

MERCED COUNTY ELEMENTARY & JUNIOR HIGH SPELLING BEE

RULES AND REGULATIONS

This is a *written* competition and open to students in grades 4-6 for Elementary and grades 7-8 for Junior High.

1. Paper and pencils will be available to each student. **No personal materials** will be allowed in the immediate competition area.
2. Students will put their name at the upper right-hand corner of their sheet.
3. The Word Master will read a word, use it in a sentence, say it again, and then pause to make sure the word is clearly understood. During the pause, a contestant may raise his or her hand to signal that he or she wishes the word to be re-pronounced and defined. The Word Master will respond to the hand signal, if any, then say START. Students have 20 seconds from the START signal to PRINT the word on their answer sheet before a STOP signal is given.
4. Students may begin printing the word at any time. However, they must put their pencils down **IMMEDIATELY** when the STOP signal is given.
5. Students may correct spelling errors before the STOP signal. Corrections **MUST** be made in one of the following manner:
 - Cross out the entire word, and rewrite it on the same line.
 - Thoroughly erase a letter or letters and **clearly** insert the correct letters.
 - All words except the one to be corrected must be crossed out at that time.
 - When STOP is called, students must immediately put down their pencils.
 - The word must be complete and spelled on one line by the STOP signal.
6. Homonyms must be spelled according to the usage described in the sample sentence and the definition given (if requested).
7. All capitals, spaces, apostrophes or other accent marks included in the normal English spelling of the word must be included. Proper words **MUST** be capitalized in order to be correct. (e.g. Missouri). Capitalizing a word that does **NOT** need to be capitalized but is spelled correctly, will **NOT BE** marked incorrect. (e.g. Hammer).
8. After the STOP signal is given, the Word Master will read the word again, and give the correct spelling of the word, which the projectionist will write for all to see.
9. The proctors will check the spelling by marking correct spellings with a plus (+) and incorrect spellings with a minus (-). Any spelling that cannot be read by the proctor, the proctor will then request a second opinion by the judges or competition staff. If the judges or proctor cannot read the word; it will be considered a misspelling. The student may **NOT** tell the proctor or judges any letters.
10. Students will have four numbered cards, as he/she fails to spell a word correctly, the proctor will turn over a card displaying number of chances left. When a student fails to spell four words correctly on the paper, the proctor will turn over card number one (1) and the student must drop out of the contest. The card process takes the place of the traditional spelling bee "rounds."

11. When a student drops out of the contest he/she will stay in their seat until either a break in the contest or when the Word Master permits them to leave their seat. Pencil and paper will then be removed by the proctor.
12. As the competition progresses and students are eliminated, remaining contestants will be asked periodically to move forward. When 6 students remain, the competition manager will validate remaining students after each word is corrected.
13. It is the responsibility of the student to signal any discrepancies to the Proctor or Judges immediately, before the next word is given. *In such cases the Judges and Word Master, in consultation with the Competition Manager and the Proctor will make the final ruling.*
14. Words may be chosen from any source deemed appropriate by the Word Master and the Judges. Words will not be limited to any specific list.
15. The Proctors, Word Master, Judges and Competition Manager will be in complete charge of the contest. Their decision will be final on all questions. No protest will be entertained after the contest has ended.
16. Students who arrive late will not be permitted to compete once the competition has begun.
17. The Elementary and Jr. High Spelling Bees are both written competitions. Winners of the County Competition *may* request an overview of an Oral Spelling Bee. This will serve as a practice for the State Competition. (Jr High State Comp is also a written Bee)

Official Competition Dictionary:

Elementary Spelling Bee – Webster’s Third New International Dictionary Unabridged (copyright 2002)

Junior High Spelling Bee – Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary, New Edition 2016

www.merriam-webster.com or www.dictionary.com

These websites provide definitions, origins and give you the capabilities of listening to an audio pronunciation of words.