaking floorboards, etc. Haunted houses are often featured in ghost stories or scary movies. Many have turned this idea into a more physical form of entertainment where visitors walk through an area “rigged” with the typical sights, sounds, and general scary properties of a haunted house. OotM teams now have a chance to create their own haunted house with illusions that are meant to frighten — but cause a different reaction instead!

A. The Problem

The team’s problem is to create and present an original performance that includes a “pop-up-style” not-so-haunted “house” where four special effects take place. The intent of the special effects will be to scare others but, instead, they produce a different result. The performance will include at least one character that experiences the special effects and a narrator who relays the experiences to the audience. It will also include a surprise ending.

The **creative emphases** of this problem are on the haunted house, the special effects, and the character that experiences the effects.

The **Spirit of the Problem** is for the team to create and present an original performance that includes a haunted house where special effects take place that are intended to scare others but end up with different results. The performance will include a character that experiences the special effects, a narrator, and a surprise ending.

B. Limitations (Italicized words/terms are defined on Page 5 in the Problem Glossary or in the *2013-2014 Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide*.)

1. **General Rules:** Read the *2013-2014 Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide*. This manual includes basic limitations for this problem and the forms required for competition. This problem cannot be solved without referring to the Program Rules section of the guide.
2. **Problem Clarifications:** The *Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide* explains the types of questions about the rules that will be clarified and the ways to submit those questions. General problem clarifications can be accessed at odysseyofthemind.com/clarifications/. Problem clarifications submitted after February 15, 2014, will not be answered. CCI may find it necessary to issue clarifications after that date, so continue to check for them after February 15 and before each competition.
3. The time limit for this problem is 8 minutes. This starts when the Timekeeper says, “Team begin” and includes setup, Style, and presentation of the problem solution.
4. The cost limit for this problem is \$145 (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.
5. The team will create an original performance that includes:
 - a. a haunted house environment.
 - b. special effects.
 - c. one or more *characters* that experience the special effects.

- d. a narrator.
 - e. a surprise ending.
6. The **haunted “house”**:
- a. does not need to be portrayed as or called a haunted house.
 - b. It must be presented as being a scary place. This may be done any way the team wishes. It does not have to be presented as a scary place throughout the performance.
 - c. will include a minimum of four different special effects.
 - d. will have at least one visitor that experiences the special effects.
7. The **four special effects**:
- a. must each be designed to surprise a visitor and take place while at least one character is visiting the haunted house.
 - b. must be portrayed as trying to scare the visitor but actually produces a different reaction than fear.
 - c. can take place in any order, but they must take place at different times in the performance.
 - d. must each have its own mechanism that produces the effect. They may use the same materials, but each mechanism must operate in a different way.
 - e. must each have a component that pops up, pops out, or suddenly *appears* in any way the team wishes.
 - f. must include:
 - (1) one that makes sound.
 - (2) one that causes a change in *appearance* of a team member. Reactions to the effect do not count as changing appearance. It can change any team member’s appearance and does not have to be portrayed as happening to a character in the performance when the effect occurs.
 - (3) an illusion; that is, something that appears to be one thing but turns out to be something else.
 - (4) a team-created special effect.
8. The **character(s) that visit the haunted house** may be *portrayed* in any way. All characters listed by the team in B11d will be scored.
9. The **narrator character**:
- a. must be portrayed by *one or more team members*.
 - b. will explain what it thinks is happening during the performance to the audience. The explanation does not have to be an accurate description of what is really happening in the performance.
10. The **surprise ending**:
- a. must be portrayed as something unexpected.
 - b. may include one of the required special effects, but it must not be only that effect.
11. The team should present the Staging Area Judge with four copies of the Team’s Required List Form found in the forms section at www.odysseyofthemind.com/members/ or four copies of a list on one side of one or two sheets of 8 ½” x 11” or A4 paper. This list must be hand-printed, typed, or computer generated. It is for reference only. The list must include:
- a. the team’s membership name and number, the problem and division.
 - b. the special effects and the order that they will take place.

- c. a brief description of the team-created special effect
- d. the character(s) to be scored in D8.
- e. a brief description of the surprise ending.
- f. 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 10' x 20' (3 m x 6 m) will be used, but a larger area is desirable. This will not be marked. If space permits, the team may perform and/or place equipment, props, etc. outside the 10' x 20' area. If a drop-off exists beyond the 10' x 20' 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. It is the teams' responsibility to create a skit that signals to the judges and audience there is a haunted house environment.
3. A three-prong electrical outlet will be available. Teams must bring their own extension cords and adapters, if needed.
4. The team members should report to the competition site with all items for the presentation of their solution at least 15 minutes before they are scheduled to compete.
5. At the end of the 8-minute time period, the Timekeeper will call "Time" and all activity must stop. The team may end before the 8 minutes, but must signal the judges when it is finished.
6. Teams should bring cleaning utensils to clean up any mess. Should a team take an unreasonable amount of time to clean the site, or leave a mess, the judges will assess an Unsportsmanlike Conduct penalty. Others not on the team's roster can help the team clear the site and remove the team's props. The competition area must be left clean and dry for the next competing team.

D. Scoring

1. Overall creativity of the performance (originality, effectiveness)..... 1 to 20 points
2. Quality of the performance (audibility, movement, stage presence)..... .1 to 20 points
3. The haunted house environment..... 1 to 30 points
 - a. Creativity of how it is shown to be a scary place.....1 to 10 points
 - b. All required special effects have components that suddenly appear 0 or 10 points
 - c. All required special effects are shown to be a surprise 0 or 10 points
4. Special effect – Makes sound..... 2 to 20 points
 - a. Engineering of how sound is produced1 to 10 points
 - b. Creativity of the sound.....1 to 10 points
5. Special effect – Changes appearance of a team member 2 to 20 points
 - a. Engineering of how change occurs1 to 10 points
 - b. Creativity and degree of the change1 to 10 points
6. Special effect – The illusion..... 2 to 20 points
 - a. Engineering of how the illusion is produced1 to 10 points
 - b. Degree of difference between what it appears to be and what it is.....1 to 10 points

7. Special effect – Team Created 3 to 25 points
 - a. Originality..... 1 to 10 points
 - b. Creativity of the engineering..... 1 to 10 points
 - c. Level of technical difficulty..... 1 to 5 points
8. The character(s) that visit the haunted house 1 to 15 points
 - a. Exhibits reactions other than fear
for all required special effects 0 or 5 points
 - b. Creativity of the reactions..... 1 to 10 points
9. The narrator character..... 1 to 20 points
 - a. Explains what is happening for each required special effect..... 0 or 5 points
 - b. Overall *effectiveness in the performance*..... 1 to 15 points
10. Effectiveness of the surprise ending 1 to 10 points

Maximum possible: 200 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

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

F. Style (Elaboration of the problem solution; use four copies of the Style Form from the *Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide*.)

1. Originality of the narrator’s appearance 1 to 10 points
2. Creative use of a *trash item* in the performance 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

Maximum possible: 50 points

G. Tournament Director Will Provide

1. A 10’ x 20’ (3 m x 6 m) presentation area (larger, if possible).
2. A three-prong electrical outlet.
3. A judging team and materials necessary to judge this problem.

***NOTE:** *Contact your Tournament Director regarding competition site specifications such as actual dimensions, registration procedures, floor surface, etc. Do not submit a clarification request for this information.*

H. The Team Must Provide

1. Four copies of its Style Form, one Cost Form, one Outside Assistance Form, and all team-specific clarifications.
2. Four copies of its list as stated in B11. This list is to assist the judges. If the team fails to provide the list, there will be no penalty; however, it benefits the team to have the lists 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. Problem Glossary

Trash Item – Anything that is considered worthless in its current state.

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