

MYSTERY ARCHITECTURE

Description:

This event is designed to test the student's ability to think on their feet. They will be given a bag of materials to build a freestanding tower as high as they can. The tower should be constructed to support a tennis ball at its top.

Number of Participants: 2

Approximate Time: 30 minutes

The Competition:

1. Each team of two students will be given a bag of building materials. All teams will receive exactly the same materials. The materials might include: straight pins, paper cups, drinking straws, paper clips, tape, string, paper, etc. (This list is only an example; the actual materials may be anything that the supervisors feel are appropriate).
2. Each team will have a maximum time of 20 minutes to construct a tower to support the tennis ball at its highest point. The top of the tennis ball must be higher than any part of the structure.
3. Only those materials supplied in the bag, and the bag itself, may be used to construct the tower. No other materials or adhesives may be part of the finished tower. Students may bring scissors, a ruler and a pair of pliers, which they will provide, to use as tools while building the tower. Each team may bring their own tennis ball to use while building their tower, however, all towers will be measured using the same tennis ball (regulation size and weight) provided by the event supervisor.
4. The students are to inform the judges when they finish their tower. They will place the tennis ball provided by the event supervisor on the top of their tower. The tower must remain standing long enough for the height and base to be measured.
5. The tower must be completely free standing. It cannot be attached to the tabletop, floor, wall or ceiling.
6. No coaching of the students will be allowed during the competition. Remember, we are assessing the student's ability to think on their feet.

Scoring:

1. The height of the tower and the width of its base will be measured as precisely as possible by the judges. Since no building materials are to extend above it, the top of the tennis ball will be considered the highest point of the tower. The width of the tower will be measured at its base. The largest diameter of the base will be recorded.
2. All towers that support the tennis ball will be ranked above those that do not. The towers in each of these groups will be ranked according to their height. Tallest tower first, the shortest tower last.
3. In the event of a tie, the winner will be the tower with the smallest base measurement.

Note: supervisors should determine the acceptable measurement with the same equipment that is available to students.

