

Frequently Asked Questions – MCTM Middle School Contests

FAQ: We can't attend any of the qualifying contests listed above. Are there other sites? How can we sign up for the in-school qualifying round?

Answer: MCTM-sponsored contests are not the ONLY qualifying contests in Missouri. Some sites choose to be independent, but students who qualify at these sites are still invited to attend the MCTM State Middle School Contest. For an entire listing, go to <http://mathleague.org/msevents.php>.

Schools may also sign up for the in-school qualifying round if they are unable to attend a site in their area due to conflicts, are simply too far from a qualifying contest site, or wish to allow students another chance to qualify for regionals.

- First, fill out and pay for mathleague membership here. Any Title 1 school can receive mathleague membership for FREE by using the promo code Title 1.
- Second, once the in-school contest is released in November or December, it will be emailed to you with explicit instructions on how to administer to any number of students from only your school. Middle School entries to the in-school qualifying round must be submitted by January 15 each year. Students who qualify through the in-school contest will attend the State contest in March/April.

FAQ: How do students qualify for Middle School State?

Answer: A Missouri student may compete in the Middle School State contest if he or she participates in a middle school qualifying round (either a local contest or the in-school qualifying round) during the school year and does any one of the following:

- Earns at least 50% of the available points on any of the individual tests.
- Scores strictly higher than 80% of the participants in his or her grade on any of the individual tests.
- Participates on a team that scores either at least 50% of the available points or strictly higher than 80% of the other teams on the team test.

FAQ: What are the tests that students will take? Do they need a calculator?

Answer:

- **Sprint Round** - This is a 40-minute test consisting of thirty questions. Students may not use calculators on this test. One point is awarded for each correct answer, with no penalty for questions that are skipped or answered incorrectly.
- **Target Round** - Four pairs of problems are administered, and students have 6 minutes to complete each pair. Students may use any calculator allowed for use on the SAT. One point is awarded for each correct answer, with no penalty for questions that are skipped or answered incorrectly.
- **Team Round** - Four team members work together for 20 minutes to answer ten questions. Students may use any calculator allowed for use on the SAT. One point is awarded for each correct answer, with no penalty for questions that are skipped or answered incorrectly.

For more details, go to <http://mathleague.org/mstests.php>.

FAQ: Where can I find practice materials?

Answer: **Websites for Extra Practice Problems & Problem Solving Techniques**

- [Mathcounts](#) - For more than just the past year's problems, solutions can be viewed under Archives. Their handbooks and past tests for purchase have not only problems but techniques for problem solving.
- mathleague.org This site allows you to sign up for sample practice problems that will be similar to those on the elementary and middle contests this year.
- [American Mathematics Competition \(AMC 8\)](#) This site is perfectly geared to helping the student with problem solving techniques, sample problems as well as forums for students to communicate with each other.
- [Art of Problem Solving](#) This site has online classes for top math students (grades 6-12) and also has a free online tutorial called Alcumus that adjusts questions to the student's ability.
- [Math Olympiads for Elementary and Middle Schools](#) Click on General Information for Samples and Problems of the Month
- [Continental Mathematics League](#) Has 2 different levels based upon higher or average reading comprehension and is open to grades 2-9

- [The Math League](#) For grades 4-12, the League has excellent sample questions as well as lots of books for purchase from past years of contests.
- [AGMath](#) An excellent resource for sample problems at the 8th grade level for algebra and geometry.
- [Kevin Hopkin's Resource Page for Contests and Problems](#) He has dozens of state and national contest sites (similar to Missouri's) listed as well as whether each has sample problems available.

FAQ: Who proctors and grades the contests?

Answer: Teachers and sponsors who attend with their students are expected to proctor or grade the contest papers. Grading may be done digitally or by hand depending upon the site.

All parents, students, and teachers should be aware of mathleague's [Conduct Standards](#).

FAQ: Interested in some local contest practice? Attend Washington University's Math Circle!

Answer: Any St. Louis area student interested in mathematics (mostly for grades 8-12) is welcome to join the Washington University Math Circle. They meet on Sunday afternoons and have speakers talk about a different math topic each time. For 2018-2019, they have changed their format to alternate some contest practice (based upon Missouri ARML) with a typical math circle topic each week. This is a wonderful way to prepare for contests of all sorts. Please click [here](#) for more information!

FAQ: How are ties broken?

Answer: For the qualifying and state competitions, there are two different ways that ties are broken for awards. If two students tie with the same score in an event (e.g. Target with a score of 3), their Borda scores are compared to see which student answered the more difficult questions. The student with the lower Borda score would place higher than the other. To break absolute ties in Sprint or Target at either the Middle or Elementary level, we look at the students' opposing event scores. Say that Students A, B and C are all tied with a score of 3 on Target, all with the same Borda scores indicating they answered the same 3 questions correct. We then look at their Sprint scores. Say Student A has a Sprint score of 6, Student B has a sprint score of 5, and Student C has a sprint score of 4. Then to break the tie on Target, Student A would be first, Student B would be second, and Student C would be third.

FAQ: How can I ask questions about the contest questions?

Answer: If you take any of the MCTM elementary contests this year and would like to ask questions about the questions on the contest, please register [here](#) for an AfterMath workshop!

FAQ: Can I request special accommodations for a student?

Answer: Reasonable accommodations may be made to allow students with special needs to participate. *A request for accommodation of special needs must be directed to local or state coordinators in writing at least three weeks in advance of the local or state competition.* This written request should thoroughly explain a student's special need as well as what the desired accommodation would entail. Many accommodations that are employed in a classroom or teaching environment cannot be implemented in the competition setting. *Accommodations that are not permissible include, but are not limited to, granting a student extra time during any of the competition rounds or allowing a student to use a calculator on non-calculator rounds.* Contest coordinators will review the needs of the student and determine if any accommodations will be made.

FAQ: I would like to host a contest site. What should I do?

- Answer: Contact Sonya Land at sonya@mathisfun.org with the following information:
 - Date of contest
 - Elementary, Middle, and/or High School Contest Level
 - Site Coordinator Name
 - Email address
 - Address of the testing location
 - Address to which registrations can be sent (if different from above)
- Then, read through the Site Coordinator Handbook <https://moctm.org/images/pdf/Handbook-2019-Middle.doc>
- Visit another contest site near you to see how a more experienced site coordinator handles his/her contest.
- Contact Sonya with any questions you may have, big or small!