

General Rules for the IAVA Spelling Bee Contest

1. The judges are in complete control of the competition, and their decision shall be final on all questions.
2. The official study dictionary for this competition is Merriam-Webster's Unabridged Online Dictionary (www.merriam-webster.com)
3. All participants are expected to arrive at the event location with adult supervision no later than 20 minutes prior to the announced starting time of the contest.
4. The role of the pronouncer is to correctly pronounce the word and to give a sentence, definition and other information about the word at the speller's request.
5. The role of the judges is to determine whether the contestant has spelled the word correctly.
6. The role of the speller is to gather as much information as possible to help spell the word correctly and to spell the word correctly.
7. The speller is encouraged to follow the "Say-Spell-Say". As each word is given to a contestant, the speller should repeat the word, spell it out slowly and distinctly, and then repeat the pronunciation of the word (example):
Pronouncer: "Table"
Speller: "Table", "T-A-B-L-E", "Table"
8. The speller may ask the pronouncer to repeat the word again, and provide the definition, language of origin, an example sentence and provide the part of speech.
9. 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.
10. Disqualifications for reasons other than clear misspelling: The judges are in complete control of the spelling bee and their decisions are final. The judges will disqualify a speller:
 - a. who refuses a request to start spelling;
 - b. who does not approach the microphone when it is time to receive the word;
 - c. who does not comply with the eligibility requirements;
 - d. who engages in unsportsmanlike conduct;
 - e. who, in the process of retracing a spelling, alters the letters or sequence of letters from those first uttered; or
 - f. who, in the process of spelling, utters unintelligible or nonsense sounds.
11. This 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. Upon missing the spelling of



a word, a speller immediately drops out of the competition. The next word on the pronouncer's list is given to the next speller.

12. Under no circumstance is any speller asked to correct the misspelling of another speller.
13. If none of the spellers remaining in the spelling bee at the start of a round spells a word correctly during that round, all shall remain in the competition with the spellers spelling in the original order.
14. All spellers eliminated in the same round will be tied for the same place. As for awards, ties will be broken using the written round.
15. When 3 spellers remain, the Championship Word List of 25 words will be invoked. If all of these words are exhausted, the remaining spellers will be deemed co-champions.
16. During the final rounds of this competition, if only one of the spellers remaining in the competition at the start of a round spells a word correctly during that round, a new round shall begin and the speller shall be given an opportunity to spell the next word on the list. If the speller succeeds in correctly spelling the new word, the speller shall be declared the champion. Otherwise (that is, if the speller does not succeed in correctly spelling the new word), all the spellers remaining in the competition at the start of the previous round shall remain in the competition. A new round will begin, with these spellers spelling in the original order.
17. The champion is not the champion until he or she has spelled correctly one more word than the speller or spellers placing second have spelled.
18. Any question related to the spelling of a word should be referred to the designated official immediately in writing on the official appeal form that will be provided at the competition. The official appeal form will contain space for the following: the word in question, the name of the speller, and the reason for the appeal.
19. Appeals may be filed by a parent, legal guardian, and/or teacher/administrator of the speller who is seeking reinstatement in the contest and be given to the appeal judge. The judge 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.
20. When only five or fewer 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.
21. If a word has one or more homonyms, the Spelling Master 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.



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22. The speller shall not be disqualified for failing to note that a word is capitalized or hyphenated.