

PROGRAM
OVERVIEW

26/27



**JOURNEYS OF TRANSFORMATION:
AN EXPLORATION OF TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION**

The vision of the United States Academic Decathlon® is to provide students the opportunity to excel academically through team competition.
Email: info@usad.org • Website: www.usad.org

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Corporate Sponsors

We thank our corporate sponsors for their support!



USAD Contacts

TARA BROWN

Administrative Services Director &
Pentathlon Director
612-423-4035
tara@usad.org

AMY DOSCH

Executive Director
651-249-5878
amy@usad.org

DANIELE GRIGSBY

Testing Director
714-585-1259
daniele@usad.org

TERRY MCKIERNAN

Curriculum Director
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 2027 Academic Decathlon National Finals will take place from April 29–May 1, in Bloomington, Minnesota.

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 (3.85 – 4.00 GPA), three Scholastic students (3.50 – 3.8499 GPA), and three Varsity students (0.00 – 3.499 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 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 2026–2027 U.S. Academic Decathlon® (USAD) curriculum is *Journeys of Transformation: An Exploration of Travel and Transportation*. 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. 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 2026–2027 curriculum as well as the national content standards met by USAD's 2026–2027 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.

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 2026–2027 mathematics curriculum addresses aspects of all six categories: Number and Quantity, Algebra, Functions, Modeling, Geometry, 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 way students approach the content and reason during their learning of mathematics. USAD's 2026–2027 mathematics curriculum encourages students to apply 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 2026–27 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 2026–27 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 2026–27 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

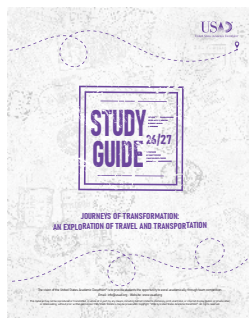
USAD's 2026–2027 curriculum addresses aspects of the following:

- *All twenty of the Voluntary National Content Standards in Economics*
- *Eleven of the twelve Curriculum and Content Area Standards for English Language Arts*
- *All 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*
- *Fourteen Life Science Disciplinary Core Ideas for Grades 9–12, six Earth and Space Science Disciplinary Core Ideas for Grades 9–12, and one Engineering, Technology, and the Application of Science Disciplinary Core Idea for Grades 9–12 and all seven crosscutting concepts delineated by the Next Generation Science Standards*
- *Nine of ten overarching curricular themes outlined by the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS), one area of focus delineated by the NCSS standards for civics, five areas of focus delineated by the NCSS standards for geography, seven areas of focus delineated by the NCSS standards for U.S. History, and two areas of focus delineated by the NCSS 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.



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.

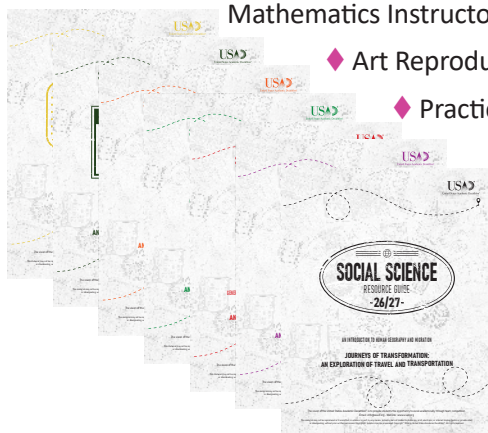


RESOURCE GUIDES:

Resource Guides will be offered 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 or audiobook.

CURRICULUM PACKAGE:

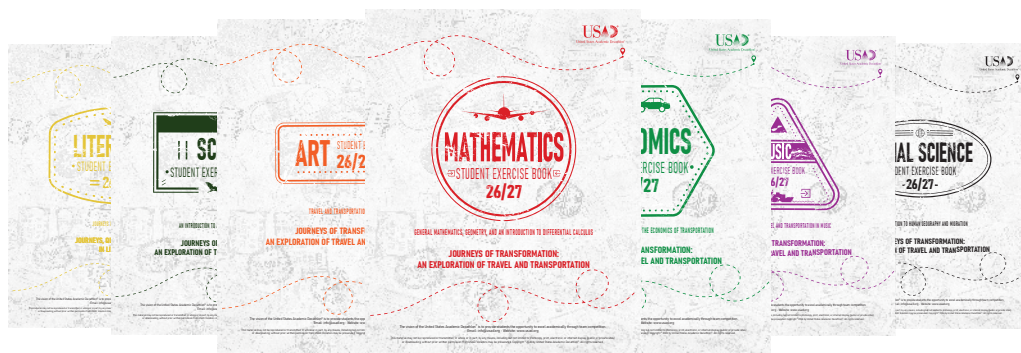
- ◆ Academic Decathlon® Study Guides
- ◆ Art, Economics, Literature, Music, Science, and Social Science Resource Guides
- ◆ Mathematics Resource Guides and Mathematics Instructor's Manual
- ◆ Art Reproductions Booklet
- ◆ Practice Test Booklet



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.



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 *The Remains of the Day* by Kazuo Ishiguro. 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**

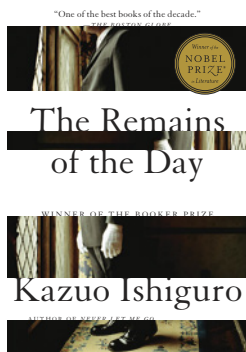
MUSIC LISTENING QUIZZES:

Includes 10 quizzes with multiple-choice items that focus on a 30-second musical excerpt from the music selections featured in the USAO Music Resource Guide: An Exploration of Travel and Transportation in Music. 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

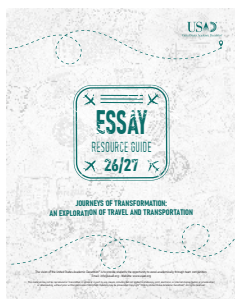
THIS YEAR'S SELECTED LITERATURE:

This year's selected literature is *The Remains of the Day* by Kazuo Ishiguro. 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.



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.



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**

FLASHDEC:



The next generation of flash cards: digital, adaptive, and completely aligned to the Resource Guides. FlashDec transforms guide content into thousands of fill-in-the-blank prompts. Students test their recall, rate each card's difficulty, and the system automatically resurfaces tougher material more often, building lasting retention through proven spaced repetition techniques. Coaches can track study time, monitor progress by subject area, and identify knowledge gaps across their team. All the speed you loved in traditional flashcards, now with thousands more questions and a powerful adaptive review system. **Available June 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.

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**

SUPER QUIZ™ RELAY POWERPOINT TESTS:

Includes twelve tests that are displayed in a PowerPoint® SlideShow. The Super Quiz relay will include questions (in multiple-choice format) from all subject areas. The PowerPoint® tests will help to reinforce student mastery of the United States Academic Decathlon Resource Guides. **Available August 1**



THE QUIZ Market

THE QUIZ MARKET:

High-quality practice exams designed for students to test themselves with a broad range of multiple-choice questions. These questions are written in the format of the Round 1–4 exams and USAD’s Level Exams. The tests are organized into categories that follow the chunking theory of memory stages: Automatic Stage Quizzes and Mastery Quizzes: Concepts & Comprehension.

The Quiz Market

- ◆ **Automatic Stage Quizzes:** Focus on small chunks of information and usually consist of questions that are level 1 type questions. **Available September 1 as a PDF.**
- ◆ **Mastery Quizzes: Concepts & Comprehension:** Conceptual Quizzes will focus on separate sections of the guides and ask higher-level questions, building on the foundational knowledge. Comprehensive exams will blend automatic recall questions with conceptual application challenges, testing the student’s comprehensive understanding of the subject. Each subject will include two conceptual quizzes and two comprehensive quizzes. **Available October 1 as a PDF.**

Practice Test Packages

PRACTICE TEST PACKAGE:

A complete set of practice materials. The Practice Test Package includes hundreds of questions that are written and reviewed by United States Academic Decathlon®-contracted writers and reviewers. The Practice Test Package contains 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:

- ◆ **Section-by-Section Tests:** Enhance mastery of the curriculum with Section-by-Section Tests, featuring 2,100 test items designed for targeted review. Each subject area includes 300 multiple-choice questions, focusing on specific sections of the Study Guide outlines to reinforce key concepts and improve retention. **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: An Exploration of Travel and Transportation in Music. 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.**



Art

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION IN ART

- I. ART FUNDAMENTALS 20%**
 - A. Introduction to Art History
 - B. Elements of Art

- II. FINDING OUR WAY..... 20%**
 - A. Wayfinding without Maps
 - B. African American Histories of Fugitivity
 - C. Perception and the Art of Walking
 - D. Mapmaking and Naming

- III. GLOBAL CURRENTS 20%**
 - A. Exploration and Empire
 - B. Artists in Transit: Blending Cultural Inspirations
 - C. Migration and Memory

- IV. TRAVELING FOR PLEASURE 20%**
 - A. Modern Nature Tourism
 - B. Images as Souvenirs of Travel: From the Elite to the Everyday

- V. TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY..... 20%**
 - A. Representing Modern Forms of Travel in Modern Styles
 - B. Innovative Technologies and Media



Economics

AN INTRODUCTION TO ECONOMICS AND THE ECONOMICS OF TRANSPORTATION

I. FUNDAMENTAL ECONOMIC CONCEPTS 10%

- A. Basic Assumptions of Economics
- B. Models and Economic Theory
- C. Positive and Normative Economics
- D. Efficiency as a Goal
- E. Microeconomics and Macroeconomics

II. MICROECONOMICS 40%

- 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

III. MACROECONOMICS 30%

- 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

IV. THE ECONOMICS OF TRANSPORTATION 20%

- A. Demand for Transportation
- B. Costs and Benefits of Transportation
- C. The Pricing of Transportation Services
- D. Regulations
- E. Investment and Financing
- F. Project Evaluation



Literature

JOURNEYS, QUESTS, AND TRAVEL IN 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. JOURNEYS, QUESTS, AND TRAVEL IN LITERATURE..... 10%**
 - A. The History of Quest Narratives
 - B. Transformations: Geographical, Ethical, Existential
 - C. The Aesthetics and Politics of Travel Writing

- III. KAZUO ISHIGURO’S *THE REMAINS OF THE DAY* (1989) 40%**
 - A. Kazuo Ishiguro Biography
 - B. Plot and Structure of *The Remains of the Day*
 - C. Characters
 - D. Themes and Interpretations

- IV. SHORTER SELECTIONS..... 35%**
 - A. Essay: John Steinbeck, Selections from *Travels with Charley* (1962)
 - B. Essay: Audre Lorde, “The Fourth of July” (1982)
 - C. Poem: Robert Frost, “The Road Not Taken” (1915)
 - D. Poem: Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1798)
 - E. Essay: George Orwell, “‘As I Please’: 12 May 1944” (Published in *Tribune*; Excerpted)
 - F. Poem: Elizabeth Bishop, “Questions of Travel” (1965)
 - G. Essay: Henry David Thoreau, “Walking” (1862)
 - H. Short Story: Goli Taraghi, “The Pomegranate Lady and Her Sons” (2013)



Mathematics

GENERAL MATHEMATICS, GEOMETRY, AND AN INTRODUCTION TO DIFFERENTIAL CALCULUS

I.	GENERAL MATHEMATICS	25%
	A. Simple and Compound Interest	
	B. Basic Counting	
	C. Probability of Equally Likely Events and Binomial Distribution	
II.	GEOMETRY	65%
	A. Right Triangles	
	B. Coordinate Geometry	
	C. Plane and Solid Figures	
III.	INTRODUCTION TO DIFFERENTIAL CALCULUS	10%
	A. Average Rate of Change of Basic Polynomial Functions	
	B. Basic Limits and Continuity	
	C. First Derivative of Basic Polynomial Functions and Graphical Interpretation	
	D. Equations of Tangent Lines	



Attractions and Activities

The city of Bloomington's #1 attraction by far, is **Mall of America**, the largest shopping center in the United States, welcoming over 40 million visitors annually. This shopping mecca boasts 2.5 million square feet of retail space, over 500 stores, and countless entertainment options. With all these great attractions, fine restaurants, and convenient location, it's easy to see why the city of Bloomington is home to more hotels than Minneapolis and Saint Paul combined – almost 50 total.

Mall of America, the nation's largest retail and entertainment complex, is Bloomington's signature attraction! Outside of the Mall, visitors love exploring our parks and nature areas—over one-third of Bloomington is green space. Other popular activities in Bloomington include exploring our dozens of delicious restaurants, checking out a play or art exhibit at Bloomington Center for the Arts, and visiting family-friendly attractions like Whirlyball Twin Cities, The Works Museum, and AMF Southtown Lanes.

Nickelodeon Universe in Bloomington, Minnesota, is the largest indoor theme park in the U.S., located inside Mall of America. Featuring thrilling rides, family-friendly attractions, and beloved Nickelodeon characters, it offers fun for visitors of all ages. With roller coasters, live entertainment, and unique shopping experiences, Nickelodeon Universe is a must-visit destination for adventure and excitement in the Twin Cities.

Activate is the world's first active gaming facility, where you and your group can participate in challenges in over a dozen game rooms. Jump, climb, play sports and have a blast as you compete and work as a team to win!

Amazing Mirror Maze in Bloomington, Minnesota, located inside Mall of America, offers a thrilling and family-friendly adventure with endless reflections and twists. This 2,500-square-foot labyrinth challenges visitors to navigate through a dazzling maze of mirrors, creating an immersive and visually stunning experience.

Great Big Game Show is a live-hosted game show experience. Two teams go head-to-head in a series of classic game show mini-games, on an immersive studio set, with a live host! It's like all game shows you love, but this time, you're the contestant. Play through rounds of strategy, chance, and knowledge, surrounded by spotlights, buzzers, a giant spinning wheel, and a confetti-filled celebration at the end!

See how many of the 520 shops you can hit inside Mall of America. Fall in love with four-legged residents at the Minnesota Zoo. Learn something new in local museums and catch a game in Minneapolis–Saint Paul. With so many activities devoted to pure fun and entertainment, it's always time to play in Bloomington, Minnesota, and the nearby Twin Cities!



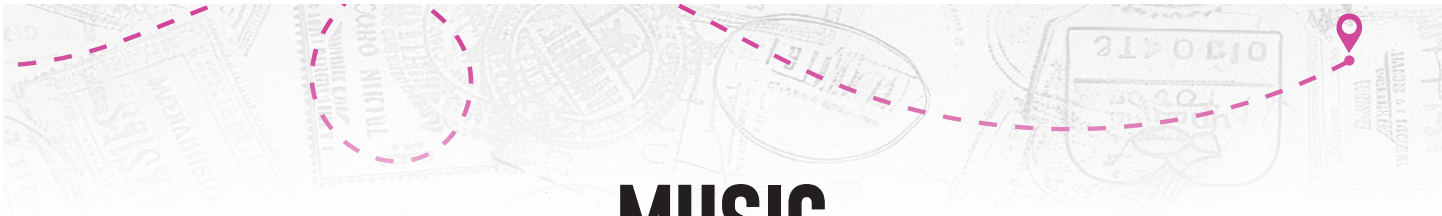
Bloomington, Minnesota

Nationals – April 29–May 1, 2027

Welcome to Bloomington!

With a beautiful location on the banks of the Minnesota River, the city of Bloomington has much to offer visitors. Not only is it home to the world-famous **Mall of America**, but this city of 85,000 also houses the stunning Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, an extensive system of hiking and biking trails, and much more. Twin Cities visitors also enjoy Bloomington's many travel conveniences, including its central location, proximity to the airport, and easy freeway access to Interstates 35W and 494. In addition, Bloomington offers free parking, free hotel shuttles to the airport and Mall of America, and the Metro Transit Blue Line light rail, which runs from Mall of America to Minneapolis–St. Paul International Airport and downtown Minneapolis.





MUSIC

TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION IN MUSIC

- 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. CELEBRATIONS OF TRANSPORT..... 28%**
 - A. Muscle-Powered Movement
 - B. Wheels + Motors
 - C. The Romance of the Rails
 - D. Ways to Work
 - E. Transport by Water

- III. JOURNEYS OF HOPE..... 28%**
 - A. Seeking Adventure (on Foot)
 - B. Seeking Adventure (on Wheels)
 - C. Journeys of Transformation
 - D. Crossing the Waves
 - E. The Final Frontier

- IV. PERILOUS JOURNEYS..... 24%**
 - A. Marching Toward Fate
 - B. Riding Toward Fate
 - C. Driving Toward Fate
 - D. Flying Toward Fate



Science

AN INTRODUCTION TO ANIMAL BEHAVIOR AND MIGRATION

- I. INTRODUCTION TO ANIMAL BEHAVIOR 15%**
 - A. What Is an Animal, and What Is Behavior?
 - B. The History of Animal Behavior: Past to Present
 - C. How Behavior is Measured and Studied

- II. THE BIOLOGY OF ANIMAL BEHAVIOR..... 25%**
 - A. The Nervous System of Animals
 - B. Hormones
 - C. How Animals Tell Time
 - D. Fixed Versus Adaptive Behaviors

- III. EXPRESSIONS OF BEHAVIOR 35%**
 - A. Foraging
 - B. Communication
 - C. Sexual Selection
 - D. Predatory and Anti-Predatory Behavior
 - E. Social Behavior
 - F. Emotions and Personality
 - G. The Effects of Domestication on Animal Behavior

- IV. MIGRATORY BEHAVIOR..... 25%**
 - A. Why Migrate?
 - B. Navigational Cues
 - C. How Animals Migrate
 - D. From Birth to Migration
 - E. Anthropogenic Effects on Migration



SOCIAL SCIENCE

AN INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN GEOGRAPHY AND MIGRATION

I. THINKING GEOGRAPHICALLY..... 10%

- A. What Is Human Geography?
- B. Maps
- C. Geographic Data
- D. Spatial Concepts
- E. Human-Environmental Interaction
- F. Scales of Analysis
- G. Regional Analysis

II. CULTURAL PATTERNS AND PROCESSES 10%

- A. Introduction to Culture
- B. Cultural Landscapes
- C. Cultural Patterns
- D. Types of Diffusion
- E. Historical Causes of Diffusion
- F. The Effects of Diffusion

III. POPULATION PATTERNS AND PROCESSES 20%

- A. Population Distribution
- B. Consequences of Population Distribution
- C. Population Composition
- D. Population Dynamics
- E. Models and Population Dynamics
- F. Malthusian Theory
- G. Population Policies
- H. Women and Demographic Change
- I. Aging Populations



IV. MIGRATION PATTERNS AND PROCESSES 30%

- A. Defining Migration
- B. Types of Migration
- C. The Migration Process
- D. The Characteristics of Migration
- E. Causes of Migration
- F. Theories on the Causes of Migration
- G. Internal Migration
- H. Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

V. MIGRATION CASE STUDIES 30%

- A. Case Study: Westward Expansion in the United States
- B. Case Study: Historical Waves of Immigration to the United States
- C. Case Study: The Great Migration of African Americans
- D. Case Study: Displaced Persons (DPs) in Post-World War II Europe
- E. Case Study: The Partition of India and Mass Migration
- F. Case Study: Cuban Migration to the United States
- G. Case Study: Guestworker Programs
- H. Case Study: Internal Migration in China
- I. Case Study: Visas and the Schengen Area



State Directors

ALASKA

Jess Mangram
SERRC-Alaska's Educational Resource Center
210 Ferry Way
Juneau, Alaska 99801
Phone: 907-433-7404
jessicam@serrc.org

ARIZONA

Sarah Morris
610 East Bell Road 2-152
Phoenix, AZ 85022
Phone: 602-935-9304
sarah@azacadec.org

CALIFORNIA

Ken Scarberry
4119 McKinley Blvd.
Sacramento, CA 95819
Phone: 707-330-3276
cadirector@academicdecathlon.org

COLORADO

Art Dominguez
Phone: 361-343-0203
arthur@cowyusad.org

CONNECTICUT

Sebastian Garza
Phone: 214-842-9458
sjgarza@massdecathlon.org

FLORIDA

Christopher Vu
christopher.h.vu@gmail.com

GEORGIA

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

HAWAII

Participating Schools

IDAHO

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

ILLINOIS

Tammy Raffan
415 Lexington Street
Maywood, IL 60153
Phone: 630-890-4221
ILAcaDec@gmail.com

INDIANA

Rusty King
943 Rushmore Dr.
Pittsboro, Indiana 46167
Phone: 317-450-9179
rgking7152@gmail.com

IOWA

Daniel Nizzi
2600 SW 9th St.
Des Moines, IA 50315
Phone: 515-664-1186
statedirector@iowaacdec.org

KANSAS

Participating Schools

KENTUCKY

Paul Bartels
Phone: 719-217-8686
paul@kyad.org

LOUISIANA

Participating Schools

MAINE

Participating Schools

MARYLAND

Art Dominguez
Phone: 361-343-0203
arthur@cowyusad.org

MASSACHUSETTS

Sebastian Garza
Phone: 214-842-9458
sjgarza@massdecathlon.org

MINNESOTA

Amy Dosch – USAD Liaison
Phone: 651-249-5878
amy@usad.org

MISSISSIPPI

Participating Schools

MISSOURI

Roy Copeland
7537 Walnut St.
Kansas City, MO 64132
Phone: 816-678-5998
copelandr_@hotmail.com



State Directors

NEBRASKA

Cris Hay-Merchant
1000 Galvin Road South
Bellevue, NE 68005
Phone: 402-932-4998
chaymerchant@bellevue.edu

Ardis Moody
410 NW 16th Street
Lincoln, NE 68528
Phone: 402-540-6409
ardis.moody@gmail.com

NEVADA

Participating Schools

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Participating Schools

NEW JERSEY

John Marshall
PO Box 432
Lincoln Park, NJ 07035
Phone: 862-200-0244
johnmarshall@alumni.nd.edu

NEW MEXICO

Amy Dosch – USAD Liaison
Phone: 651-249-5878
amy@usad.org

NEW YORK

Participating Schools

NORTH DAKOTA

Participating Schools

OHIO

Susan Ayres
PO Box 9174
Dayton, Ohio 45409-9174
Phone: 317-435-5561
acadecofohio@gmail.com

OKLAHOMA

Participating Schools

OREGON

Participating Schools

PENNSYLVANIA

Phil Cerami
625 Lower Rd.
Souderton, PA 18964
Phone: 610-505-1307
phil@pa-ad.org

RHODE ISLAND

Frank Lenox
RI Academic Decathlon
1944 Warwick Ave.
Warwick, RI 02889
Phone: 401-269-9925
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@fcsk12.net

TEXAS

Rick Hopkins
1141 N. Loop 1604 E., #105
PMB 479
San Antonio, TX 78232
Phone: 210-632-8796
director@txacadec.org

UTAH

Stacie Whitford
Phone: 801-690-3185
utahacadeca@gmail.com

VIRGINIA

Art Dominguez
Phone: 361-343-0203
arthur@cowyusad.org

WASHINGTON

Participating Schools

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Art Dominguez
Phone: 361-343-0203
arthur@cowyusad.org

WEST VIRGINIA

Participating Schools

WISCONSIN

Amanda Albrecht
Phone: 920-379-6903
wiacademicdecathlon@gmail.com

WYOMING

Art Dominguez
Phone: 361-343-0203
arthur@cowyusad.org

INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

USAD
PO Box 4351
Mankato, MN 56002
Phone: 712-326-9589
Fax: 651-389-9144
info@usad.org



USAD Board of Directors

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2026 USAD Nationals Awards

- 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 in the varsity, scholastic, and honor categories, 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 second-, third-, and fourth-place for Divisions I, II, III, IV, and V
- Dr. Robert D. Peterson National Championship Awards for first-place for Divisions I, II, III, IV, and V

Individual Event Awards

Gold, silver and bronze medals are awarded to the first-, second-, and third-place students in each subject area in the honor, scholastic and varsity categories in Divisions I, II, III, IV, and V. All ties are awarded.

Individual Overall Awards

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

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 top three teams in Divisions I, II, III, IV, and V.

Super Quiz Team Awards

Team plaques are awarded to the teams in Divisions 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 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 in social science from Division I, II, III, IV, or V.

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 Divisions I, II, III, IV, and V.

Founder's Scholarship: Most Improved Varsity Student

This award is presented to the varsity team participants in Divisions I, II, III, IV, and V who have improved their scores the most at Nationals compared to their state competition scores.

Highest-Scoring Student Award

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

Most Valuable Team Member

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

The Roberts/Caperton Inspiration Award

This award is presented to team participants who have demonstrated 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

These awards are given to the first-place teams in Divisions I, II, III, IV, and V, and these teams are proclaimed the National Champions.

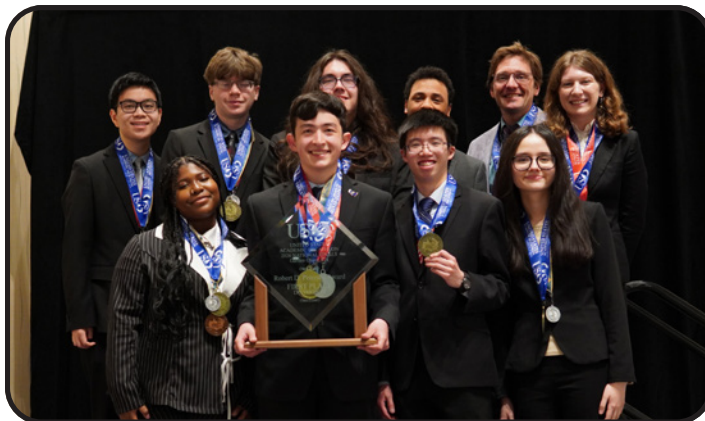
2026 USAD Nationals Winners



FIRST PLACE DIVISION I
Granada Hills Charter HS, California



FIRST PLACE DIVISION II
Hallmark Academy, California



FIRST PLACE DIVISION III
Lathrop HS, Alaska



FIRST PLACE DIVISION IV
Banning Lewis Academy, Colorado



FIRST PLACE DIVISION V
Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, Virginia

2026 USAD Nationals Winners



SECOND PLACE DIVISION I
El Camino Real HS, California



SECOND PLACE DIVISION II
Cedar Rapids Jefferson HS, Iowa



SECOND PLACE DIVISION III
Willoughby South HS, Ohio



SECOND PLACE DIVISION IV
Martinsville HS, Indiana



SECOND PLACE DIVISION V
Francis Parker School of Louisville, Kentucky

2026 USAD Nationals Winners



THIRD PLACE DIVISION I
Whitney Young Magnet HS, Illinois



THIRD PLACE DIVISION II
Mountain Vista HS, Colorado



THIRD PLACE DIVISION III
Acton-Boxborough Regional HS, Massachusetts



THIRD PLACE DIVISION IV
Union HS, Iowa



THIRD PLACE DIVISION V
The Classical Academy of Sarasota, Florida



United States Academic Decathlon®
P.O. Box 4351, Mankato, MN 56002
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