



## SPELLING BEE RULES

- Grade divisions are Grades 2-3 and Grades 4-5. Three prizes will be awarded in both divisions.
- Please arrive promptly. No contestant will be allowed to participate once the contest begins.
- There will be no talking allowed among contestants or between contestants and members of the audience. A contestant will be disqualified if he or she receives any assistance from anyone in the audience.
- Members of the audience should turn off cell phones and pagers and remain quiet when a contestant is spelling a word.
- *The Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition* will serve as the final authority for the spelling and definitions of words used in the competition.
- This contest will be conducted in three rounds for both divisions.
  - Round 1 is a written one. Spellers will be asked to spell on paper 20 words. Definitions and sentences will be read after each of the words.
  - Round 2 is oral and each speller will be required to spell three words. The results of Rounds 1 and 2 will be combined to determine the eligibility of the spellers for Round 3.
  - Round 3 is an oral elimination round.
- In the oral rounds after the pronouncer gives the speller a word, the speller is encouraged to pronounce the word before spelling to ensure that the speller has heard the word correctly and after spelling to indicate spelling is complete.
- The speller may ask the pronouncer to say the word again, define it, and/or use it in a sentence. The pronouncer will grant all requests until the judges agree that the word has been made reasonably clear to the contestant. Judges may disqualify any speller who ignores a request to start spelling.
- Once a speller begins to spell a word, he or she will not have a chance to change letters once pronounced.
- Spellers will have 60 seconds in which to spell the word in all rounds. The Time Keeper will remind the speller to begin if 30 seconds elapses in the oral rounds.

- In Round 3 when the number of spellers is reduced to two, the elimination procedure changes. When one speller misspells a word, the other speller shall be given an opportunity to spell the same word. If the second speller spells that word correctly and the next word on the pronouncer's list, the second speller shall be declared the champion.

If the second speller, after correcting the first error, misspells the next word, then the misspelled new word shall be given to the first speller. If the first speller successfully corrects the error and correctly spells the next word on the list, then he or she becomes the champion.

- Protests may be filed by anyone wishing to reinstate a speller to the contest but will not be heard from any individual wanting to eliminate another speller. The deadline for filing a protest is before the beginning of the next round. No protest will be entertained after the contest is ended.
- Judges are in complete control of the competition. Their decisions are final. Spelling bees are similar to sporting events in which referees call the plays as they see them. Players don't always agree with the decisions or like them but accept them as part of *good sportsmanship*.
- Most importantly, please have fun and relax whether you are a participant or a spectator!

