

Choosing A Team Challenge

Choosing the Team Challenge is empowering for kids! This is the first opportunity for the Team to come together and bond. This Teamwork is the foundation of having a successful DI season! PLEASE let them compromise in a positive way. Don't take the experience away from the kids by choosing a challenge for them. The Destination Imagination program is a process; a way to teach kids teamwork, to combine strengths listen to each other and recognize others ideas count too! They need to learn that if they collaborate and combine ideas, the results are way better than just one person's idea. Teamwork and bonding take time, but is worth the effort!

So How do you guide the Team to choose a challenge?

Work on Team bonding. Do team activities and games. Give the kids a chance to get to know and trust each other before you jump into choosing a challenge and brainstorming. Then follow the steps below.

Watch some team videos from past DI seasons

- This helps the kids start to understand what a Great Solution looks like.
- Point out backdrops that work, creative props and costumes that enhance the presentations and WOW moments. Have them describe what the story was about and how they know. (this will also help during brainstorming and story creation)
- Be sure to show them solutions from all types of challenges and point out that even in the technical challenges there was acting and art. In the Fine arts challenges there were technical elements. Etc...

Watch the challenge preview videos

- Have the kids state what sounds fun. Kids don't know how to analyze but they can tell you what is FUN to them. Don't ask them for ideas yet. Tell them to keep an open mind until they have more facts.

Read the Challenge Overviews with the kids and ask them:

- What parts of the challenges sounds fun? Do not let them go on about their ideas to solve it just what sounds fun.
- What sounds hard? Not ideas just what parts sound difficult to do?
- Have the kids rank the challenges in terms of 1-6 individually and tabulate the results with them. Have a Team member keep the tally sheet.

Discuss the top 3 challenges

- What do you need to do? Have a team member write the answers on a white board or flip chart.
- What sound FUN? Their answers might change after reading the requirements.
- What sounds like it would be less Fun to do? Remember to keep it positive no “that sounds stupid” or “we could never do that” Your job is to rephrase everything positively and get the team to listen to everyone in a positive way.

Then ask - How can you combine the best of all 3 (or top 2) challenge requirements?

- Get them to be silly and think of a really crazy challenge that combines everything. The crazier the better. Get them to laugh so they are not stuck on their choice! Get them to get beyond “My idea!”
- Sometimes the kids get stuck on ideas and not the challenge. Refocus them in creating a super FUN challenge.
- Go back and rank the top 3 challenges again. Reread the requirements and discuss. (Sometimes they change their minds)
- Try and come to a consensus and choose one challenge with noted modifications. Keep it positive.
- If no consensus, can they combine ideas (of the top 2) to make everyone happy? Explain all the challenges require art, acting, presentation, props, building and technical elements. If someone wants to make a car and the others want to act, can you combine a car into the Fine arts challenge?
- Give it some time and explain they can’t move on until all are happy and can figure out something as a Team! I promise they will get there! Just make it positive and throw in team building games until they are ready. This will be one of the hardest parts for a Team Manager. Working out the art of compromise at the start makes everything so much easier for the rest of the season! Just take your time. A Team will be able to work faster and more efficiently than a bunch of kids. Hang in there!

DO NOT VOTE on a challenge! Voting implies winners and losers. The goal should be to compromise in a fun way, by being creative and making everyone happy. Everyone gets to work on something that sounds exciting, crazy and FUN!

What to do if they can’t decide?

- Take a break. Do something FUN, play a team building game, do an Instant Challenge or have a team centipede walk.
- Let the kids take the lead. Let them lead some of the discussions, let them be silly and throw crazy ideas around. Just make sure to keep the conversation

Positive. No name calling or stupid ideas. No, that's sounds boring or dumb. They have to be taught to act like a team. There is no I in TEAM etc.

- Ask the team if they can think of ways to integrate the FUN stuff to make everyone happy. Ask the naysayers what they suggest to make the decision AMAZING!
- If that doesn't work pick a completely different challenge and see if the all or most of FUN things from the top 2 challenges can be integrated into a new challenge choice.
- Eventually the kids will get the idea of compromise. Don't let anyone gloat over winning. They are all winning if the Team makes a decision. Stress they are a TEAM!
- Hang in there as parents we just want to rush this process, but kids need to learn to compromise and to learn that give and take is needed to be successful. Most of the time the kids see that compromising makes the end result even better than they imagined. It might take 2-3 weeks but it is worth it to get the team to buy into their challenge choice. The process is making them into a TEAM.

After a choice is made have the kids celebrate! Do something silly, have a dance party or blow noise makers, make up a team cheer. This will help cement the idea that they succeeded as a TEAM!

Then the Team is ready to dissect the challenge requirements and start Brainstorming!