

DESCRIPTION OF VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENTS

This section is a brief overview of the various positions useful for newbies trying to decide what they want to try, or veterans considering a different assignment.

Prep Area Appraisers need to have a loving disposition towards kids and always be cool! Their primary task is to collect all the necessary paperwork from the teams before the main performance. But... the Prep Area Appraiser is the first contact the teams make with the tournament officials, so a big smile and willingness to help the team get through their jitters is important. Prep Area Appraisers need to be available the entire day, and are not able to sneak away to watch other performances.

Timer/Announcers is the person who announces the team's name and welcomes them. He/she elicits applause for each team as they are announced....after all they are already successful in solving their challenge. There is a script that briefly describes the challenge, then asks if the appraisers are ready, if the team is ready and if the audience is ready. The timekeeper part starts then. The T/A speaks loudly and clearly the word BEGIN. A countdown timer is provided. When time expires the beeper will sound and teams must stop. Most finish before this; however, if they do not, then the T/A announces STOP. Timekeeper/Announcers need to be available the entire day and are not able to sneak away to watch other performances.

Challenge Appraisers do the actual evaluation of the team's performance, whether in the main challenge or instant challenge. This position sounds intimidating but is actually one of the most-straight forward because everything is spelled out in the appraiser instructions. Typically, each Appraiser is looking at 2-3 specific things to evaluate. Guidance is given on how to award points, and the biggest challenge is to ensure you are consistent in how points are awarded among all teams. (I recommend rating the initial teams start in the middle of the range for flexibility.) Appraisers also need to eagerly interact with the teams immediately after their performance, not only to learn more about how they solved the problem (to help in scoring), but also to provide affirmation to the teams (via Sticky Notes) that their hard work was appreciated. Main Challenge Appraisers need to be available the entire day, and are not able to sneak away to watch other performances.

Rising Star Feedback is very similar to the Challenge Appraisers, but they are specific to the very young Rising Star performers. There are no points awarded here – just lots and lots of praise to encourage the little ones to stay involved. (This has to be the most fun assignment in the tournament.)

Instant Challenge Appraisers perform similar duties to the main Challenge Appraisers above, but do so on the Instant Challenge, where the teams have no idea of their mission until they enter the room – then they have typically five minutes to prepare and a couple minutes to show off their results, which may be a task, performance, or both. Watching for creativity, teamwork, and use of available materials are typically the keys to success in the Instant Challenge. Just like the team members need to be pumped for this part of the competition, the Instant Challenge Appraisers likewise must stay consistently pumped up for every team presenting throughout the day. Instant Challenge Appraisers need to be available the entire day, and are not able to sneak away to watch other performances.

Number Crunchers are a lot like firemen... they get the pleasure of watching the main challenge performances from a front row seat, without a care in the world. Then, as soon as the team performance is complete, they are flooded with the score sheets from 3-5 appraisers and need to accurately compile and cross-check the scores. The number cruncher who is good at reviewing the challenge and the score sheet format thoroughly, will find that that the “pleasure” of the job greatly exceeds the “flood”. The score sheets are very clearly laid out, so once you do one, you know what to look for and the rest will process very easily. (Note: Must know how to add, subtract & multiply.) Number Crunchers need to be available the entire day, and are not able to sneak away to watch other performances.

Prop & Door Monitor positions are ones that I consider an “introduction position” jobs for future Appraisers or those helpers under age 18. In some cases these positions work for people who are only

available for part of the day. The Prop & Door Monitor positions allow some flexibility to sneak away to watch an important performance of friend or family. The Prop Monitors are a visible presence in the team prop storage areas to ensure that nothing gets damaged and that well-intentioned parents and coaches don't get involved in doing things for the teams that would be considered interference. **It is vital that only the team members do "all" the work related to their challenge solution** – we'll cover interference in the training sessions. Door Monitors manage the performance area by closing entrances to a performance when it has started, and opening things back up when it is over. The teams have put a lot of effort into their performances, and they deserve no extra noise or disruptions once their performance has begun. (However, if 'Grandma' shows up just a little late, the Door Monitor will quietly let her in!

Retail Sales is one of the most fun positions, because you are taking other people's money and trading it for cool Destination Imagination merchandise. Experienced team members are really big on custom "pins" that they like to trade at tournaments. There are also apparel items and a lot of mind-bender gadgets for sale. The retail sales volunteers can be scheduled to work just a half day, so it helps if I know whether they will be available in the morning versus the afternoon. While you are there, enthusiasm is key, along with a welcoming smile, ability to handle money, and to keep the merchandise looking neat and orderly.

Jar Raffle Sales is similar to Retail Sales, but involves selling tickets for a chance to win very large jars filled with energy (typically sugar-based) that have been donated as a fund-raiser.

Interlude Coordinator is a special assignment that happens in parallel with the tournament competition. It is a creative exercise that gives the teams something to do between their main performances and instant challenge. The 'highlights' of this activity may be presented to attendees while they are gathering for the awards ceremony; and may consist of a creation, dance, or skit. My hope is that this volunteer(s) will work to come up with the activity to keep participants' minds active throughout the tournament day.

That leaves the 'special assignments' which can also be filled by Appraisers and Volunteers who have completed their other assignments for the day. One is the **Awards Table Set-Up**. Just like it sounds, around 3:30pm on the day of the tournament, I would like a couple folks dedicated to getting the award table set up and trophies, banners, etc arranged. Another is that of **Runners**, which are a few people who know where the Scoreroom is, and are responsible for getting completed and signed-off score sheets from the performance area to the Scoreroom. If we don't have designated runners, each challenge area is expected to get their score sheets delivered in a timely manner. There are also possibilities for people who know **Calligraphy** to fill out special award certificates at the end of the day, designated **Photographers** for each challenge, and to help put up and take down **Banners** and other signage.