



Colegio Bilingüe New Horizons

Our Strongest Conviction is Academic Excellence

Accredited by New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)

Spelling Bee Rules 2012-2013

1. Students will be provided with identical word lists based on their grade level. These words have been selected from all academic curriculum areas. In addition to the general list provided, there is a challenge list for the final rounds and tie breaking purposes, based on specific grade levels. The challenge words are not given in advance.
2. English Teachers will review words weekly from the list, using various techniques and activities. Examples of these exercises are:
 - Using dictionaries (look-up exercises) to learn the meaning, part of speech, root word and origin of words.
 - Reciting words weekly to practice diction and pronunciation.
 - Using pictures and context clues to identify or define the words.
 - Unscrambling letters to form the words.
 - Completing word searches or puzzles that use the word list
 - Writing poems, paragraphs or short stories using 5, 10 or 15 words from the list, in the correct context
 - Completing fill in the blank exercises using a word bank of the spelling/vocabulary words
 - Writing sentences that reflect the correct meaning of the words.
3. For the competition, teachers must choose three finalists and an alternate for each section according to the students' performance on the activities described above, in class. Teachers should send the lists of finalists to the English Language Coordinator for their grade level on or by March 22, 2013.
4. The Coordinators and/or Assistant Principal will select three English Language teachers as judges for each competition. One judge will be responsible for pronouncing the words, while the other two are responsible for keeping track of time and registering students' performance.
5. The contestant will choose a folded word card, or number, from a container. The **pronouncer** will then read the word for the contestant to spell. The student must then spell the words correctly in the time allotted (*no more than 30 seconds*). The contestant should pronounce the word before and after spelling it.
 - *Important: Capital letters should be indicated when spelling, for example: Mexico, capital M-e-x-i-c-o.
6. The contestant may request the pronouncer to repeat the word again, define it, or use it in a sentence. The contestant may also ask for judges to provide the part of speech, language origin, and/or alternate pronunciation of the word. The pronouncer shall grant such requests up to three times, after which the student must begin spelling. These requests should not exceed 45 seconds. In all, the student must complete their questions and the spelling of the word, within 1 minute and 15 seconds. The student will have the benefit of requesting clarification during the first 45 seconds. The judges and pronouncer will not communicate with the speller during the final 30 seconds. The judges will eliminate or disqualify any speller who does not provide a complete spelling before the expiration of time. If the judges or pronouncer need to discuss a competition- related matter while the speller is contemplating a word, they may pause

the time clock. If they pause the time clock, they will inform the speller when they pause and resume the time clock.

7. If a word has one or more homonyms, the **pronouncer** will indicate which of them is to be spelled by giving a definition or using the word in a sentence, or the definition, whether or not the contestant makes the request.
8. Once the contestant starts to spell, the selected word, he/she may stop and start again with the first letter of the word, but time will continue running.
9. Judges may disqualify any contestant who ignores a request to start spelling. Spellers must adhere to the contest rules and observe good behavior or they may be disqualified.
10. Upon spelling a word incorrectly, a contestant is eliminated from the contest. In the preliminary rounds, the missed word will not be re-used and one of the judges will give the correct spelling. The next contestant will select a new word.
11. When four spellers remain, the championship round begins. The procedure changes in order to select the placing of the final four winners. A) The contestant who fails at spelling his /her word in this round will be disqualified if the next contestant/contestants successfully spell the missed entry. B) If all contestants fail to spell a word in that specific round, no one is dismissed, and a new round begins.
 - The procedure applied in 11-A will be applied to decide on the 4th and 3rd places.
 - When only two spellers remain in the contest, the procedure changes slightly. At that point, when one contestant misspells a word, the other contestant shall be given an opportunity to spell that same word. If the second contestant spells that word correctly, and also spells the next word on the **pronounce** list, then that speller will be declared the champion.
 - If both spellers misspell the same word, both shall continue in the contest, and the one who first spells two words correctly will be declared as the champion.
 - Any question relating to the spelling of a word should be referred to the judge immediately. The deadline for making a protest is before the contestant affected would have been given another word to spell had the contestant remained in the contest. No protest will be entertained after that word has been given to another speller.
12. Should a situation or exception arise, the judges may consult the coordinator to arrive at a resolution. All judges' decisions are final, in relation to the competition.
13. All 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th place winners for each grade level will receive prizes.

Pronouncer's role:

The pronouncer strives to pronounce words according to the diacritical markings in the school-selected dictionary.

In the competition the pronouncer responds to the speller's requests for a definition, sentence, part of speech, language(s) of origine and alternate pronunciations. When presented with requests for alternate

pronunciations, one of the judges checks for alternate pronunciations in the school-selected dictionary. If the speller wishes to ask if the dictionary lists a specific root word as the root of the word to be spelled, the speller must specify a pronunciation of the root (not a spelling), its language, and its definition. The pronouncer will grant all such requests as long as they are in accordance with time constraints outlined in Rule 6.

The pronouncer may offer word information – without the speller having requested the information- if the pronouncer senses that the information will be helpful and information appears in the spelling bee word list or the school selected dictionary.

Judges' role:

The judges uphold the rules and determine whether or not words are spelled correctly. Judges may consult the coordinator to reach a resolution. The decisions of the judges are final.

Because seeing lip movements may be critical in detecting misunderstandings or misspellings, spellers must face the judges when pronouncing and spelling a word.

The judges participate in exchanges of information between the speller and pronouncer if they feel that clarification is needed. Also, the judges listen carefully to the speller's pronunciation of the word; and, if they sense that the speller has misunderstood the word, the judges work with the speller and pronouncer until they are satisfied that reasonable attempts have been made to assist the speller in understanding the word within the time limit (Rule 7). While the judges are responsible for attempting to detect a speller's misunderstanding, it is sometimes impossible to detect a misunderstanding until a spelling error has been made. The judges are not responsible for the speller's misunderstanding.

Pronouncer errors: The judges compare the pronouncer's pronunciation with the diacritical markings in the word list. If the judges feel that the pronouncer's pronunciation does not match, the pronunciation specified in the diacritical markings, the judges will direct the pronouncer to correct the error as soon as it is detected.

Disqualifications for reasons other than clear misspelling: The judges will disqualify a speller (1) who refuses a request to start spelling within 30 seconds without asking for clarification; (2) who does not approach the microphone when it is time to receive the word; (3) who engages in unsportsmanlike conduct; or (4) who, in the process of spelling, utters unintelligible or nonsense sounds.

Speller activities that do not merit disqualification: The judges may not disqualify a speller (1) for failing to pronounce the word either before or after spelling it, or (2) for asking a question.

Speller's role

The speller makes an effort to face the judges and pronounce the word for the judges before spelling it and after spelling it. The speller while facing the judges makes an effort to utter each letter distinctly and with sufficient volume to be understood by the judges. The speller may ask the pronouncer to say the word again, define it, use it in a sentence, provide the part of speech, provide the language(s) of origin and/or provide an alternate pronunciation or pronunciations. The speller may also ask for root word questions that meet the specifications delineated in the **pronouncer's role**.

Misunderstandings: The speller is responsible for any misunderstanding of the word unless (1) the pronouncer never provided a correct pronunciation; (2) the pronouncer provided incorrect information regarding the definition, part of speech, or language of origin; or (3) the speller correctly spelled a homonym of the word and the pronouncer failed to either offer a definition or distinguish the homonyms. If any of these situations occur, the error will be corrected by the judges and the speller will immediately be given a new word.