

SPELLING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CONTEST DIRECTOR

The following guidelines are to be used to expand upon, but not replace, the information in the *Constitution and Contest Rules*, Section 1092. The rules may also be found in the *A+ Handbook* and on the UIL web site.

BEFORE THE MEET

Check your contest packet...you should receive:

1. Contest rules and instructions
2. Contest Roster
3. Spelling & Tie Breaker Tests
4. Instructions to Pronouncer
5. Instructions to Graders
6. Instructions to Verifier/ Monitor
7. Certificates of Excellence (district only)
8. An application for additional certificates, to be used only if needed

Room.

Secure a room of adequate size for the number of contestants expected. The room should have desks or chairs and tables of proper height.

Materials and Equipment.

1. The contest packet which contains the tests and other materials.
2. The contest roster may be filled out with contestants' names from entry forms prior to the contest.
3. A stopwatch for use by the pronouncer.
4. Pencil sharpener or extra pens or pencils for use by contestants.
5. The current *A+ Spelling List*.
6. Check the "Official Notices" section of the *Leaguer* or the UIL web site for any corrections to the current *A+ Spelling List*.
7. The host may provide numbered paper for contestants if desired.

Personnel.

1. *Graders*. At least three graders will be needed, and more may be used if available. Coaches of contestants may be graders. Graders should be briefed to ensure that they understand the instructions for grading.
2. *Pronouncer*. The pronouncer may not be a coach of any contestant entered in the contest. The pronouncer should receive the test and tie breaker well in advance of the contest and become familiar with the words and verify pronunciations and spellings of all words. The pronouncer should be prepared not only to give two pronunciations of each word (if the word has more than one pronunciation), but also to provide an illustrative sentence for words which offer unusual difficulties.
3. *Verifiers*. One or two verifiers to check the pronunciation and definitions given by the pronouncer. Contest directors are encouraged to use coaches as verifiers.
4. *Monitors*. One or two monitors. A monitor may be a coach. The monitor's duty is to make certain that contestants work quietly and independently.

DURING THE CONTEST

1. During the contest, exclude all from the room except contestants and contest personnel.
2. Contestants should be separated from each other as far as space in the room permits.
3. Check names of contestants against the contest roster and assign a number to each. Instruct contestants to place assigned number in the upper right-hand corner of their papers.
4. The pronouncer should pronounce the test words using the test list. If a word has two or more acceptable pronunciations, the pronouncer should give at least two of the pronunciations. If a word seems to offer unusual difficulty for contestants it should be

briefly defined or used in an illustrative sentence. For example, the pronouncer should be careful to distinguish between words that sound alike but have different meanings.

5. To time the test properly, the pronouncer can watch the numbers in parentheses and the minute hand of a clock or stopwatch. Numerals to the right of the word on the test list indicate minutes. Each group of words should be given out in NO LESS than one minute. Numbers not in parentheses are the cumulative total of words on the list. The pronouncer may increase the time if a few extra seconds are needed to define words which sound alike.
6. After the test has been given, the contest director may announce that a short break will be given before the tie breaker is given to all contestants.
7. During the pronouncing of the words, the verifier should sit at the back of the room with a copy of the test lists and mark any word for which they question the pronunciation or definition. After the test and after the tie breaker, the verifier and pronouncer shall clarify any word questioned. Those words shall then be pronounced again.

GRADING THE PAPERS

1. After the contest, gather all contest papers so that none may be retained by the contestants, coaches or other interested parties.
2. Exclude contestants from the room when grading. Allow sufficient time for careful grading. The authority for elementary and junior high spelling lists and contests is the *Merriam-Webster Intermediate Dictionary*. In case any word is misspelled in the *A+ Spelling List*, that word is not to be considered in grading the spelling papers, unless a correction has been given in the "Official Notices" section of the *Leaguer*. If *Merriam-Webster Intermediate Dictionary* gives additional spellings not on the contest list, those spellings may be considered correct.
3. *Grading*. Each test should be independently graded twice, and papers contending to place should be graded a third time. From the total number of word entries, deduct one point for each incorrectly spelled word.
 - (A) *Word Order*. Any word omitted by the contestant is a miss. If all contestants omit the same word, the pronouncer is presumed to have failed to have given the word, so the omission by contestants is not considered a miss.
 - (B) *Punctuation and Capitalization*. The misuse of an apostrophe or hyphen, or a mistake in capitalization is considered a miss. Contractions and possessive forms may be written with all letters connected or written separately.
 - (C) *Misspelled Words on List*. Any word misspelled on the spelling list is not to be considered in grading the tests unless a correction has been in the "Official Notices" section of the *Leaguer* and posted on the UIL web site.
4. *Determining Legibility*. Contestants may print or write words. If there is a question about legibility of a letter, place a blank piece of paper on either side of the letter, separating it from its context and then determine whether the letter can be identified. If two of three graders rule that a letter is legible, it should be considered correct.
5. *Ties*. Ties in individual competition are to be broken by scoring the tie breaker test of only those involved in the tie. When calculating team scores, do not include scores from the tie breaker portion of the test unless a tie exists. If a tie exists in team competition, calculate the tie breaker scores for only those teams involved in the tie. If the tie remains after scoring the tie breaker, the tie shall stand. Should there be a tie for first place, there is no second place. Should there be a tie for second place, there is no third place, etc.

ANNOUNCING THE WINNERS

1. *Verification Period*. Contestants and coaches shall be allowed a time not to exceed 15 minutes to examine their own tests and an answer key before the official results are announced. If errors are found, either in the grading or recording of scores, these should be reported to the contest director at this time.

2. *Official Results.* Once the viewing period has expired and all test papers are collected by the contest director, official results shall be announced. Official results, once announced, shall be final.
3. *Places and Points.* Places and points shall be awarded through sixth place in each division according to Section 1408. If the district has elected to include team competition, team places and points are awarded through third place according to Section 1408.

AFTER THE MEET

1. Provide the district director with the Contest Roster with each contestant's score, a list of the individual and team winners and their schools, and the number of contestants participating.
2. Make recommendations or suggestions for the following year.
3. The district director or district meet host must return contestants' tests, answer sheets, papers, etc. to participating schools. This material CANNOT be returned until the release date established in the current *Constitution and Contest Rules*. The meet director may need your assistance in putting the names of contestants and their schools on the papers to be returned, or in separating the contest materials to be returned to each school.