

SCIENCE OLYMPIAD PROGRAM PROGRESSION



Division A Elementary Science Olympiad (Grades K-6, Ages 5-12)

DESCRIPTION:

Division A features competitive and non-competitive STEM opportunities for students in grades K-6. Educators, after-school providers, and parents lead students through hands-on, inquiry-based activities to help develop children's understanding of STEM concepts through fun, play, trial and error. Some Science Olympiad states and regions also host competitive tournaments for Grades 3-6, featuring events that test STEM knowledge and skill.

PROGRAM IMPACT:

In addition to exposing students to basic science concepts and building confidence, Elementary Science Olympiad prepares students for success in middle and high school STEM classes, as well as more rigorous Science Olympiad competition in the B and C Divisions. Elementary Science Olympiad can act as a stand-alone program or classroom curriculum, and it can be the beginning of a pipeline for developing STEM interest and talent.

Division B (Grades 6-9, Ages 12-15)

DESCRIPTION:

Division B offers middle school students the opportunity to learn and prepare for competition in 23 events that touch every letter in STEM at invitational, regional, state, and national tournaments. Teams of 15-30 students are formed at schools and coached by school staff members, assisted by parents and community volunteers. Event topics and skills are aligned to Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), as well as Career and Technical Education (CTE) goals.

PROGRAM IMPACT:

Research shows that by 8th grade, most future STEM professionals have chosen to pursue the sciences, so capturing student interest early is vital. Many events in Division B are aligned to Division C events, so students get a competitive edge for tournaments, a head start in high school-level science and a better understanding of STEM careers. Science Olympiad's **MY SO** program is a perfect complement, offering curriculum and career exploration developed specifically for middle school students who are interested in a variety of STEM topics. **MY SO** can be used by families, teachers, after-school program providers, or team coaches in virtual, in-person or hybrid settings.

Division C (Grades 9-12, Ages 15-18)

DESCRIPTION:

Division C is organized similarly to Division B and offers a similar slate of 23 competitive events scaled up to grade-level difficulty. Events in Division C are aligned to and sometimes go beyond honors and Advanced Placement (AP) science courses, preparing students for post-secondary study. Teams typically also use their experience and leadership skills to assist their team coach, mentor younger program participants, help to run tournaments, and serve their communities.

PROGRAM IMPACT:

Science Olympiad tournaments are held at colleges and universities, exposing students to campuses, faculty and program offerings in STEM, and allowing students to imagine themselves as future STEM majors. State and National Tournaments offer scholarships to gold medal winners as well. Many program alumni cite communication, teamwork and leadership skills they learned in Science Olympiad as vital to their success in college and beyond.

Program Alumni (Post-Secondary, Ages 18+)

DESCRIPTION:

Science Olympiad alumni stay involved and use their experiences to give back. More than 42 Science Olympiad Alumni Chapters have been founded at colleges and universities like Caltech, Cornell, North Carolina State and Texas A&M, running invitational tournaments, helping with regional and state events, and mentoring teams. Beyond college, program alumni become coaches, state directors, and national event supervisors, advising on event content and design.

PROGRAM IMPACT:

Some Science Olympiad alums have been involved in the organization for nearly four decades! It becomes a passion and a purpose.

“Science Olympiad allowed me to see a broad range of scientific fields at any given time and allowed me to hone in on what I truly liked – not to mention the friendships, relationships, and common bonds that I have for life with former teammates and coaches. Science Olympiad ranks as one of the top experiences of my life!”

- Mark Tourre, forensic DNA analyst at the US Army Crime Investigation Lab