

Spontaneous

1. Listen closely to the rules. Encourage the team to focus during the reading of the rules. There will be plenty of time for solving the problem afterwards.
2. Always look for loop holes in the rules. If it doesn't say you can't, then usually you can. If the team always finds loop holes in your spontaneous practice, let them solve with the loop hole one time and then repeat the problem eliminating that loop hole.
3. Have assigned spontaneous roles: leader, loop hole finder, rule expert, encourager
4. Teamwork is almost always scored!
 - a. Begin as a team with all members doing a cheer/chant.
 - b. Listen to everyone's ideas
 - c. Be positive if someone is stuck
5. Don't be still and monotone. Sing answers, use facial expressions and body movements.
6. Unless told otherwise, interact with objects and others on your team.
7. Know who will sit out of each type of problem ahead of going into the room.
8. Don't repeat something that is very similar to another answer. An answer is only creative once and usually scored only one time.
9. Use words creatively in answers:
 - a. Ten – stencil, tenure, intense
 - b. Ace – face, asymmetrical, trace, grace
10. Have go to lists and/or go to locations. Aliens, space stations, farm, beach, circus,, music, etc. If the kids are stuck, they can focus on something from their list to keep moving.
11. Encourage speed in answering verbal questions. It's almost always better to give a common answer and keep moving than pondering a creative answer and using too much time.
12. Practice with slow down objects – straws, cards, etc. that may be used at competition.
13. Get parents to help with spontaneous. Verbal while driving for instance.
14. Pay attention to the scoring. Know where the points are!
15. Practice problems where verbal communication is not allowed. This will improve overall communication and problems of this style are not uncommon at tournaments.
16. Have team members bring spontaneous problems and supplies. Allow that team member to also judge the problem.

Spontaneous Speed Control Methods

Assign each of the five team members a number from 1 to 5. Use only the Ace through 5 from one or more decks of playing cards. Shuffle the cards and place them face down in front of the team members. The coach will turn over the first card. The card number (Ace = 1) designates which team member will then answer. After responding, that team member will then turnover the next card and so on. When all the cards are used, the deck is then turned over and the team continues until time runs out. 3 x 5 CARDS Each of the five team members is given 8-10 cards. When a team member gives an answer, a card is put into a container placed before the team. When all cards are used the team is finished responding, even if time remains on the clock. If a team member is unable to answer, a card is placed in the container also. If there are fewer than five team members, distribute the cards for the missing team members to the others. A variation is to place a stack of 35 cards (or any amount divisible by five) on the table. A card is placed in the container after each response. If the team member is stuck, the whole team is stuck. Another variation is that if the team member is stuck, a card is placed in the container and the team continues responding to the problem. A third variation, instead of using 3 x 5 cards, use beans, macaroni, checkers, or small blocks of wood. **PASS CARDS** Five PASS cards are placed before the team. If a team member is unable to answer, a PASS card is given to the judge (coach). If all PASS cards are used before time runs out, if a team member is stuck, the whole team is stuck. At the end of the time period, two points are added to the final score for each unused PASS card.

Paddle Place a Ping-Pong paddle on the table. Before giving a response the team member must pick up the Paddle and hold it over his/her head. After giving the response, the team member places the Paddle on the table before the next team member who is to respond. A variation is to place the Paddle on the table and any team member may pick it up to respond. The same team member may not respond twice in a row. The Paddle must be placed on the table before the next team member may pick it up and respond.

Ruler Have your team member line up single file. Hand the student in the front of the line a ruler. Once the problem is presented and time begins, the first student will give an answer, hand the ruler to the team member behind him/her and move to the back of the line. This process continues until time runs out.

Removal Put 35 cards (or beans, macaroni, or wood blocks) in a container and place it on a table in front of the team. Each team member is to remove one item from the container before giving a response. When all items are removed from the container or time runs out (whichever is first), the team must stop. If a team member is stuck, the whole team is stuck.

Dice Assign each team member a number from one to five. The coach will roll the dice the first time. The team member with the number showing on the dice will give a response. After giving the response, the team member will roll the dice. The team member whose number appears will then respond, and so on. If the number six appears, the team member who rolled the dice must respond again. If it is on the first roll, the coach will select the team member to respond.

Index cards. Seven colored index cards may be given to each of the five team members. For example 7 white cards will be given to a team member; 7 blue cards given to another team member; 7 green cards given to a third team member; 7 orange cards given to the 4th team member; and, 7 yellow index cards given to the 5th team member. A basket would be placed in the middle of the table. When a team member responds, in turn, he/she will place one of their colored index cards in the basket. Time is up when all 35 cards are in the basket, or the time limit has expired, whichever comes first.

I want to share with you an example that I hope will clarify "creativity" in terms of scoring. This is one that Stephanie Hobson has shared in the past but now I will endeavor to put in writing so that you can share with your team.

Three Balsa teams decide that their "theme" is Las Vegas and each builds a palm tree.

1. The palm tree is made of a tube covered in brown wrapping paper with leaves cut out of green paper. It is very realistic and well made.
2. The palm tree is made out of cereal boxes cut and shaped around a tube and the leaves are made of green paper covered with glue and sprinkled with green coconut.
3. The palm tree is made of a tube covered with poker chips and the leaves are made of playing cards

Be the Style Judge; the team style sheet asks that you score the "Creativity of the Palm Tree" on a scale of 1-10 ?

1. In terms of creativity this would score LOW. Creativity is not how well made something is.
2. This would score MEDIUM. Essentially they used recycled stuff but they still used brown cardboard as brown bark and green paper as leaves. Sprinkling it with green colored coconut shows that at least they had a sense of humor.
3. This would score HIGH. The reason is that the material used enhances the THEME from a STYLE point of view EVERYTHING (script, props, backdrop, costumes – everything) should project and enhance the theme. So by changing their wording on the STYLE sheet, instead of re-building the Palm tree,

How could each team maximize their score?

Here are the three Las Vegas themed palm trees again.

Team 1. The palm tree is made of a tube covered in brown wrapping paper with leaves cut out of green paper. It is very realistic and well made.

Team 2. The palm tree is made out of cereal boxes cut and shaped around a tube and the leaves are made of green paper covered with glue and sprinkled with green coconut. It is a bit messy and much of the coconut has fallen off.

Team 3. The palm tree is made of a tube covered with poker chips and the leaves are made of playing cards. It looks like it was made by 7 different people, some leaves are cut and shaped, other leaves are torn and ragged. The trunk is folding over under the weight of the leaves.

What we are looking at now is the wording for their STYLE sheet. Let's assume that all three teams have chosen the Palm Tree as their "Free Choice" style category and all three teams use the same wording- in which range would you score them?

	Low	Medium	High	
Quality of construction of Palm tree	2&3		1	
Use of recycled materials in Palm tree	1,2&3			What exactly is recycled? Green paper is not recycled (it <i>will</i> be recycled), the coconut is not recycled, nor are the poker chips etc
Creative use of materials to make the Palm Tree	1	2	3	using paper as bark is not very creative, using coconut is a bit more and the cards and chips more so because they enhance the theme
Use of green coconut to make the Palm tree look more realistic- it is a Coconut Palm			2	
How the use of poker chips and playing cards enhance the Las Vegas theme			3	

Is this what your team came up with? As you can see each team has the opportunity of getting a HIGH score even though they built very different Palm Trees!