

## ***Participant Rules for the 2020 Spelling Bee***

- 1) The pronouncer (person who will be posing all words to the participants) gives the speller a word.
- 2) Speller is encouraged to pronounce the word before spelling it and again after spelling it, however, the judges may **not** disqualify a speller for failing to pronounce the word either before or after spelling it.
- 3) The speller may ask the pronouncer to repeat the word, define it, use it in a sentence, and provide the part of speech. The pronouncer shall grant all such requests until the judges agree that the word has been made reasonably clear to the speller. The pronouncers and judges will not entertain questions about the root word of the word posed to the speller. The judges may not, however, disqualify a speller for asking a question.
- 4) The judges may disqualify any speller who ignores a request to start spelling.
- 5) The role of the pronouncer is (a), to pronounce the word correctly and (b), to give a sentence, definition, or other information about the word at the speller's request.
- 6) The role of the judges is (a), to confirm that the word given by the pronouncer is correctly and clearly pronounced, (b), to determine whether the contestant has spelled the word correctly and (c), to ensure that proper procedures are followed in determining winners in accordance with the Spelling Bee Rules. Note: if the word given by the pronouncer is incorrectly pronounced, the judges must ask that a new word be given. If a speller misspells a word and the judges determine that the word was not clearly pronounced, the speller may be given a new word. A speller may "mis-hear" a word and misspell it, but if the judges confirm that the word was correctly and clearly pronounced, the speller is eliminated.

- 7) The role of the speller is (a), to gather as much information as possible to help them spell the word correctly and (b), to spell the word correctly.
- 8) 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 are changed in the respelling, the speller is eliminated.
- 9) The speller shall not be disqualified for failing to note that a word is capitalized.
- 10) 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 distinguishing the homonym, any correct spelling of any homonym of the word will be accepted.
- 11) The 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 (but may be called back to resolve a tie among spellers—see below).
- 12) If none of the spellers remaining in the Spelling Bee at the start of a round spell a word correctly during that round, then all shall remain in the competition equally and a new round begins.
- 13) All spellers eliminated in the same round will be tied for the same place.
- 14) To be declared Champion, a speller must have spelled correctly **two more** words than the second-place speller.
- 15) If only one of the spellers remaining in the Bee at the start of a round spells a word correctly during the round, the speller shall be given the opportunity to spell the next word on the list. If the speller spells the

new word correctly, then the speller shall be declared the Champion. Otherwise, all spellers remaining in the competition at the start of the round shall remain in the competition and a new round will begin with all of the spellers in their original order.

- 16) If and when the number of spellers is reduced to two in determining first place, the elimination process changes. At that point, when one speller misspells a word, the second speller shall be given an opportunity to spell that same word. If the second speller spells that word correctly, plus the next word on the list, then the second speller shall be declared the Champion. If one of the two spellers misspells a word and the other speller, after correcting the error, misspells the new word, then the misspelled new word shall be referred to the other speller. If this other speller then succeeds in correcting the error, plus correctly spells the next word on the list, then they shall be declared the Champion. If both spellers misspell the same word, they both shall continue equally in the competition and the one who first misspelled the word shall be given a new word to spell.
- 17) If, after the Champion is identified, there are spellers remaining who are tied for second and third place, the Spelling Bee will continue until the tie(s) are resolved, following the procedures outlined in # 9-#11, above.
- 18) The judges are in complete control of the competition. Their decision shall be final.