

Spelling Bee Rules

1. 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. The judges will know that the speller is done if he or she pronounces the word after spelling it and the pronouncer will be assured that the speller has heard the word correctly if he or she pronounces it before beginning to spell it.
2. The speller may ask the pronouncer to say the word again, define it, and/or use it in a sentence. The pronouncer shall grant all such 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.
3. Having started to spell a word, a speller may stop and start over, retracting the spelling from the beginning, but in retracting there can be NO change of letters or their sequence from those first pronounced. If letters or their sequence is changed in the re-spelling, the speller will be eliminated. In other words, a speller cannot correct himself, even while it is still his or her turn.
4. The contest 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 when there are two spellers remaining. (At that point refer to Rule 6)
5. 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 using it in a sentence, any correct spelling of any homonym of the word will be accepted.
6. When the number of the spellers is reduced to two, the elimination procedure changes. At that point, when one speller misspells a word, the other shall be given an opportunity to spell that same word. If the second speller spells that word correctly, plus the next word on the pronouncer's list, then the second speller shall be declared the champion. If the second speller misspells the new word, after correcting the first word, the new word is then given to the first speller. If the first speller then succeeds in correcting the error and correctly spells the next word on the list, then he or she becomes the champion. If both spellers misspell the same word, both shall continue in the contest and the one who first misspelled the word shall be given a new word to spell.
7. Protests may be filed by anyone (the speller, parent, spectator, etc.) wishing to reinstate a speller into the contest but will not be heard from any individual speaking to dislodge another speller from the competition. Deadline for filing a protest is before the speller affected would have received his or her word had he or she stayed in the contest. NO PROTEST will be entertained after that word has been given to another speller. Protests should be verbally made to a designated person immediately or upon completion of a round. It is especially important to speak up right away when there are only two or three spellers left.
8. Judges are in complete control of the competition. Their decisions are final. Spelling bees are not unlike sporting events in which referees call the plays as they see them. Players do not always agree with the decisions or like them, but accept them as part of good sportsmanship.
9. Spectators and competitors will be required to remain quiet during the competition. This is in respect for the spellers and judges. You will be asked to leave if a quiet manner is not kept. Spellers will be disqualified if a quiet manner is not kept.