

Agenda
New Coaches' Meeting
Academic Decathlon
Kingston Room of the Education Service Center
August 24, 2009

1.0 County, State and National Organizations

- 1.1 County Coordinator, Meredith Davis at 468-9030 or mdavis@sjcoe.net
- 1.2 California Academic Decathlon (CAD), Ken Scarberry, Executive Director
- 1.3 United States Academic Decathlon (USAD)
 - 1.3.1 Essential Information for Coaches (handout)
 - 1.3.1 Eligibility Guidelines for 2010 (handout)
 - 1.3.2 2010 Calculator Policy (hand out)
 - 1.3.3 Information about Online Practice Tests
 - 1.3.4 Curriculum Updates
 - 1.3.5 Coach's Handbook – in progress
 - 1.3.6 Practice Test Booklet available for purchase

2.0 Overview of the Academic Decathlon

- 2.1 Academic Decathlon Teams
 - 2.1.1 Structure of Teams
 - 2.1.2 Eligibility and Computation of GPAs
 - 2.1.3 Recruitment and Selection of Teams
 - 2.1.4 Preparation Activities and Strategies
 - 2.1.5 Suggested Preparation Calendar
 - 2.1.6 Funding Support
- 2.3 Team Registration
 - 2.3.1 Form Checklist
 - 2.3.2 Contact Information
 - 2.3.3 2010 Event Forms
- 2.4 San Joaquin County Academic Decathlon Calendar
- 2.5 Curriculum and Study Materials
 - 2.5.1 2010 Curricular Theme – The French Revolution
 - 2.5.2 Study Materials Provided by SJCOE
 - 2.5.3 USAD Materials and Products Brochure
 - 2.5.4 DemiDec Materials Brochure
- 2.6 Competition Day: General Information
 - 2.6.1 Schedules
 - 2.6.2 What Decathletes Should Wear and Bring
 - 2.6.3 Registration
 - 2.6.4 Rules and Policies

- 2.7 Homerooms: Multiple-Choice Tests
 - 2.7.1 General Information – Day 2
 - 2.7.2 Math Test
 - 2.7.3 Music Test
 - 2.7.4 Scantron Sample
- 2.8 Essay Test
 - 2.8.1 General Information – Day 1
 - 2.8.2 Sample Prompt Page
 - 2.8.3 Essay Scoring
- 2.9 Interview
 - 2.9.1 Interview Process – Day 1
 - 2.9.2 Topics for Oral Interview Questions
 - 2.9.3 Interview Scoring
- 2.10 Speech
 - 2.10.1 Speech Guidelines/Process – Day 1
 - 2.10.2 Sample Impromptu Prompts
 - 2.10.3 Speech Scoring
- 2.11 Super Quiz
- 2.12 Scoring and Awards

3.0 Helpful Hints for Coaches--General

- 3.1 Train team to research and research well; coach is an organizer and overseer, not the only researcher
- 3.2 Coach must be knowledgeable especially in the Super Quiz
- 3.3 Stay to the outlines in the Study Guide. Check Study Guide to determine the % of questions per subject to be researched
- 3.4 All Super Quiz test items will be based on the information presented in the Super Quiz Resource Guide
- 3.5 In each of the subject areas except for Super Quiz, a percentage of the test items will require students to do some independent research beyond the Resource Guides
- 3.6 Encourage individuals to excel in 1-2 areas (must do the job for the team)
- 3.7 Team-building activities are important
- 3.8 Speech, Interview, and Essay are areas easily improved
- 3.9 May want to have assistant coaches to help in specific areas of study, but these coaches must be aware of format and objectives
- 3.10 Check USAD website often
- 3.11 Have several backups in all divisions, but especially in the Varsity Division
- 3.12 Read all Aca Dec correspondence with care. Call or email me with any questions
- 3.13 Turn in all required paperwork in a timely manner

4.0 Helpful Hints--Speech

- 4.1 Speeches should be written early or students may quit with the pressures in January
- 4.2 Work with students to rewrite and polish speeches
- 4.3 Give many opportunities to present speeches to different groups
- 4.4 May use 3X5 cards in prepared and impromptu; advantages and disadvantages to memorized speeches; no reading of speech allowed
- 4.5 Encourage students to say thank you at the end of both speeches to alert the timer
- 4.6 Speak to the judges, not at them
- 4.7 Encourage students to relax and enjoy the fruits of their labor; it is generally better than they think
- 4.8 Avoid the areas of religion, sex, or other controversial topics
- 4.9 Review the speech scantrons with students – speech content is important but delivery is critical
- 4.10 Keep a list of impromptu prompts handy for those few extra instructional minutes
- 4.11 Speech must be the original work of the student and the speech must not have been used for any other competition

5.0 Helpful Hints – Interview

- 5.1 Have students avoid “ahs”; think first
- 5.2 Students should have eye contact with all judges, especially the one who asked the question, but don’t stare
- 5.3 Students should have proper posture; no slouching
- 5.4 Interviews should be practiced and videotaped many times
- 5.5 Students should practice individual and group interviews
- 5.6 Review the interview scantrons with students
- 5.7 At county, interviews are seven minutes in length
- 5.8 Dress appropriately; first impressions are important
- 5.9 Have students carefully, clearly fill out Student Profile forms. They can be filled out online and downloaded.

6.0 Helpful Hints – Super Quiz

- 6.1 Watch the magic words on all tests like all and except
- 6.2 Focus on the next answer, don’t look back or worry past answers
- 6.3 Cover answers to discourage wandering eyes
- 6.4 Change answer only if sure; erase; watch time
- 6.5 Read long questions as quickly as possible
- 6.6 Divide up information and articles in the Super Quiz Resource Guide, put on index cards, share and review frequently. More review is required in the weeks right before competition
- 6.7 Remind students that in SQ, it is the best 2 out of three scores;

- helps relieve stress; builds self-esteem
- 6.8 We use the 30 question, 3 student SQ format
- 6.9 Each of the 3 students answer oral relay questions independently

7.0 Helpful Hints--Essay

- 7.1 Fifty minutes is plenty of time, but don't squander and get off to a fast start
- 7.2 Students have some time to read instructions with the proctors, but no time once the prompts are given out
- 7.3 It is important to incorporate the prompt into the introduction
- 7.4 Students must respond to the prompt
- 7.5 The essay must be coherent and well organized
- 7.6 Familiarize students with the essay-scoring rubric
- 7.7 Select a reasonable thesis but not too long or involved
- 7.8 Include two or three main points and stay on the prompt
- 7.9 Use 50 minutes time frame to practice essay writing
- 7.10 Tie end of paragraph to quote to reinforce
- 7.11 Use transitions to connect paragraphs
- 7.12 Develop points using Aca Dec readings or personal life
- 7.13 Arrive at a universal truth, a metaphor for life
- 7.14 Watch cosmetics; margins, crossed out words, general neatness

8.0 Helpful Hints – Mathematics

- 8.1 Calculators are allowed but MUST follow USAD calculator policy
- 8.2 Students are responsible for bringing calculators
- 8.3 Calculators may only be used on the mathematics test
- 8.4 Estimate
- 8.5 Look for two answers close to one another if having to guess (answer and detractor)
- 8.6 Answer all questions; use "c" if time runs out
- 8.7 If some questions are skipped, go back and guess
- 8.8 Don't waste time marking answers; mark fast and heavy
- 8.9 Math is traditionally a difficult test; don't get discouraged and keep focused on what is next

9.0 Helpful Hints – Literature

- 9.1 Set a deadline for completion of the reading of the novel/poetry
- 9.2 If the coach is not an English teacher, he/she needs to search out help in the English Department
- 9.3 Cover terms relevant to the study of literature

10.0 Helpful Hints – Social Science

- 10.1 Try to eliminate obviously wrong answers

- 10.2 No one text is sufficient for preparation; have each student research a given area, take notes, and share information
- 10.3 Ask the Social Science Department for help
- 10.4 Provide guest speakers to increase interest and lessen the amount of reading
- 10.5 Videos, if not too elementary, are valuable resources

11.0 Helpful Hints--Economics

- 11.1 Need to cover economic vocabulary, economic theories, and basic principles
- 11.2 Study charts and graphs published in business magazines and newspapers to help familiarize the students with economic concerns
- 11.3 Be alert to key words in questions

12.0 Helpful Hints – Art

- 12.1 Have students research the artists
- 12.2 Discuss not only the artists, their contribution to the field, but how they apply various principles of art and design to their works
- 12.3 Study other pieces by the artist; identify style; set up bulletin board of pictures
- 12.4 Most students have had little exposure to art so try not to overwhelm them with too much at one time

13.0 Helpful Hints – Music

- 13.1 Begin with the basics since most students have weak backgrounds in music
- 13.2 Start music studies early and proceed in small doses
- 13.3 Share the research duties
- 13.4 Plan to attend the San Joaquin County Fine Arts Day on October 24. Tickets are \$12 per seat.