



# OUR CHANGING CLIMATE



# CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

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2024 – 2025

The vision of the United States Academic Decathlon® is to provide students the opportunity to excel academically through team competition.  
Toll Free: 866-511-USAD (8723) · Direct: 712-326-9589 · Fax: 712-366-3701 · Email: [info@usad.org](mailto:info@usad.org) · Website: [www.usad.org](http://www.usad.org)

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# CORPORATE SPONSORS

*We thank our corporate sponsors for their support!*



## USAD CONTACTS

### **TARA BROWN**

Customer Service and  
Accounts Receivable  
712-326-9589

Toll free 866-511-USAD (8723)

Fax: 651-389-9144  
info@usad.org

### **AMY DOSCH**

Finance and Accounting  
651-249-5878  
amy@usad.org

### **DANIELE GRIGSBY**

Test Development  
714-585-1259  
daniele@usad.org

### **TERRY MCKIERNAN**

Curriculum Development  
714-585-1289  
terry@usad.org



## **VISION**

The vision of the U.S. Academic Decathlon® is to provide all students the opportunity to excel academically through team competition.

## **MISSION**

The mission of the U.S. Academic Decathlon® is to promote learning and academic excellence among students of varying achievement levels by developing and providing multidisciplinary academic competitions using U.S. Academic Decathlon®-based curricula.

## **CORE VALUES**

As a premier national scholastic competition for high school students, the United States Academic Decathlon® believes in:

The academic growth of students

Challenging multidisciplinary learning

Teamwork as a means to achieve self-knowledge and life skills

Providing equal opportunities for students of different achievement levels

The importance of inclusivity and diversity to learning and the human experience

High standards of honesty and integrity

Transparency in our relations and interactions with all of our stakeholders

Excellence in our programs, services and activities

Respect for diverse points of view

# WHAT IS THE UNITED STATES ACADEMIC DECATHLON®?

## OVERVIEW

The United States Academic Decathlon®, the premier national scholastic competition for high school students, was created to provide opportunities for students to experience the challenges of rigorous team and individual academic competition. Each student competes in ten events: Art, Economics, Essay, Interview, Literature, Mathematics, Music, Science, Social Science, and Speech. Students compose an essay based on a prompt whose central theme incorporates information relating to the current curriculum. Students also perform a prepared speech and impromptu speech and participate in an interview before a panel of volunteer judges from the local community.

The culmination of the competition is the exciting Super Quiz™ relay in which students have the opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of the broad range of the U.S. Academic Decathlon's interdisciplinary curriculum by answering questions from seven different subject areas: art, economics, literature, mathematics, music, science, and social science. The Super Quiz is the only part of the actual testing that is open to the public, and it is inevitably one of the most memorable and exciting parts of the Academic Decathlon competition.

Gold, silver, and bronze medals are awarded for individual events and total scores. Overall individual winners are recognized as are champion teams. The broad base of awards allows for major recognition of academic accomplishment. Teams advance through local, regional, and state levels of competition. The state champions compete at the national finals. The 2025 Academic Decathlon National Finals will take place on May 1–May 3, in Des Moines, Iowa.

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The United States Academic Decathlon emphasizes the personal and academic growth of each student who, by meeting the challenges with honesty and integrity, can reap the rewards of greater self-knowledge and self-confidence for the future.

The ten-event academic program strives to foster a greater respect for knowledge, to promote wholesome inter-school academic competition, and to further develop student communication skills. A unique aspect of the U.S. Academic Decathlon is that it is designed to include students from all academic abilities and achievement levels. Each nine-member team consists of three Honor students (3.80 – 4.00 GPA), three Scholastic students (3.20 – 3.799 GPA), and three Varsity students (0.00 – 3.199 GPA). Each team member competes in all ten events against other students in their GPA division. Overall team scores are calculated using the top two individual scores from each division.

## HISTORY

The U.S. Academic Decathlon was first created by Dr. Robert Peterson, former Superintendent of Schools in Orange County, California. Firmly believing that everyone's learning potential can be maximized through competitive challenge, Dr. Peterson set in motion the contest that has since come to be recognized as the most prestigious high school academic team competition in the United States. The program spread rapidly due to the success and excitement it engendered. The United States Academic Decathlon was founded in 1981.

# THE UNITED STATES ACADEMIC DECATHLON® AND CURRICULUM AND CONTENT STANDARDS

## OVERVIEW

The United States Academic Decathlon’s curriculum is an interdisciplinary curriculum in which a selected theme is integrated across six different subject areas: art, economics, literature, music, science, and social science. Students also study mathematics and participate in essay-writing, speech, and interview events. The theme for the 2024–2025 U.S. Academic Decathlon® (USAD) curriculum is *Our Changing Climate*. While in most subjects the majority of the topics relate to the overall curricular theme, some topics that cover fundamentals may also be included to encourage a thorough understanding of the subject area as a whole. The USAD mathematics curriculum is unrelated to the theme and focuses on standard high school mathematics topics.

This document provides a summary of the Common Core Standards for high school Mathematics and Reading that are addressed in USAD’s 2024–2025 curriculum as well as the national content standards met by USAD’s 2024–2025 curriculum.

## THE UNITED STATES ACADEMIC DECATHLON’S CURRICULUM AND THE COMMON CORE STANDARDS

### Standards Background

The Common Core State Standards Initiative is a state-led effort to establish a common set of educational standards for English language arts and mathematics. The standards aim to ensure that students graduating from high school are prepared to attend college or enter the workforce. The Common Core Standards were developed by states and content experts under the guidance of governors and state education chiefs, and they have been adopted by forty-one states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA).

### The United States Academic Decathlon® and the Common Core Standards for High School Mathematics

The Common Core High School Mathematics Standards consist of six broad categories. The U.S. Academic Decathlon’s 2024–2025 mathematics curriculum addresses aspects of five of these six categories: Number and Quantity, Algebra, Functions, Modeling, and Statistics and Probability.

### Mathematical Practice Standards Addressed

In addition to the content standards, the Common Core High School Mathematics standards emphasize eight practice standards. These standards are meant to address the manner in which students approach and reason during their learning of mathematics. USAD’s 2024–25 Mathematics Curriculum addresses seven of these eight practice standards:

- *CCSS.Math.Practice.MP1: Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them*
- *CCSS.Math.Practice.MP2: Reason abstractly and quantitatively*
- *CCSS.Math.Practice.MP4: Model with mathematics*
- *CCSS.Math.Practice.MP5: Use appropriate tools strategically*
- *CCSS.Math.Practice.MP6: Attend to precision*
- *CCSS.Math.Practice.MP7: Look for and make use of structure*
- *CCSS.Math.Practice.MP8: Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning*

### The United States Academic Decathlon and the Common Core Reading Standards for Literature

USAD’s 2024–25 literature curriculum in concert with other Academic Decathlon subject areas addresses aspects of all ten of the Common Core College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading for students in grades K–12. USAD’s 2024–25 literature curriculum in concert with other Academic Decathlon subject areas addresses aspects of all ten Common Core Reading Standards for Literature for students in grades 9–10. USAD’s 2024–25 literature curriculum in concert with other Academic Decathlon subject areas addresses aspects of seven Common Core Reading Standards for Literature for students in grades 11–12.

## THE UNITED STATES ACADEMIC DECATHLON CURRICULUM AND NATIONAL CONTENT STANDARDS

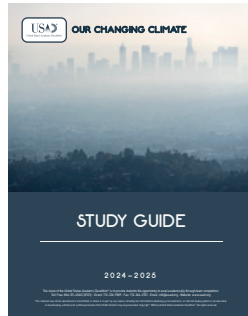
USAD’s 2024–2025 curriculum addresses aspects of the following:

- *All twenty of the Voluntary National Content Standards in Economics*
- *Eleven of the twelve Curriculum and Content Area Standards for English Language Arts*
- *Four of the five content areas of the high school mathematics curriculum delineated by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and provides students with opportunities to utilize all four reasoning habits delineated by the NCTM*
- *Four National Core Arts Standards for Music*
- *Four National Core Arts Standards for Visual Arts*
- *Twelve Life Science Disciplinary Core Ideas for Grades 9–12, eight Earth and Space Science Disciplinary Core Ideas for Grades 9–12, one Physical Science Disciplinary Core Idea for Grades 9–12, two Engineering, Technology, and the Application of Science Disciplinary Core Ideas, and six of seven crosscutting concepts delineated by the Next Generation Science Standards*
- *Eight of ten overarching curricular themes outlined by the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS), five areas of focus delineated by the National Content Standards for Geography, six historical eras of focus delineated by the National Content Standards for U.S. History, and nine historical eras of focus delineated by the National Content Standards for World History*

# CURRICULUM MATERIALS

## U.S. ACADEMIC DECATHLON STUDY GUIDE:

Summarizes the curriculum for the entire year. Includes detailed outlines for Art, Economics, Literature, Mathematics, Music, Science, and Social Science. Also includes rules and guidelines for the Speech, Interview, and Essay events. Available as a PDF for download or as an eBook. *Available May 15*

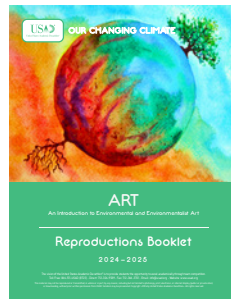


## PRACTICE TEST BOOKLET:

The PTB is the most important coaching tool for understanding Academic Decathlon tests. Written by the official USAD test writers in each subject area. Contains eight tests, sample essay prompts, and speech and interview rules and rubrics. The PTB may be reproduced at the school level only. Includes mp3 file for music questions based on listening excerpts and PowerPoint® Slideshows for art questions based on artwork images and the Super Quiz™ relay. *Available May 15*

## ART REPRODUCTIONS BOOKLET:

Contains full-color reproductions of the 18 selected artworks for this year's art curriculum. Available as a PDF for download or as an eBook. *Available May 15*

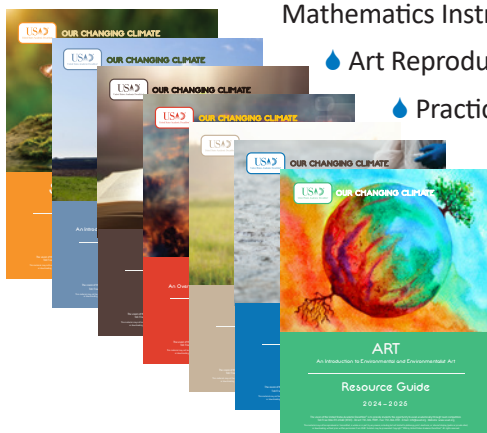


## RESOURCE GUIDES:

Resource Guides will be provided in Art, Economics, Literature, Mathematics, Music, Science, and Social Science. These Resource Guides will provide teams with a thorough review and academic treatment of all the topics noted in the subject area outlines for these subjects. All Academic Decathlon competition test items will be derived from the information and concepts presented in the Resource Guides, as well as the selected literature, artworks, and musical works. The Resource Guides offer an essential resource that will assist students in their mastery of the topics and aid in their preparation for the competition tests. Available as a PDF for download or as an eBook. *Available May 15*

## CURRICULUM PACKAGE:

- ◆ Academic Decathlon® Study Guides
- ◆ Art, Economics, Literature, Music, Science, and Social Science Resource Guides
- ◆ Mathematics Resource Guides and Mathematics Instructor's Manual
- ◆ Art Reproductions Booklet
- ◆ Practice Test Booklet





# STUDENT STUDY AIDS

## STUDENT EXERCISE BOOKS:

Available in Art, Economics, Literature, Mathematics, Music, Science, and Social Science, the Student Exercise Books provide a student-friendly synthesis of the material presented in the Resource Guides and offer students a chance to test and reinforce their knowledge of the curriculum through a variety of exercises and activities. The Student Exercise Books will include section overviews as well as short quizzes, true/false questions, fill-in-the-blank items, etc., to assist students in their mastery of the curriculum. Available as a PDF for download.

*Available June 15*



## ESSAY EXAM BOOKLET:

Contains 20 essay tests with a total of 60 essay prompts, which focus on the following six subject areas: art, economics, literature, music, science, and social science. The essay rubric used at the National Competition is included in the booklet. Great for essay writing practice.

*Available June 15*

## IMPROMPTU TOPIC BOOKLET:

Contains 150 impromptu speech topics, including a variety of sample approaches that may be encountered in the United States Academic Decathlon competition. Great for speech practice and impromptu preparation.

*Available June 15*

## LITERATURE NOVEL QUIZZES:

Test your knowledge of Linda Hogan's *Solar Storms*. Quizzes will include a combination of fill-in-the blank items, short question and answer format, multiple-choice items, and matching to help students to master the chapters in this year's selected novel.

*Available June 15*

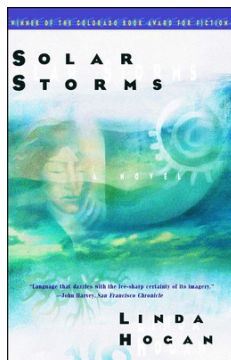
## MUSIC LISTENING QUIZZES:

Includes 10 quizzes with multiple-choice items that focus on a 30-second musical excerpt from the music selections featured in the USAID Music Resource Guide: *Music and the Natural World*. Quizzes will be similar to what students will encounter on the listening portion of the music competition tests to reinforce mastery of the music selections. Includes accompanying mp3 file which is available for electronic download. *Available June 15*

# ADDITIONAL STUDY & PRACTICE TEST MATERIALS

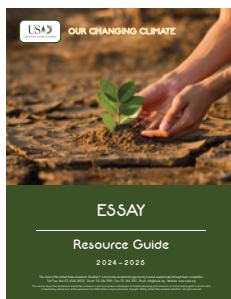
## THIS YEAR'S SELECTED LITERATURE:

This year's selected literature is *Solar Storms* by Linda Hogan. The U.S. Academic Decathlon has arranged for a special discount from the publisher. Students will also study selected shorter works of literature that relate to the curricular theme. *Available May 15*



## ESSAY RESOURCE GUIDE:

The Essay Resource Guide provides Academic Decathletes with all the information they need to know about USAD's essay event. The Essay Resource Guide includes a thorough explication of the essay scoring rubric and offers students techniques, strategies, tips, and guided activities—including detailed analyses of sample essays—to help them write an effective, high-scoring essay. *Available May 15*



## PRACTICE LEVEL TESTS:

Includes a series of three tests made up of 150 questions in each subject area. Tests can be used consecutively as a study tool since they are constructed at easy, medium, and hard difficulty levels, allowing for gradual mastery of the curriculum. *Available August 1*

## PRACTICE SPECIALTY TESTS:

Includes two 100-item tests in art, literature, music, science, and social science, focused in depth on a specific portion of the subject outlines. Tests consist of a variety of question styles for students to gain knowledge on focused topics. *Available August 1*

## 4,000 SUBJECT AREA FLASH CARDS:

Companion to the Resource Guides and Online Practice Tests. 600 questions each in art, music, literature, social science, science, and economics; 400 in mathematics. Questions and answers are referenced directly to the Resource Guides to reinforce learning and strengthen fast answer skills.



*Available August 1*

## NOTEBOOK DIVIDERS (10 SETS):

Crammed with pertinent information, this set of 10 tabbed notebook dividers helps students stay organized. Includes artist and composer bios, lists of key terms and definitions, and other information. *Available May 15*

## PRACTICE COMBO QUIZZES:

Contains four quizzes with a total of 200 items in each subject area. Quizzes focus on topics in sequential order of the subject outlines. Quizzes include a combination of fill-in-the-blank items, short-question and answer format, multiple-choice items, and matching to help students to master the curriculum with a variety of question styles. *Available August 1*

# ONLINE MARKET

## THE ONLINE MARKET:

High-quality practice exams for students to test themselves with over 4,000 multiple-choice questions. Questions are written in the format of the Round 1–4 exams and USAD’s Level Exams. Tests are broken down into three categories that follow the chunking theory of memory stages: Automatic Stage Quizzes, Conceptual Stage Exams, and Comprehensive Stage Exams.

- ◆ **Automatic Stage Quizzes:** Focus on small chunks of information and usually consist of questions that are level 1 type questions. **Available August 15**
- ◆ **Conceptual Stage Exams:** Cover full sections of the guides and ask higher-level questions, building on the information asked in the *Automatic Stage Quizzes*. **Available September 1**
- ◆ **Comprehensive Stage Exams:** These are a combination of the *Automatic Stage*-style questions and *Conceptual Stage*-style questions and cover the entire subject Resource Guide. **Available October 1**

Teams must be members of the USAD Testing and Training Center to purchase the product at a discounted price. Coaches will also have access to the exams and will be able to choose if they want their students to have access to the questions, or if they want the PDF downloadable version only. Teams who choose not to access the training center will have access to the exams as a PDF at a higher price.

Online  
Market

# PRACTICE TEST PACKAGES

## THE PRACTICE TEST PACKAGE:

**A complete set of practice materials. The Practice Test Package has 8,000 test questions that are written and reviewed by United States Academic Decathlon®-contracted writers and reviewers.** The Practice Test Package contains thousands of test questions to reinforce learning and test-taking skills. The topical breakdown of the test items in the Practice Test Package is in accordance with the percentages noted in the Academic Decathlon Study Guide outlines.

PTP  
Practice Test  
Package

## THE PRACTICE TEST PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- ◆ **Online Testing and Training Center:** Train for Academic Decathlon team competition through a unique combination of individual study sessions, direct challenges, and national scrimmages featuring more than 7,000 questions in art, economics, literature, mathematics, music, science, and social science categories. A powerful Academic Decathlon resource offering daily preparation to match intellects with students from around the country through team competitions. **Available August 1.**
- ◆ **Practice Level Tests:** Includes a series of three tests made up of 150 questions in each subject area. Tests can be used consecutively as a study tool since they are constructed at easy, medium, and hard difficulty levels, allowing for gradual mastery of the curriculum. **Available August 1.**
- ◆ **Music Listening Quizzes:** Includes 10 quizzes with multiple-choice items that focus on a 30-second musical excerpt from the music selections featured in the USAD Music Resource Guide: *Music and the Natural World*. Quizzes will be similar to what students will encounter on the listening portion of the music competition tests to reinforce mastery of the music selections. Includes accompanying mp3 file which is available for electronic download. **Available June 15.**

# PRACTICE TEST PACKAGES (CONT.)

## ONLINE PRACTICE TESTS: *Standard Practice Tests and Subject Assortment Tests*

The online test system uses the same interface as the United States Academic Decathlon® Online National Competition. Get up to 35 subscriptions for one low price. The system features additional bonuses for the coach and student, which include the ability to:



- ◆ Build tests to assist in the team selection process
- ◆ Administer tests in a group setting
- ◆ Set up competitions between teams and states
- ◆ Take an unlimited number of on-screen USAD-format tests, randomly created in each subject area
- ◆ Access the test program from any Internet-connected handheld computer or cell phone with full web browser
- ◆ Access test reports in seven different formats

Students can access the online practice test program with their assigned username and password.

**Online Practice Tests**—1300 test items: 200 each in art, economics, literature, music, science, and social science; 100 mathematics questions. Tests will focus on each subject area, section-by-section of the Study Guide outlines, to reinforce mastery of the material. **Available August 1.**

**Online Subject Assortment Tests**—700 test items. This includes fourteen 50-item tests that consist of an assortment of questions from each of the seven objective subject areas. **Available August 1.**

**Online Bonus Questions**—1400 multiple-choice questions that go beyond the scope of the *Resource Guides* for additional mastery of the curriculum topics. **Available August 1.**

### **Academic Decathlon Study Features**—

- ◆ **Online Flash Cards and Online Quick Quiz:** Test your knowledge by subject category.
- ◆ **Online Scrimmage:** Participate in national scrimmages.
- ◆ **Head-to-Head Challenge:** Challenge another current user to a direct competition.
- ◆ **Online Puzzle Maker:** Access to this software program allows you to quickly create word search and crossword puzzles using word lists and clues directly from the United States Academic Decathlon curriculum.

### **United States Academic Decathlon Online Community Features**—

- ◆ My Statistics
- ◆ Track your online study results and rankings
- ◆ Recent News and Videos
- ◆ Access state and national USAD news and information

# ART

## AN INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENVIRONMENTALIST ART

- I. ART FUNDAMENTALS ..... 20%**
  - A. Introduction to Art History
  - B. Elements of Art
  
- II. LAND USE AND LAND RIGHTS ..... 20%**
  - A. Introduction to Artistic Perspectives on Land Ownership and Land Use
  - B. SELECTED WORK: Allora & Calzadilla, *Land Mark (Foot Prints)*, 2002
  - C. SELECTED WORK: Kent Monkman, *The Fourth World*, 2012
  - D. SELECTED WORK: Bonnie Devine, *Battle for the Woodlands*, 2014–15
  - E. SELECTED WORK: Will Wilson, *Church Rock Spill Evaporation Ponds*, Church Rock, New Mexico, Dinétah, 2019
  
- III. POLLUTION AND EXTRACTION ..... 20%**
  - A. Introduction to Issues of Waste, Pollution, and Industrial Extraction
  - B. SELECTED WORK: Agnes Denes, *Wheatfield—A Confrontation: Battery Park Landfill, Downtown Manhattan—With Agnes Denes Standing in the Field*, 1982
  - C. SELECTED WORK: Noah Purifoy, *Offshore Drilling*, 1995
  - D. SELECTED WORK: Subhankar Banerjee, *Caribou Migration I*, 2002
  - E. SELECTED WORK: Vik Muniz, *Marat (Sebastião)* from *Pictures of Garbage*, 2008
  
- IV. ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS OF KNOWLEDGE ..... 20%**
  - A. Introduction to Systems Thinking and the Ecosystem in Art
  - B. SELECTED WORK: Helen And Newton Harrison, *Shrimp Farm, Survival Piece #2*, 1971
  - C. SELECTED WORK: Hans Haacke, *Rhine Water Purification Plant*, 1972
  - D. SELECTED WORK: Nancy Holt, *Sun Tunnels*, 1973–76
  - E. SELECTED WORK: Mark Dion, *A Meter of Jungle*, 1992
  - F. SELECTED WORK: Pierre Huyghe, *Untilled*, 2011–12
  
- V. THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE OF ENVIRONMENT ..... 20%**
  - A. Introduction to the Subjectivity of Experiencing Environments
  - B. SELECTED WORK: Alma Thomas, *Snoopy—Early Sun Display on Earth*, 1970
  - C. SELECTED WORK: Ana Mendieta, *Untitled: Silueta Series*, 1978
  - D. SELECTED WORK: Rebecca Belmore, *Ayum-Ee-Aawach Oomama-Mowan: Speaking to Their Mother*, 1991
  - E. SELECTED WORK: Mel Chin, *Unmoored*, 2018
  - F. SELECTED WORK: Latoya Ruby Frazier, *Shea Cobb with Her Mother Ms. Renéé and Her Daughter Zion at Nephrotiti’s Wedding Reception, Standing Outside the Social Network Banquet Hall, Flint, Michigan*, from the series *Flint is Family: Act I*, 2016–17

# ECONOMICS

## AN INTRODUCTION TO ECONOMICS AND THE ECONOMICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

<b>I.</b>	<b>FUNDAMENTAL ECONOMIC CONCEPTS</b> .....	<b>10%</b>
	A. Basic Assumptions of Economics .....	
	B. Models and Economic Theory	
	C. Positive and Normative Economics	
	D. Efficiency as a Goal	
	E. Microeconomics and Macroeconomics	
<b>II.</b>	<b>MICROECONOMICS</b> .....	<b>40%</b>
	A. Perfectly Competitive Markets	
	B. Applications of the Competitive Market Model	
	C. Evaluating Government Policy: The Impact of Price Controls and Taxes	
	D. International Trade	
	E. The Profit Motive and the Behavior of Firms	
	F. Imperfect Competition	
	G. Creative Destruction: The Profit Motive and the Sources of Economic Change	
	H. Market Failures	
	I. Institutions, Organizations, and Government	
<b>III.</b>	<b>MACROECONOMICS</b> .....	<b>30%</b>
	A. Macroeconomic Issues	
	B. Macroeconomic Measurement	
	C. Economic Growth, Productivity, and Living Standards	
	D. Savings, Investment, and the Financial System	
	E. Money and Prices in the Long Run	
	F. Short-Run Economic Fluctuations	
<b>IV.</b>	<b>CLIMATE CHANGE: ECONOMICS MEETS ECOLOGY</b> .....	<b>20%</b>
	A. Introduction and Overview	
	B. Economic Concepts and Climate: Theory and Practice	
	C. Economics Issues and Climate	
	D. Policy Responses to Climate Change	
	E. Summing Up	

# LITERATURE

## AN INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL LITERATURE

- I. CRITICAL READING..... 15%**
  - A. Purpose and Main Idea
  - B. Structure
  - C. Restatement of Information
  - D. Genres and their Characteristics
  - E. Language and Tone
  - F. Grammar and Syntax
  - G. Vocabulary in Context
  - H. Diction
  
- II. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL LITERATURE ..... 10%**
  - A. What is Environmental Literature?
  - B. England: The Romantics
  - C. The Transcendentalist Movement in the U.S.
  - D. Philosophies of Environmental Action
  - E. Environmental Awakening
  - F. The City and the Country
  - G. Eco-Justice and Environmental Literature
  - H. The Rise of Climate Fiction
  - I. Environmental Appeals for Social Change in Nonfiction
  
- III. LINDA HOGAN, *SOLAR STORMS* (1994)..... 45%**
  - A. Biographical Context: Linda Hogan
  - B. Historical Context: The James Bay Project
  - C. Plot and Structure: Indigenous Ecological Time in the Novel
  - D. *Solar Storms*: Major Themes
  - E. Cast of Characters in *Solar Storms*
  - F. Analysis of *Solar Storms* and Its Themes
  - G. Literary Contexts of the Novel
  
- IV. SHORTER SELECTIONS..... 30%**
  - A. SELECTED WORK: “The World Is Too Much With Us” (1807) by William Wordsworth
  - B. SELECTED WORK: “Freeway 280” (1981) by Lorna Dee Cervantes
  - C. SELECTED WORK: “Different Ways to Pray” (1980) by Naomi Shihab Nye
  - D. SELECTED WORK: “Webcam the World” (2009) by Heather McHugh



- E. SELECTED WORK: “The Blue” (2011) by Camille T. Dungy
- F. SELECTED WORK: “The air smelled dirty” (2017) by Marge Piercy
- G. SELECTED WORK: “Our Purpose in Poetry: Or, Earthrise” (2018) by Amanda Gorman
- H. SELECTED WORK: “The Machine Stops” (1909) by E. M. Forster
- I. SELECTED WORK: “Once More to the Lake” (1941) by E. B. White
- J. SELECTED WORK: “The Toxic Donut” (1993) by Terry Bisson
- K. SELECTED WORK: “Epiphany in the Beans” excerpt from *Braiding Sweetgrass* (2013) by Robin Wall Kimmerer
- L. SELECTED WORK: “Space Leek” (2019) by Chen Qiufan



# MATHEMATICS

## GENERAL MATHEMATICS, GEOMETRY, AND AN INTRODUCTION TO DIFFERENTIAL CALCULUS

- I. OVERVIEW OF PERMUTATIONS AND COMBINATIONS ..... 10%**
  - A. Multiplication Principle
  - B. Permutations
  - C. Combinations
  
- II. ALGEBRA ..... 40%**
  - A. Sequences and Series
  - B. Polynomials
  - C. Binomial Expansion Theorem
  - D. Compound Interest
  - E. Euler’s Constant
  
- III. STATISTICS ..... 50%**
  - A. Descriptive Statistics
  - B. Measures of Variation
  - C. Basic Probability
  - D. Probability Distributions
  - E. The Binomial Distribution
  - F. The Normal Distribution

# DES MOINES. THE Ss ARE SILENT. THE 2025 USAD NATIONAL FINALS ARE CALLING.

Catch Des Moines welcomes the **2025 USAD National Finals** to Iowa's vibrant capital city May 1st through May 3rd, 2025.

Whether it's our sizzling food scene, bold art, or attractions worth shouting about, there's something for everyone in Greater Des Moines. Be sure to check out some of these inspiring, historic, and educational attractions when you visit next year!



## IOWA STATE CAPITOL

100 rooms of awe-inspiring history and camera-ready beauty.



## SCIENCE CENTER OF IOWA

Engaging and inspiring visitors of all ages by bringing learning to life.



## LIVING HISTORY FARMS

We're not all farms you know, but the ones we do have are pretty epic. This 500-acre outdoor museum includes everything from milking cows to old-timey baseball.



## STATE HISTORICAL MUSEUM

With three floors showcasing Iowa's accomplishments, contributions and heritage across our 99 counties, experience our state's rich history through exhibits and artifacts.



## DID YOU KNOW?

The Henry Wallace House, a historic building in Des Moines, was home to Henry Wallace, an advocate for agricultural improvement and reform. His grandson, Henry A. Wallace, was former VP to FDR and was a proponent of cooperation with Soviets in post-WW II international relations. [#IowaCulture](#)

**THIS FUN FACT PROVIDED BY:** IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

IOWA ARTS COUNCIL PRODUCE IOWA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA



### TERRACE HILL

Experience the Victorian lifestyle of the late 1880s. This National Historic Landmark and Iowa Governor's Residence, is among the finest examples of Victorian Second Empire architecture in the United States.



### BLANK PARK ZOO

Lions and tigers and red panda bears, oh my!



### BOTANICAL GARDEN

Rain or shine, things are always in bloom at this beautiful, seven-acre public garden in the heart of downtown.



### SALISBURY HOUSE

Go back in time in this beautiful 42-room mansion built in the 1920s. It's filled with original art, rare books and antique furnishings from around the world.



### DES MOINES ART CENTER

Making art accessible with free admission to world-class art exhibits.



### IOWA HALL OF PRIDE

Enjoy dozens of hands-on interactive exhibits that tell the stories of Iowa's communities and their heroes.

Looking for more travel inspiration and ideas of things to do while you're here? Visit [catchdesmoines.com/videos](http://catchdesmoines.com/videos) and check out our video series for The S's Are Silent and Des Best, chock full of authentic Des Moines experiences you won't want to miss! See you next May!

**CATCH**  
**DES MOINES**

# MUSIC

## MUSIC AND THE NATURAL WORLD

### I. BASIC ELEMENTS OF MUSIC THEORY ..... 20%

- A. Sound and Music
- B. Pitch, Rhythm, and Harmony
- C. Other Aspects of Musical Sound
- D. Form in Music
- E. Which Is the Real Music? Scores, Recordings, and Performance

### II. THE NATURAL WORLD ..... 28%

- A. Marvels Made Musical—LISTENING COMPANION 1: *Grand Canyon Suite*, “On the Trail” (1929–31) – Ferde Grofé
- B. Stormy Weather—LISTENING COMPANION 2: Symphony No. 6, op. 68 “Pastoral,” Mvt. 4, “Gewitter Sturm: Allegro” (“Thunderstorm: Allegro”) (1808) – Ludwig van Beethoven
- C. The Globe’s Growing Things—LISTENING COMPANION 3: *Ame No Ki (Rain Tree)* (excerpt) (1981) – Tōru Takemitsu
- D. Playing with Pollinators—LISTENING COMPANION 4: *The Tale of Tsar Saltan*, “Flight of the Bumblebee” (1900) – Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov
- E. Birds as Composers—LISTENING COMPANION 5: *Hermit Thrush at Morn*, op. 92, no. 2 (1921) – Amy Beach

### III. CELEBRATING THE PLANET ..... 17%

- A. Singing the Seasons—LISTENING COMPANION 6: *Sumer is icumen in* (c.1250) – Anonymous
- B. Trees of Green, Red Roses Too—LISTENING COMPANION 7: “What a Wonderful World” (1967) – Bob Thiele [“George Douglas”] and George David Weiss
- C. Warming Up After the Cold War—LISTENING COMPANION 8: *Global Warming* (1990) – Michael Abels

### IV. WORDS OF WARNING ..... 35%

- A. You Don’t Know What You’ve Got ‘Til It’s Gone—LISTENING COMPANION 9: “Big Yellow Taxi” (1970) –Joni Mitchell
- B. Poison Is the Wind That Blows—LISTENING COMPANION 10: “Mercy Mercy Me (The Ecology)” (1971) – Marvin Gaye



- C. Postmodern Anxiety—LISTENING COMPANION 11: “Idioteque” (2000) – Thomas Yorke, Philip Selway, Edward O’Brien, Colin Greenwood, Jonathan Greenwood (Radiohead), and Paul Lansky
- D. Calling For Action—LISTENING COMPANION 12: “Despite Repeated Warnings” (2018) – Paul McCartney
- E. Why Don’t We Listen?—LISTENING COMPANION 13: “Feels Like Summer” (2018) – Donald Glover [“Childish Gambino”]
- F. Is It Too Late?—LISTENING COMPANION 14: *Elegy for the Arctic* (2016) – Ludovico Einaudi



# SCIENCE

## AN INTRODUCTION TO ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

### **I. FOUNDATIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE . . . . . 20%**

- A. What Is Environmental Science?
- B. Environmental Indicators
- C. The Scientific Method
- D. The Limitations of Environmental Science
- E. Environmental Systems

### **II. BIODIVERSITY: FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL. . . . . 30%**

- A. Biodiversity
- B. Evolution
- C. Changes in Environmental Conditions and Extinctions
- D. Human Activity and Biodiversity
- E. Linking Biodiversity and Evolution to Ecology
- F. Population Ecology
- G. Community Ecology
- H. Ecological Communities
- I. Productivity
- J. Major Aspects of Ecosystems
- K. Biomes
- L. The Cycle of Elements within the Biosphere

### **III. THE HUMAN IMPACT ON NATURAL RESOURCES . . . . . 30%**

- A. The Human Population
- B. The Elements on Earth
- C. Water Resources
- D. Agricultural Resources
- E. Fishery Resources
- F. Forestry Resources

### **IV. SCIENCE FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE. . . . . 20%**

- A. Air Pollution and Atmospheric Science
- B. Energy Use and Sources
- C. Human Environmental Impacts and Human Health Risks
- D. Global Climate Change

# SOCIAL SCIENCE

## CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE PAST AND PRESENT

### I. CONCEPTUALIZING CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE PAST AND THE PRESENT ..... 25%

- A. Essential Concepts from Earth System Science (ESS)
- B. Sources for Reconstructing the History of Climate
- C. Fields for Studying the History of Climate
- D. Conceptualizing Climate Change Today
- E. Climate Change and Narratives of Global History

### II. HUMANS IN THE HOLOCENE ..... 25%

- A. An Overview of the Holocene
- B. Climate and the Development of Human Civilizations
- C. The Little Ice Age (LIA) and the Colonial World
- D. From the “Seventeenth-Century Crisis” to the Nineteenth Century

### III. THE ANTHROPOCENE ..... 25%

- A. The Origins of the Anthropocene
- B. The Causes of the Anthropocene
- C. The Consequences of the Anthropocene

### IV. RESPONDING TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS ..... 25%

- A. Recognizing the Climate Crisis
- B. Opposition to Climate Action
- C. Mitigating the Climate Crisis
- D. Climate Activism

# STATE DIRECTORS

## ALASKA

*Joan Pardes*  
SERRC-Alaska's Educational  
Resource Center  
210 Ferry Way  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
[akacadeca@serrc.org](mailto:akacadeca@serrc.org)

## ARIZONA

*Sarah Morris*  
610 East Bell Road 2-152  
Phoenix, AZ 85022  
Phone: 602-935-9304  
[sarah@azacadec.org](mailto:sarah@azacadec.org)

## CALIFORNIA

*Ken Scarberry*  
4119 McKinley Blvd.  
Sacramento, CA 95819  
Phone: 707-330-3276  
[ken@academicdecathlon.org](mailto:ken@academicdecathlon.org)

## COLORADO

*Tara Brown – USAD Liaison*  
Phone: 712-326-9589  
[tara@usad.org](mailto:tara@usad.org)

## CONNECTICUT

*Sam Keal*  
[skeal@massdecathlon.org](mailto:skeal@massdecathlon.org)

## FLORIDA

*Amy Dosch – USAD Liaison*  
Phone: 651-249-5878  
[amy@usad.org](mailto:amy@usad.org)

## GEORGIA

*Michelle Crawford*  
PO Box 937  
Young Harris, GA 30582  
Phone: 404-414-3041  
Fax: 404-480-5136  
[MCrawford@pageinc.org](mailto:MCrawford@pageinc.org)

## HAWAII

*Cindy Martisko*  
PO Box 564  
Pepeekeo, HI 96783  
Phone: 612-743-6853  
[cindymartisko@gmail.com](mailto:cindymartisko@gmail.com)

## IDAHO

*Nick Hoffman*  
PO Box 705  
125 E Fir Avenue  
Osburn, ID 83849-0705  
Cell: 208-512-5197  
[idahoacadec@gmail.com](mailto:idahoacadec@gmail.com)

## ILLINOIS

*Tammy Raffan*  
415 Lexington Street  
Maywood, IL 60153  
Phone: 708-990-8607  
[traffen@west40.org](mailto:traffen@west40.org)

## INDIANA

*Rusty King*  
7481 N. County Rd. 550 E.  
Pittsboro, Indiana 46167  
Phone: 317-450-9179  
[rgking7152@gmail.com](mailto:rgking7152@gmail.com)

## IOWA

*Dr. Jolene Teske*  
26567 225<sup>th</sup> St.  
Eldora, IA 50627  
Phone: 515-689-4864  
[statedirector@iowaacdec.org](mailto:statedirector@iowaacdec.org)

## KANSAS

*Amy Dosch – USAD Liaison*  
Phone: 651-249-5878  
[amy@usad.org](mailto:amy@usad.org)

## KENTUCKY

*Participating Schools*

## LOUISIANA

*Participating Schools*

## MAINE

*Pam Smith*  
187 Ridge Rd.  
Monmouth, ME 04259  
Phone: 207-314-5693  
[threecowcats@yahoo.com](mailto:threecowcats@yahoo.com)

## MARYLAND

*Yashna Hasija*  
Phone: 571-565-9225  
[virginia.decathlon@gmail.com](mailto:virginia.decathlon@gmail.com)

## MASSACHUSETTS

*Sebastian Garza*  
Phone: 214-842-9458  
[sjgarza@massdecathlon.org](mailto:sjgarza@massdecathlon.org)

## MINNESOTA

*Amy Dosch – USAD Liaison*  
Phone: 651-249-5878  
[amy@usad.org](mailto:amy@usad.org)

## MISSISSIPPI

*Participating Schools*

## MISSOURI

*Roy Copeland*  
7537 Walnut St.  
Kansas City, MO 64132  
Phone: 816-678-5998  
[copelandr\\_@hotmail.com](mailto:copelandr_@hotmail.com)

## NEBRASKA

*Dr. John Anstey*  
2175 North 124 Ave. Circle  
Omaha, NE 68164  
[ansteydr10t@gmail.com](mailto:ansteydr10t@gmail.com)



# STATE DIRECTORS

## NEVADA

*Participating Schools*

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

*Participating Schools*

## NEW JERSEY

*John Marshall*

111 Fayson Lakes Rd.

Kinnelon, NJ 07405

Phone: 862-200-0244

[johnmarshall@alumni.nd.edu](mailto:johnmarshall@alumni.nd.edu)

## NEW MEXICO

*Amy Dosch – USAD Liaison*

Phone: 651-249-5878

[amy@usad.org](mailto:amy@usad.org)

## NEW YORK

*Amy Dosch – USAD Liaison*

Phone: 651-249-5878

[amy@usad.org](mailto:amy@usad.org)

## NORTH DAKOTA

*Participating Schools*

## OHIO

*Susan Ayres*

PO Box 9174

Dayton, Ohio 45409-9174

Phone: 317-435-5561

[acadecofohio@gmail.com](mailto:acadecofohio@gmail.com)

## OKLAHOMA

*Participating Schools*

## OREGON

*Participating Schools*

## PENNSYLVANIA

*Michelle Buchanan*

Erie School District

148 W. 21<sup>st</sup> St.

Erie, PA 16502

Phone: 814-602-1511

[michelleschroeder227@yahoo.com](mailto:michelleschroeder227@yahoo.com)

## RHODE ISLAND

*Frank Lenox*

RI Academic Decathlon

1944 Warwick Ave.

Warwick, RI 02889

Phone: 401-269-9925

[Frank.Lenox@acdec.net](mailto:Frank.Lenox@acdec.net)

## SOUTH CAROLINA

*Participating Schools*

## SOUTH DAKOTA

*Participating Schools*

## TENNESSEE

*Eddie Keel*

c/o Achievement School District

1350 Concourse Avenue

Suite 434

Memphis, TN 38104

Phone: 731-444-4888

[Eddie.Keel@tn.gov](mailto:Eddie.Keel@tn.gov)

## TEXAS

*Rick Hopkins*

1141 N. Loop 1604 E., #105

PMB 479

San Antonio, TX 78232

Phone: 210-241-8856

[director@txacadec.org](mailto:director@txacadec.org)

## UTAH

*Stacie Whitford*

Phone: 801-690-3185

[jsbtwhitford@msn.com](mailto:jsbtwhitford@msn.com)

## VIRGINIA

*Yashna Hasija*

Phone: 571-565-9225

[virginia.decathlon@gmail.com](mailto:virginia.decathlon@gmail.com)

## WASHINGTON

*Participating Schools*

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

*Participating Schools*

## WEST VIRGINIA

*Participating Schools*

## WISCONSIN

*Amanda Albrecht*

Phone: 920-379-6903

[aalbrecht@cesa7.org](mailto:aalbrecht@cesa7.org)

## WYOMING

*Tara Brown – USAD Liaison*

Phone: 712-326-9589

[tara@usad.org](mailto:tara@usad.org)

## INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

*USAD*

PO Box 4351

Mankato, MN 56002

Phone: 712-326-9589

Fax: 651-389-9144

[info@usad.org](mailto:info@usad.org)

# USAD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Dr. James Augustin\***  
Director

**Denise Greene-Wilkinson\***  
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# AWARDS PRESENTED AT THE 2024 USAD NATIONALS

- The Roberts/Caperton Inspiration Award
- B. Franklin Reinauer II Economics Prize
- State Directors' Communication Award
- Asa Edwin Reaves, Esq. Social Science Prize
- Frank Wurtzel Prize
- Participation medals for all students
- Most valuable team member from each team
- Highest-scoring decathlete from each team
- Individual gold, silver, and bronze medals in art, economics, essay, interview, literature, mathematics, music, science, social science, and speech for varsity, scholastic, and honor divisions, in Divisions I, II, III, IV, and V
- Super Quiz™ Team Award for Divisions I, II, III, IV, and V
- Rookie Team of the Year for Divisions I, II, III, IV, and V
- Founder's Scholarship: Most Improved Varsity Student in Divisions I, II, III, IV, and V
- Overall individual awards (first-, second-, and third-place) and scholarships for varsity, scholastic, and honor categories for Divisions I, II, III, IV, and V
- Overall team awards for first-, second-, third-, and fourth-place for Divisions I, II, III, IV, and V
- Dr. Robert D. Peterson National Championship Award

## Individual Event Awards

Gold, silver and bronze medals are awarded in each division to the first-, second-, and third-place students from the honor, scholastic and varsity categories in each event. All ties are awarded.

## Individual Overall Awards

Scholarships and plaques are awarded to team participants in Division I, II, III, and IV to the first-, second-, and third-place students from the honor, scholastic and varsity categories with the highest cumulative scores from all 10 events.

## Team and School Awards

Team scores are determined by the two highest honor scores, the two highest scholastic scores and the two highest varsity scores for all 10 events.

## Divisional Awards

Championship trophies and banners are presented to the first-, second-, and third-place teams, and plaques are awarded to the fourth-place teams in Division I, II, III, IV and V.

## Super Quiz Team Awards

Team plaques are awarded to the teams in Division I, II, III, IV and V with the highest raw score for all nine students in the Super Quiz.

## B. Franklin Reinauer II Economics Prize

This award is presented to the highest-scoring U.S. team participant in economics from Division I, II, III, IV, or V.

## Asa Edwin Reaves, Esq. Social Science Prize

This award is given to the highest-scoring U.S. varsity team members from Division I, II, III, IV, or V in the area of social science.

## Frank Wurtzel Prize

This award is given to the varsity student from Division I, II, III, IV or V with the highest combined score in essay, literature, and speech.

## State Directors' Communication Award

This award is given on a three-year cycle by category (varsity, scholastic, honor) to the team participants from Division I, II, III, IV or V with the highest combined total scores in the essay, interview, and speech events.

## Rookie of the Year Award

Plaques are awarded to the highest-scoring rookie team, defined as a team that has not competed at Nationals for ten or more years, in each division.

## Founder's Scholarship: Most Improved Varsity Student

This award is presented to a varsity U.S. team participant in Divisions I, II, III, IV, V who has improved their score the most at Nationals from their state competition score.

## Highest-Scoring Student Award

An award and a medal are presented to the highest-scoring student on each team in Division I, II, III, IV, V.

## Most Valuable Team Member

An award and a medal are presented to the decathlete who was chosen by their teammates as the most valuable team member on each team in Divisions I, II, III, IV, V.

## The Roberts/Caperton Inspiration Award

This award is presented to U.S. team participants who have demonstrated particular strength of character, perseverance, commitment, inspiration or team leadership, while overcoming significant obstacles or unusual circumstances to participate in the United States Academic Decathlon.

## Dr. Robert D. Peterson National Championship Award

This award is given to the U.S. team from Division I, II or III with the highest overall score, and that team is proclaimed the National Champion.

# 2024 USAD NATIONALS WINNERS



**FIRST PLACE DIVISION I**  
El Camino Real Charter High School, California



**FIRST PLACE DIVISION II**  
Lathrop High School, Alaska



**FIRST PLACE DIVISION III**  
Oakwood High School, Ohio



**FIRST PLACE DIVISION IV**  
Lane Tech College Prep, Illinois



**FIRST PLACE DIVISION V**  
Hallmark Academy, California

# 2024 USAD NATIONALS WINNERS

## THE ROBERTS/CAPERTON INSPIRATION AWARD WINNERS



2024 Roberts/Caperton Inspiration Award recipient  
Ashley Stevens from Herbert Hoover High School in Iowa.



2024 Roberts/Caperton Inspiration Award recipient  
Benjamin Chicoria from Robert Turner High School in Texas.

# 2024 USAD NATIONALS WINNERS

## ROOKIE OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNERS



**DIVISION I ROOKIE OF THE YEAR**  
North Kingston Senior High School, Rhode Island



**DIVISION II ROOKIE OF THE YEAR**  
New Berlin West High School, Wisconsin



**DIVISION III ROOKIE OF THE YEAR**  
The Classical Academy of Sarasota, Florida



**DIVISION IV ROOKIE OF THE YEAR**  
Englewood High School, Colorado



**DIVISION V ROOKIE OF THE YEAR**  
Hallmark Academy, California





2024 – 2025