

LET'S BRAINSTORM!!!

Things you find in a garage
List things that are wobbly
List things that glow
List things easy to forget
Things in a bank
Things you take to the beach
Things that are white
Kinds of brushes
Kinds of rings
Things on a farm
List things that can hurt
List things that stretch
List spongy things
List difficult things to share
List things you wouldn't want
to lose
List ways to grow
Things in a library
Things in your bedroom
Things that come in a pack
Things at a salad bar
Things that spread
Things that are sticky
Things you can smell
Things that are round
Things made of plastic
Things with motors
Things you wear on your head
Things that are slippery
Things that can be heard
Things that float

Things that come in: a jar,
a bag, pairs
Things that float
Things that are soft
Things you have repaired
Things found in the kitchen
Things you do in the morning,
night
Things made of glass
Things on the playground
Things in your desk
Types of chairs
Things needed for a trip
Household cleaning items
List uses for:

old cars
old clothes
old presidents
old televisions
old shoes
old records

Name things you could hold in
the palm of your hand
List things you could hold in a
cup
Name things that shake
Name things found in a third
grade classroom

VERBAL SPONTANEOUS PROBLEM PRACTICE IDEAS

Uses for:

Trees
String
Light bulbs
Animal skins
Hats
A million bars of soap
Newspaper
Paper clips
Classroom tables

Kinds of:

Hands
Things that come out of a hole
Things which support something
Rings
Things that are square
Things that are hollow
Things that are hard
Things that are soft
Things that are tall
Things that are short

Situations:

Identify strange objects and/or pictures.
What is in a covered box?
I can't think of anything worse than ...
How is a willow tree like an umbrella?
If Cinderella hadn't lost her slipper, how would the prince have found her?
Unusual ways to earn money for your class.
How sloths got three toes.
Answer is: *rough and scratchy*. Write the question.
Different ways to go to school.
Different ways to get students lined up for lunch.
Different ways to calculate size and weight of an unseen hippopotamus.
What would you say if a waiter spilled spaghetti on you?
Think of as many functions as you can for a wink.
If you could place only one thing in a house of glass walls to promote privacy, what would it be?
Imagine that overnight all the grass turned red. What would happen?
Other than in animals and humans, where else would you find teeth?
What are the attributes of: a school lunch box, a mushroom?

List things that:

Reflect
Are found in twos
Are subtle
Cannot be seen
Are made more beautiful by age
Can get squishy
Are white and edible
Are green and can't be eaten
Can change color

Name or List things that: . . .

- are red, blue, yellow, green, etc...
- fall, rise, inflate, shrink, grow, expand, repeat, etc...
- are letters, are numbers
- are keys, sets, points, quarters, heads
- are containers and what they contain
- transport and what they transport
- eat and what they eat
- are superior and what they're superior to
- are made of parts and what the parts are
- create and what they create
- are hidden and what hides them
- are added to something and what the result is
- help something, and how they help
- are anachronisms: "If _blank_ had _blank_, (what would happen)_"
i.e. "If cavemen had electric guitars, they'd rock."
- contain wood, water, air, fire
- are juggled
- search and what they search for
- are stones
i.e. "Rolling stones", "Kidney stones", "Flintstones"
- are openings and who opens them
- are stored, and where they are stored
- destroy something, and what they destroy
- have hands
i.e. "A clock", "Bridge", "A coat of arms"
- hold things together, and what they hold
(Submitted by Elizabeth Batson)
- are secret
i.e. "Top secret", "'Secret' brand deodorant", "What they put in hot dogs"
- are wrapped, and what wraps them
i.e. "Egg rolls are wrapped in dough", "Cars wrap around telephone poles", "Verses are rapped by rappers", "I rapped on the door"
- are short, tall
i.e. "Strawberry shortcake", "Shorts", "Time is short"
- flow
i.e. "My thoughts", "A river", "Lava", "A flower"
- run, and what makes them run
i.e. "A cold makes my nose run", "Double clicking makes a computer program run"
- get mad, and what makes them mad
i.e. "A full moon makes a lunatic mad", "Gum makes my teacher mad", "Drunk driving makes MADD mad"
- repeat
i.e. "The sun repeatedly rises", "A metronome", "I repeat, a metronome"
- are mean

Coaches

Don't forget
to change the
order or method
of Responding to
Verbal Problems!

- i.e. "A car thief's mean", "An average can be the mean"
- are links, and what they link
 - i.e. "A chain of hot dogs links them together", "History is a link to the past", "This is a link to Matt's homepage"
- are homes
 - i.e. "A mansion", "Sherlock", "A plate"
- repel, and what they repel
 - i.e. "Insect repellent repels mosquitoes", "Multiple-choice tests repel creativity"
- attract, and what they attract
- money can't buy
- absorb, and what they absorb
 - i.e. "Computer chips absorb data", "Bounty absorbs spills"
- are ridden, and what rides them
 - i.e. "Commuters ride the train", "Fleas ride dogs", "The sick are bed-ridden"
- are trees
 - i.e. "Oak tree", "One, two, tree", "Entry", "Binary tree"
- are plants
- are bunches
- are quick
 - i.e. "Quicksand", "Nestle Quik", "A race car"
- are wells
 - i.e. "Wishing well", "Wells Fargo", "Beef Wellington"
- are pairs
- are different ways people and animals use warnings
 - i.e. "Birds sing to warn other birds of their territory."
- are horses
- are ships
- are birds
 - i.e. "Bluebird", "Bird brain", "Caring for birds is such a *birden*"
- are watched, and who or what watches them
- are depressed
 - (This upbeat problem submitted by Scott Meuleners.)
- are unhealthy
- can't be measured
- join people together
- are impossible, and why
- have legs

DIAMOND BRAINSTORMING METHOD: A TOOL FOR IDEA GENERATION

Any group attempting to create great things must first start with small ideas and build upon them. Odyssey teams often need to learn how to brainstorm ideas, then how to discuss them, and, finally, how to narrow them down to ones that are practical. At the same time, they must learn to respect each other's ideas and be willing to give up individual ideas for the success of the group.

The Diamond Brainstorming Method is a visual method that encourages as many ideas as possible. Teams build one idea from another, and all ideas are listed as they "pop out" of the team members' heads, no matter how "impossible" they seem. Also, by building up ideas one at a time and narrowing them down one at a time, the method encourages team members to relinquish ownership of ideas, so no one's feelings are hurt by rejection during later discussion. The visual quality of this appeals particularly to younger teams who can "see" their ideas taking shape.

MATERIALS: A large chart, newsprint pad, blackboard, or white board; markers or pens; and eager team members wanting to share ideas.

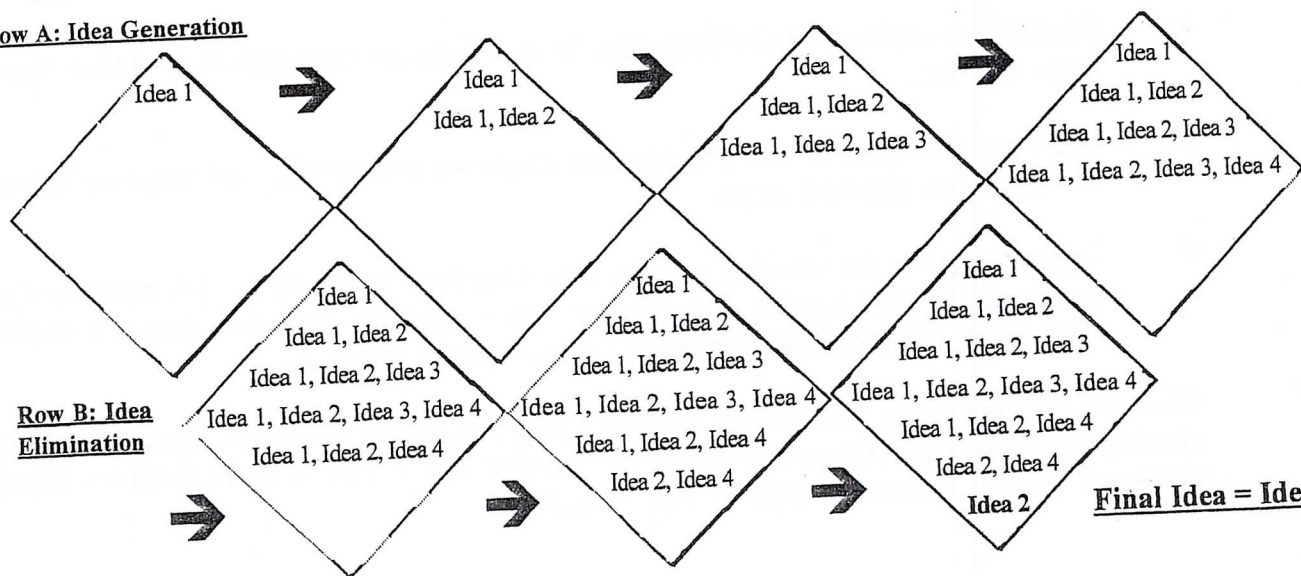
FORMAT: Team members sit in chairs or on the floor, with one person recording ideas. (The coach may record the ideas, but he/she must write down the teams' exact words.)

PROCEDURE:

1. Team members pose a question, such as, What would be the best way to do 'X', or, How can we make 'Y', or, What should 'Z' look like? Note: The team members must generate the questions themselves, and the questions should be general and open-ended. A coach may help the team determine exactly what it is they want to brainstorm by asking questions such as, What is the problem you are trying to figure out?
2. All the team members brainstorm answers to the question, and someone suggests his/her idea, and the recorder writes it down on the board or chart.
3. A second member gives an idea, and it is written down with the first one just below the first idea, so that the ideas begin to fill in the top half of the diamond shape (see Row A). Ideas are repeated on each line; the widest part of the diamond displays ALL the team's ideas.
4. After the team members come up with all possible ideas (as few as 4 or 5, or as many as 10 or 15) they then begin, through discussion, to narrow down the possibilities by eliminating one at a time as shown in Row B. They could even combine two or more separate ideas to determine the final one. Hopefully, they'll come to an agreement on their favorite idea without voting -- and without argument!

Remember: Only constructive criticism is ever allowed!

Row A: Idea Generation



BRAINSTORMING

Brainstorming is a group problem-solving technique named by advertising executive Alex Osborne. Before beginning to brainstorm with your team, it is important to review Osborne's ground rules:

Rule 1: Withhold judgement of ideas

An essential problem-solving skill is the ability to conceptualize freely. Conceptualization is the process that creates ideas. Nothing smothers the free flow of ideas like a sharp critical remark or harsh laughter from another person. Osborne wanted ideas expressed. He believed that a judgmental attitude would cause group members to be more concerned with defending ideas than with generating them.

Rule 2: Encourage wild ideas

It is easier to tame a wild idea than to think of one. Asking for wild ideas encourages group members to be imaginative. Placing a premium on that which initially seems far out encourages group members to expand their thinking.

Rule 3: Quantity counts

The more creative ideas a person or a group has to choose from, the better. It makes sense that if the number of ideas to be considered is greater, the chance of really finding a really good idea is also greater.

Rule 4: Piggyback on the ideas of others

Participants are encouraged to build up or modify the ideas put forth by other team members of the group. (Creative people tend to be good listeners.) Alerting people to the possibility of combining previous ideas can open vast resources for most people.

Coaches Tips:

- Teach children to be good listeners. They will be better at problem solving if they listen to each other and to the directions.
- Discuss the problem again when time is up. Evaluate responses as to which responses were creative.
- Use a tape recorder to help you evaluate responses and pacing. Try snapping fingers and decrease time between snaps.
- Begin practicing by working in pairs and recording the answers. Let each pair keep a record of the total number of responses. Take examples from their lists and brainstorm other ideas that could have developed from a single response.

When the kids reach the point where their first impressions are exhausted, teach them to adapt, combine and rearrange thoughts and thus to conceive new ideas. Use the Scamper Checklist developed by Bob Eberle, to improve this technique.