



USAGraduate STEM Competition Overview

Mission: To engage learners in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) in a fun and inspiring way and challenge them with a free, online competition which is grade appropriate and curriculum relevant.

Phased Development of USAGraduate.com STEM Program

- Educational content developed by New York State certified Science & Math teachers.
- Phase 1 was a “proof of concept” pilot program run in conjunction with the Syracuse City School District (SCSD) in April and May 2008.
- **Phase 2 is a 7 week program which begins on Monday, January 12 2009 and concludes on Friday, March 6th. This program is open to NYS students in the Central New York and Southern Tier Regions, the Capital Region, and the Poughkeepsie/Mid Hudson Region.**
- **Phase 3 is an 8 week program which will begin immediately following Phase 2. Phase 3 will be expanded geographically to cover all Phase 2 areas plus other NYS regions to be announced. Phase 3 will begin on Monday, March 9, 2009 and end on Friday, May 8th.**

How do I access the website?

Log on to the website at www.usagraduate.com

Student registration begins on Wednesday, January 7, 2009.

What weeks will the competition run?

The Phase 2 Competition will run from Monday to Sunday each week commencing Monday, January 12, 2009 and ending Sunday, March 8th. The program will not run during the Mid-Winter Recess the week of Feb16th.

The Phase 3 Competition will run from Monday, March 9, 2009 to Friday, May 8th. The program will not run during the Spring Recess the week of April 13th.

Student Registration

There are three separate competition levels, one each for Elementary, Middle and High School. When registering, a student first selects their grade level and then (using the dropdown box) selects the name of their school. This minimal information is used to validate legitimate students, provide participation levels by school, and allows us to notify the school when they have a winner.

Teacher Registration and Teacher “KEYS”

A teacher can register a student or a class of students or a student can assign themselves to a teacher with a “Teacher KEY”. This enables the teacher to promote participation in the competition as part of their teaching program and to have access to individual student participation and performance results throughout the competition.

Prizes

Prizes are detailed in the Prizes section of the website and include laptop computers, iPods, Amazon.com Gift codes and special education prizes.



Winners are drawn each week based on their participation and successful completion of that week's quiz.

End of term prizes are drawn from students who achieve the following categories:

- Successfully completed each week of the term (**persistence**)
- Top 10% on points earned (**performance**)
- Top 30% on points earned (**performance**)
- Top 10% most improved during the term (**improvement**)

Functionality for Teachers and Teacher KEYS

Teachers can be student facilitators and are enabled to use this competition to complement their teaching plans and/or for “extra credit” as the materials are designed to be grade appropriate and curriculum relevant.

A special Teacher's Module is included with the following functionality:

Teachers Register

1. Teachers log-on, register and identify their school
2. Manage their own profile and passwords
3. Are assigned a “Teacher KEY” which will enable their students to register and be assigned to their teacher.

Teachers Register Classes, Clubs or individual students

4. Teachers can register their students, assign usernames and passwords, and distribute these login details to their students.
5. Alternatively the student can register themselves using the Teacher KEY.
6. Teachers can access their list of registered students and retrieve lost login details, if necessary.
7. Teachers can view all students registered under their Teacher KEY and see the progress which their students are making as each week of the competition progresses.

Protocol – Students under 13

Students under 13 cannot register without a Teacher KEY or Guardian KEY. This is necessary to meet the requirements of the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). Students over 13 can register independently without a Teacher or Guardian KEY.

Teacher Suggestions for Educational Content

We welcome teacher comments and suggestions. We also encourage teachers to provide educational content which will improve the “learner experience”. A teacher can register as an educational content provider. Teachers can then create and submit Questions and Answers which are then reviewed by the USAGraduate.com STEM Competition Administrator for use in the competition.

How to register

1. Select Teacher button on the home page
2. Select Register on the Teacher Welcome Page
3. Complete the details and select “Register”
4. You will be assigned a Teacher KEY. This is the number which allows your students to register under your teacher control.



5. You are now logged-in and can encourage your students to participate and win prizes.

Parent/Guardian Controls

The role of the parent or guardian in the USAGraduate.com STEM Competition is similar to that of the teacher with respect to student registration. In compliance with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), children under 13 years old are not allowed to provide any personally identifiable information. In order to comply with this, their Parent or Guardian must register the student and provide their details including an email address.

The Parent/Guardian is then assigned a Parent/Guardian KEY which then enables the Under 13 student to register. Any email communication from us (i.e. should that student be a winner) will then be addressed to the Parent/Guardian only, in compliance with COPPA.

The Parent/Guardian module is includes the following functionality

Parent/Guardian registers

1. Register as a Guardian
2. Manage your own profile including passwords
3. Receive your Guardian KEY which enables your student to register
4. Students over 13 can register without a Guardian KEY.
5. Parent/Guardian can access the list of students they register and retrieve login details for these students, if lost.
6. Parent/Guardian can view the progress of all students registered under their name and see their results each week as the competition progresses.

How to register

1. Select Guardian button on the home page
2. Select Register on the Parent/Guardian Welcome Page
3. Complete the details and select "Register"
4. You will be assigned a Guardian KEY. This is the number which your student uses to register under your control.
5. You are now logged in and can encourage your student to participate and win prizes.

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