



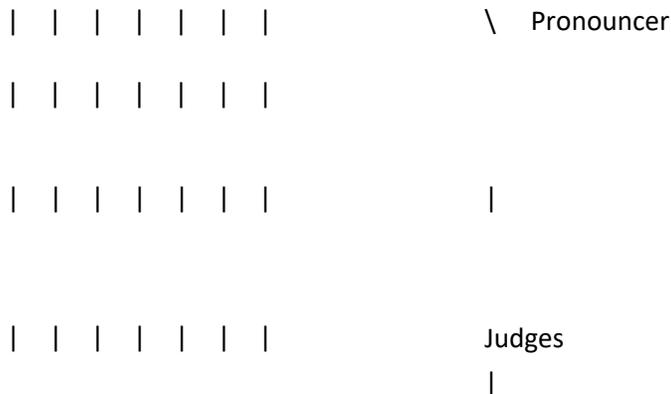
## Suggestions and Tips for a Successful Spelling Bee



- Some clubs hold separate Bees for fourth and fifth grades. This is a good idea when there are many schools participating and therefore, many students. The sample letter to contestants and alternates contains information pertaining to both forms of Bees. Please delete the part that is not applicable to the format of your Bee.
- Limit the number of contestants to around thirty or forty. You do not want your Bee to take too long.
- Open doors to the Bee one half hour before starting time for registration. Begin the Bee promptly and do not wait for “no shows”.
- Offer a break if you feel it necessary after five rounds. Remind students the breaks are the time to use the bathroom.
- You may wish to record the Bee, should there be a dispute over the spelling of a word. (The State Bee will be recorded on two devices)
- You may wish to solicit prizes from a local bookstore, business or bank.

### Suggested seating arrangement:

Contestants should not face the crowd, if possible. This helps the children maintain their concentration and reduces the chance of “help” from parents.



## Sample Organization of Club Spelling Bee

### October

- Select Club members to organize the Spelling Bee. One to two people should be sufficient.
- Contact your District Spelling Bee Chairman and the State Spelling Bee Chairman to let them know of your Club's intent to hold a Bee.
- There are several methods of obtaining contestants. The method used depends upon type of community(ies), number of local schools, and the Club.
  - Contestants solicited through newspapers, posters, flyers. With this method, contestants would need to pre-register.
  - Contestants solicited by contacting local schools. Have each school run its own Bee, sending a specific number of finalists to your Bee.
- Compile a list of local schools and determine the number of the participants to be invited from each school. Decide whether two Bees (one for fourth grade and one for fifth grade) or one will be held.
- Prepare and send letter to each principal, inviting their participation.
- Determine where the Spelling Bee will be held and obtain authorization, insurance riders, etc. if necessary. Ask about any special requests (supervision of the children in the halls, use of bathrooms, etc.).
- Determine what type of prize will be issued to winners. Ask businesses to donate a prize.

### November

- Prepare letter to the fourth and fifth grade teachers at the schools on your list. Obtaining the names and telephone numbers of the teachers and contacting them directly is recommended. Indicate how many children may be invited and the date by which you need their names. See Sample.
- Prepare letters of congratulations to be issued to the invited students, contestants and alternates. The letter should include the date, time and location of the Spelling Bee, along with a practice word list and the rules. See Samples. You may want to indicate the number of guests each child may bring, if the size of the room is an issue.
- Request club volunteers to work on the Bee. You may decide to invite local teachers, School Board members, etc. to serve as pronouncer, judges, and registration / refreshment helpers. You may ask for donations of refreshments.

### December

- Compile a registration list from school responses. Follow up with schools who have not responded.
- Prepare Certificates of Achievement, nametags, and programs, if desired.
- Prepare copies of the word lists for the pronouncer and each judge. There is one word list for even year bees and one list for odd year bees. The State Bee Chairman will provide lists to the District Bee Chairmen who will send them to the local Club Bee Chairmen.

## **January**

- Count the number of participants on your final registration list.
- Write each number on a small piece of paper, fold it and place in a bag. The bag should be kept with the registration list. See Instructions for Registrars.
- Prepare a numbered sign for each child to wear around his/her neck. The numbers will help the judges to identify participants.

## **Bee Day**

- Organize all of your materials and enjoy your Bee – make sure you have your word lists!
- Read the rules out loud to the parents and contestants.
- Some clubs gather the contestants together as they come in and talk about what is going to happen. Remember – they are nervous! Ask if there are any additional questions and briefly walk through the spelling bee procedure.
- Be sure to have a dictionary on hand. The dictionary is your authority should a question arise.
- Set up chairs for participants; you may put a numbered sign on each chair, if you would like. See Suggestions for tips on how to organize your seating.
- Submit an article with pictures to your local newspaper.
- Submit the names of the winners to the District Spelling Bee Chairman.