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39TH ANNUAL CALIFORNIA ACADEMIC DECATHLON

A Contest of Academic Strength

Providing academic competition to encourage, acknowledge and reward academic excellence through teamwork among students of all achievement levels.



For More Information

Phone: (707) 646-7603

ken@academicdecathlon.org

www.academicdecathlon.org

INTERVIEW

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Since 1968, the Academic Decathlon has grown into the premier scholastic competition in America. The Academic Decathlon was created to provide opportunities for high school students to experience the challenges of rigorous team and individual competition. Designed to provide a forum for celebrating and acknowledging scholastic achievement and academic excellence in the context of a team environment, the Academic Decathlon provides high school students the opportunity to participate in an educational forum that fosters a deep respect for knowledge, cooperation, and self-esteem.

<http://www.academicdecathlon.org/round3teamreg.htm>

INTERVIEW INFORMATION

PREPARATION FOR THE INTERVIEWS

1. SET UP STATION

- A. Ensure the station is set-up according to the interview arena diagram (see sample). Make sure the station has the correct station number and decathlete roster.
- B. The decathlete will be invited in by the Room Manager for their interview appointment.

2. REVIEW PROCEDURES

Before the first decathlete enters the room, review the following procedures and the schedule with the other judges in your team:

- A. Select a judge to monitor the questions and time during each interview session and to facilitate the judges between interviews. Be sure that each judge asks the decathletes questions and takes part in scoring.
- B. **STAY ON SCHEDULE.** It is essential to stay on schedule. Try to refrain from repeating a question after a decathlete has responded unless you require clarification to his/her response. Do not debate or dispute with a decathlete's ideas, or get into a discussion with the decathlete by stating your ideas.

DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS BEFORE EACH INTERVIEW & JUDGING PROCESS

1. Decide who will collect the scored Scantrons from the rest of the judges. Each judge receives a set of pre-slugged Scantron sheets.
2. Judges need to verify that the decathlete ID numbers and judge ID numbers are correct.
3. A Room Manager will send each group of Decathletes into the interview room.
4. Cordially greet the decathlete and introduce her/him to the rest of the judging panel (see "Judge's Script"). The judges will individually introduce themselves to the decathlete. **Note: There is no penalty if the decathlete reveals his/her city, county, or school name.**
5. Select who will be responsible for completing the decathlete roster for each interview session. The decathlete roster is where you report the start and end time of each interview for each decathlete. It is also where you report any issues or concerns during an interview such as a decathlete arriving late or leaving early or any other concerns.
6. Begin the interview process by having the Decathlete provide their brief introduction. Proceed with questions following the Decathlete's introduction.

7. Allow 7 minutes per Decathlete beginning when the decathlete begins his/her introduction. When 6 minutes have passed, the Room Manager will notify the judges that one minute remains allowing the judges to complete their question and/or ask for final comments.
8. The Room Manager will announce when it's time to dismiss the Decathlete. Judges must not dismiss the Decathlete from the arena before the Room Manager's announcement.
9. Judges will be given time to enter their scores. Before bringing in the next decathlete, if necessary, judges should address any concerns regarding question content and provide an alternate appropriate question(s) for consideration to ask a decathlete.
10. Return to the beginning of "Distribution of Materials & Judging Process."



AFTER EACH SESSION

1. Completed Scantrons will be collected a designated judge from your team. A designated room monitor will come by through the day to collect the completed Scantrons from each station.

AFTER ALL INTERVIEW SESSIONS HAVE CONCLUDED

1. Judges please return all material and resources back into your Judge's Kit and wait for further instructions. Check to make sure all completed Scantrons are given to the USAD room official.
2. Please take a moment to fill out the volunteer evaluation form. Your information is very valuable and appreciated in developing the finest competition for our decathletes.

SUGGESTED SCRIPT FOR INTERVIEW ROOM MANAGER/JUDGES

1. [Room Manager] "Decathletes, welcome to your interview, please find your station and have a seat."
2. [Judge] "Welcome to the interview. My name is _____, and I will be participating as a judge."
3. [Judge] "I would like you to meet your other judges."

(Judges Self Introductions)

1. _____
2. _____

4. [Judge] "Please tell us your **first** name and your identification number."
5. [Room Manager] "The interview will last approximately 7 minutes."
6. [Room Manager] "When 6 minutes have passed, I will notify the judges that a minute remains and will ask for conclusion."
7. [Room Manager] "At the end of 7 minutes, I will notify the judges that time has expired and no more questions can be asked."
8. [Room Manager] "You may begin." *(Time begins at this time.)*

(Judges) (Judges will begin the interview by asking the Decathlete to introduce themselves and share a little bit about themselves.)

9. [Room Manager] "That is time. Decathletes, thank you for your participation, you may be excused. We wish you the best of luck in the competition."
10. *(If you are on schedule, judges should have time to complete their scoring independently of each other Please follow the Room Manager's instruction who will adhere to the time schedule.)*



TIME FORMAT AND ROOM SETUP

TIME FORMAT

Time allotted each decathlete

Time for introductions and review
of procedures (script) 1 minute

Interview..... 6 - 7 minutes

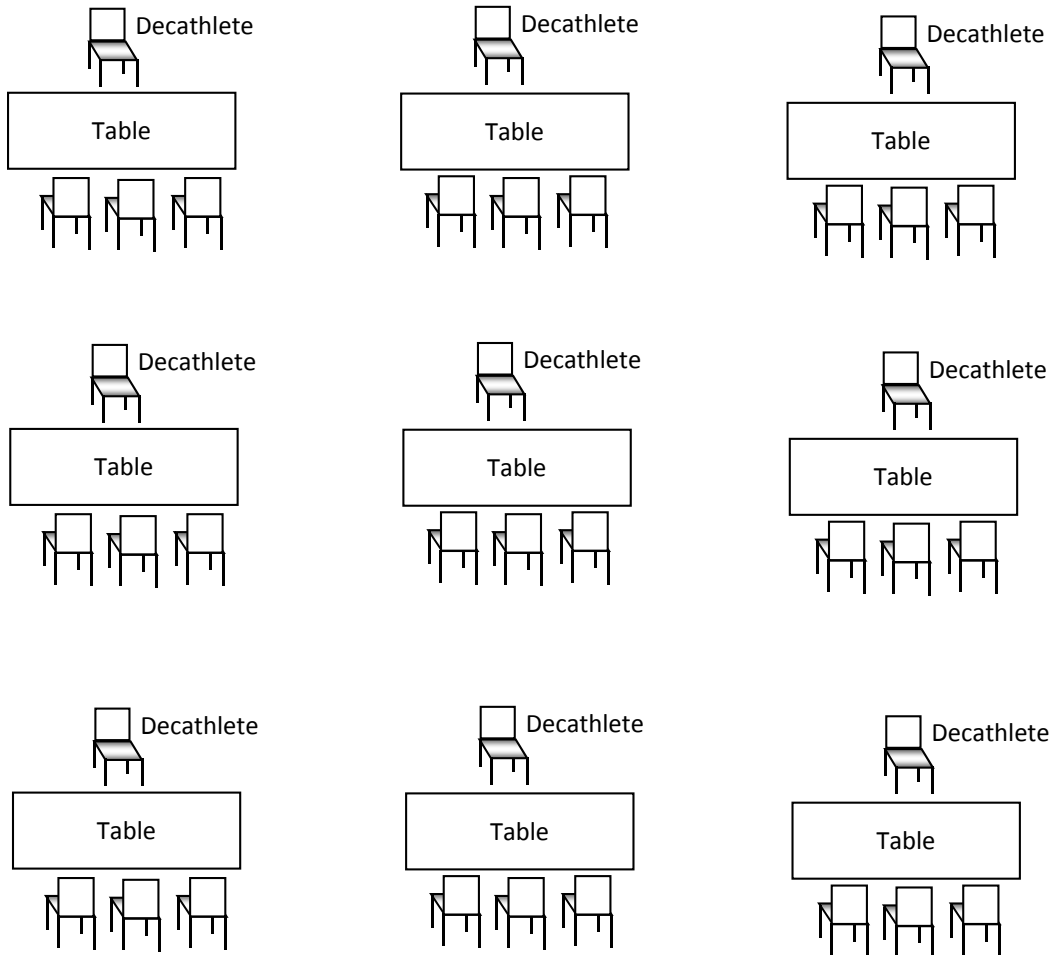
Adjudication 2 minutes

Total Time..... 9 - 10 minutes

REVIEW AD INTERVIEW JUDGE SCHEDULE FOR SCANTRON COLLECTION

**To be presented during the
Interview Judge Orientation.**

SAMPLE ARENA ROOM SETUP



CONDUCTING A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW

General Recommendations: The success of the interview depends on how well and how quickly you can create a pleasant understanding with the decathlete, treating them at all times with respect.

1. **Determining Environment.** Manner, attitude, and tone of voice are important in creating the proper interviewing climate. In the short time available, establish a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in which the Decathlete is assured of your sincere interest and attention. Encourage the Decathlete to talk about himself/herself.
 - Maintain an attitude of pleasant receptiveness, quiet confidence, and intelligent objectivity.
 - Establish rapport and put candidate at ease.
2. **Managing Interview.** The judges are in charge of the interview process. Control, direct, and guide the interview. Set a steady pace and ask the questions according to the structured interview format.
 - Keep initiative but be responsive.
 - Cover all of the topics and devote enough time to each part.
 - Conduct the interview so the Decathlete plays the dominant role and the interviewer is the stage manager.
 - Steer the conversation without intruding on it--refrain from expressing your personal opinion or values--be objective.
 - Encourage Decathlete to talk openly and freely.
 - Pace questions so that Decathlete can give adequate replies without dwelling on irrelevant information.
 - Indicate when the interview is coming to a conclusion.
3. **Listening Intelligently.**
 - Concentrate on what the Decathlete is saying.
 - Allow Decathlete to complete remarks without interruption or second-guessing.
 - Listen attentively.
 - Show interest.
 - Give Decathletes the time they need to think of examples and answer the questions.
4. **Coming To The Conclusion.**
 - Empathy, fairness, and good judgment are working tools for a good interview.
 - Bring interview to an end gracefully and naturally without rushing to a close.
5. **Silent Gaps.**
 - Summarize points made by the Decathlete and lead into the next question.
 - Keep asking for specific examples.
 - Give encouragement by rephrasing question.

SAMPLE TOPICS FOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

These are sample questions and not official competition questions.

QUESTIONS ASKED OF THE DECATHLETES CAN BE BASED ON THE DECATHLETES SELF-INTRODUCTION OR TOPICS SIMILAR TO THOSE LISTED BELOW. THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW ARE “ONLY EXAMPLES”:

1. **PERSONAL OBJECTIVES & ACADEMICS**
 - a. “What do you enjoy most about school?”
 - b. “How do you like to spend your time after school?”
 - c. “Describe your biggest challenge at school?”
 - d. “Do you feel it’s important to be involved in extra-curricular activities? Please explain.”
 - e. “What did you do as a member of _____?”
 - f. “How has participation in _____ affected you personally?”

2. **ACTIVITIES (During and After School)**
 - a. “Describe the type of community service activities that you are involved in or would like to be involved in?”
 - b. “What meaningful experiences did you have as a _____?”
 - c. “What kinds of skills have you acquired as a _____ that will help you in a future job?”
 - d. “In what other activities would you like to have participated: how would they help you in the future?”

3. **COMMUNITY INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES**
 - a. “How do you feel your current activities (school and/or out-of-school activities) will benefit you in the future?”
 - b. “What would you like to accomplish in the next five years?”
 - c. “Perhaps you would share with us some of your dreams for the future.”
 - d. “What are some of the things you would like to do upon graduation?”

4. **ACHIEVEMENTS**
 - a. “How did you become interested and/or involved in the Academic Decathlon?”
 - b. “What is the most difficult event in the Academic Decathlon?”
 - c. “What have been the benefits of being a Decathlon team member?”

5. **INFLUENCES & VALUES**
 - a. “Who do you consider to be the most influential person in your life?”
 - b. “How has this person influenced your personal growth?”
 - c. “What values do you consider to have most strongly influenced your life?”

6. **MISCELLANEOUS IDEAS**
 - a. “What personal quality do you possess that will benefit society or your community and why?”
 - b. “If you could travel anywhere, where would you go and why?”
 - c. “If you could solve a social problem, what would it be, and how do you think you would solve it?”

DO NOT ASK A DECATHLETE WHAT SCHOOL THEY ATTEND OR AREA THEY REPRESENT. ALSO, AVOID ANY QUESTIONS THAT PROBE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS, DATING HABITS, PARENTAL RELATIONSHIPS, ETC.

DESCRIPTORS for RUBRIC

Rating Scale

Voice is the way a speaker controls volume, clarity, and distinctness of voice to gain greater audibility. Voice should have a variety in the rate, volume, and pitch to engage interest, hold attention, and convey self-assurance.

Language Usage refers to the appropriate choice of words, proper use of grammar and correct enunciation. Language should promote clear understanding of thoughts and be appropriate for the occasion.

Interpersonal Skills are measured by the candidate’s ability to establish rapport with interviewers. The candidate’s response should correspond to and interact with the interviewers’ questions, and he/she should stimulate an involvement with the interviewers.

Non-Verbal Language refers to the manner in which the candidate uses gestures, facial expressions, and physical involvement for effective communication. It is the indirect revelation of the candidate’s real self while speaking. The candidate should speak with enthusiasm and assurance, showing interest in the interviewers and confidence in his/her responses.

Through the interview process, the individual reveals:

Problem Solving Skills	Creating/Developing Skills	Organizational Skills
Analytical Skills	Interpersonal Skills	Promotional Skills

When asking questions of the candidate, keep these skills in mind. Help the candidate to develop experience in answering questions that reveal these skills.

Manner is measured through the candidate’s ability to speak with enthusiasm and assurance while showing interest in the interviewers and confidence in their reactions. The candidate should be direct in his/her response.

Listening Skills refers to the ability to analyze and interpret “what is being asked.” In order to answer skillfully and address the issue being considered, the candidate must listen carefully and attentively. The candidate’s responses to the questions will give an indication of his/her level of attention and ability to identify, sort, and process the information being requested.

Answering Skills refers to the ability to 1) address the issue being considered; 2) present information in a clear and concise manner; 3) organize information in a logical and sequential order; 4) adjust responses appropriately to a variety of audiences; and 5) pace conversation to convey necessary information and achieve purpose. Order, logic, imagination, intelligence, and other personal qualities are reflected in the way answers are given. A well thought-out answer engages the interviewers’ attention and gives insight into the candidate’s personal qualities, skills, goals and experiences. Relevant examples and illustrations support the answers. All information presented should be relevant to the question being asked.

Responses refer to the quality of the answers given. The candidate should reflect on the questions to provide thoughtful and insightful responses. A well thought-out answer engages the interviewers’ attention and gives insight into the candidate’s personal qualities, skills, goals, and experiences. The answers are supported by relevant examples and illustrations. All information presented should be relevant to the question being asked. The candidate should speak with certainty and conviction.

Overall Effectiveness measures the 1) nature of information provided; 2) manner in which it was communicated; 3) overall impression it created, and 4) rapport established between the interviewer and candidate. Some of the questions to consider are: Did the candidate provide the information requested in a skillful manner? Was the information relevant and meaningful? Was the candidate able to achieve a positive impression of his/her skill, experiences, and personal qualities?

Appearance refers to the appropriate attire of the candidate. The candidate follows AD dress standards.

USA U.S. ACADEMIC DECATHLON

INTERVIEW EVALUATION FORM

STUDENT ID NUMBER			
00	00	00	00
01	01	01	01
02	02	02	02
03	03	03	03
04	04	04	04
05	05	05	05
06	06	06	06
07	07	07	07
08	08	08	08
09	09	09	09

VOLUNTEER NUMBER		
00	00	00
01	01	01
02	02	02
03	03	03
04	04	04
05	05	05
06	06	06
07	07	07
08	08	08
09	09	09

DIRECTIONS

USE NO. 2 PENCIL ONLY

PLEASE -

- MAKE DARK MARKS
- ERASE COMPLETELY TO CHANGE
- ENTER: STUDENT'S NAME AND NUMBER
YOUR NAME AND NUMBER
ROOM NUMBER
- MARK 1 STUDENT PER FORM

EXAMPLE:

1	0	2
3	3	3
2	2	3
3	3	3

STUDENT'S NAME _____

JUDGE'S NAME _____

ROOM NUMBER _____

JUDGE

1	2	3
4	5	6

INTERVIEW		EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR						
VOICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> VOLUME FLEXIBILITY EXPRESSIVENESS 	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
LANGUAGE USAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRAMMAR ENUNCIATION APPROPRIATENESS 	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAPPORT INTERACTION INVOLVEMENT 	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
NON-VERBAL LANGUAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MOVEMENT GESTURE POSTURE 	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
MANNER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ASSURANCE ENTHUSIASM DIRECTNESS 	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
LISTENING SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APPROPRIATENESS of RESPONSES ATTENTIVENESS 	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
ANSWERING SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CLEAR COMPLETE APPROPRIATE 	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
RESPONSES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> THOUGHTFUL INSIGHTFUL WITH CONVICTION 	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PURPOSE ACHIEVED INTEREST RECEPTION 	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
APPEARANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> APPROPRIATE FOR AN INTERVIEW 	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0