Our Aim

Tournament of Minds’ aim is to enhance the potential of our youth by developing diverse skills, enterprise, time management, and the discipline to work collaboratively within a challenging and competitive environment.

Our Objectives

- To promote the stimulation of real, open-ended challenges
- To develop creative problem-solving approaches and techniques
- To foster cooperative learning and teamwork
- To promote knowledge and appreciation of self and others
- To encourage experimentation and risk-taking
- To expand and reward creative and divergent thinking
- To stimulate and spirit of inquiry and a love of learning
- To develop enterprise
- To celebrate excellence

The Challenges

The team of seven students are given copies of this year’s Long Term Challenges at the start of term three. The team decides which of the four challenges offered they will attempt to solve. There are four disciplines:

- Applied Technology
- Language Literature
- Maths Engineering
- Social Sciences

The team has six weeks to formulate a solution to their chosen challenge and ten minutes to present their solution to an audience and panel of judges on Tournament Day. There are many rules and requirements that teams must follow, which are outlined in the Schools’ Instruction Manual.

For the experience to be beneficial to students, TOM requires that the Challenge solutions and presentation be ENTIRELY the work of team members. Therefore, any ideas, suggestions or recommendations made by teachers, parents or friends not only leave the team liable to severe penalties or disqualification, but also act as a disservice to the team members by demonstrating a lack of confidence in their own abilities. To this end, all team members and their facilitator are required to sign an Outside Assistance Form.

The team must do everything for themselves, and this includes troubleshooting, carry props around, setting up and dressing, doing hair and make up etc.

How to Assist

Encourage the team to focus on the things in which they have shown improvement. Tell the team that you are proud of their conduct, team spirit, enthusiasm, etc. And encourage the team to discuss how they feel about their presentation.

The competitive element encourages students to be the best that they can be, but it’s a friendly competition. They learn from and even cheer on their competitors.

You are welcome to watch each and any team’s solution. Please be punctual as we keep to a strict timetable and the doors are shut during presentations to avoid distractions.

If you’re keen you can contact your school about assisting as a team facilitator or acting as a TOM judge!
Challenge Summaries

APPLIED TECHNOLOGY – Did Video Kill the Radio Star

Did video really kill the radio star? Up until the early 1950s a popular form of entertainment was the radio play. With the introduction of television, people’s tastes changed. Moving images seemed to tell a better story. Now the radio play is making a comeback – why?

The challenge is to explain this re-emergence of the radio play as a popular form of entertainment. To do this teams need to create a documentary film showing how a radio play is created; and how and why audiences loved listening to it. They must demonstrate the enjoyment audiences experienced in watching it being produced.

MATHS ENGINEERING - Get the Message

The island of Conversazione has three small villages – Chattalotte, Havachat and Chitterchatter. The people of Chattalotte need to send an urgent message to Havachat, however there are large obstacles separating each village. The message can only be delivered via Chitterchatter. A communication system needs to be constructed to get the message through.

The challenge is to design and build a communication system to enable a message (carried by a small ball) to reach Havachat via Chitterchatter, where it is briefly delayed. Once the message has been sent on its way no team member can interact with or touch it until it has reached Havachat. (See diagram below.)

The system must send the message over two obstacles and needs to include:

1. A launcher to propel the message from Chattalotte over the 1st obstacle
2. The means to have the message spend some time in Chitterchatter.
3. The means to get the message over the second obstacle.
4. The means to trap or catch the message in Havachat after the second obstacle.

SOCIAL SCIENCES – Counter-Culture Crisis

Cultural identity is something that is treasured by all, and sometimes we guard our own culture religiously. But an occasion has arisen where it is imperative that the diverse groups of the society of Disunitia must join their cultures as one cohesive group. They gather together to create a dance that reflects all of their backgrounds, but there is a reluctance of some to participate. The future of their society is dependent upon their ultimate cohesion.

The challenge is to create a dance that not only reflects a variety of cultures but also creates a sense of unity. The solution may be based on existing cultures, or teams may create their own.