

NJSFWC 2017 Spelling Bee

Official Club, District, and State Spelling Bee Rules



All rules must be made available to contestants *prior* to the Spelling Bee and also read out loud to the contestants and audience members on the day of the Spelling Bee *before* competition begins.

1. **Grade/Enrollment:** Participants must be enrolled in the fourth or fifth grade.
2. **Official Dictionary:** **Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary** shall serve as the final authority for the spelling of the words. If more than one spelling is listed for a word, any of these spellings will be accepted as correct if the alternate spelling appears in boldface type.
3. **Talking Among Contestants:** Once the Spelling Bee begins, there shall be no talking between the contestants. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in the contestant being disqualified from the remainder of the competition.
4. **Re-pronouncing and Definitions:** The contestant may ask the pronouncer to re-pronounce the word, define it, or use it in a sentence. The pronouncer may grant all the requests until the judges agree that the word has been made reasonably clear. Judges may disqualify any contestant who ignores a request to start spelling.
5. **Pronouncing Words:** In competition, the pronouncer gives the contestant a word. We strongly suggest to the contestants that they pronounce the word before spelling. This will allow the judges to make sure the contestant is spelling the correct word. After spelling word, the contestant should say the word again to let the judges know they are done spelling.
6. **Practice Word Lists:** Every contestant will receive a practice word list. Some words for the Bee may be chosen from the practice word list. Additional words will be added. No contestant at the Club, District, or State levels will receive any official competition word lists.
7. **Homophones:** During competition, a contestant may receive a word that is a homophone, meaning a word could have two *different* and *correct* spellings with two distinct meanings. Example: "plane" vs. "plain." In these instances, the pronouncer will automatically define the word. Should the pronouncer not provide the definition, the contestant can spell either of the homophones.
8. **Proper Nouns:** During competition, contestants may receive a word or words that are proper nouns, meaning that the word or words must include capital letters. All capital letters must be indicated during the spelling of the word. For example: if the word "Rhode Island" is given, then the contestant must spell as follows: "Rhode Island (pause) capital R-h-o-d-e capital I-s-l-a-n-d (pause) Rhode Island."
9. **Pauses or Re-starts to Spelling:** Having started to spell a word, a contestant may stop and start over, retracing the spelling from the beginning, but in retracing, there can be **no change** of letters and their sequence from those first pronounced. If letters or their sequence is changed in the respelling, the contestant will be eliminated.
10. **Questions Related to Word Spellings:** Any question relating to the spelling of a word should be referred to the judges **immediately**, before the correct spelling is given.
11. **Misspelled Words:** Upon missing the spelling of a word, the contestant will be informed by the pronouncer or judge that the word is incorrect and must immediately drop out of the contest and exit the spelling area to join the audience as a spectator. Competition continues with the next word being given to the next contestant.
12. **Final Decisions:** The decisions of the judges shall be final on all questions.

END OF BEE PROCEDURES: Once the Bee is down to THREE CONTESTANTS

- A. If all the contestants in any round misspell their word, all the spellers are invited back to the next round and continue to spell in the order listed on their placards
- B. If there is only one contestant in any round that spells correctly, that one speller goes into the next round alone and is given the next word on the list
- C. If that contestant spells that word correctly, he or she shall be declared the champion. If that contestant misspells the word, all the spellers from the previous round are invited back to start spelling again in the next round. Contestants will spell in the order listed on their placards

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