

Intermediate Committee Stranger Things

SJMUNC XXXVIII

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Letters from the Chairs

Dear Delegates,

My name is Ronan Davis, and I am a senior at St. John's High School. I would like to welcome you to SJMUNC XXXVIII and tell you that I am very excited to chair this committee alongside David Wang.

This is my fourth year as a member of Model UN at St. John's and my fourth year as a part of this conference. It is my second time as a chair. I have attended four national conferences at Brown University (twice) and the University of Chicago (twice), so I have a decent share of MUN experience, which will only help us have a good time at this conference.

We thought this topic was unique and engaging, and I hope we can all have fun with it. We recommend that you watch Stranger Things if you have not already done so, not only because it will help you in committee (which it absolutely will), but also because it is a great show. If you do not end up watching the show (which is understandable, especially if you have a busy schedule), I hope our briefing paper gives a sufficient amount of information about the show and the topic. You should also do some research on your character and the show as a whole if you do not watch the show, to ensure that you are prepared for a great day of committee.

If you have any questions about this committee (if you haven't seen the show, all of this may be confusing) or MUN in general, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Ronan Davis

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Dear Delegates,

My name is David Wang, and I am a Sophomore at St. John's High School. I sincerely welcome you to SJMUNC XXXVIII. It is my pleasure to co-chair this committee along with Ronan Davis.

This is my second year as a member of Model UN at St. John's and at this conference. This is my first time as a co-chair. I have not attended any national conferences before; my only other Model UN experience comes from BCMUNC.

We debated quite a lot about the topic for this committee; the ideas evolved from College Football to Elden Ring/Dark Souls. In the end, Ronan recommended Stranger Things to me, as a person who hasn't watched any shows for like 5 years. It's sad to give up Steam and watch Netflix instead, but the show was stunning, and I quickly loved it. Though the story might not be as compelling as some of the video games I've played, it's an excellent one nonetheless.

So I recommend anyone who hasn't watched Stranger Things go watch at least two seasons of it to get a general idea of the story, as well as do additional research about your assigned character. Watching the show will not only help you in this committee, but it's also something fun to watch in your free time (not when you're eating though).

Now, for those of you who do not want to watch the full show, [here](#) is a 3 hour long YouTube video explaining the entire story up to season 4.

May the flames guide thee,

David Wang

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Statement of the Problem

Citizens of Hawkins, Indiana, have lived through years of unexplained disappearances, sudden deaths, and unreported military activity, but the town has now become a stronghold of something even more terrifying: a massive, four-pronged interdimensional gate that connects Hawkins to the Upside Down—a dangerous and unstable dimension unfamiliar to modern science. It appears suddenly, without explanation, and produces an eerie energy that has begun to spread through the town, triggering electrical interference, environmental problems, and growing fear among the population. While the government has attempted to deny the gate's existence, too many people have seen it. Something is coming, and it may already be here.

People have mixed opinions on the topic of whether to close the gate or not, if it is even possible. For some people, this gate must be sealed off immediately and never be opened again. The existence of the gate alone presents a threat to the residents. Others believe that taking efforts to close it immediately could lead to unwanted consequences, including the situation becoming worse. There is also a belief among scientists and officials that the gate may be the result of an interdimensional shift. Some scientists say that the gate should be studied, monitored, and possibly used to our advantage.

There is also a question of how the survivors of the *Upside Down* should be treated. Among the survivors is Eleven, a teenage girl with unique telepathic and telekinetic abilities tied directly to this other dimension. Others, such as Will Byers and Max Mayfield, carry scars—physical, psychological, and potentially supernatural—that continue to develop, with their connection to the Upside Down growing stronger every second. Members of the community, such as Police Chief Jim Hopper, Joyce Byers, and many others, have also been

involved in encounters with the Upside Down. Most of these individuals are not scientists or soldiers, but they may be the most important assets in this committee because of their previous success in dealing with the Upside Down. Balancing their safety with the need for action will be one of the greatest challenges ahead. Should they be trusted to deal with it themselves, or does military action need to be implemented?

The existence of the gate to the Upside Down presents important questions about government secrecy, civilian protection, and scientific ethics. How much information should the public know? Should Hawkins be evacuated? Who has the authority to make the decisions? Federal officials? Military leaders? International authorities? Scientists? Hawkins citizens? Everyone has different opinions, and no one has the full picture needed to fully defeat this phenomenon. This committee must debate whether to act quickly or proceed with caution. With every passing hour, the town continues to fall deeper into turmoil, and it remains unclear whether this gate is a warning, a doorway, or a trap.

History of the Problem

In the town of Hawkins, Indiana, in 1983, a young boy named Will Byers disappeared while going home from his friend Mike Wheeler's house after a long 10-hour campaign of Dungeons and Dragons. The town launched a traditional search effort, but it was not successful. Will's friends, Mike Wheeler, Lucas Sinclair, and Dustin Henderson, decided to investigate on their own. On their first venture, they did not find Will, but did find something else that would change their lives: a mysterious girl in the woods with supernatural telekinetic powers who referred to herself as 'Eleven'. Only a day later, another disappearance happened. This time, it was Barb Holland, a friend of Mike's sister Nancy. Jonathan, Will's older brother, was there to witness Barb's disappearance. In the wake of these events, three groups of people began investigating the same phenomenon: Hawkins' chief, Jim Hopper, and Will's mother, Joyce; Will's friends; and Nancy and Jonathan. The investigations all led to the same place: Hawkins National Laboratory and the strange realm called the Upside Down. After Hopper and Joyce rescued Will from the Upside Down, the final fight happens in Hawkins Middle School, where the three groups, Dr. Martin Brenner, the lead scientist at Hawkins' laboratory, who the kids discover abducted Eleven as a child, experimented on her, and gave her powers, along with his soldiers, fight a monster, referred to by the kids as the Demogorgon, the same monster who abducted Will and held him in the Upside Down. With Eleven's powers, she sent the Demogorgon back to the Upside Down. Unfortunately, in doing this, Eleven disappeared with the Demogorgon.

Almost a year passed, and everyone thought the nightmare was over, but they were wrong. Even though Will Byers was back home and alive, there was something wrong with him.

He started having terrifying episodes where he seemed to be in the Upside Down, physically, causing him great fear. Around the same time, a girl named Max Mayfield moved to Hawkins with her stepbrother, Billy Hargrove, and she quickly caught the attention of both Lucas and Dustin and joined the friend group. What nobody realized at first was that a massive, spider-like creature called the Mind Flayer had been slowly taking control of Will's mind through his episodes, using him as a spy to learn about our world on its mission to destroy it. Meanwhile, Eleven had been secretly living in a cabin with Hopper, who was trying to keep her safe and hidden from the government, which was still looking for her. When Will became fully possessed by the Mind Flayer, it used his knowledge to send an army of Demodogs, smaller versions of the Demogorgon seen in the previous year, through underground tunnels that had been spreading like vines beneath Hawkins. During the chaos at Hawkins Lab, Bob Newby, Joyce's new boyfriend, who was just trying to help, was killed by the Demodogs while trying to save everyone else. Now, the only way to stop the Mind Flayer was for Eleven to close the gate to the Upside Down, which had previously been opened accidentally by Eleven and allowed the Demogorgon to come the previous year and the Demodogs to cause his mayhem this year. However, before that, so that part of the Mind Flayer that was still in Will was removed, they had to find a way to get it out of Will's body. They discovered that using heat, which is a sort of Kyrpotnite for creatures from the Upside Down, would work. So, they roasted the Mind Flayer out of Will, fixing the Upside Down problem, at least for now.

Almost a year later, in early July of 1985, the crew discovers that they were not the only people who had connections to the Upside Down. A group of soviet scientists had begun research on the Upside Down as well. In order to possibly improve their chances of winning the Cold War, these Soviet scientists built an underground base to hold a device with the capability

of opening a portal to the Upside Down, covering it up with the Starcourt Mall. Meanwhile, the piece Mind Flayer that was in Will's body the previous year, which could not escape through the original gate before Eleven closed it, starts to take control of Hawkins citizens remotely, including Max Mayfield's brother, Billy Hargrove, as its host, turning them into flesh and creating a physical body for itself to wreak havoc on Hawkins. Leading up to Independence Day, Hopper and Joyce, along with the help of Murray Bauman and Alexei, the scientist responsible for creating the gate-opening device, find a way to destroy the device and end the Soviets' hopes of discovering the wonders of the Upside Down, though with no insignificant loss, as Hopper is thought to be killed in the destruction of the device. At the same time, the kids find a way to suppress the Mind Flayer, though not without the death of Billy and the temporary loss of Eleven's powers.

In the spring of 1986, everything changed. With the brutal killing of Chrissy Cunningham, the queen of Hawkins High School, by means of a method of snapping bones and gouging eyes out not seen since the 1950s, the Hawkins crew knows something is up. It turned out Chrissy was not the only target of this killer, whom they call Vecna. Not only does he kill Chrissy, but also two other teenagers: Fred Benson and Patrick McKinney. In discovering the victims' symptoms before their deaths, the crew realizes that Max is likely to be Vecna's next victim, so they must do everything in their power to stop him. In their search, they discover that Vecna is no ordinary killer. He enters his victims' minds and kills them from a safe place in the Upside Down. Additionally, he is found to be responsible for all the other actions of the previous years from the Upside Down. Not only this, but they also discover his other identity: One, Dr. Brenner's first child, on whom he experimented. In an effort to save Max from death and Hawkins from imminent destruction, the Hawkins crew bands together, and with the help of

Eleven's powers, Max is saved from death, though not from a coma in which she may stay forever. However, the town of Hawkins is not so lucky. A four-pronged gate is opened, stemming from each of Vecna's previous three kill sites to fix the problem in which Hawkins currently stands. Will Hawkins fall, or can you help save its citizens, and possibly the entire world, from the horrors of the Upside Down and Vecna's ever-growing power?



Possible Solutions

Unlike the previous openings of gates to the Upside Down, this time, the gate has taken over the entire town of Hawkins. Therefore, Eleven and her friends may need some extra help, either from the government or from some other force. For example, in 1984, Eleven came across Kali Prasad, also known as ‘Eight,’ one of the children on whom Dr. Brenner experimented. Could she help in the fight?

The government has been a prominent force throughout all of the Upside Down mayhem, but will it need to have a larger role now? If so, what should they do? They could send the military to guard the gate all throughout the city to ensure that nothing comes out or the gate expands. They could be involved in finding a way to close the gate. Will the experienced residents of Hawkins in the Upside Down accept any governmental help?

Another question is: should the gate be used as a scientific opportunity? Should scientists be allowed to study the gate and its properties? Could it be beneficial in finding a way to close the gate, or will these scientists only be getting in the way? It may also be dangerous for civilians, such as scientists, to be in close contact with the gate. Should the government be allowed to regulate that?

Additionally, what should take place if someone like Vecna does emerge from the Upside Down? Should Eleven, Hopper, and their friends take over in fighting him, or should the government be at the forefront of any such fight?

It is likely that the government will want to take control. If that is the case, what should Eleven and her friends do? Should they conform to the government's wishes or take matters into their own hands?



Character Positions

Main Hawkins Crew

1. **Eleven (Jane Hopper)** – Eleven is a young woman with telekinetic and telepathic powers.

She believes that the gate to the Upside Down should be closed permanently in order to prevent further deaths. With her powers, she is the greatest hope in closing the gate.

2. **Mike Wheeler** – As Eleven's closest ally, Mike refuses to support any plans that put Eleven or any other survivor in danger. He argues that those with experience fighting the Upside Down should lead resistance efforts rather than government officials or scientists.

3. **Will Byers** – Will is the first resident to be abducted into the Upside Down, and he still experiences ongoing connections to it. He supports the monitoring of all the survivors at any given time.

4. **Lucas Sinclair** – A pragmatic and resourceful member of the group who values preparation and self-defense. Lucas advocates for an immediate evacuation of Hawkins, followed by Military Containment until a safe solution is found.

5. **Dustin Henderson** – Dustin is the squad's thinker and strategist; as such, he supports a tactical approach that studies the gate before closing it for future reference. As a D&D fan, he believes that their D&D knowledge can help to understand this phenomenon.

6. **Max Mayfield** – Max is a fearless teenager who survived Vecna's attack. However, she is still in a coma. For the purposes of this committee, we are going to assume she is out of her coma.

She will do anything to prevent Vecna from attacking anyone else, so her priority is closing the gate.

7. **Erica Sinclair** – Erica is Lucas’s younger sister. She is smart, daring, and witty. She stands with her brother and believes that Hawkins should be evacuated.

Older Teens & Young Adults

8. **Nancy Wheeler** – Nancy is a determined journalist who previously uncovered multiple government cover-ups. She advocates for full public disclosure about the Upside-Down and its threats, believing that press freedom and full transparency are essential for public safety.

9. **Jonathan Byers** – Jonathan is a quiet introvert, an excellent photographer, and a friend of Nancy. As the older brother of Will Byers, he prioritizes family protection and the re-allocation of affected individuals above all else.

10. **Steve Harrington** – Steve is the biggest advocate for the protection of young children against the hands of the Upside Down. He believes that those with experience fighting the Upside Down should be in leadership positions.

11. **Robin Buckley** – Robin is a witty, quick-talking friend of Steve Harrington from their days working at Scoops Ahoy. With her intelligence, sarcasm, and resourcefulness, she is a great asset in defeating Vecna and believes it should be done without the untrustworthy government.

Key Adults

12. **Jim Hopper** – Hopper is Hawkins’ Chief of Police. He has a lot of experience fighting both criminals and the Upside Down. He has ventured into the Upside Down multiple times to rescue

people. He believes that the experienced should lead the resistance group, as well as government supervision and protection of Eleven, the most valuable weapon in this war.

13. **Joyce Byers** – A determined and loving mother who ventured into the Upside Down multiple times to save his son. Her persistence has repeatedly saved her children. She is compassionate but is unwilling to stay put in the face of danger.

14. **Murray Bauman** – A conspiracy theorist, but later became a reliable ally, adept at uncovering hidden agendas. Cynical about official narratives and quick to suggest unconventional strategies.

15. **Dr. Sam Owens** – A government official and scientist who has worked to contain the Upside Down while balancing public safety and maintaining some level of transparency. He supports a scientific approach when dealing with the Upside Down.

Hawkins Locals & Side Characters

16. **Karen Wheeler** – Though unaware of the full scope of events happening, she is getting increasingly concerned about her children's safety. She advocates for strong community protections, especially the children.

17. **Ted Wheeler** – Preferring stability over involvement, he is often disengaged from the crises around him. As such, he tends to support low-risk, non-destructive measures.

18. **Holly Wheeler** – Being the youngest Wheeler child, she is too young to be involved in anything important, unless, of course, Vecna forces her to be involved. However, she is still a great example of the stakes at hand if this crisis is not dealt with.

19. **Claudia Henderson** – Caring and trusting mother of Dustin, she has minimal exposure to the Upside Down. She is simply concerned about the safety of her child.

20. **Officer Callahan** – A Hawkins police officer with little supernatural experience. As such, he prefers to maintain civil order rather than risky plans.

21. **Officer Powell** – Another Hawkins police officer, excels at following directions, not so good at creative thinking or strategic planning. In times of crisis, he simply follows clear chains of command issued by Hopper.

22. **Jason Carver's Father** – Still angry about his son's death, he sees the Upside Down and anyone connected to it (especially Eleven and her friends) as threats.

23. **Suzie Bingham** – Dustin's tech-savvy long-distance girlfriend who helped hack into government databases.

24. **Argyle** – Jonathan's laid-back but surprisingly insightful friend from California. Though often comedic, he occasionally makes profound observations about the moral cost of endless war.

25. **Vickie** – Civilian voice showing the emotional impact of the crisis on ordinary townsfolk.

Survivors Connected to the Upside Down

26. **Victor Creel** – He is imprisoned for decades after the murder of his family, committed by Vecna/Henry. He is a traumatized, yet valuable, witness to the earliest known attack of the Upside Down/Vecna.

School & Town Figures

27. **Mr. Clarke** – Hawkins Middle School science teacher, runs the AV club. He was the one who taught the main group about the nature of the Upside Down. He advocated for learning before acting, a rather scientific approach.

28. **Kali Prasad (Eight)** – Eight is Eleven’s “sister” from Dr. Brenner’s lab program. She has the ability to create illusions. With her previous experience, she does not trust the Hawkins lab or the government, and advocates for extreme measures for safety when dealing with the Upside Down.

29. **Wayne Munson** – Protective and wary after his nephew, Eddie Munson’s, wrongful death. He would like any Upside Down gates to be closed immediately upon discovery.

Government Agents

30. **Lt. Colonel Jack Sullivan** – A military leader who advocates for the total elimination of any threats concerning the Upside Down, no matter the cost.

31. **FBI Special Agent** – As an FBI agent, he is concerned about the national security implications of the Upside Down. He is inclined toward secrecy and federal control.

32. **CIA Representative** – He views the Upside Down as a potential intelligence and defense asset that can be used against the Soviets. He is willing to take calculated risks if the Upside Down proves to be useful.

33. **United Nations Disaster Response Coordinator** – Views the Upside Down as a threat to the existence of Humanity, concerned about global safety. Advocates for international cooperation when managing the gates.

34. **FEMA Crisis Director** – Focused on rebuilding Hawkins and protecting displaced residents, not politics or science.

35. **International Media Correspondent** – Wants to make the information about the Upside Down transparent to the public. Opposes secret or cover-ups unless proven otherwise.

36. **US Military General** – High-ranking officer, prefers decisive action using military force. Prioritizes containment, wants to learn if the Upside Down can be a useful weapon against the Soviets.

37. **Russian Scientist** – Worked in the Soviet facility beneath Starcourt Mall. Seeks international collaboration but also wants to study the interdimensional energy source for potential energy uses.

38. **Department of Energy Representative** – Since the Hawkins Lab was under the DOE, this person argues that their agency should manage the cleanup and investigation.

39. **Pentagon Science Advisor** – Represents national defense interests; wants to study the Upside Down as a potential weapon or energy source.

40. **International Journalist (BBC)** – Wants open coverage and truth, skeptical of both the U.S. government and the Hawkins group.

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