

WHAT IS IT?

United States Academic Decathlon (USAD) is a program that provides high school students an opportunity to experience the challenges of rigorous academic competition through participation in team activities. In addition, the Academic Decathlon involves members of the business/industry as active supporters of a program promoting academic excellence. Long term relationships, developed through joint participation, benefit the students and the community.

Region and state contests are held for schools categorized as large, medium and small. Based on a point system, the highest scoring team represents Texas at the national USAD competition. All members of the winning team receive scholarships.

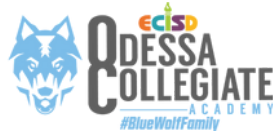
Texas provides \$150,000 in scholarship money each year. The Academic Decathlon is designed to include students of three academic levels. Each nine-member team consists of:

- three Honor (3.8-4.0) students
- three Scholastic (3.2-3.7999) students
- three Varsity (2.0-3.1999) students

We invite you to become part of a program that you may think is over your head, until you realize you can reach higher as a team. I invite you to struggle. And I invite you to learn—not just to read, but to understand; not just to win, but to lead.



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TEXAS
ACADEMIC DECATHLON

ECISD 
Advanced Academic Services

WHY JOIN?

You should join the Academic Decathlon not because that goal will be easy to achieve, but because it will be hard. You and your teammates may study more than you ever have before, not knowing whether you will take home ten medals each—or none at all. The philosopher Mortimer Adler once wrote,

“It is only by struggling with difficult books, books over one's head, that anyone learns to read.”



EVENTS

- **Essay**
 - You'll have fifty minutes to write the strongest paper possible. To get ready, you'll want to practice outlining and writing compelling arguments related to six of the seven Academic Decathlon subjects—excluding only math. The more clearly you can learn to write, the more persuasive you'll be—and the more you've studied the theme, the more evidence you'll be able to cite on whatever topic you face on competition day.
- **Speech**
 - In the prepared speech, you'll speak for up to four minutes on any topic you'd like. A word of advice: choose early, practice often. Afterward, you'll be asked to speak off the cuff for up to two minutes on a topic you haven't seen before. If you've never given a speech, don't worry: you're not alone. Many Decathletes cite learning to speak in public as one of their most transformative experiences in the program.
- **Interview**
 - In the interview, you'll have seven minutes to answer questions about a subject you shouldn't need to research very much: yourself. Learning to listen closely and to present yourself in a compelling way is another skill that will benefit you for the rest of your life, whether it's during your college interviews, on the job, or at dinner with your future parents-in-law. Be ready to answer questions about your background, your interests, and your goals, and never forget to thank your judges for volunteering.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

- Art
- Language and Literature
- Science
- Music
- Math
- Social Science
- Economics

The Decathlon is more a marathon than a sprint. To round out the events above, you'll take seven multiple choice exams. You'll find yourself developing better critical thinking and test-taking skills that will serve you well on everything from the SAT to your college finals.

In the short run you'll also have the chance to win something much shinier: medals in every subject. The more well-rounded you are, and the further you go outside your comfort zone, the more you'll win—a chance, even in a team sport, to demonstrate individual excellence.

Super Quiz

In the Super Quiz, you and your teammates will take turns solving tough multiple choice challenges in front of a live audience before time runs out. Super Quiz is always the last event, the loudest, and the most intense: a high-stakes celebration of all the subjects you've learned.



NEW THEMES EACH YEAR!

You'll always learn something different. Each year, US Academic Decathlon selects a new theme for teams all over the country to explore. The theme shapes an entire course of studies—and brings it all together. The more years you participate in Academic Decathlon, the more themes you'll master.



Help pay for college with scholarship money

- Texas awards more scholarship money than any other state. Over \$150,000 of scholarships are given to Texas Decathletes each year!



The chance to compete at the national level

- The highest scoring team in the state goes to national competition.
- National competition is held in a different competing state every year.



Be part of an elite academics team

- Come be a part of an elite academic team while learning better study habits and having fun and compete with the best academic teams in the state!