

## Tips for Triumph

### Before the competition

1. Practice.... Practice... practice!!!!
  - Practice Hard Problems
    - Have the students think about what they did to solve each problem by talking through each step. By working on harder problems, it reveals areas that the students need to master.
  - Practice Easy Problems
    - Easy problems give students confidence in their work. It gives them the feeling that they can conquer and correctly complete a math problem. By giving them warm-up problems, it gets the gears going and gives them courage to confront harder problems.
    - Also mental math will increase speed. Therefore, developing number sense helps.
  - Practice Fun Problems
    - Math is supposed to be fun! ☺ By giving the students some problems that hold value, the student's drive to succeed increases. These problems come in handy when a student wants to give up.
2. Master concepts that you find difficult.
  - If the student finds algebra difficult, practice it. In the end, it will make the students more confident when they confront difficult problems.
3. Practice problems mentally. Have students verbalize how they plan to attack each problem before they even begin writing so that you as the teacher can find misconceptions and fix the plan of attack.
4. Teach students how to organize their thoughts and attacks when it comes to messy problems. For example, drawing pictures and making charts helps make a hard problem seem easier.
5. To make concepts stick, have students teach their peers.
6. Get a well-rested night's sleep because a tired brain is more likely to make mistakes.
7. Make a reachable goal before you come. It will help students evaluate how they did.

### During the competition

1. Get students pumped up and ready to do their best. This does not call for being over-confident, but have them believe in themselves. They and you have prepared hard for this competition.
2. Have a water bottle and some mints.
3. While answering, remind them to not read the questions so fast that they miss important information. When they have finished the problem, have them reread it to make sure that they did what the question asked.

4. If students come across a problem and draw a blank, remind them not to give up! Reread it. Oftentimes another look will make them spot things they did not notice beforehand and their confidence is restored. Also, a blank mind may be the result of being nervous. Have them take a deep breath! They can do it! If there is a problem they cannot complete after rereading it, tell them not to lose hope or focus! There are other problems. Don't let one problem bring them down.
5. Write clearly. When students go back and check their work, sometimes a messy digit might mislead their solutions.
6. HAVE FUN! This competition is for the purpose of making math fun and discovering talents each student possesses.

### **After the Competition**

1. Evaluate their performance. Talk about what they did well and what they need to improve for the next time around.
2. Did they meet their goal?
3. To the students: Don't let silly mistake get to you. Ask yourself, "Did I do the best that I could have done?" If the answer is yes, no one can ask any more from you.