



The United States Catholic Schools Academic Junior High Decathlon

History

The United States Catholic Schools Academic Decathlon was founded in September, 1989 by Dr. Mark Ryan who was a junior high teacher at St. Aloysius School in south-central Los Angeles. Dr. Ryan had a vision for an academic event to parallel the athletic competitions so prevalent in schools. What began as a tiny competition involving a handful of schools from the greater Los Angeles area has grown to become an event involving Catholic junior high students from across the United States. The Decathlon is currently under the guiding jurisdiction of the California Catholic State Superintendents Curriculum Committee.

The Academic Decathlon consists of ten events:

Logic Quiz – Group participation (10 students) maximum points - 8,000 points

- 20 problems

Super Quiz – Group participation (10 students) maximum points - 8,000 points

- 50 multiple choice questions on FIVE subjects:
 - Religion
 - Literature
 - Fine Arts/Music
 - Science
 - Social Studies
 - Plus a tie-breaker

Individual Categories – Eight subjects maximum points per subject - 1,000
= 8,000 total points

- Roman Catholic doctrine (Religion)
- English
- Literature
- Science
- Mathematics
- Current Events
- Social Studies
- Fine Arts (Art and Music)

What materials do the decathletes study to prepare for the competition?

Resource books are selected each year for each subject area.

What qualifications should a student possess to participate on an AJHD team?

Junior High Students (6th, 7th and 8th graders) are eligible to join the Team!

- Must love to learn!
- Must be dedicated.
- Must be a team player.
- Must be able to work collaboratively with your study partner and the team.
- Must be organized and able to manage your time effectively.
- Must perform well under pressure.
- Must have excellent study skills and be attentive during practice.

If a student participates in the AJHD, keep in mind that:

- 10 students compete on the day of the Academic Junior High Decathlon.
- The remaining students are alternates/study partners.

Why should students join the Academic Junior High Decathlon team?

- It is an honor to represent your school in an academic competition and to be a part of group of outstanding students!
- It helps students develop excellent study skills.
- It prepares students for the academic transition into high school.
- It improves test-taking skills, reasoning skills and teamwork.
- Decathletes develop lasting friendships with their teammates!
- Free snacks at afternoon practices!
- Decathletes have tons of fun!!!

How much time do decathletes spend studying?

According to a 2015 survey of Decathlon coaches, the majority of teams practice for an average of three to five hours per week. Typically, teams meet twice a week, and often increase their practice sessions as the day of the competition nears. In addition, decathletes spend about the same amount of time (three to five hours per week) studying materials on their own outside of practice.