

Rules for the Islamic Schools of New England Spelling Bee

2012 Bee Hosted by The Islamic Academy for Peace

Preface

Please note that the rules for this spelling bee have been modified and adapted from 5 sources: The Scripps National Spelling Bee Rules for Local Spelling Bees, the Dayspring Home Educators Spelling Bee Rules, the Jack and Jill National Spelling Bee Rules, Hope Spelling Bee of Wisconsin, and the CanSpell Spelling Bee rules.

Please be sure that all administrators, teachers, parents, and spelling bee participants are familiar with the rules.

Muslim home-schooled students are welcome to participate in a preliminary practice round (approx. 20 words) that will be held approx. 30 minutes prior to the official spelling bee. The top five home-schooled spellers will then be invited to compete in the official spelling bee. The traditional application process should be followed, indicating "home-schooled" on your form when it is faxed or mailed.

For the purposes of this Spelling Bee, any student that does not attend traditional, daily classroom lessons away from the home is considered home-schooled.

All participants are expected to arrive at the event location with adult supervision no later than 30 minutes prior to the announced starting time of the contest.

No talking will be allowed among contestants or between contestants and members of the audience. If a contestant receives assistance from anyone in the audience, he/she will be disqualified. The audience is also requested to remain seated until a break, to avoid confusing or distracting the contestants. Contestants found talking may be disqualified from the Spelling Bee.

Cell phones and other electronic devices should be shut off during competition or set to silent or vibrate. Audience members who are found disruptive to the spellers will be asked to leave. At no point may any audience member argue with Spelling Bee officials. Persons found doing that will be asked to leave. Please read all procedures regarding appeals.

These rules are guidelines designed to assist spelling bee officials and spellers at the local level. Spelling bee officials include the pronouncer, judges, coordinator, timekeeper, and arbitrator. Individuals bearing complaints about the conduct of this bee should register their concerns with the spelling bee officials in writing, before the end of the round in which they think a mistake took place.

ALL DECISIONS OF THE SPELLING BEE OFFICIALS ARE FINAL.

Rules for the Islamic Schools of New England Spelling Bee

2012 Bee Hosted by The Islamic Academy for Peace

1. **Eligibility:** A speller qualifying for the 2012 Islamic Schools of New England Spelling Bee must meet these requirements:
 - a) The speller must not have won a Scripps National Spelling Bee championship in Washington, D.C.
 - b) The speller must not have passed beyond the eighth grade on or before February 1, 2012.
 - c) The speller must not have earned the legal equivalent of a high school diploma.
 - d) The speller must not eschew normal school activity to study for spelling bees.

2. **Officials:** Spelling Bee officials will include two or three Spelling Marshalls (who will also play the roles of judges and a time keeper), the pronouncer, a record keeper, and one or two arbitrators.

3. **Format:** The spelling bee is conducted in rounds. Each speller remaining in the spelling bee at the start of a round spells one word in each round. The spelling bee will be conducted orally. The speller may not demand a written format except under the conditions or Rule 4.

4. **Special needs:** Spelling bee officials will strive to provide accommodation for spellers who have physical challenges. All requests for spelling bee officials to accommodate special needs involving sight, hearing, speech, or movement should be directed to spelling bee officials, well in advance of the spelling bee date. The judges have discretionary power to amend oral and/or written spelling requirements on a case-by-case basis for spellers with diagnosed medical conditions involving sight, hearing, speech, or movement. The Word Lists sent out to the schools will serve as the final authority for the spelling of words used in the competition. The *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, or an electronic version of it, will serve as the official Spelling Bee dictionary for pronunciation and for definitions.

5. **Procedures:**
 - a) Students will be asked in rounds, rather than grades. All students will be seated, and the pronouncer will be calling by number and assigning words from the corresponding lists. For example, in Round 1: the pronouncer will ask grade 1 students to spell, then grade 2, then grade 3, and then grade 4. Those who spell correctly will compete in Round 2 in the same fashion, and so on.

Rules for the Islamic Schools of New England Spelling Bee

2012 Bee Hosted by The Islamic Academy for Peace

Each round will be clearly announced. All students from the grade will line up behind the microphone. Every student will return to his seat after spelling regardless if he spelled correctly or incorrectly. After each round, the judges will then thank those who have misspelled and ask them to return to the audience.

- b) The pronouncer will agree with the judges on a pattern to follow in choosing the spelling words.
- c) The Speller will listen to the word from the Pronouncer. The Speller should then state the word **once**, spell the word(s) **aloud** and **restate the word** spelled. Restating the word indicates to the timekeeper that you have finished spelling.
- d) Timing (40 seconds) begins when the Speller states the word(s) the first time and ends when the Speller says the word(s) a second time.
- e) The speller **SHOULD NOT** say the word a second time until completely finished spelling the word. If the speller does so, he/she will be disqualified because it was indicated to the timekeeper that spelling was completed. The speller may, however, pronounce the word more than once before s/he starts spelling.
- f) If a Speller needs clarification for the word to be spelled, he/she can ask for a sentence or a definition. **The speller must ask for clarification before saying the word for the first time** so that timing will begin after clarification is received.
- g) If the speller makes a mistake while spelling the given word, the speller must tell the officials that he/she is going to start again and respell the entire word. But – REMEMBER the speller must not restate the word until he/she is completely finished spelling the word.
- h) A speller may stop and start over, re-tracing the spelling of a word from the beginning.
- i) For contestants of **grades 1 – 3**, self-correction is allowed during re-tracing the spelling of a word. **For example:** after beginning the spelling of the word, he/she may start over and change the order of the letters. In such a case, the final spelling attempt will be the one used in determining the correctness of the word spelled. For clarity,

Rules for the Islamic Schools of New England Spelling Bee

2012 Bee Hosted by The Islamic Academy for Peace

and to avoid misunderstanding, the student must indicate verbally when he/she is starting over.

- j) Although contestants in **grades 4-8** will be allowed to re-trace their words, they will not be allowed to self-correct. This means that there can be no change of letters and/or their sequence from those first pronounced. In these grades, if letters and/or their sequence are changed in the re-tracing, the speller will be disqualified. For clarity, and to avoid misunderstanding, the student must indicate verbally when he/she is starting over.
 - k) The competition will be conducted in rounds for each grade. Each speller remaining in the competition at the start of a round will spell one word in that round.
 - l) When a word is misspelled, the Spelling Marshall will indicate this to the speller, give the correct spelling and then give the next word to the next speller. The student who misspells a word will stand aside (but does not return to his seat) to allow the next student in the waiting area to move up to the microphone. If the case occurs where all spellers in that round have misspelled their words, then a new round will begin and continue until some spellers are disqualified. All spellers eliminated in the same round will be tied for the same place. 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.
 - m) At this point, when only two spellers remain, the Spelling Marshall will pause to announce the End-of-Bee procedures.
- 6. Word List:** Selected teachers of the Spelling Bee committee are responsible for choosing the word lists for use at each Islamic Schools of New England Spelling Bee. The word lists will determine how the Spelling Bee words should be spelled.
- 7. Pronouncer's Role:** The pronouncer will make every effort to pronounce the words according to the diacritical markings in the official Spelling Bee dictionary. After pronouncing the word, the pronouncer may clarify the word by defining it or by using it in a sentence if asked. The pronouncer may also repeat the word.

Rules for the Islamic Schools of New England Spelling Bee

2012 Bee Hosted by The Islamic Academy for Peace

Homonyms: If a word has one or more homonyms, the pronouncer will indicate which word is to be spelled by defining the word or by using it in a sentence, however, the final responsibility rests with the speller to determine which homonym is being pronounced.

Speller's requests: The pronouncer responds to the speller's requests for definition, sentence, or part of speech. The pronouncer does not entertain root word questions, requests for alternate definitions, language of origin, and/or alternate pronunciations.

Pronouncer's sense of helpfulness: The pronouncer may offer word information, without the speller having requested the information, if the pronouncer senses that the information is helpful.

- 8. Judges' role:** The judges uphold the rules and determine whether or not words are spelled correctly. They also render final decisions on appeals in accordance with Rule 16. They are in complete control of the competition, and their decision is final on all questions.

Interaction with the speller: Because seeing the speller's lip movements may be critical in detecting misunderstanding or misspelling, the judges encourage spellers to face them when pronouncing and spelling the word.

Notice of rules: The judges ensure that all spellers and audience members are given an opportunity to receive a complete copy of the rules prior to the start of the spelling bee.

Misunderstandings: The judges participate in the exchange 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. 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.

Rules for the Islamic Schools of New England Spelling Bee

2012 Bee Hosted by The Islamic Academy for Peace

Pronouncer errors: The judges compare the pronouncer's pronunciation with the diacritical markings in the Spelling Bee's official dictionary. If the judges feel that the pronouncer's pronunciation does not match the pronunciation specified in the diacritical markings, the judges 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 under the following circumstances:

- 1) The speller refuses a request to start spelling.
- 2) The speller does not approach the microphone when it is time to receive the word.
- 3) The speller does not comply with the eligibility requirements.
- 4) The speller engages in unsportsmanlike conduct.
- 5) The speller competing in grades 4-8, in the process of retracing a spelling, alters the letters or sequence of letters from those first uttered.
- 6) The speller who in the process of spelling, utters unintelligible or nonsense sounds.
- 7) The speller does not complete the spelling of the word within the specified time limit of 40 seconds. Timing starts after students says the word the first time.
- 8) The speller talks during the competition.
- 9) The speller receives assistance from a person in the audience.
- 10) The speller receives assistance from a device in the audience or with the speller.

Speller activities that do not merit disqualification: The judges may not disqualify a speller for the following reasons:

- 1) The speller asks a question.
- 2) The speller notes or fails to note the capitalization of a word.

9. 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, or provide the part of speech. The Speller should make sure to ask any questions before stating the word to be spelled.

Misunderstandings: The speller is responsible for any misunderstanding of the word unless the following situations occur:

Rules for the Islamic Schools of New England Spelling Bee

2012 Bee Hosted by The Islamic Academy for Peace

- 1) The pronouncer never provided a correct pronunciation.
 - 2) The pronouncer provided incorrect information regarding the definition, part of speech, or use in a sentence.
 - 3) The speller correctly spelled a homonym of the word and the pronouncer failed to either offer a definition or distinguish the homonyms.
- 10. Timekeeper's Role:** The timekeeper is the official keeper of time. The timekeeper will begin the timer when the speller says the word and stop the timer when the timer says the word a second time. If the pronouncer has said the word and the speller remains silent, the timekeeper reminds the speller to begin spelling after 20 seconds. The timekeeper announces disqualification based on expired time of 40 seconds after the speller says the word.
- 11. Tape Recorder Handler:** The tape recorder handler is responsible for recording the spelling in each round. He/she will stop and replay the tape as requested by the arbitrator.
- 12. The Arbitrator:** The arbitrator will receive written appeals from audience members. He/she will decide whether or not to pause the bee in order to confer with judges, pronouncer, and tape recorder handler in order to entertain the appeal. The arbitrator has final say in whether spellers are reinstated in the bee.
- 13. Record keeper's Role:** The record keeper will track spellers in each grade level in order to make sure final rounds are conducted in a timely fashion for each grade level and correctly identify winners of each grade. The record keeper will signal the end of the 7th round, after which students will spell from the next grade level.
- 14. Correction of a misspelling:** The pronouncer and judges will not ask the speller to correct another speller's misspelling, even in end-of-bee circumstances.
- 15. Misspelling:** Upon incorrectly spelling a word, the speller immediately drops out of the competition, except as provided in Rule 16.
- 16. End-of-bee procedure:** If all spellers in a round misspell: If none of the spellers remaining in the spelling bee at the start of a round spells a word correctly during that round, all remain in the competition and a new round begins.

Rules for the Islamic Schools of New England Spelling Bee

2012 Bee Hosted by The Islamic Academy for Peace

Ties: All spellers eliminated in the same round are tied for the same place. After the champion has been determined, spelling bee officials may opt to conduct tiebreakers (of their own design), if tiebreakers are necessary for the awarding of prizes or the determination of qualifying spellers for the next level of competition.

If only one speller in a round spells correctly: If only one speller spells correctly in a round, a new one-word round begins and the speller is given an opportunity to spell the next word on the list (anticipated championship word). If the speller succeeds in correctly spelling the anticipated championship word in this one-word round, the speller is declared the champion.

Example: In Round 12 there are four spellers. Spellers 6 and 21 misspell. Speller 30 spells correctly. Speller 42 misspells. So, Speller 30 is the only speller in the round to spell correctly. Speller 30 begins Round 13—a one-word round—and is offered the anticipated championship word. Speller 30 correctly spells the anticipated championship word and is declared champion.

Example: Two spellers spell in Round 10. Speller 14 misspells. Speller 25 spells correctly. Speller 25 begins Round 11—a one-word round—and is offered the anticipated championship word. Speller 25 correctly spells the anticipated championship word and is declared champion.

Example: Two spellers spell in Round 16. Speller 3 spells correctly. Speller 9 misspells. Speller 3 begins Round 17—a one-word round—and is offered the anticipated championship word. Speller 3 correctly spells the anticipated championship word and is declared champion.

VERY IMPORTANT: If a speller misspells the anticipated championship word in a one-word round: A *new* round begins with ALL the spellers who spelled (correctly *and incorrectly*) in the previous round. These spellers spell in their original order.

Example: In Round 8 there are three spellers. Speller 12 spells correctly and spellers 23 and 37 misspell. Round 9—a one-word round—begins, and Speller 12 is offered the anticipated championship word. Speller 12 misspells the anticipated championship word. Round 10 begins and includes Spellers 12, 23, and 37. The rules prescribe that spellers 12, 23, and 37 spell in their original order. So Speller 12 gets the next word on the list even though Speller 12

Rules for the Islamic Schools of New England Spelling Bee

2012 Bee Hosted by The Islamic Academy for Peace

misspelled the previous word on the list. Round 10 is not complete until all three spellers have spelled.

Tip: A record keeper or judge tracks the progress of spellers throughout the rounds. The record keeper's information will be helpful in preventing end-of-bee confusion.

- 17. Appeals:** The speller's parent(s), legal guardian, or teacher/school administrator may appeal to the judges for the speller's reinstatement provided that the appeal is in compliance with the appeal protocol. The judges render a final decision on the appeal in accordance with the reinstatement protocol.

Appeal protocol

A written appeal must be hand delivered to the spelling bee arbitrator. The deadline for delivering an appeal is before the speller affected would have received his/her next word had he/she stayed in the spelling bee; however, to minimize disruptions to the spelling bee, every effort should be made to deliver an appeal by the end of the round in which the speller was eliminated. When five or fewer spellers remain, the written appeal requirement is suspended, and an oral appeal must be made before the speller would have received his/her next word had he/she stayed in the spelling bee. A written appeal must provide the speller's name and number, the word in question, and the reason the speller should be reinstated.

While the competition is in session, individuals who have filed appeals may not directly approach the judges unless explicit permission to approach the judges has been given. The judges will contact the speller if they decide to reinstate the speller. To minimize disruption to the pace of the spelling bee and the concentration of the spellers, the judges are under no obligation to stop the spelling bee in order to discuss with the speller's parent(s), legal guardian, or teacher/school administrator a denied appeal. The judges' decisions are final and are subject neither to review nor to reversal by the Scripps National Spelling Bee's headquarters office.

Reinstatement protocol

Pronouncer mispronunciation: An appeal claiming that a speller's elimination from the spelling bee was due to pronunciation error should be denied unless there is agreement that the pronouncer *never* offered a correct pronunciation.

Rules for the Islamic Schools of New England Spelling Bee

2012 Bee Hosted by The Islamic Academy for Peace

Alternate pronunciations: An appeal claiming that the pronouncer did not offer alternate pronunciations should be denied.

Speller's misunderstanding: An appeal claiming that the speller's elimination from the spelling bee was due to the speller's misunderstanding the word, its pronunciation(s), and/or other information about the word should be denied. It is the speller's responsibility to understand the word. The speller offered correct spelling, as indicated in the word list that was sent to each school. An appeal claiming that the speller correctly spelled the word should be denied unless an audio recording of the Spelling Bee's proceedings or bee officials' recollections clearly indicate that the word was indeed spelled correctly. An appeal claiming that the speller spelled the word correctly according to a dictionary, instead of the spelling list that was given to each school should be denied.

Homonym: An appeal claiming that the speller's elimination was unfair because the speller's word is a homonym should be denied unless the pronouncer failed to correctly define the word after the speller asked for a definition *and* the speller correctly spelled that particular homonym of the word.

Incorrect or unsolicited information: An appeal claiming that the speller's elimination was unfair because the pronouncer offered incorrect or unsolicited information about the word should be denied unless it is determined that the pronouncer indeed gave factually incorrect information *and* it appears that the speller's spelling would have been correct if not for the incorrect or unsolicited information provided by the pronouncer.

Bee officials failed to correct a misunderstanding: An appeal claiming that the speller misspelled because the judges and/or pronouncer failed to correct the speller's mispronunciation of the word should be denied. It is sometimes impossible to detect a speller's mispronunciation or misunderstanding, and ultimately it is the responsibility of the speller to understand and correctly pronounce the word.

Disqualification request: An appeal seeking to dislodge another speller from the spelling bee should be denied.