

Verbal Problem – Talk to the Straw!

1. You will have one minute to think and 4 minutes to respond. You may ask questions during your thinking time, however, time will continue. No other talking is allowed.
2. You will receive 1 point for each common response and 5 points for each creative response.
3. Each of you has 7 cards. You will take turns in order. After you give a response, you will place one of your cards in the container.
4. Speak loudly and clearly. Once time begins, it will not be stopped, even if the judge asks you to repeat your response, or to clarify it, or to give a more appropriate response.
5. You MAY skip one turn. If time remains once all other members of your team are out of cards, you may then elect to give a MAKE-UP response however this response will only be eligible for 1 point.
6. You will be finished when response time ends or you have used all of your cards.
7. There are items on the table. You may touch them as you give your response, but you may not damage them or put them in your mouth.
8. Your problem is to say something to or about one or more of the items. For example you could say “Ah, chopsticks!” (Repeat number 8, “Your problem is...”).

Verbal – Talk to the Straws

Judging Instructions:

1. Read problem through, emphasizing part in #3, *“after you give a response, place a card in the container.”*
2. For primary teams and inexperienced teams, read the entire problem through twice, otherwise just read #8 twice.
3. Show them the container in the center of the table.
4. Count down when there’s 10 seconds left for thinking time.

Things to coach them on:

1. Make sure they are putting their cards in the container **AFTER EACH** response.
2. For primary teams and inexperienced teams make sure they understand that creative answers score better, ie. materials to build pet cages, “**STRAW**berry pickers”, tomatoe plant spike, walking cane, etc.
3. For experienced and older teams, consider my **747 RULE**;

7 cards + 4 minutes to respond = avg 7 seconds per response (5 players)

Practicing in this mode, gets the teams into a regular rhythm so they know instinctively how long they have so they don’t rush with common responses. After awhile, they can then judge how to speed up or slow down if given less/more cards/response time to max score.

5. Try to keep track of score with tally marks. Time permitting, share with the team your favorite responses (*I usually write them down during the round to remember*) OR ask the team to name their favorites.