

U.S. Space & Rocket Center



International Space Camp (ISC) Challenge

Imagine this.

You are tired. The team has travelled for 24 hours. It's 40° C outside, but you are inside, in a cool air-conditioned room, out of the sun. Representatives from 35 countries, plus a teacher from every US state, are gathered around in national costume, waiting for the International Space Camp for Students Opening Ceremony. The Europeans sweat in their clogs and heavy formal clothes. The US teachers have dressed in humorous costumes that symbolise their state. One has cheese on his head.

Music starts, and you're on, moving around the people there to watch the Opening Ceremony. Australia is third in line. Of course the US comes first. They know where they are, what they are doing. Then Argentina, then Australia. Then the other countries follow.

You stand around the wall, draped in the flag they provide. The US kids stand to talk to the crowd, to welcome the visitors. OK, that's cool. Then Argentina stand, move to the microphone, and read their speech. They look great in their gear, but their English is stilted.

Then it's your turn. Both students and the educator move forward to share an opening address. The crowd has never heard an Aussie talk, but they know Australia is somewhere outside the US. They know our reputation for fun. They expect to laugh, to be surprised by our accent, despite their own southern drawl. They want to hear what you have to say, in the next two minutes.

You begin to speak ...

So here is your simple ISC Challenge.

Take your time, and write a response to all three questions. There is no correct answer to any of them. You do not have to be too creative, just sensible and realistic.

The questions are just for you to consider, and help you plan, as they will all relate to situations that have to be faced at ISC.

The opening address is your only opportunity to be formal, and represent Australia, so it is most important that you get it right.

1. What would you suggest the Australian delegation wear as a national costume for ISC?

Something conveniently casual or designer label? Something cool or formal? Something polite or humorous?

Will everyone in the team wear the same? Who organises it? How will this decision be made? Remember clothes take up valuable luggage space. Will they ever be worn again? (Once, the team wore surf lifesaving gear. Maybe a bit casual?)

2. What would you include in your opening address?

Remember you will be the first natural English speakers, and no-one else will have said the obvious things (e.g. It is great to be here!). Avoid sarcasm or smart jokes—they may not understand or appreciate Aussie humour. Speak slowly, and not for too long—just enough for them to hear you speak 'Australian' and to get your message across. How do you share the message so that everyone gets to speak? No powerpoint or other help is available, just you ...

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3. Now it is the closing session of ISC.

There is a formal, serious and tearful presentation of awards (no speeches allowed from you). The custom is to give small gifts or souvenirs of your home to everyone in your group (15). So what clever or obvious 'tourist' items from Australia will you carry all that way? How much will it cost? Where can you get free items perhaps?

Now it's over to you to complete this ISC Challenge.

Let's get this thing started! Replies to be submitted by 25 March with your application, if you wish to accept the challenge.

Put on those thinking caps!

You may wish to watch some highlights of the 2008 Opening Ceremony at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0cKBR8s1uE>