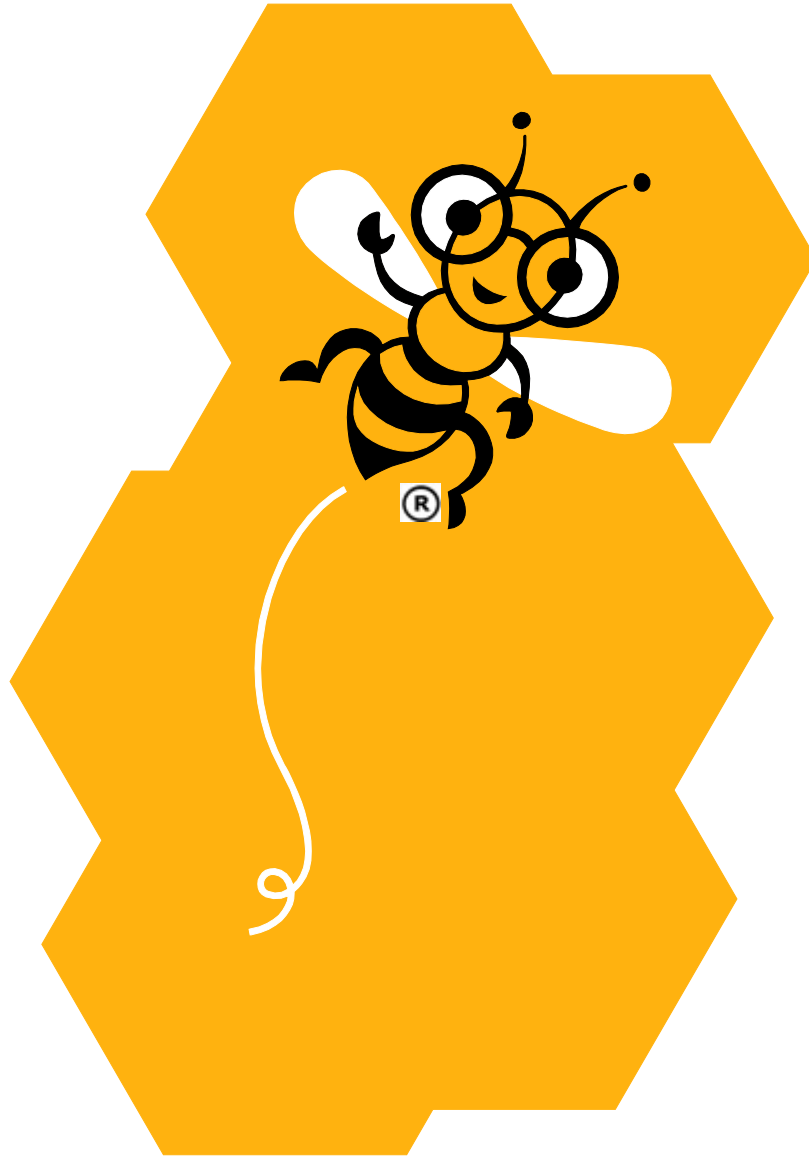


GEORGIA ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATORS

SPELLING BEE GUIDE

A Planning Guide for School, County and System Spelling Bees



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INTRODUCTION

Spelling bees offer an opportunity for students to exhibit their proficiency in the art of spelling. The following suggestions are appropriate for bees in all types of schools (public, charter, online/virtual, parochial, private, and home school) and are designed to help plan and produce a successful spelling bee. This list has been compiled from the experiences of State Spelling Bee Committee members coordinating all levels of spelling bees for many years. Always remember that the focus of all spelling bees is the students.

SUGGESTIONS FOR A SUCCESSFUL BEE AT THE LOCAL (School, System and District) LEVEL

1. Read and follow the official State Spelling Bee booklet, *Procedures, Rules, and Regulations*, for the current school year. A copy of the booklet can be downloaded from www.gae.org/spellingbee.
2. All students in grades four through eight should have the opportunity to participate in the bee.
3. Provide for a form of elimination – classroom and/or grade level. The bee may be oral or written. If the number of spelling bee participants in the preliminary round is more than 25, a written bee is recommended.
4. The word list for the written or oral bee at the classroom or school level may come from *Spell It!* word study booklet, which is available free online when the school/association has paid Scripps National Spelling Bee the \$120 (or \$89 for homeschools) materials and enrollment fee. The school/association will receive access to a password-protected Web site where it may obtain PDF versions of study materials from Scripps National Spelling Bee.
5. All word lists **should** have definitions and sentences. Based on the proficiency of spellers, it is recommended that the list contain a minimum of between 10 – 20 times the number of spellers. The list should progress from beginning-level to advanced-level words. The difficulty within the rounds should be consistent.
6. A copy of the word list and rulebook is to be furnished to the caller and each judge. Safeguard the word lists before and after the bee. Provide the caller the word list in advance so that he/she can practice words.
7. Begin with a practice round using easy words. No one is eliminated during the practice round.
8. During the bee, follow the word list. Try to keep the difficulty level consistent within the round and progressively more challenging as the rounds advance.
9. The location of the spelling bee should provide adequate lighting, sufficient space, and a noise-free environment. Secure this location as early as possible in the school year.

SUGGESTIONS FOR A SUCCESSFUL BEE AT THE LOCAL (School, System and District) LEVEL (cont.)

10. For an oral bee, a good speaker system, microphones, and two adequate recording systems are necessary.
11. Develop your list of contacts for possible callers, judges, spotters, business owner/managers, etc.
12. A caller should have a background in the English language with no distinctive accent.
13. In addition to the caller, three judges and two spotters, who alert judges to a protest from a parent, legal guardian, or school representative for the affected speller, are recommended. Spotters are to face the audience.
14. Other personnel may be required for registration, refreshments, set-up, clean-up, etc. Be sure custodial concerns are covered before and after the bee. Check to see that restroom facilities are adequate and stocked.
15. Devise a way to determine the order of seating of the spellers (draw/choose random number/item corresponding to seating arrangement).
16. Make number for speller to wear that corresponds to number drawn/chosen. Also, make numbers for the chairs.
17. One person (parent, legal guardian, or school representative) is to be designated as the official protestor for each speller and should be seated in a section with seat numbered to correspond with speller's number.
18. Prepare a packet/envelope containing ribbon, pin, certificate of participation, coupons, etc., to give to speller.
19. Purchase certificates and/or pins from GAE for spellers. Secure awards and prizes for winner(s) from local GAE unit and/or local businesses.
20. Prepare program listing spellers, caller, judges, spotters, etc. Provide the agenda and recognize contributors.
21. The agenda for the bee should include a welcome, introductions, and reading of rules 4-12 on pages 9-11 in the 2013-14 State Spelling Bee *Procedures, Rules and Regulations* booklet. When bee is down to two spellers, read rules 13-18, pages 11 and 12 in the 2013-14 State Spelling Bee *Procedures, Rules and Regulations* booklet. The *Procedures, Rules and Regulations* can be found at www.gae.org/spellingbee.
22. Test recording equipment before bee. Video equipment may be used in addition to audio recorders. Recording equipment should be placed as close to the speller as possible without being distracting.
23. Light refreshments are optional, but encouraged. Ask local GAE unit or local businesses for help.

SUGGESTIONS FOR A SUCCESSFUL BEE AT THE LOCAL (School, System and District) LEVEL (cont.)

24. Caller, judges, and spelling bee coordinator should meet in private one hour prior to start of bee to go over rules, word list, and other concerns. Assign specific duties to individual judges: (a) To be the spokesperson and to refer to the dictionary; (b) To write/record each speller's response letter by letter; and (c) To operate the adequate recording systems.
25. Meet with spellers just prior to beginning the bee to go over any instructions, including what to do when spelling is incorrect and concerns regarding rules. Spellers should go to the restroom just before beginning bee.
26. Judges determine if the caller has correctly pronounced the word. If it is incorrectly pronounced, the judges are to inform the caller. The speller is to pronounce the word given by the caller. It is important that the speller pause after pronouncing the word to give the judges time to determine if the speller has heard the word correctly from the caller. The speller should directly face the judges when spelling. Pronouncing the word when the speller is finished lets the judges know that the speller has finished spelling the word.
27. Remember that a protest may be made by a designated person who is a parent, legal guardian, or school representative of the speller affected. To protest, the designated person is to stand and remain standing until recognized by the spotter. The spotter informs the judges who stop the bee. The judges hear the protest, confer, and make their decision, which is final on all matters. Subsequent protests must be different from those made previously.
28. Record the order of elimination of spellers from the bee to ensure the appropriate speller(s) advance to the next level of competition.
29. Be sure to send thank you notes to all people who helped or provided items or gifts for bee.
30. Make sure the winner(s) are informed of the next level of competition and that the necessary forms are completed and submitted to the appropriate person before the deadline. See page 14 for a sample Qualifier's Form.
31. School-level winners should be provided a copy of the ***Procedures, Rules, and Regulations*** for the current school year, which is available on the GAE website at **www.gae.org/spellingbee**.
32. Contact the media. Prepare a press release before and after the bee.
33. The appendix has examples of many useful suggestions that can be adapted to your bee level or situation.

NOTE: The State Spelling Bee Committee encourages your comments and suggestions regarding this handbook in an ongoing effort to promote the best possible spelling competitions for our Georgia students.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

EXAMPLE OF TIMELINE FOR SPELLING BEE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Timeline	Task	Completed/Notes
Fill in Timeline Dates to Accommodate your bee	Secure site for bee, two ways to record bee, microphones, chairs, tables, layout (sample included), and place for judges and caller to meet to go over rules and word list.	
	Contact people to assist with bee: caller plus backup caller, three judges plus backup judge, two spotters, two people to do registration, two people to serve refreshments. People are needed to set-up, clean-up, and record bee.	
	Prepare letter requesting donations from businesses for spellers and adults assisting with bee (sample included). Make copies	
	Prepare letter to qualifiers giving instructions, times, and directions (sample included). Make copies.	
	Prepare poster board with number and string for qualifiers to wear around neck (can be laminated for reuse; would have to be collected from spellers as they are eliminated from bee).	
	Contact businesses requesting donations. Pick up prizes as soon as possible.	
	Reconfirm bee site, set up, equipment needed, time for site to be used – 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.	
	Reconfirm date, time, and place with judges, caller, spotters, and others helping with bee. Ask them to provide brief information about themselves to be used in introductions. Provide them with spelling bee rules. They will need to meet one hour prior to bee to go over rules and word lists.	
	Establish deadline for information needed for preparation and adhere to them at all levels.	
	Pick up any additional door prizes from businesses. List businesses in the program and acknowledge contributions during comments at the beginning of bee.	
	Contact media.	
	Prepare certificates for qualifiers.	
	Prepare numbers for chairs spellers will sit in.	
	Prepare packet for each speller with certificate, ribbon, pin, food coupons, etc.	
	Prepare and make copies of the program.	
	Prepare word lists; include practice round; need five sets of lists – for caller, and three judges. Use of 3-ring binder, notepad and pencils are highly recommended.	
	Prepare nametags for adults helping with bee.	
	Plan refreshments (high school club members may help by baking and serving refreshments – community service requirements). Tablecloths, plates, cups, napkins, etc., will also be needed.	
	Prepare numbers for qualifiers to draw to determine position in bee.	

Timeline	Task	Completed/Notes
Fill in Timeline Dates to Accommodate your Bee	Prepare comments/directions to be made to qualifiers and audience. Include welcome, introduction of caller, judges, spotters, spellers, Bee rules, etc.	
	Write thank you notes to businesses donating prizes.	
	Write thank you notes to caller, judges, spotters, etc., and include appropriate donated prize(s). These notes can be presented at the bee.	
	To get spellers, their parents, and system representatives to stay for the entire bee, plan to have a drawing for door prizes at the end. Prepare names for drawing, arrange prizes, and get a person to help award prizes.	
	Prepare prizes for winner and runner-up (trophies, certificates, ribbon for winner and vouchers). Get a person to help award trophies and prizes.	
	Plan to meet with spellers prior to bee – when, where, what to go over with them. Include procedure to follow when a word is missed.	
Day of Bee	Stage set-up: Chairs with numbers for spellers; podium for caller, microphone, and water; microphone(s) for spellers.	
	Judges table: Dictionary, recording devices, water. Select a head judge to keep up with order of finish and to report any ruling, a judge to write word as it is spelled, and a judge to operate recording devices. (Equipment – table and three chairs).	
	Registration table: Programs; numbers in a container to draw for position in bee; record position number on form (sample provided); poster board for speller to wear around neck; packet containing certificate of participation, ribbon, and spelling bee pin. (Equipment – table and two chairs).	
	Refreshment table.	
	Private room for judges and caller to meet to go over rules and words.	
	Put up spelling bee signs and bee decorations.	
	Fill out District Qualifier Form, obtain signatures, and mail immediately.	
	Fill out voucher for winner and runner-up. (For District Bee Only)	
	Fill out form for GAE listing winner, runner-up, and alternate (third place) and mail immediately. (For District Bee Only)	
	Mail voucher listing spelling bee expenses. Receipts are required to be attached. (For District Bee Only)	

APPENDIX B

STAGE – NUMBERS ON CHAIRS

1. There should be a chair on stage for each speller.
2. A number should be taped to the back (front side) of the chairs. Numbers should go from left to right on each row.
3. **After the Bee, remove the numbers from the chairs; remove the tape from the numbers; return the numbers to the envelope.**

Also –

Reserve and number seats for designated protestors (see page 2, number 15).

APPENDIX C

SIGNS AND REFRESHMENTS

SIGNS

Make and hang large Spelling Bee signs.

FOOD TABLE

Get ice for cooler.

Cover tables with tablecloth.

Put decorations on tables.

Put out food and drinks, napkins, plates, and cups.

Display “No Food or Drink Is Allowed in Cafeteria/Auditorium/Theater” signs on table.

Oversee the food table during Bee.

AFTER THE BEE

Clean up. Pack up decorations. Pack up food.

APPENDIX D

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

1. Have speller sign in on sheet beside his/her name.
2. Have speller draw a position number; take number from speller; write number on sheet; put number in envelope.
3. Get appropriate cardboard to hang from neck and put on speller.
4. Give speller his/her envelope containing certificate, pin, ribbon, rulebook, and prize coupons.
5. A parent, legal guardian, or school representative should register as the designated protestor and be provided a nametag and protest sign that corresponds to the position number of his/her speller.

APPENDIX E

SAMPLE PROGRAM

(COUNTY/SYSTEM) SPELLING BEE (DATE) (SITE NAME)

Caller Name and Title

Judges Name and Title

Name and Title

Name and Title

Spotters Name and Title

Name and Title

County/System Spelling Bee Consultant Name and Title

NOTE: The County/System Spelling Bee winner will compete in the District Spelling Bee along with other spellers in District ____.

(Year) COUNTY/SYSTEM SPELLING BEE CONTRIBUTORS

- Georgia Association of Educators
- Pizza Hut
- Circuit City
- Ace Hardware
- Publix
- Ryan's Family Steakhouse
- Wild Adventures

SPELLERS

<u>System</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Speller</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Banks	Banks County Middle	Name	6
Cook	Cook County Middle	Name	5
Fulton	Fulton County Middle	Name	7
Chatham	Chatham County Middle	Name	7

APPENDIX F

STAGE SET-UP

CHAIRS FOR SPELLERS
X X X X X X X X X X
X X X X X X X X X X

* _____ X Floor MIC _____ *

(Tables for Judges)

Designated Protesters

(Rows of chairs for Audience)

APPENDIX G

SAMPLE LETTER TO BUSINESSES

(NOTE: Materials must be changed to reflect information pertinent to your bee.)

(Date)
COUNTY/SYSTEM _____ SPELLING BEE

Coupons or certificates from your business are needed for the County/System ___ Spelling Bee that will be held Saturday, (Date), 200__, at _____ School. There will be approximately _____ spellers. Spellers will be from the following schools: Name of schools _____ .

I am in need of:

- Dinners for Two for the six adults participating in key positions of Callers and Judges.
- Coupons for games, food, or supplies for approximately _____ spellers.
- Coupons or dinners for the top two winners who will compete in the District Spelling Bee on (Date).

Any help with any of the above requests will be greatly appreciated. Partial donations will be gladly accepted. If you are able to contribute, your business will be listed in our Spelling Bee program and will also be announced during the Spelling Bee.

Thank you very much for your participation.

Sincerely,

Your Name
County/System _____ Spelling Bee Consultant
Your Address
City, GA 00000
Your telephone number

APPENDIX H

SAMPLE LETTER TO SPELLERS

(NOTE: Materials must be changed to reflect information pertinent to your bee.)

(DATE)
COUNTY/SYSTEM _____ SPELLING BEE

Dear Speller:

Congratulations on qualifying for the County/System _____ Spelling Bee. We look forward to your participation in the Bee on _____, (Date), at _____ School, (Address), (City), GA, in the cafeteria. Directions are given at the bottom of this letter.

Registration will be from 9:15 – 9:40 a.m. Drawing for order of participation will be done when you sign in. Your official protestor (parent, legal guardian, school representative) is to register and will be seated in a special section. The Bee will begin at _____, and there will be approximately _____ spellers. The Bee should last approximately two hours. After the prizes have been awarded to the winner and runner-up, there will be a drawing for other prizes. You must be present to claim your prize.

The winner of the County/System _____ Spelling Bee will participate in the District championship finals on (Date) in _____. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. Please share the information in this letter with your alternate (if applicable), school officials, and your official escort.

Sincerely,

Your Name
County/System _____ Spelling Bee Consultant
Your Address
Anywhere, GA 00000
Home telephone number

DIRECTIONS TO SPELLING BEE SITE:



School, County and System Level Spelling Bee

Qualifier's Form

To participate in the Spelling Bee, winner(s) must complete this Qualifier's Form. Please type or print legibly and complete all parts. Be sure to provide all required signatures. This form is to be received by your **County or System Bee Coordinator** not later than **(day and date)**.

School Name _____

Please check only one: Qualifier Alternate

Name _____ Female Male

Home Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Home Phone _____ E-mail _____

Birthdate _____ Age _____ Grade level _____

Mother's Name _____ Father's Name _____

Mother's Work Number _____ Father's Work Number _____

Mother's Email _____ Father's Email _____

School Name _____

School Address _____

City, State, Zip _____ School Phone _____

Name of Protestor (if applicable) _____

(Circle One) – parent, guardian, school representative

Protestor's Work Phone _____ Home Phone _____

Do you have any special needs that affect your ability to perform in the Bee (i.e., hearing impairment, wheelchair, etc.)?

If yes, please explain: _____

I certify that the information provided on this form is true to the best of my knowledge and that the qualifier meets all eligibility requirements.

Print Name of Qualifier _____

Signature of Qualifier _____

Print Name of Parent or Guardian _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian _____

Print Name of School Official _____

Signature of School Official _____

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State Spelling Bee Consultant

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