What the Heck is Style?

"Style" – What the heck is "Style"?

What is Style:

- "That which is added to the problem's solution and relates to the theme of the problem or the solution but is not scored under the long-term problem". (OotM Program Guide)
- Style is everything over and above the long-term solution. It is the way a team chooses to present its solution to the judges and the audience. It is the backdrop for the performance.
- In a performance problem, style and the problem solution become difficult to separate. In a technical problem, style becomes the theme through which the long-term solution presented.

Developing "Style":

- Style should be kept in mind throughout the process of solving the long-term problem. It can evolve from the solution.
- Don't lock into a style theme too early. Be patient.
- Be sure all the mandatory elements are incorporated into your evolving theme. Mandatory items must be present to receive points.
- Brainstorm the "Free choice(s) of the team".
- Record the ideas on a flipchart as they develop. Any team member can add to the "Style Suggestions" at any time.

Developing the Presentation:

- Choose a theme the judges will only see once.
- Outline the presentation.
- Beginning – grab the attention of the judges and the audience.
- Middle – tell the story. Get your message across. Complete your objectives.
- Ending – leave a good, lasting impression. Leave the judges feeling good about what they have just seen.
- Examine the "overall Effect" of the style presentation. Does the theme tie into the long-term problem?
- A skit or performance is not required to receive points for style.
- Be specific in detailing what it is the judges are to evaluate.
- Select the most creative aspects possible.
- Select the free choice(s) of the team.
- Detail how the mandatory items will be met.
- Review the ideas that have been collected and select a theme.
- Remember to SHOW the audience, don't just TELL the audience.
- Complex does not equal creative. There is a beauty inherent in simple solutions to difficult problems.

Put it all together.

- Write scripts, poems, song, etc.
- Design and build props.
- Create costumes.
- Assign roles, including understudies.
- Develop a timeline, due dates and a plan given the time left before tournament.
- Rehearse, but not to the point that the performance loses spontaneity.

Scoring Style:

Each Style category is worth 10 points, but those points DO count! When the team selects their style category, when there is free choice, select carefully and specifically. If there are several similar props, select the best one, rather than the group. Be specific about what you want the judges to judge, if one costume, prop, poem, song, piece of scenery or even a portion of one of those (the list here is not exhaustive!), is amazing tell the judges exactly what it is you want judged. The way judges look at the scoring:

- 1-3 points
  - using common materials/ideas in ordinary ways
- 4-6 points
  - using common materials/ideas in unusual and creative ways
- 7-8 points
  - using unusual materials/ideas in uncommon, effective ways or unusual creativity
- 9-10 points
  - using uncommon materials effectively in unique ways or in other words: for 9-10 points your style selection 'knocks the judges' socks off!' with outstanding creativity! It's hard to get a 9-10 because our judges have seen sooo much creativity! A goal to strive for!

Thanks to Rhode Island OM for this document: What the heck is style?