



### Introduction to Academic Decathlon

(The Demi-Dec alpaca is our unofficial mascot, and appears in all of our preparation materials. We have adopted him as a symbol of all that is AcDec: hardworking, kind of dorky but adorable, fun to have around in general, and much more accepting than llamas. We don't spit.)

Academic Decathlon is a team activity, but more of an individual competition. There are 10 categories each student is tested on: Art History, Economics, Essay (not at Regionals), Interview, Language and Literature, Math, Music History, Science, Social Science and Speech .

**This year's theme is Water : A Most Essential Resource**, so the Literature is based on the novel Sea Wolf and other lit based on that theme. Science is based in marine biology. The Art section studies the use of water in art, and water as a subject of art. Music will explore the ways water has influenced music from instruments to compositions. Economics will be general macro- and micro- with a special section on the economics of water, and Social Science focus on the impact of water on history. Math this year is permutations, algebra, and stats.

Students will hopefully not be asked to contribute for registration fees, as I'm applying for some grants. If I can't get us any funding, you'll be asked to contribute \$25 toward the registration for contest. Let me know if that's an issue.

**Dates:** Regional Contest is the evening of the **27th of January** (a Thursday), and then all day **Friday, the 28th**. State competition will be an overnight in Mason City, all day Friday and Saturday, the 4th and 5th of March.

We will be doing a placement test in the first week of December. Honor level students will be required to participate to guarantee a spot on a team. All others are very much encouraged to play. This process will take most of a school day, and will allow me to fill the teams with the highest scorers. We want to make sure we guarantee ourselves a seat at State!

**Why do it?** Because it's awesome. Also, you'll meet new people. Students are not required to prepare heavily for the Regional, but any student going to the state competition is expected to study hard. The **Honors category especially is very competitive**. We want to continue our stellar tradition!

**Organization Website.** [www.usad.org](http://www.usad.org)

**Iowa AcDec website.** [www.iowaacdec.org](http://www.iowaacdec.org)

**Study materials .** [www.demidec.com](http://www.demidec.com). User name :johnstonacdec Password. : awesome

**and ELP Moodle:** enrollment key elprocks

**Contact info:** Mrs. Cline, HS ELP [scline@jdragonmail.us](mailto:scline@jdragonmail.us). 515-306-5794

## Exams

Each exam is 50 questions, to be completed in 30 minutes. The interview lasts about 5 minutes, and is designed to see if you can handle a semi-formal conversation with adults. The speech is 3-4 minutes prepared with note cards if you wish, and then a 1-2 minute impromptu. Prepared speech topic is your choice such as a personal story, history, although you should avoid controversial topics such as politics or religion.

In addition to the theme portion for each category test, there are general knowledge questions.

## Teams

There are three categories of students based on their adjusted G.P.A.: Honors= 3.8-4.00, Scholastic=3.2-3.79, and Varsity= up to 3.19. G.P.A. is calculated differently, because **no classes are weighted**, only **core** courses count, and we use the **previous school year's** grades. A student must be **academically eligible** to compete in January, which means no class may be failed in the first semester of the year.

A team consists of three students in each category, and the two that score the highest are calculated into the team score. The team score determines which teams are going to state. Each student, whether included in the team score or not, is eligible for **individual awards for each separate test**. Also, Honors kids only compete against Honors kids, etc. In addition to full teams of 9 students each, there can be alternates (who do not participate in the speech or interview aspects and compete for individual awards amongst alternates.). There is **no limit to how many alternates** we can bring to Regionals, although we only bring two to state.

Johnston traditionally fields **three teams at Regionals**, if we can locate enough Scholastic and Varsity players. **We do not require that Varsity students do any preparation at all- all we ask is that they show up on competition days. Please help -----We have NO Varsity players yet!!!**

The same may be true of the Scholastics, depending on how many we have. Those Honors students who have done some prep will be taken to Regionals and will compete as alternates- which means no speech/interview.

## Preparation

JHS has traditionally held **weekly non-mandatory meetings** most weeks from October to January. Exceptions are days with P-T conferences, no school, Finals week, etc. Meetings are **student-driven**.

Googlesheet to register your interest and availability!!

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/15S1p551\\_DbI26ypQsuECzGDt84PlwDf-ot9nOpULPH0/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/15S1p551_DbI26ypQsuECzGDt84PlwDf-ot9nOpULPH0/edit?usp=sharing)

We will have specific speech prep and interview prep sessions, including mock performances with feedback. **For Honors and Scholastic competitors, the speech mock performance will be mandatory.** These will most likely occur the second or third week of January, unless we all decide we'd rather do it earlier.