

## Rules for Local & Conference Spelling Bees

1. The pronouncer should make every effort to pronounce the words according to the diacritical markings in Scripps National Spelling Bee word lists and *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* and its Addenda Section, copyright 2002, Merriam-Webster.
2. In competition, after the pronouncer gives the speller a word, the speller will be encouraged to pronounce the word before spelling it and after spelling it. The judges may not disqualify a speller for failing to pronounce the word either before or after spelling it.

### OR

The Speller will listen to the word from the Pronouncer. The Speller should then state the word **once**, spell the word(s) **aloud** and **restate the word** spelled. Restating the word indicates to the timekeeper that you have finished spelling. The speller **SHOULD NOT** say the word a second time until completely finished spelling the word.

3. The speller may ask the pronouncer to say the word again, define it, use it in a sentence, provide the part of speech, and/or provide the language of origin. The pronouncer shall grant all such requests until the judges agree that the word has been made reasonably clear to the speller. Root word questions will not be entertained by the pronouncer and judges.
4. The Speller has 40 seconds to spell the word. Timing (40 seconds) begins when the Speller states the word(s) the first time and ends when the Speller says the word(s) a second time. The judges may disqualify any speller who ignores a request to start spelling.
5. The role of the pronouncer is (1) to correctly pronounce the word and (2) to give a sentence, definition, and other information about the word at the speller's request. The role of the judges is to determine whether the contestant has spelled the word correctly. The role of the speller is (1) to gather as much information as possible to help spell the word correctly and (2) to spell the word correctly. The judges may not disqualify a speller for asking a question.
6. Having started to spell a word, a speller may stop and start over, retracing the spelling from the beginning. In retracing, however, there can be no change of letters or their sequence from those first pronounced. If letters or their sequence is changed in the respelling, the speller will be eliminated.
7. The competition shall be conducted in rounds. Each speller remaining in the spelling bee at the start of a round shall spell one word in the round, except as provided in Rule 13, Option B.
8. Upon missing the spelling of a word, a speller immediately drops out of the competition, except as provided in Rule 13. The next word on the pronouncer's list is given to the next speller.

**9.** If one of the last two spellers misspells a word and the other speller, after correcting the error, will not be given a new word and he or she shall be declared the champion. If both spellers misspell the same word, both shall continue in the competition, and the one who first misspelled the word shall be given a new word to spell.

**10.** *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* and its Addenda Section, copyright 2002, Merriam-Webster, shall serve as the final authority for the spelling of words. If more than one spelling is listed for a word that the pronouncer has provided for the speller to spell, any of these spellings shall be accepted as correct if all of the following three criteria are met: (1) The pronunciations of the words are identical, (2) the definitions of the words are identical, and (3) the words are clearly identified as being standard variants of each other. Spellings at other locations having temporal labels (such as *archaic*, *obsolete*), stylistic labels (such as *stand*, *nonstand*), or regional labels (such as *North*, *Midland*, *Irish*) which differ from main entry spellings not having these status labels shall not be accepted as correct.

**11.** Any question relating to the spelling of a word should be referred to the designated official immediately in writing on the official appeal form. The official appeal form should contain space for the following: the word in question, the name of the speller, and the reason for the appeal.

**12.** Appeals may be filed by a parent, legal guardian, or teacher of the speller who is seeking reinstatement in the contest. The judges will not entertain appeals from individuals seeking to dislodge another speller from the competition. The deadline for filing an appeal is before the speller affected would have received his/her next word had he/she stayed in the competition. No appeal will be entertained after that word has been given to another speller. Under Option A, when only five spellers remain, an oral appeal must be made immediately, that is, before the speller affected would have received his/her next word had he/she stayed in the contest. Under Option B, when only two spellers remain, an oral appeal must be made immediately, that is, before the speller affected would have received his/her next word had he/she stayed in the competition.

**13.** If a word has one or more homonyms, the pronouncer will indicate which word is to be spelled. If the listed word is not properly identified, either by defining it or distinguishing the homonyms, any correct spelling of any homonym of the word will be accepted.

**14.** The speller shall not be disqualified for failing to note that a word is capitalized (noted as "cap," "usu cap," "often cap," or "sometimes cap" in *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* and its Addenda Section, copyright 2002, Merriam-Webster).

**15.** No talking will be allowed among contestants or between contestants and members of the audience. If a contestant receives assistance from anyone in the audience, he/she will be disqualified. The audience is also requested to remain seated until a break, to avoid confusing or distracting the contestants. Contestants found talking may be disqualified from the Spelling Bee.

Cell phones and other electronic devices should be shut off or set to silent or vibrate, and put away during competition. Audience members are NOT PERMITTED to video, record or take photos during the event. Failure to follow this rule will result in being asked to leave the room. Audience members who are found disruptive to the spellers will be asked to leave. At no point may any audience member argue with Spelling Bee officials. Persons found doing that will be asked to leave. An official recorder and photographer of the event has been assigned.

**16.** The judges are in complete control of the competition. Their decision shall be final on all questions.

## SPELLING BEE AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

At the bee, it is appropriate to acknowledge the students who have prepared for this contest. However, interruptions during the event are a distraction to the speller, pronouncer, and judges. Please follow these simple guidelines as an audience member during the bee.

### **General Etiquette:**

No mouthing, calling out of letters, or help in any way may be offered to the spelling bee participants. Spelling participants have studied and worked hard to be a part of this spelling bee. Please extend participants the courtesy of not speaking or distracting them during the competition.

### **Applause:**

Applause for the spellers is acceptable at the end of each round. Applause for an individual speller is discouraged and causes a disruption in the bee.

### **Children:**

Children who are not participating in the bee are asked to sit quietly with their parents or guardian. **Young children may have difficulty sitting through a spelling bee. If a young child becomes disruptive, we ask that you please exit the cafeteria as soon as possible.**

### **Entering/Exiting the Gym:**

To keep distractions to a minimum, please only enter and exit the gym at the end of a round. A break will be given during the bee to use the restrooms and get a drink.

### **Cell Phones:**

We request that cell phones and pagers are turned off during the bee.

### **Photos of the event:**

We ask that during the bee flash photography is not used. If you take photos without a flash during the bee, please take them from your seat in the cafeteria. Thank You!