Tip Tuesday #3
Brainstorming

This is the most exciting time (in my daughter's opinion) because any idea is possible! Once the team has chosen the long-term (LT) problem, it's time to start brainstorming different parts of the problem. There many methods of brainstorming, but the main rules should be

- **all ideas are possible** and should be considered
- **no negative comments** can be made about the ideas.

Start with the Fun After reading Section A of the problem, what did the team think sounded like fun in solving the problem? What are some possible details to those parts of the problem?

Create a Story Story Elements in OM helps to break apart the problem and organize the team's ideas into Character, Setting, and Plot. Judges and audience members are excited to see and hear the team's story, as told through their 8-minute performance. The performance can be shorter than 8 minutes. Keep the story as simple as possible. Make sure all of the required actions are included in the story. Some problems are specific about things that have to happen in the beginning and/or the end of the story. The team decides when each of the other required actions take place. Additional details can be added later, if there's time.

Finding a Theme A theme in Odyssey of the Mind can often be some object or idea that is used over and over again. What are the things that team members are passionate about? It could be a certain animal, a favorite book, movie, or TV character, a talent like playing an instrument, dancing, or singing, a subject in school, a snack food, a certain building material. This may be discovered later in the journey or it could be part of the original brainstormed ideas. The theme could also be tied to the setting if the team chooses a fun location.

After Brainstorming At the next meeting, you may want to suggest the rule that once an idea is shared with the team, if becomes the team's idea and might get changed or even eliminated in order to make the team's story easier to understand, more creative, and fit within the time limit. Unused ideas could be used next year. Put all of the ideas separately on post-its, then start moving them around on chart paper, a whiteboard, or the table according to the team's responses. Are there any ideas that seem to go together? Are there any ideas that can be combined? If you are telling a story, how or when might this idea happen? SCAMPER has a list of questions that could be asked about the team's ideas. You do not need to use all of them.

Good luck! And remember to **HAVE FUN!**