



Washington State Math Council
The Team Project Question for 2026
Am I supposed to do math?



SCORING GUIDE for the 2026 WSMC Team Project

Your investigation will result in three "products." The first will be a written report. The second will be a display of some kind that you will use at the WSMC contest to summarize your work for students, judges and others who may ask you questions about your work. The third will be a very brief presentation before an audience and, potentially, a panel of judges. In the final evaluation, the report will account for 70% of the total points, the display will account for 15% and the presentation will account for the remaining 15%. The report, display, and presentation will be evaluated according to your performance on the criteria shown below. You will receive 0 - 4 points on each criterion. (Points are doubled in the report category, "Mathematics.") When you meet expectations, you will get 3 points for that criterion. Four points will be given to those who, in the judgment of the evaluators, significantly exceed expectations. Getting one or two points on a criterion indicates strong or moderate weaknesses. Zero points will be awarded if there is no effective response for that criterion.

I. The Report (70%) The purpose of the report this year, as described more fully in the statement of this year's project, is to use mathematics to investigate two variables related to representation of the country's population in math curricula and how these change over time. Begin your report with an introduction in which you briefly explain to the reader what you are doing and why. The majority of the report should then concentrate on what you discovered and how you used math in your sampling process as well as how you analyzed change over time in the variables you tracked. Please conclude with a brief analysis of what this change or lack thereof means for our society. There is a ten-page limit for the whole report. It's okay to present additional data in an appendix following the report. These pages won't count against the ten-page limit. All pages must be numbered and have one-inch margins all around. Please use a legible font and do not use a font smaller than 12 for the text of the report.

Addressing the problem 12 points possible

4 points	Address the problem that was posed The project you address in your report is the one that was given. It has not been substantially modified.
4 points	Introduce the project effectively The purpose and importance of the project is clearly and succinctly restated in Part 2 of your report.
4 points	Communicate your process for addressing the project A clear and succinct explanation of how your team worked on the project is given in Part 2. How did you take advantage of one another's strengths and interests? Were there problems you encountered as you came up with the variable(s) to be investigated and as you analyzed the data?

Mathematics 24 points possible (Points are doubled for this section.)

8 points	The mathematics you use to present your process and your findings must be appropriate You selected mathematical tools (analysis techniques, procedures, representations, etc.) that have the potential to communicate clearly and effectively. A K-12 math "expert"* might have made the same choices.
8 points	The mathematics you use must be adequate / sufficient The mathematical tools you selected enable you to address the problem effectively and completely. You've done enough.
8 points	The mathematics you use must be correctly applied You have used the mathematical tools (algorithms, procedures, representations, models, etc.) successfully. There are no substantial mistakes in your mathematics.

Communicating your analysis and conclusions 16 points possible

4 points	The balance between words, mathematics and graphics is effective For each variable, you explain what you found in words and also use mathematics and graphics as needed to summarize and effectively communicate your findings. Your explanations follow clear, logical sequences that would make sense to a k-12 math "expert".
4 points	Figures and graphics must be necessary and sufficient.

	You have used representations of mathematics and mathematical results (tables, graphs, charts, etc.) that assist the reader in understanding your work and your conclusions. Every representation has a clear and considered purpose.
4 points	The figures and graphics must be clearly labeled. The meaning of each figure or graphic is clear to a competent reader. You have a succinct and informative title for each figure or graphic. All axes or dimensions are labeled, etc.
4 points	Your grammar is correct. You have very few (less than one per page?) grammatical errors**. You must have page numbers. You should use some acceptable style standard (e.g., APA (American Psychological Association), MLA, etc.). While you do not have to be obsessive about this, deviations from a standard should not detract from the report's readability. Any source citations must also conform to some standard format.
	Total for Report

NOTE: If you choose to use generative Artificial Intelligence such as ChatGPT or similar for any part or draft of any part of the report, please let us know by including a brief statement describing how you used it.

II. The Display (15%)

On the day of the contest, you will set up and "staff" a display (e.g., a poster or a tri-fold, or e-slides displayed on a computer monitor) and you will talk with people about your project and your findings. You should be prepared to summarize your experience generally and to answer specific questions from judges and students about your work. These questions might address any aspect of the work you have done, including details from the report and will allow the judges to continue their evaluation of your efforts. Your display will be set up in an area that is available to all of the participants in the contest and so you may also get questions from others who are interested in your work and the team project. Ideally, at least one member of the team should be present at all times, though this is not required. At the state contest judges will contact you to ask a few questions about your work on the project.

The Display	12 points possible.	Your display and the people supporting it must:
4 points	Explain your interpretation of the project Your display and your verbal explanation should allow a competent and interested reader or listener to understand what the project was about.	
4 points	Explain and justify the approach you took and your data representations Your display and your verbal explanation should allow a competent and interested reader or listener to understand your approach to the project and your decisions regarding data gathering, analysis and representation.	
4 points	Explain and justify your conclusions Your display and your verbal explanation should allow a competent and interested reader or listener to understand your conclusions and the mathematical basis for your conclusions.	
	Total for Display	

III. The Presentation (15%)

On the day of the contest, your team will give a very brief (approximately five minutes) presentation summarizing your work on this project. The evaluation of the presentation will focus on your communication skills more than on the quality of the mathematics, which receives primary emphasis in the report and display. The presentation will include Q & A from judges and audience members.

The Presentation	20 points possible.	Your presentation must:
4 points	Be informative. Your presentation should briefly describe the project, the approach you took to this project and your conclusions.	

4 points	Be clear. The style, structure, and sequence of your presentation should enable listeners to easily understand your work on the project.
4 points	Be compelling. The style, structure, and sequence of your presentation should keep listeners engaged, involved, and interested.
4 points	Be succinct. Your presentation must be completed within the time allowed.
4 points	Be responsive to questions. Be prepared to answer reasonable questions from the audience or judges.

	Total for Presentation
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	Grand Total 70 x (Report total/52) + 15 x (Display total/12) + 15 x (Presentation total/20)
Comments:	

* An “expert” is someone who is very familiar with the context of this project and who has a very competent and informed grasp of k-12 mathematics.

** You should have the report proof read by an expert. How about an English Language Arts teacher?