

Battle of the Books Guidelines and Rules

What is Battle of the Books?

- Battle of the Books, also known as BOB, is a program created and offered by Bartlett Public Library, Gail Borden Public Library, and Poplar Creek Public Library. This program relies upon collaboration with School District U-46.
- Battle of the Books encourages quality reading for 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students.
- Team members read a list of books, chosen by librarians, and answer questions about them at meets. There are 6 rounds in each season. Scores are kept at each meet and winners are recognized.
- Throughout the season, emphasis is placed on the fun of participation, teamwork, and the satisfaction that comes from reading.
- This program is not affiliated with any other Battle of the Books programs; it is completely administered by these three partner libraries.

Who can participate?

- 4th, 5th, and 6th graders in a public schools, private schools, or homeschools.
- School teams from public and private schools located within the library district boundaries of one of the sponsoring libraries, or in School District U-46.
- Homeschool or neighborhood team members must reside within the library district boundaries of one of the sponsoring libraries.
- Neighborhood teams may only be created if there is no team for their public school.
- All teams must be able to arrive at a scheduled meet by 3:15 p.m.

How do you participate?

- To participate in Battle of the Books, coaches must fill out a registration form by the deadline detailed on the form. Any schools applying after the deadline has passed will not be considered for this current school year.
 - Coaches do not need to be school employees. However, they must be responsible adults over the age of 18. If a coach is unable to attend a meet, he or she is responsible for appointing a substitute coach, which may be a parent or another school employee.
- Each school should develop a team(s) of 4th, 5th and 6th grade students. There are no restrictions the size of your team. The method of choosing team members is up to the individual school.
- In an effort to ensure representation from across all three library districts and/or School District U-46, each qualifying group that wishes to participate may form one team.
 - The total number of teams can not exceed 44. If the total number of registration forms exceeds 44, then every team applying will be entered into a lottery.
 - Schools with more than 20 players may request a second team by completing a second team registration form. Coaches who do not complete this second team request form will not be considered for a second team.
 - If the number of requests for second teams exceed the number of available slots, all second team requests will go into a lottery.
 - No schools may have more than 2 teams.

How are the meets organized?

- Six meets will be scheduled for each school.
- The season will begin in October and will continue until March. No meets will be held on days when school is not in session.
- Meets will be held at one of the public libraries, on Tuesdays and Thursdays starting at 3:15 pm.
 - Teams should arrive at the host library by 3:00 pm so that a meet can begin on time.
 - If a coach is not present, the library expects an accompanying adult will supervise the team.

- The host library must be called if a team is not able to arrive by 3:15. In that instance, a grace period of 15 minutes will be granted.
- Any arrivals after 3:30 pm may join the meet in progress.
- If a team cannot appear on the date scheduled, they forfeit the meet and receive a score of 0.
- If the library must cancel a meet due to weather or building problems, the meet will be canceled by 1:30 pm, coaches will be contacted using the contact information provided at registration, and the meet will be rescheduled for the makeup date for that round unless otherwise noted.
 - Additionally, meets will be canceled whenever U-46 cancels school or afterschool activities.
 - If school officials cancel after 1:30, every effort will be made to contact coaches of the changes.
- A schedule of battles will be set up at the beginning of the season. Coaches will be notified when the schedule is available on the Gail Borden Public Library website.
- Along with a schedule, a few sample questions will be sent to the coaches for practice use.

What types of questions are asked at meets?

- The questions that will be asked will be of two types.
 - Title Questions - require a book title for an answer
 - Content Questions - require a multiple choice letter and the answer that follows
- The first ten questions are Title Questions, which require a book title for an answer.
 - If the team answers correctly, they will be awarded 5 points and offered an opportunity for an additional point.
 - If a team can also provide the last name of the author for non-fiction or fiction titles, they will be awarded an additional point.
 - If a team can also provide the last name of the author or illustrator for a picture book title, they will be awarded an additional point.
- The last five questions are Content Questions, which require a multiple choice letter and the answer that follows
 - When answering a content question, please state both the corresponding letter followed by the the answer (example: *a) the cat*). If a team answers correctly, they will be awarded 5 points.
- If a team does not answer a Title Question or a Content Question correctly, or the time runs out, the question will pass to the next team in order.
 - If the second team is able to answer the question correctly, the second team is awarded one bonus point. They are not offered an additional point for the last name of the author and/or illustrator.
 - If both teams are unable to provide the correct answer, or if the second team has already answered five "passed" questions correctly, the question becomes "dead" and no points are awarded.

What happens during a meet?

- At the meets, each team will be asked 15 questions and will be questioned on any of the Battle of the Books titles and authors/illustrators. (see types of questions above)
 - Each team will have up to 30 seconds to answer the initial question and 15 seconds to answer questions missed by the preceding team.
- Teams will be questioned in succession with questions chosen at random.
- When the moderator is reading a question to a given team, all members of that team must turn and face the moderator.
 - After the question is read, the team members may huddle or otherwise discuss the question between themselves.

- After conferring with the team, one team member should then raise his/her hand and wait to be recognized by the moderator. The first response is the only acceptable answer.
- For title questions, teams members may huddle or otherwise discuss questions between themselves for the title and, if they are given the opportunity to provide the last name of the author, teams may huddle or discuss again before they give an answer. However, teams must provide both within the 30 second time limit.
- Missed questions will be passed immediately to the next team and will not be repeated. Any team may correctly answer up to five "passed" questions per meet.
- At each meet, teams provide either timekeepers or a scorekeeper. Please see the schedule for assignment details.
- Substitution of players is allowed twice during a meet, so up to fifteen players on a team may participate in any given meet.

What are the rules or expectations during a meet?

- Team members should strive to avoid looking out into the audience, especially when any questions are read that pertain to their team scoring points.
- The moderator reserves the right to throw out a question and any possible points for that question if he/she suspects that some form of cheating, such as signals or help from the audience, has occurred.
- Teams suspected of cheating on multiple occasions during a season may incur other penalties, including dismissal from the current season and opportunities for participating in the future.
- The moderator will be the final authority on the acceptability of an answer. If the coach thinks a question is inaccurate, a comment form should be completed. Comment forms are
- All Battle of the Books lists, books, flashcards, and any other materials containing information that will aid in answers must be out of view for the duration of any meet.
- During the meet, questions may not be written down by any member of the audience.
- The audience at any given meet is limited to teams scheduled to play, their coaches, and their supporters.
- Persons associated with teams not scheduled to play that day should in no case observe.
- Additionally, audio and video recording is strictly prohibited.
- Audience members who do not follow these rules will be asked to leave the meet. Team members often wear Battle of the Books t-shirts. While the wearing of shirts is acceptable, these shirts may not feature book titles, book authors/illustrators, and verbiage that could be construed as a possible answer to a Battle of the Books question. If team members are found to be wearing shirts that feature any of the above, they will be asked to turn their t-shirts inside-out for the duration of the meet.

Frequently Asked Questions:

- The Gail Borden Public Library website maintains the Battle of the Books administrative materials.
- Scores from each meet will be posted on the Gail Borden Public Library's Battle of the Books page.
- The reading list for the next season will be provided when available, typically around the time of the previous season's Final Event in March.

The Battle of the Books program is sponsored by the Gail Borden, Poplar Creek and Bartlett Public Libraries.

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