

GIPS Successful Coaching Tips

PLEASE REVIEW CAREFULLY PRIOR TO BEGINNING WORK WITH STUDENTS.

Age Appropriateness of Research Materials

In every Global Issues Problem Solving (GIPS) topic, large areas of research information are available that are appropriate for all ages; however, in some topics content may be more controversial or sensitive and may not be appropriate for younger students. **It is the responsibility of the coach to preview and monitor materials for age appropriateness** and to work with parents to ensure their support for the materials that students use.

Suggestions for Involving Parents with Global Issues Problem Solving

1. **Overview for parents:** Consider holding a meeting for the parents of your team members early in the year. At that time, you can explain the problem solving process, discuss the topics for the year, and invite parents to research along with their students. You may be able to piggy-back on back-to-school nights or open houses.



2. **Clarify the topics for the year:** Be sure that parents know what topics are being studied for the practice problems. For any sensitive topics, let parents know how you plan to handle the research. In this case, you may want to get signed parent permission for students to research the topics. You can assure parents that all Future Scenes will be age appropriate for all students. Future Scenes for problems 1 and 2 can be shared with parents before students complete the booklet.
3. **Clarify the components:** If you will be using more than one component of FPS (Global Issues Problem Solving, Scenario Writing, Scenario Performance, Community Problem Solving), be certain that students and parents understand the difference between each component.
4. **Clarify program viewpoints:** Let parents know that the focus of GIPS is on the process and on teaching students how to think, not what to think. Explain that the program itself does not support any particular viewpoints. Share statements from the front of the research manual that explain the FPS position.
5. **Establish a format for communication:** Let parents know how to contact you should they have any questions or concerns about topics or research. Invite them to review the *Readings, Research, & Resources* manual if you use it.
6. **Partner in research:** Encourage parents to become partners in research with their children. Develop specific activities or sharing formats for student/parent teams.
7. **Research via internet:** Carefully monitor any internet research that students do under your supervision. Remind parents to monitor their children's internet activities at home.
8. **Include local speakers:** Invite parents to help you locate and set up local speakers on the topics of study. Invite all parents to attend these special presentations.

9. **Invite parents in to observe:** Invite parents to observe your work sessions with students. Once students understand the problem solving process, invite parents to join the students in solving a “mini-scene.” Allow only 5-10 minutes for each step so that the process is completed in an hour or so and eliminate the formal writing.

Affiliate Bowl and International Conference topics may be more challenging than the practice topics. If your team qualifies for these levels of competition, inform parents immediately about the topic. If necessary, you may want written permission for students to study for these topics.

Keep parents informed!

10. **Obtain permission for Affiliate, National, or International study:**

Team Formation

Small groups that work as teams are the core of the GIPS. Students learn to brainstorm together and to divide up the written work so that each team member contributes to the final problem solving booklet.

Coach/student ratio: Coaches may work with any number of teams and individuals. Although some coaches work with a single team, many work with up to six teams or more at a time. Some school districts invite many students to “try out” the first problem, and then work with a smaller group of students who want to commit to working on the second and third problems.

Team composition: Team members may vary from problem to problem. Many coaches change teams for each practice problem, so that students experience working with many different team members, but assign teams for the Qualifying Problem carefully. In most Affiliates, the four team members whose names appear on the Qualifying Problem cover sheet are invited to move on to the next competition.

Divisions: Students *should* participate in the division designated for their grade level. Students *may* participate in a higher division than their grade, but they *may not* participate in a lower division.

- Junior Division – grades 4, 5, 6 or the equivalent
- Middle Division – grades 7, 8, 9 or the equivalent
- Senior Division – grades 10, 11, 12 or the equivalent



Above all, share your enthusiasm for Future Problem Solving!

