

I am happy to work with you in any way I can. Making the event a success for your students, staff and school is my priority. There may seem to be a lot of work here, but most of it is mine. It's easier than it may appear.

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Challenge Station



The Bare Basics



- ⇒ I will send a bank of at least 70 standards-based questions per grade level for your school to choose from. How you do that is up to you. (While you want the questions challenging, you do not want the students frustrated either. I can make specific questions easier or harder as you need.)
- ⇒ Each class is assigned a team color and is divided into exactly 6 groups. (For the most success, set up balanced groups the best you can.)
- ⇒ Get volunteer answer checkers if you can. This leaves teachers free to manage behavior and encourage students, too.
- ⇒ The cost is \$22 per class + \$1 for travel (for a day) one-way from Southeast Columbia. (I live near Millcreek Elementary in Columbia.)
- ⇒ I play music during the event, so, once the event gets started, the excitement really begins.
- ⇒ I will be happy to meet with the teachers or someone from the school ahead of time to make sure all questions are answered and everyone is confident that the event will be a success.
- ⇒ I am a retired elementary teacher, so I know how hard teachers work. I'll do my best to make it great and easy to do for teachers and students.

Please feel free to give me a call, or email me at challenge@piratemath.org, if you need anything else.

Scott Gandy

Token Tubes

Wooden Tokens earned by correct answers go in long tubes.

Chips won at Challenge Station go in short tubes.

(Tokens & Chips are each worth 1 point.)



Mrs. Nelson: Blaney Elementary

FAQs

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What is the cost? \$22 per class plus \$1 per mile (1-way) from Southeast Columbia. Pirate's Challenge is a labor of love, but running a successful event requires many hours of prep and travel (not to mention the materials needed).

How much space is needed?

Activities for 6 classes of an average of 25 students each have been run in a middle-school sized gym, an elementary school gym, and a cafeteria that holds about 290 students.

Gym activities generally have students sitting on the floor.

While Answer Checkers are asked to hand out a group's question randomly in order to try to limit nearby groups from working on the same question at the same time (also helping assure a greater sampling of standards for the teachers), it is important to have groups from the same class separated the best you can.

The cafeteria setup used at Blaney Elementary in Elgin, SC is shown below. However, as with everything good educators do, flexibility is key.

Answer Stations go in the four corners of the space. (Students waiting to have their answers checked are required to form just one line at their station. This keeps things fair and helps minimize wandering eyes.)

There must be room for the Challenge Station and Token Tubes as well. An area between 6' x 6' and 8' x 8' area on the center, outside edge of the groups should work well. Once again, flexibility is the key.

The Challenge Station sits on a 3' diameter table. Once the event begins, it becomes a buzz of activity and needs some student "gathering-around" space.

How long does one event take?

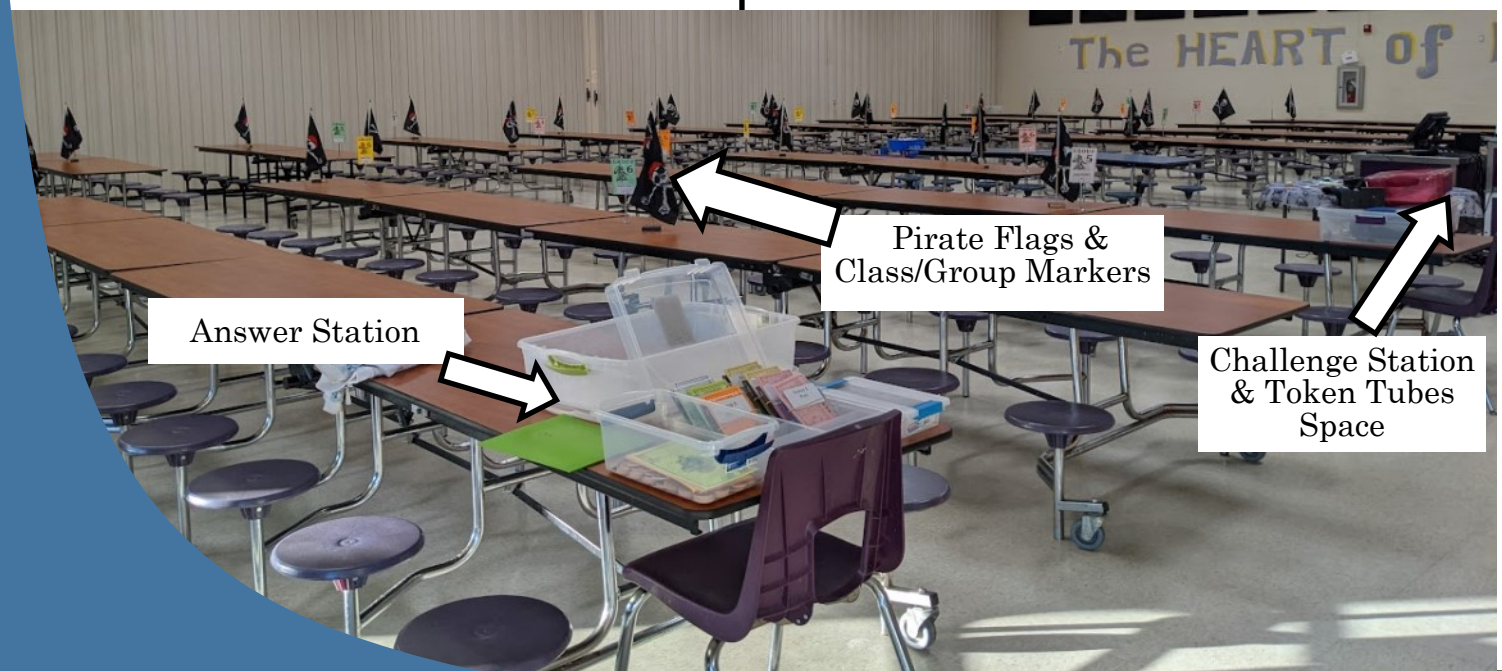
From class entry to departure –the event takes about an hour & 15 minutes, though it can be made to fit your schedule. The time frame is up to the school.

Are multi-grade level activities OK?

Yes. Appropriate questions for each grade are used.

Can more than one activity be held in a day?

Yes. If the school schedule/facility allows it, running all three grade levels in a single day is easily done.



What do I provide?

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- Questions, Answer Keys, Answer Checker Instructions and Student Directions
- For math, a question bank (all based on SC standards) of approximately 70 questions per grade level will be sent to the school. Choose 24 or 28.
- After selected, they will be altered. The actual activity questions will keep the same format and standard, but change names, numbers, etc.). For example, Captain Nick may become Captain Slim Jim, and $2 + 4$ may become $6 + 3$.
- Using standards from two grade levels is useful early in the school year.
- Answer stations, answer keys and other materials (such as pirate flags/group markers and music – with speakers) needed to run the activity and help create an exciting atmosphere.

What do schools provide? Generally, one teacher per grade level is the liaison. One person can do this if more than one grade level is being run in a day. To make sure things go smoothly, there are often questions about what kind of answers they accept.

An electrical outlet near the Challenge Station for my speakers is also helpful.

What makes things go best?

- Everyone needs to show up on time and make sure students know their team color and group number. (Each class is divided into six groups.)
- Balanced groups are recommended. Consider how students get along with each other as well as math abilities.
- Students know the basics of how the game works before the activity, bring pencils and blank scratch paper. (Answers are written on the questions provided.)
- Students understand that their class will do best, and they will have more fun, if their group works well together and let's everyone help.
- Volunteer Answer Checkers (if you have them) are helpful, and should arrive early enough to review their jobs. I will arrive plenty early to sign in at the office and set up.

Note: Using volunteers as Answer Checkers is recommended. It frees teachers up to provide encouragement and class management as necessary.

Where do the questions come from?



- For math, schools are sent a bank of standards-based questions to choose from. This guarantees that students receive questions based on what they've been taught. Since schools are free to use these in the classroom, minor changes are made for questions used for the activity.
- For other subjects, schools send me what they want covered and as many specifics as possible. Questions are created from there.
- Schools may choose to provide their own questions in the format provided.
- Teachers may use them as they like. Traditional multiple choice math questions are not used and are limited for other subjects.
- If you like, you may supply the questions – which I put into the format needed for printing. Question Space: 3.25 x 4.9 inches

Notes: Standards from two grade levels may be selected. *This is useful early in the school year.* Teachers may even request specific difficulty levels for questions they've selected.

Small school? No worries.

Multi-grade activities work fine. Each grade level receives their own set of questions.

In fact, Pirate's Challenge can even be run in a single classroom.

You can run an activity for one or two classes in a classroom or multipurpose room. It won't have all the bells and whistles, but it can be just as exciting. The same communication with the teacher is as necessary beforehand as a full-scale event.

Besides the questions and answer keys, (and depending on space available), wooden tokens, Token Tubes and Challenge Station are still used.

This may be ideal for a school to run several small sessions in a single day. It also means teachers can serve as Answer Checkers while I run the Challenge Station.

If a grade level wanted to run several sessions to fit class schedules, classes can still compete with each other by using the total number of points earned per class. A group champion from all the classes can even be determined if you like.

Step-By-Step

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In brief, each class/team is divided into 6 groups, with students working to help their team succeed, but schools may set the time allowed. Multiple grade levels may be used.

Each class is assigned a team color.

While designed for up to 6 classes at a time, smaller schools running multi-grade level activities may need more. So, if you have the space, we could stretch it to 8.

1. Students enter and find their group's place. (Each group will have a marker with their team color and group number.)
2. Rules & basic procedures are reviewed.
3. The activity begins.
4. Students answer as many questions as possible in the time given.
5. Results are calculated and announced.
6. Classes depart.

Simply Put

- Students solve their problem.
- One member of the group takes their answer to the Answer Station to be checked.

If All Parts Of The Problem Are Correct

- The student is given a new question and a wooden token.
- The new question is taken back to the group and a group member brings the token straight to The Challenge Station.
 - The token is placed in the team's Tube.

If Any Part Of The Problem Is Incorrect

- Groups get 3 tries at each problem.

How does the Challenge Station work?

- One student from each team present, challenges other players from other teams at the station in a Fast Fact Challenge.
- Schools determine which type of facts are used. Multiplication, Division, Addition, Subtraction (or even factors).
- Winners of a challenge earn a bonus point.
- Others return to their group empty-handed.

