

Press Release

Importance of Mathematics Olympiads

Background Information

It is difficult to trace precisely the origins of mathematics competitions for school students; after all, in-class testing (which often resembles small-scale competitions) has accompanied the school system from its very beginning. In fact, the archetype of some competitions can be found outside school, in the society.

Today the world of mathematics competitions encompasses millions of students, teachers, research mathematicians, educational authorities, and parents, who organize and take part in hundreds of competitions and competition-like events with national, regional, and international importance every year. Even greater is the number of books, journals, and other printed and electronic resources that help students and their mentors prepare for the various types of competitions.

The Objective of the Competition

Competition is essential and intrinsic to life. Every day, living things in nature and economic subjects in society compete for resources, for better living conditions, and for higher efficiency. The desire to compete in overcoming a challenge is deeply rooted in human nature and has been employed for centuries to help people sharpen their skills and improve their performance in various activities. Competitions are viewed as an important part of the educational provisions for gifted and talented students and part of the recommended continuum of differentiated opportunities. Competitions are viewed as one of the school-based provisions for gifted and talented students across all areas of ability. The area in which competitions was most commonly utilized was in the domain of physical and sport abilities followed by the intellectual /academic domain. Competitions can also be used as part of the multiple method identification process. Moreover, they offer students the opportunity to strive for personal achievement and to compare themselves with others. They are a means for “providing an encouraging environment in which gifted students compete, excel, and are honored for their abilities.” Intellectual’s suggest that competitions also enhance students’ self-directed learning skills and sense of autonomy.

The primary goals of mathematics competitions are to increase motivation, excitement and interest in mathematics, and to provide schools and parents with information about more able students. A competition result provides one measure of a student's mathematical ability and discriminates ability levels of individuals at the participant's level. Preparation for a competition in mathematics may demand targeted independent study as many competitions require rapid and accurate answers under pressure. Some competitions in mathematics, such as those organized by local mathematics teachers' associations, include group problem solving activities where team work and collaboration are important.

The *Mathematics Olympiads* are intended for the crème de la crème (best part; élite.) of mathematically gifted and talented secondary school students and give opportunities for students to attend mathematics camps and to continue, if selected, to compete internationally.

A comprehensive analysis of the literature on competitions concluded that "learning to deal with competition in a constructive manner is essential for gifted children, especially given the competitive nature and the central role of competition in high-level achievement". This view was supported by other renowned intellectuals who declared that "the opportunities to tap and showcase kiwi talent far outweigh the negative elements often associated with competitions".

The Experience of Nejashi Ethio-Turkish International Schools in Organizing Olympiad

Nejashi Ethio-Turkish International School prompts the participating schools to constantly improve their educational systems and their methods for selecting and preparing the students. This yielded a great variety of competitions and mathematical enrichment activities around the schools taking part in the competition. The recent competitions indicate that other sciences, such as physics, chemistry, and biology, need to organize Olympiads of their own.

In Nejashi Ethio-Turkish International Schools has a range of local, regional, national, and international opportunities for students to compete against their own and others' mathematical abilities in individual and team competitions. This range of challenges spans primary through to secondary-aged students, meeting the needs of many levels of ability, from developing expertise to exceptional, expert-like skills.

The competition also proved that schools prepare students and sometimes host their own events for deciding which students will represent them.

The Mathematics Olympiads are good because they made the testers to work within a team and quite often they might be gifted mathematicians who just like to focus on their own and not to problem solve in their classes.

The parents liked to use competitions as an additional way of monitoring their children's learning through participation and results in competitions. The parents strongly supported competitions and when the opportunity was not given, they usually took some form of action such as contacting the school to make inquiries about the competitions. The parents supported their children's participation in competitions in monetary terms; the costs were not high and some schools subsidized this expense.

To sum up; competitions should be acknowledged in school policy as part of the mathematics program. Equitable opportunities should be provided for students to participate in mathematics competitions and ideally a promising student should not be denied opportunities because of the cost factor. Schools could invite students to provide feedback on their experiences so that their participation is taken seriously and not viewed as a separate part of the program. Competitions can serve as a way of bringing students of like minds' together so that they find friendship, inspiration, and encouragement from working with others. This may be in preparation for the competition, working on problems from previous competitions, or sharing after a competition.

Ethiopian Mathematics Olympiads of 2015

Ethiopian Mathematics Olympiads organized by Nejashi Ethio-Turkish International Schools is to be held among the 6th, 7th and 8th grades students in Addis Ababa on May 02, 2015. The objectives of competition are to:

- Increase the interest in mathematics among the students, make them see their mathematics level and improve the self-confidence of the students.
- Give the consciousness of representing their schools, provide the students with the desire for the voluntary studies and target significant studies for their country in the future.

- Students who may participate in this Mathematics Olympiads are supposed to have an average grade of **85 out of 100** in the previous year's report card.

The exam that doesn't include Nejashi Ethio-Turkish International Schools students shall start at the same time in both AU and Alemgena Branches of our schools. Detailed information about the place and time of the exams for each grade (6, 7 and 8) shall be given during the application. The results of the Olympiads shall be announced on the SAME DAY, at 1:00 p.m. at AU Branch of Nejashi Ethio- Turkish Int'l Schools.

Students shall be awarded gold, silver and bronze medals, watch, certificates and money as per their ranks. In addition, school of the winners, up to third level, shall be awarded 3 in one scanners, photocopiers, inkjet printers, stationary items and certificates.

The parents and accompanying teachers together with the participating students shall be invited for a cultural show (comprised of dances and songs) presented by the students of Nejashi Ethio-Turkish International Schools before the award ceremony.

Thus, you are kindly invited to cover this very important and remarkable event in your media so as to develop the interest of mathematics in all schools of the country.