



# SPELLING BEE VOLUNTEER

2023-24

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Student Leadership & Learning Contacts

# Important Information

## THANK YOU

for volunteering to serve as the **Spelling Bee Coordinator!**

Your labor of love in Christ's name is truly appreciated. The ACSI Student Leadership & Learning (SL&L) team is here to help you in every way possible. Please don't hesitate to ask for assistance.

**ACSI Student Leadership & Learning partners with K-12 schools and universities globally to advance the educational mission for students by providing enrichment and experiential events beyond the classroom, which equip students with valuable skills such as creative thinking, problem-solving, leadership, and service. Through participation, students discover their talents, reinforce their biblical worldview, and increase their cultural influence for Jesus.**

**NEW for 2023-24: There will be three levels of In-Person Spelling Bee competitions: Local, Divisional, and National. The top five (5) winners of the Spell-Off at each Local Spelling Bee competition will be invited to participate in a Divisional Spelling Bee. The top (5) winners from each Divisional Spelling Bee will be invited to the National Spelling Bee.**

Schools that cannot participate in an In-Person Bee have the option to purchase a Spelling Bee Kit. If your school purchased a Kit, disregard the sections of this handbook that pertain only to In-Person Spelling Bees (e.g., participation fees and forms).

### Submission of Fees

School registration fees are paid in the fall when submitting a registration form. Student participation fees are due 30 days before the event. The *Participation Fees Form* can be accessed online at [acsi.org/studentleadership](https://acsi.org/studentleadership) on the "Pay Fees" page.

To avoid a **Cancellation/No-Show Fee of \$200**, which covers your school's share of various event expenses, notify your chairperson and/or ACSI Student Leadership & Learning team member at least **60 days** before the event if you are unable to attend. Withdrawing within 60 days of the event takes away the opportunity for schools on the waitlist to participate and makes it increasingly difficult for the Chairperson to plan for the event.

### Volunteers

Each participating school must provide five (5) adult volunteers to officiate at the ACSI Spelling Bee. Failure to meet this volunteer requirement will result in removal from the event. In such a case, school registration and student participation fees will still be assessed.

To protect students participating in an ACSI-sponsored Student Leadership & Learning event, the school administration must affirm that **"All staff and volunteers the school provides meet its internal policies and standards and state requirements for working with children in a K–12 private school setting."**

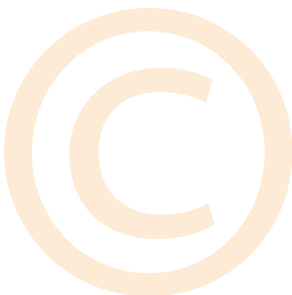
### Insurance

All schools participating in an ACSI-sponsored event must have adequate insurance coverage for students and sponsors/teachers. ACSI does not assume responsibility for these coverages.

The school's student accident insurance should cover the most reasonable and customary medical expenses. Workers' compensation should cover sponsors/teachers.

Events include but are not limited to art, math, music, speech, and spelling events.

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To prepare students for their event, ACSI grants permission to ACSI member schools registered for this ACSI Student Leadership & Learning event to reproduce the materials contained in this document, as necessary, to prepare for the event. Please limit the distribution of materials to only one copy per student or volunteer.

**THESE FILES MAY NOT BE POSTED ON ANY SCHOOL WEBSITE.** Member schools should contact an ACSI Student Leadership & Learning team member for instructions on providing study materials to parents or students.

# Organization of the ACSI Spelling Bee

The best spellers from a **School Spelling Bee** will advance to a **Local Spelling Bee**. The top five (5) winners of the Grades 5-8 Spell-Off at the Local Bee will be invited to participate in a **Divisional Spelling Bee**. From each Divisional Spelling Bee, the top five (5) winners will then be invited to the **National Spelling Bee**. Here are the details for each of the Spelling Bee components:

## School Spelling Bee

The School Spelling Bee should be scheduled approximately six weeks before the ACSI Local Spelling Bee. This timing allows for the *School Participation Form* (page 27) to be emailed to the Chairperson 30 days before the event.

To conduct your School Spelling Bee, follow the ACSI *Procedures and Rules* (refer to pages 10-11) to determine each grade's best speller(s). A maximum of four (4) students per grade can participate in the ACSI Local Spelling Bee. It is recommended to identify alternate spellers if any selected students cannot attend the event. Schools can use the ACSI *Student Practice List* or create word lists and sentences for each grade level Bee.

Once you have chosen the participants from your school, assign a coach to work with these spellers. The coach should meet with the students at least once a week for practice. They should hold mock Bees and train the spellers to use the say-spell-say procedure (refer to the *Procedures and Rules* on pages 10-11). The coach should also review the *Procedures and Rules* with the students and ensure that they are followed during practice.

## Local Spelling Bee

Local Spelling Bees may be held for Grades 1-4 only, Grades 5-8 only, or Grades 1-8.

The ACSI Local Spelling Bee is divided into two levels:

- **Grades 1–4:** Spellers participate in grade-level competition.
- **Grades 5–8:** Spellers participate in grade-level competition. The first, second, third, and fourth-place grade-level finishers advance to a Spell-Off competition.

Each grade level Bee will take place in a separate room. The Chairperson may determine the sequence in which participants spell before the Bee or on the day of the Bee.

The Local Spelling Bee will be conducted according to the ACSI *Procedures and Rules*. The first round of words will serve as a practice round. Students will not be eliminated for misspelling a word during this round. After the practice round, students will be eliminated in subsequent rounds to determine the top spellers.

Awards may be presented at an Awards Assembly or in grade-level Bee rooms after completing the competition.

## Divisional Spelling Bee

The top five (5) winners of the Grades 5-8 Spell-Off at the Local Bee will be invited to participate in a Divisional Spelling Bee.

The Divisional Spelling Bee will be conducted according to the ACSI *Procedures and Rules*. The first round of words will serve as a practice round. Students will not be eliminated for misspelling a word during this round. After the practice round, students will be eliminated in subsequent rounds to determine the top spellers.

## National Spelling Bee

From each Divisional Spelling Bee, the top five (5) winners will then be invited to the National Spelling Bee.

The National Spelling Bee will be conducted according to the ACSI *Procedures and Rules*. The first round of words will serve as a practice round. Students will not be eliminated for misspelling a word during this round. After the practice round, students will be eliminated in subsequent rounds to determine the top spellers.

# Spelling Bee Officials

Each participating school must provide five (5) adult volunteers to officiate at the Local Spelling Bee. Fill out the *Volunteer Submission Form* (page 28) and email it to the event Chairperson 30 days before the Local Spelling Bee or by the Chairperson's deadline. A fillable form can be downloaded from the "Spelling Bee Resources" page at [acsi.org/studentleadership](https://acsi.org/studentleadership).

Adult workers are needed to fill the positions of **Spell Master, Head Judge, Recording Judge, Arbitrator, and Round Keeper**. Note: Parents are not permitted to work in the same room where their child competes in the Bee.

**Important:** When recommending someone as a Spell Master, ensure they have a background in English or are proficient in this area. Additionally, they should possess excellent articulation and pronunciation skills. To maintain fairness for all students, the Spell Master must not have an accent or dialect that differs from the geographical area of the Spelling Bee.

The Chairperson will email each volunteer worker a specific job assignment and a Spelling Bee Volunteer Packet before the Spelling Bee. Each worker must attend an orientation meeting approximately one hour before the Spelling Bee begins. Please remember that the orientation meeting cannot start until all judges arrive.

## Job Descriptions

### **Spell Master (Judge A)**

Refer to the *Sample Spelling Bee Script* on pages 17-20.

- Initiate the Bee with one practice round. (There is no elimination during the practice round.)
  - Grades 1-4 only: The Spell Master may give a second round of practice words to "erase the jitters" before the start of the Bee. The second practice round must be explained before starting that round.
- Pronounce the word to be spelled and automatically give a sentence. Address it to the contestant.
- Listen as the contestant spells, and kindly communicate whether they can continue in the Bee. (Example response: "That is correct" or "I'm sorry. That is incorrect. The correct spelling is \_\_\_\_\_. Please report to the Round Keeper.")
- Be prepared to give any re-pronunciation or definition to aid the contestant's understanding of the word. The Spell Master may not provide the part of speech or the root word if requested by the speller. The speller may ask, "Is the word a \_\_\_\_\_?" or "Is the root word \_\_\_\_\_?" The Spell Master may answer "yes" or "no." Contestants must request all aid; do not volunteer the information. Exception: The Spell Master will automatically give a sentence after the word to be spelled has been pronounced.
- The judging panel may decide when the word has had ample clarification. You should then instruct the contestant to say the word and begin spelling.
- If the Spell Master is unsure of a word's pronunciation or cannot pronounce it according to the provided dictionary pronunciation, the word should be skipped. A notation should be made in the Spell Master's word list indicating that the word was not used in the Bee. It is appropriate to consult with the Head Judge when making this decision.
- The Spell Master will address the contestant after another judge has informed the judging panel that a contestant has been eliminated due to a rule infraction.
- If two rounds pass without eliminating students, the Round Keeper will inform the Spell Master. The Spell Master can then decide whether to advance to the next level of difficulty.

**Head Judge (Judge B)**

- Assist the Spell Master in any way possible to keep the Bee running efficiently.
- Stop the student if they do not pronounce the word or if they do not pronounce it correctly. Watch for procedure infractions, etc. If the contestant fails to pronounce the word correctly, the Head Judge may stop the student and say, "I'm sorry, you are mispronouncing the word. Please listen as the Spell Master repeats the word." (The Spell Master may also do this).
- Operate the stopwatch.
  - Time begins immediately after the word is clarified (if requested) and the speller pronounces (or is advised to pronounce) the word. The contestant has 30 seconds to begin spelling. If the speller has not started within 30 seconds, say, "Time. You must complete the spelling of the word in the next 30 seconds. Please begin."
  - If the contestant does not finish spelling the word in these 30 seconds, say "Time. I'm sorry, too much time has elapsed." (The Spell Master then directs the contestant to report to the Round Keeper.)

**Recording Judge (Judge C)**

- Use a pencil and notepad to write each letter as the contestant spells. This is necessary for the retracing rule.
- If the contestant stops spelling and starts over, you must check the letter sequence you wrote down and ensure no changes were made.
- If the letter sequence was changed during the retracing, say to the judging panel, "I'm sorry, the letters were changed during retracing." The Spell Master will notify the contestant of their elimination from the Spelling Bee.
- A second Recording Judge may be used if a recording device is unavailable.

**Arbitrator (Judge D)**

- Resolve questions or conflicts regarding rules or procedures.
- Pay close attention to every aspect of the contestant's participation, as a protest could be filed at any time for many different reasons.
- Operate the recording device and have access to the official ACSI dictionary. The Arbitrator should have a word list available, but it should never be within reading range of the speller in progress.
- Assist the Spell Master by looking up words in the dictionary for additional clarification when requested by the contestant. Keep the dictionary out of the speller's view. The portion of the dictionary you are looking at can be a clue to the word's first letter.

**Round Keeper (Judge E)**

- Keep a record of the rounds.
  - Use a flip chart or cards with separate numbers on each sheet.
  - Watch the order of contestants. When a contestant is ready to spell again, a round has been completed.
  - Pay close attention to who begins each round, as it may change due to the elimination of the previous "first" contestant.
- Log the correct or misspelled spelling for each speller on the Record Keeping Form.
  - Write the name of each speller, their assigned number, and their school in the appropriate spaces on the form.
  - Enter a round number at the top of each column.
  - Mark **C** for correct spelling and **M** for misspelling for each participant in each round.
- Inform the Spell Master if two rounds pass without any eliminations.

**Host (Optional)**

Note: If a separate Host is not assigned, any Spelling Bee Official may assume the Host's responsibilities.

- Attend the Worker's Orientation Meeting and meet with grade-level volunteers before the Opening Assembly.
- Attend the Opening Assembly and lead spellers to the room where their grade level Bee will occur.
- Seat the spellers in the order they will be spelling (refer to the *Record Keeping Form*).
- Welcome the spellers and audience members to the Spelling Bee and introduce the judging panel (refer to the *Sample Spelling Bee Script*).
- Remind the audience members to power off cell phones and other electronic devices.
- Sit near the door and monitor the spellers and audience members. The audience must remain seated until a break to avoid confusing or distracting the spellers.
- Open the door between the rounds to allow spellers and audience members to leave.
- Direct spellers and parents to the nearest restrooms.
- At the end of the Spelling Bee, please gather all items used by the judges and the door signs and return them to the check-in table.

**Combining Jobs (Optional)**

Note: If not enough volunteers are available to fulfill the required roles, one option is to combine the responsibilities of the Recording Judge and Round Keeper or the Head Judge and Arbitrator. This approach ensures that all necessary tasks are carried out efficiently, even with a limited number of volunteers.

# Procedures and Rules

All Procedures and Rules must be followed at the ACSI Spelling Bee to preserve the program's credibility.

- Spelling Bee officials include the Spell Master, Head Judge, Recording Judge, Arbitrator, and Round Keeper. The Head Judge will also act as a spokesperson for the judging panel.
- Words will be pronounced according to the diacritical markings in *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition*, from which the definition(s) are provided.
- The Spell Master may not give the part of speech or the root word; however, if asked, "Is the word a \_\_\_\_\_" or "Is the root word \_\_\_\_\_?" the Spell Master may answer "yes" or "no."
- *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition*, is the final authority for the spelling of words. If a word has two or more accepted spellings, only the spellings set in boldface type and separated by the word "or" (and in some cases, the word "also" at the beginning of the descriptive matter) will be considered correct. Spellings labeled as archaic, obsolete (abbreviated as "obs"), and regional (such as North, Midland, South, British, and Irish) that differ from those in boldface type will not be accepted as correct.
- The Spell Master will initiate the Spelling Bee with one practice round. Students may misspell a word only during the practice round and continue in the contest.
- For each word, the Spell Master will pronounce the word, give a sentence for clarification, and repeat the word.
- The speller must do the following:
  - Look at the Spell Master/judging panel.
  - Say the word before spelling. (This is to ensure that the student heard the word correctly.)
  - Spell the word orally. (Students will not be permitted to trace the words on their body or in the air.)
  - Say the word again after it is spelled to indicate spelling is complete.
    - This is the "say-spell-say" procedure that must be followed to ensure that (1) the speller understands the correct pronunciation of the word, and (2) the judges know when the spelling is complete and that no letters will be added. The Head Judge will stop the student if they fail to pronounce the word before spelling it or if it is mispronounced. Failure to say-spell-say will not eliminate the speller from competition, but it will reduce the chances of correct spelling and/or the ability to arbitrate. It may cause the speller to exceed 60 seconds.
  - Spellers must speak clearly and loudly. The judges' decision is final in determining the correctness of the spelling, which may be misunderstood if not spoken clearly.
  - Spellers are allowed to ask for a definition of the word for clarification before beginning to spell or ask for the definition, sentence, and/or pronunciation to be repeated. Requests will be granted until the judges agree that the word has been made reasonably clear to the speller. If a student takes advantage of the rule, they will be advised by the Spell Master to say the word and begin spelling.
- After the student spells the word:
  - If spelled correctly, the student returns to their seat, and the student in the waiting area moves up to the microphone or the spot marked for the speller. As this occurs, the next student approaches the waiting area.
  - If misspelled (or eliminated by rules infraction), the student goes directly to the Round Keeper (or to the Arbitrator if there is a protest regarding the judges' decision).
  - When a student has been eliminated from a round, the next speller moves up to take the vacated seat, thus keeping spellers sitting together and in order.
- After clarification (if requested) and once the student pronounces (or is advised to pronounce) the word, they have 30 seconds to begin spelling. If the student does not start spelling at the end of the 30 seconds, the judges will remind them to begin. The student then has another 30 seconds to complete spelling the word from the time the judges give the reminder. If the student fails to spell the word by the end of these 30 seconds, they will be disqualified. The speller will then report to the Round Keeper.
- A speller may stop and start over, retracing the spelling from the beginning after having started to spell a word. However, letters and their sequence must be the same as those first pronounced in the retracing. If a speller changes letters or their sequence during the retracing, they will be disqualified.
- To ensure clarity and prevent misunderstandings, the student must verbally indicate when they are starting over.



## Procedures and Rules (continued)

- When a word is misspelled, the Spell Master will say, "I'm sorry, that is incorrect," then correctly spell the word for the speller and give the next word to the next speller.
- After being eliminated, every speller must report to the Round Keeper.
- Any questions related to the spelling of a word should be referred to the Arbitrator immediately.

In any instance, the speller, parent, or coach are the only individuals permitted to protest on behalf of the speller they represent. The deadline for making a protest is before the affected speller would have received their next word if they had remained in the contest. No protest will be entertained after that word has been given to another speller. When only two spellers remain, a protest must be made immediately before the second speller starts spelling their given word. After protesting, the speller, parent, or coach must move back 15 feet to allow the judges to deliberate. The Head Judge will communicate the final decision to the speller, parent, or coach.

The speller, parent, or coach does not participate in the decision-making process or have access to the judges' dictionary, audio recording, Recording Judge's notepad, etc. If a speller is placed back in the Spelling Bee, the speller will be given a new word to spell for the round and assume their original place if the new word is spelled correctly.

- The Arbitrator will have access to the word lists, pronunciations, definitions, sentences, the official Bee dictionary, the audio recording of the Bee, the rules, and the timekeeper's record sheet. If a challenge cannot be resolved from one of the above resources, the Arbitrator will call for a brief time-out to confer with the judges. The judges' decision is final.
- If only one of the spellers remaining in the contest at the start of a round spells a word correctly during that round, the speller shall be given an opportunity to spell the next word on the list. If the speller correctly spells the new word, the speller shall be declared the champion. Otherwise, all the spellers remaining at the start of the round shall stay in the competition. A new round will begin, with all the spellers spelling in their original order.

After the champion is declared, a tiebreaker will take place if there is a tie for 2nd, 3rd, or 4<sup>th</sup> place.

**Tie Breaker:** When multiple spellers are eliminated in the same round, they are tied for the same place. Once the champion has been determined, Spelling Bee officials will hold tiebreakers if there is a tie for 2nd, 3rd, or 4th place. Tiebreakers are necessary to award prizes and decide which spellers qualify for the next level of competition. Each student will be given two words to spell consecutively during the tiebreaker. The speller will spell two words before the next speller is given their turn. The speller who correctly spells the most words will be awarded the higher place. If two or more students spell the same number of words correctly, the judges will give each student two additional words to spell consecutively.

- The ACSI Spelling Bee panel of judges will have complete control over the Bee, and their decisions are final.
- *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition* may be referenced during the Spelling Bee. All word lists, writing tablets, laptops, smartphones, recording devices, pens, pencils, etc., must be put away during the Spelling Bee.
- No one other than the Recording Judge can record the competition. Recording includes audio recording, video recording, and written recording.
- Each participating school may have one coach in the room to represent their students in the Spelling Bee. The coach can be either a school representative or a parent.
- Please do not approach the judges or the spellers during the break times.
- No talking will be allowed among spellers or between spellers and audience members. If a speller receives assistance from anyone in the audience, they will be disqualified. Spellers found talking may be disqualified.
- If a speller, parent, or coach is found in possession of an ACSI word list other than the current year's *Student Practice List* at any ACSI Spelling Bee, the speller may be disqualified.

# Spelling Bee Scenarios and Descriptions

Five scenarios have been developed to demonstrate the progress and elimination of spellers using the official ACSI Spelling Bee *Procedures and Rules*.

The scenarios were developed using a panel of 8 to 11 contestants. At this point in a Spelling Bee, the Bee officials would closely track contestants' elimination. Eight spellers represent the potential top eight places.

Each scenario demonstrates the progression through the rounds until the champion is determined. Once the champion is determined, any necessary tiebreaker rounds are conducted. It is important to note that all spellers eliminated in the same round are tied for the same place.

Each scenario demonstrates one or more potential circumstances that can be encountered in the ACSI Spelling Bee.

## Scenario 1

1. All spellers misspell in round 12. They all move forward to round 13.
2. The champion is determined in round 14.
3. A tiebreaker for second and third places is conducted, with spellers eliminated in round 13.
4. A tiebreaker for fourth place is conducted, with spellers eliminated in round 11.
5. For the grades 5-8 Spell-Off only, tiebreakers should also be conducted to determine 5th, 6th, and 7th places.

C = speller correctly spelled the word. M = speller misspelled the word.

Rounds		10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Speller		Regular Rounds					Tiebreaker Rounds			
John	1	M								
Sue	2	C	M					CC	MC	MM
Mike	3	C	M					CC	MC	CM
Alisha	4	C	C	M	M		CC			
Claro	5	C	M					CC	CM	CC
Ben	6	C	C	M	C	C				
Vlad	7	M								
Hank	8	C	C	M	M		MC			
			Spellers 2, 3, and 5 are tied for fourth place.	All spellers misspell. All move to the next round.	Spellers 4 and 8 are tied for second/third places.	Speller 6 is the champion.	Spellers eliminated in round 13 move to tiebreaker rounds. Speller 4 is in second place. Speller 8 is in 3rd place.	Spellers eliminated in round 11 move to tiebreaker rounds.	All spellers spell just one word correctly. All spellers move to the next round.	Speller 5 is in fourth place.

Scenario 2

1. The champion is determined in round 13.
2. A tiebreaker for second and third places is conducted, with spellers eliminated in round 12.
3. A tiebreaker for fourth place is conducted, with spellers eliminated in round 11.
4. For the grades 5-8 Spell-Off only, tiebreakers should also be conducted to determine 5th, 6th, and 7th places.

C = speller correctly spelled the word. M = speller misspelled the word.

Rounds		10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Speller		Regular Rounds				Tiebreaker Rounds					
John	1	M									
Sue	2	C	M					CC	MM	CM	
Mike	3	M									
Alisha	4	C	C	C	C						
Claro	5	C	M					CC	MM	CC	
Ben	6	C	C	M		CC	CC				
Vlad	7	M									
Hank	8	C	C	M		CC	MC				
			Spellers 2 and 5 are tied for fourth place.	Spellers 6 and 8 are tied for second/third.	Speller 4 is the champion.	Spellers eliminated in round 12 move to tiebreaker rounds.	Speller 6 is in second place. Speller 8 is in third place.	Spellers eliminated in round 11 move to tiebreaker rounds.	Both spellers misspelled two words. Both spellers move to the next round.	Speller 5 is in fourth place.	

**Scenario 3**

1. In round 13, speller 4 misspells the anticipated championship word. All spellers from the previous round return to a new round, round 14.
2. In round 16, speller 6 misspells the anticipated championship word. All spellers from the previous round return to a new round, round 17.
3. The champion is determined in round 18.
4. Second place goes to the speller who was eliminated in round 17.
5. Third place goes to the speller who was eliminated in round 14.
6. A tiebreaker for fourth place is conducted, with spellers eliminated in round 11.
7. For the grades 5-8 Spell-Off only, tiebreakers should also be conducted to determine 5th, 6th, and 7th places.

C = speller correctly spelled the word. M = speller misspelled the word.

Rounds		10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Speller		Regular Rounds									Tiebreaker Rounds			
John	1	M												
Sue	2	C	M								CC	CC		
Mike	3	M												
Alisha	4	C	C	C	M	M								
Claro	5	C	M								CC	MC		
Ben	6	C	C	M		C	C	M	M					
Vlad	7	M												
Hank	8	C	C	M		C	M		C	C				
			Spellers 2 and 5 are tied for fourth place.		Speller 4 misspells the anticipated championship word. All spellers from the previous round move to the next round.	Speller 4 is in third place.		Speller 6 misspells the anticipated championship word. All spellers from the previous round move to the next round.	Speller 6 is in second place.	Speller 8 is the champion.	Spellers eliminated in round 11 move to tiebreaker rounds.	Speller 2 is in fourth place.		

Scenario 4

1. The champion is determined in round 13.
2. A tiebreaker for second, third, and fourth places is conducted, with spellers eliminated in round 12.
3. For the grades 5-8 Spell-Off only, tiebreakers should also be conducted to determine 5th, 6th, and 7th places.

C = speller correctly spelled the word. M = speller misspelled the word.

Rounds		10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Speller		Regular Rounds				Tiebreaker Rounds			
John	1	M							
Sue	2	C	C	C	C				
Mike	3	M							
Alisha	4	C	C	M		CC	CM	CM	
Claro	5	C	M						
Ben	6	C	C	M		CC	CC		
Vlad	7	M							
Hank	8	C	C	M		CC	CM	MM	
				Spellers 4, 6, and 8 are tied for second/third/fourth places.					
					Speller 2 is the champion.				
						Spellers eliminated in round 12 move to tiebreaker rounds.			
							Speller 6 is in second place.		
								Speller 4 is in third place. Speller 8 is in fourth place.	

**Scenario 5**

1. In round 11, speller 5 misspells the anticipated championship word. All spellers from the previous round return to a new round, round 12.
2. Both spellers misspell in round 12; both move to round 13.
3. The champion is determined in round 14.
4. Second place goes to the speller, who was the only speller eliminated in round 13.
5. A tiebreaker for third and fourth places is conducted with spellers who were eliminated in round 8.
6. For the grades 5-8 Spell-Off only, tiebreakers should also be conducted to determine 5th, 6th, and 7th places.

C = speller correctly spelled the word. M = speller misspelled the word.

Speller	Regular Rounds							Tiebreaker Rounds										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
John	C	C	C	C	M													
Sue	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	M							CC	CM	CM	
Mike	C	C	C	C	M													
Alisha	C	C	C	C														
Claro	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	M	M	M					
Ben	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C		M	C	C				
Vlad	C	C	C	C	M													
Hank	C	C	C	C														
Meg	C	C	C	C	M													
Jane	C	C	C	C														
Phil	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	M							CC	MC	CC	
In rounds 1–3, all spellers spelled their words correctly.		C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C				
Spellers 2 and 11 are tied for third/fourth place.		C	C	C	C	C	C	M										
Speller 5 misspells anticipated championship word. All spellers from the previous round move to the next round.		C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	M							
Both spellers misspell their words. Both spellers move to the next round.		C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	M	M					
Speller 5 is in second place.		C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	M	C					
Speller 6 is the champion.		C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	M	C					
Spellers eliminated in round 8 move to tiebreaker rounds.		C	C	C	C	C	C	M							CC	CM	CM	
Speller 11 is in third place. Speller 2 is in fourth place.		C	C	C	C	C	C	M							CC	CM	CM	

# Sample Spelling Bee Script

The following script is designed to help Spelling Bee officials understand their roles in running the Spelling Bee. It will be most helpful to first-time Spell Masters.

Please read through the script, making any adjustments appropriate to your Bee. The script is provided as a general guide for all ACSI Spelling Bees across the country. As such, it reflects the published rules and guidelines of the Bee but may not account for "housekeeping details" unique to your host school/region.

## Script for Grade-Level Spelling Bees

The Spelling Bee officials should arrive in their assigned room before the students. This will allow them time to prepare themselves and set up the materials for the Bee.

As students arrive in their assigned room, the Host or other officials will direct them to sit in the area designated for spellers. The sequence spellers will spell may be determined by students drawing numbers or by the Chairperson before the Bee.

*[Wherever the Host title appears below, any judge designated by the panel may be substituted.]*

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### Welcome (Host)

Good [morning/afternoon/evening]. Welcome to the ACSI Spelling Bee for grade \_\_\_\_\_. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am your Host [or other Official] today.

*[Host only]* When the Bee begins, I will be at the back of the room near the door to help answer any questions you may have.

---

### Visitor Guidelines (Host) *[Use these statements only as they apply to your Bee.]*

Parents and guests, let me remind you of the Spelling Bee instructions for the audience:

1. Spellers may only leave when we have our designated break, after two or three rounds of the Bee.
2. After a speller spells out, they will come to sit with you in the audience until the end of the Bee.

*[Include the following statement only if it applies to your Bee.]*

As already communicated by your School Coordinator, children other than the contestants are not permitted to be present during the Spelling Bee.

Once the Bee has officially begun, there is to be no audio or video recording or still photography. You may only photograph the practice round and the awards presentation at the Bee's conclusion. We also ask that cell phones be turned off.

*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition* may be used during the Spelling Bee, but all word lists, writing tablets, laptops, smartphones, recording devices, pens, pencils, etc., are to be put away during the Spelling Bee. Remember that if you have any questions regarding the procedures of the Bee or the reason your student was disqualified, you may ask the Arbitrator. Every effort will be made to answer your question.

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### Opening Prayer (Host or Official)

Let's begin with a word of prayer.

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### Introduction of Spell Master (Host)

It is now my pleasure to introduce the panel of judges.

Our Spell Master for today's Bee is [Mr./Mrs./Ms.] \_\_\_\_\_. [He or she] is the one who will pronounce the words for you to spell. If you have questions about the word, you will ask [him or her].

[Mr./Mrs./Ms.] \_\_\_\_\_ will introduce the other panel members.

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### Introduction of Judging Panel (Spell Master)

Thank you, [Mr./Mrs./Ms.] \_\_\_\_\_ [give name of host].

I am delighted to welcome you to the ACSI Spelling Bee today. You have all studied very hard to be here. I congratulate each one of you for your accomplishment.

Before I give you final instructions for the Bee, I want to introduce the judging panel members. Their job is to ensure that I am doing my job correctly and that we hear your spelling accurately. We want to be very fair in all that we do today. Each of the judges has a specific job.

**Introduction of Head Judge (Spell Master)**

[Mr./Mrs./Ms.] \_\_\_\_\_ is our Head Judge and will [also] be our timekeeper. Notice the stopwatch [he or she] has in [his or her] hand. As soon as we have clarified the word and you say the word, [he or she] will start the stopwatch. You will have 60 seconds in which to spell the word. If you have not begun to spell the word after 30 seconds, [he or she] will remind you that you have 30 seconds remaining.

**Introduction of Recording Judge (Spell Master)**

[Mr./Mrs./Ms.] \_\_\_\_\_ is our Recording Judge. [He or she] will be writing down every letter you spell. This gives us a visual record of your spelling.

**Introduction of Round Keeper (Spell Master)**

[Mr./Mrs./Ms.] \_\_\_\_\_ is our Round Keeper. [He or she] will keep track of spellers in the same sequence (or order) as the number you drew. When you misspell a word, you will go to [Mr./Mrs./Ms.] \_\_\_\_\_. [He or she] will also keep track of the order in which each speller leaves the Bee.

**Introduction of Arbitrator Judge (Spell Master)**

[Mr./Mrs./Ms.] \_\_\_\_\_ is our arbitrator judge. If you have a question about the reason you were disqualified or feel that some error has been made on the part of the judging panel, you may speak to [Mr./Mrs./Ms.] \_\_\_\_\_.

[He or she] will answer your question, referring to the Spelling Bee rules, or the dictionary as needed. Only the student's designated coach may approach the Arbitrator on behalf of the student. After making a protest, the speller or coach will move back 15 feet to allow the judges to deliberate. The Head Judge will communicate to the speller or coach the final decision. The speller and coach do not participate in the decision-making process nor have access to the judges' dictionary, recording device, Recording Judge's tablet, etc. If a speller is placed back in the Spelling Bee, the speller will be given a new word to spell for the round and assume his or her original place if the new word is spelled correctly. If the Arbitrator cannot resolve the question, he or she will stop the Bee and consult with the entire judging panel. You must approach the Arbitrator before your next opportunity to spell. If the judges agree that an error has been made, they will put you back in the Bee. However, the judges' decision is final.

**Instructions for the Procedures and Rules (Spell Master)**

All attendees have been given a copy of the *Procedures and Rules*. Do you have any questions?

**Instructions for the Practice Round (Spell Master)**

We are now ready to begin the practice round. For this round, please come to the microphone (or to the area in front of me) and tell us your name and the name of your school. I will pronounce your word, use it in a sentence, and pronounce it again. We have a sign here to remind you to "say-spell-say." The speller who will spell next will come to the "on deck" location. After you spell, you will return to your seat.

Remember that this is the practice round. Be sure to speak strongly and clearly so we can hear you. If you misspell the word, you will not be disqualified.

**Begin Practice Round**

*[The first speller approaches the panel. The Host should help monitor students' flow to and from the spelling area.] [If the recording device has not been turned on, turn it on now.]*

(Spell Master)

Good morning! Please tell us your name and the school you are from.

(Student)

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I attend \_\_\_\_\_ School.

(Spell Master)

Thank you, \_\_\_\_\_. Your word is \_\_\_\_\_. *[Read the sentence; repeat the word.]*

(Student)

*[The student will say the word, spell it, then say it again. They may ask for a definition or for the sentence to be repeated. They may clarify the part of speech or the root word. The Spell Master's answer to these questions is limited to "yes" or "no." The Spell Master may consult with the head judge before responding.]*



(Spell Master)

*[If the word is correctly spelled]*

**That is correct.**

*[If the word is incorrectly spelled]*

**I'm sorry, that is incorrect. The correct spelling is \_\_\_\_\_.**

*[Give the correct spelling.]*

**If this were the actual Bee, you would report to the round keeper, but because it is the practice round, you may return to your seat.**

*[Continue this way until the last student has spelled in the practice round. Use this opportunity to double-check that the recording device is recording adequately to record the voices of the Spell Master and the students.]*

**End of Practice Round (Round Keeper)**

**This concludes our practice round. Now is the time to power off all electronic devices and put away any cameras, cell phones, laptops, word lists, writing tablets, pens, pencils, etc. Only a physical copy of *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition*, may be used during the Spelling Bee. Thank you.**

*[The first speller approaches the Spell Master. The next speller moves to the "on deck" position.]*

Begin Round 1

(Spell Master)

**This is the beginning of round one.**

*[To the first speller, use the student's name here]* \_\_\_\_\_, **your word is \_\_\_\_\_.**

*[Read the sentence; repeat the word.]*

(Student)

*[The student will say the word, spell it, then say it again. They may ask for a definition or for the sentence to be repeated. They may clarify the part of speech or the root word. The Spell Master may consult with the Head Judge before responding.]*

(Spell Master)

*[If the word is correctly spelled]*

**That is correct.**

*[If the word is incorrectly spelled]*

**I'm sorry, that is incorrect. The correct spelling is \_\_\_\_\_. *[Give the correct spelling.]* Please report to the Round Keeper.**

**End of Round (Round Keeper)**

**This is the end of round one.**

*[After a visual signal from the Spell Master]* **We are now ready to begin round two.**

*[Continue the Bee in this manner. Take a break between rounds after 30-45 minutes or so have passed.]*

**This is the end of round \_\_\_\_\_.** *[Give the number of the round.]*

**Instructions for Break (Spell Master)**

**At this time, we are going to take a ten-minute break. We will dismiss students first so that they may use the restrooms and get a drink of water. Audience members must refrain from interacting with students during the break.**

*[Host opens the door, leaving it open (if possible) throughout the break. As students return to the room, the Round Keeper ensures they are seated in the correct spelling sequence.]*

Return from the Break

(Spell Master)

**Welcome back, spellers! You are all doing a terrific job. The Round Keeper has double-checked your spelling sequence to be sure you are seated correctly. Thank you, everyone, for your cooperation.**

**We are ready to begin.**

(Round Keeper)

**This is the beginning of round \_\_\_\_\_.** *[Give the number of the round. The Spell Master proceeds as before.]*

---

### **One Speller Remaining (Spell Master)**

**You are the grade \_\_\_\_\_ Spelling Bee champion if you spell the next word correctly!**

*[If the speller misspells the championship word, you will ask all the spellers from the previous round (including the one speller who spelled correctly and those who misspelled) to return to their original places for the Spelling Bee to continue.]*

*[After determining the champion, begin any necessary tiebreaker rounds to determine the second, third, or fourth place winners.]*

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### **Presentation of Awards (Spell Master)**

*[If in grades 5-8]*

**Our first, second, third, and fourth place winners will now report to the [designated location] for the Grades 5-8 Spell-Off. All are welcome to observe the Spell-Off.**

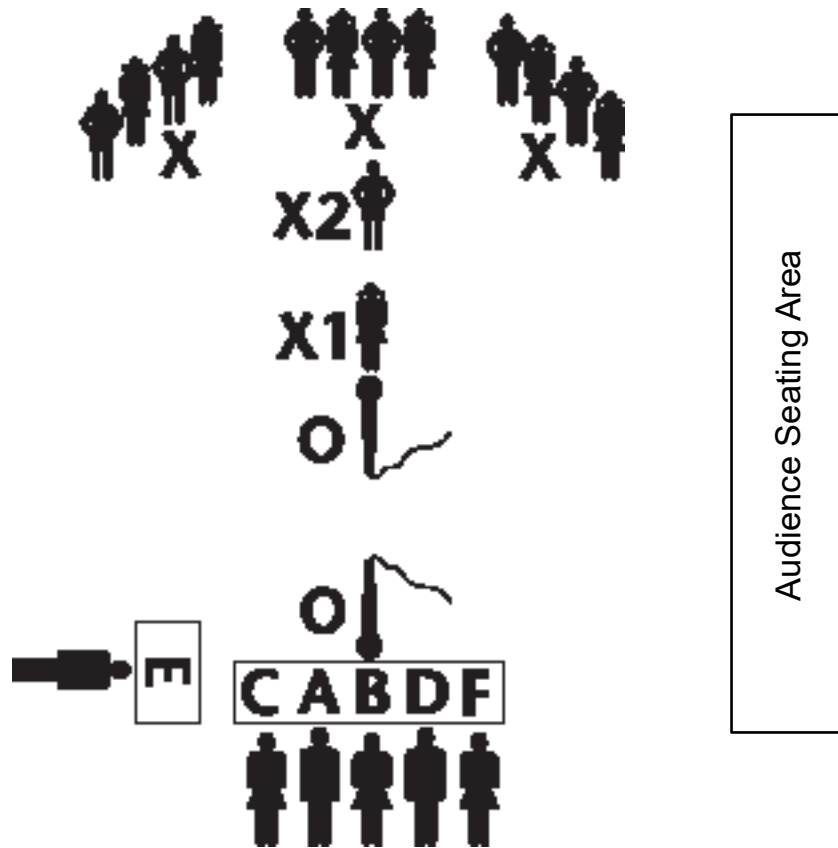
**Parents and guests, thank you for your support and excellent cooperation during the Spelling Bee.**

# Suggested Room Layout

Legend:

- A – Spell Master** (Gives the contestant the word.)
- B – Head Judge** (Stops the contestant if they forget to pronounce or mispronounce the word; operates the stopwatch.)
- C – Recording Judge** (Records each letter and checks retracing.)
- D – Arbitrator Judge** (Operates the recording device and arbitrates disputes.)
- E – Round Keeper** (Manages the round chart and records disqualified contestants.)
- F – Additional Recording Judge** (Needed only if a recording device is unavailable – *optional*.)
- O – Microphones** (*optional*)
- X1 – Speller** (*in process*)
- X2 – Speller** (*next up*)

To minimize distractions or signals from the audience, students should avoid facing the audience unless the house lights can be significantly dimmed. The audience seating area may be located to the side or behind the spellers, depending on the available space in the room. Students must maintain their total concentration on the Spell Master and other Spelling Bee officials throughout the entire Bee without any interruptions.





# Sample Tiebreaker Round Form

Round Keeper: Use one table below for each round of each tiebreaker. Once a round is finished, use the next table to track the next round. Duplicate as needed. Mark a C for correctly spelling the word and an M for misspelling the word for each speller in the boxes marked Word 1 and Word 2.

Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Round in which spellers were eliminated: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tiebreaker for (circle one): 2nd 3rd 4th Final Spell-Off Only: 5th 6th 7th Round: \_\_\_\_\_

School	#	Name	Word 1	Word 2	Total Correct	Place
<i>ABC Christian School</i>	4	<i>Alisha</i>	C	C	2	2nd
<i>XYZ Christian School</i>	8	<i>Hank</i>	M	C		3rd

Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Round in which spellers were eliminated: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tiebreaker for (circle one): 2nd 3rd 4th Final Spell-Off Only: 5th 6th 7th Round: \_\_\_\_\_

School	#	Name	Word 1	Word 2	Total Correct	Place
<i>New Christian School</i>	2	<i>Sue</i>	C	C	2	Tie
<i>Calvary Christian School</i>	3	<i>Mike</i>	C	C	2	Tie
<i>Berean Christian Academy</i>	5	<i>Claro</i>	C	C	2	Tie

Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Round in which spellers were eliminated: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tiebreaker for (circle one): 2nd 3rd 4th Final Spell-Off Only: 5th 6th 7th Round: \_\_\_\_\_

School	#	Name	Word 1	Word 2	Total Correct	Place
<i>New Christian School</i>	2	<i>Sue</i>	C	C	2	Tie
<i>Calvary Christian School</i>	3	<i>Mike</i>	C	C	2	Tie
<i>Berean Christian Academy</i>	5	<i>Claro</i>	C	C	2	Tie

# Sample Tiebreaker Round Form (Continued)

Round Keeper: Use one table below for each round of each tiebreaker. Once a round is finished, use the next table to track the next round. Duplicate as needed. Mark a C for correctly spelling the word and an M for misspelling the word for each speller in the boxes marked Word 1 and Word 2.

Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Round in which spellers were eliminated: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tiebreaker for (circle one): 2nd 3rd 4th Final Spell-Off Only: 5th 6th 7th Round: \_\_\_\_\_

School	#	Name	Word 1	Word 2	Total Correct	Place
<i>New Christian School</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>Sue</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>0</i>	
<i>Calvary Christian School</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Mike</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>1</i>	
<i>Berean Christian Academy</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>Claro</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4th</i>

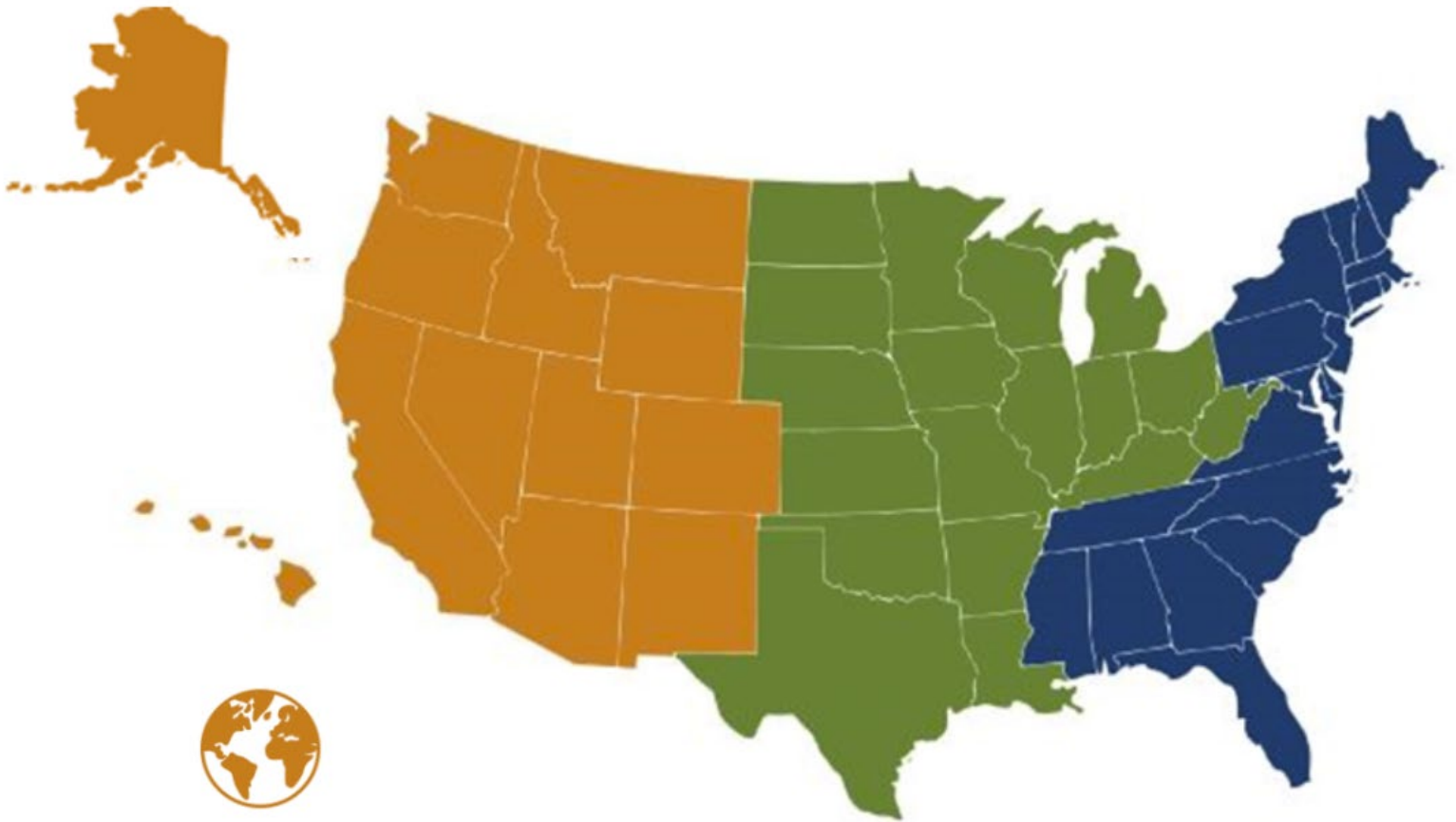
Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Round in which spellers were eliminated: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tiebreaker for (circle one): 2nd 3rd 4th Final Spell-Off Only: 5th 6th 7th Round: \_\_\_\_\_

School	#	Name	Word 1	Word 2	Total Correct	Place

Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Round in which spellers were eliminated: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tiebreaker for (circle one): 2nd 3rd 4th Final Spell-Off Only: 5th 6th 7th Round: \_\_\_\_\_

School	#	Name	Word 1	Word 2	Total Correct	Place

## STUDENT LEADERSHIP & LEARNING CONTACTS



### Western Division

California/Hawaii  
Northwest  
Rocky Mountain  
International

[SLL\\_West@acsi.org](mailto:SLL_West@acsi.org)

### Central Division

Mid-America  
South-Central

[SLL\\_Central@acsi.org](mailto:SLL_Central@acsi.org)

### Eastern Division

Florida/Caribbean  
Northeast  
Southeast

[SLL\\_East@acsi.org](mailto:SLL_East@acsi.org)

[ACSI.ORG/STUDENTLEADERSHIP](https://www.acsi.org/studentleadership)