

# Bitney College Prep Brain Buster Challenge

## Team Preparation Guide

The Brain Buster Challenge presents a bewildering array of different activities for the teams competing in the event. We recognize that it's hard to schedule time for team members to get together and prepare for the competition, so we focus here on just a few critical things, each of which will likely make a dramatic difference in a team's performance at the event. See the Brain Buster Challenge page on our school web site for more details ([http://www.bitneyprep.net/brain\\_buster\\_challenge/](http://www.bitneyprep.net/brain_buster_challenge/)).

### Rehearse the Debate

Getting up in front of others to argue your points is an understandably intimidating experience for middle school students. Familiarity with the overall format of the debate (e.g., that each argument for/against is followed by rebuttal) also makes an enormous difference in a team's performance. In some ways, running through just one complete practice debate on your own (with your teacher acting as the moderator) can be at least as important as the time you spend preparing your individual arguments for and against the debate topic. Refer to the Debate Format document on the Brain Buster Challenge web page for specifics.

### Study the Constitution

The History category focuses specifically on the U.S. Constitution, since this is a key component of middle school history education. It makes sense to spend a little time reviewing just before the event.

### Ever played Clue?

This year's Problem Solving Challenge is based loosely on the board game "Clue." Some familiarity with the storyline and goal of the game — to solve the mystery by determining: Who did it? With what weapon? In which room of the house? — will be helpful, but not essential.



### Try the Sample Questions

We post sample questions for each category on the Brain Buster Challenge web page. You'll be better prepared for each category if you've attempted these samples.

### Bring Your Spirit!

The event begins with each team introducing itself with some kind of short performance. This is an important component of the competition for our coveted Spirit Award. If you have musical accompaniment, make sure you check it out beforehand so that you're ready to "plug and play" when you arrive on campus. It's also important to recognize that our judges will be watching your team throughout the entire event to note how well you work together, what kind of attitude you bring, whether you leave litter behind, etc. Finally, the Problem Solving category has a specific Teamwork Rubric that constitutes half of the Problem Solving category score, so you should download and review the rubric from the Brain Buster Challenge web page ([http://www.bitneyprep.net/brain\\_buster\\_challenge/](http://www.bitneyprep.net/brain_buster_challenge/)).