



2018-19 GAE State Spelling Bee Frequently Asked Questions



Q: What does my school need to do for its students to participate in Georgia's spelling bee?

A: In order for a school's students to participate in the spelling bee and have an opportunity to move on to the region, state and national competitions, that school must register itself and pay a registration fee to Scripps. The Scripps site is www.spellingbee.com.

Q. Why are the final rounds different that at the Scripps National Spelling Bee?

A. The rule change was created out of concerns regarding the final two spellers and the elimination process of the bee. We want to give each speller a fair experience in this process. So by changing the elimination process, each speller is given the best possible chance to continue in the bee until the competition is narrowed to the final two spellers.

Q. Do the schools and the county/system bees have to follow the rule change?

A. While we do not delegate the bees below the region level, we highly recommend everyone abide by these rule changes. Should a problem arise at the lower level bees and the rules were not followed, we (the state committee) would be unable to assist in a fair manner. The rules are revisited each year with much concern and thought. All levels participating in the State Spelling Program should be using the rules set forth by the State Spelling Bee Committee.

Q: Do the rules differ between region/state level and national competitions?

A: Yes. It's important to note that Georgia's rules differ slightly from Scripps' rules and Scripps emphasizes that state rules may be different in their information. For the rules that pertain to running Georgia's bees, please refer to the *Procedures, Rules and Regulations* manual that can be found in the related links at www.gae.org/spellingbee.

Q: What grades are eligible?

A: Any student who is in the fourth through eighth grade during current Bee school year is eligible.

Q: Why is vocabulary now included and stressed so highly?

A: At the Scripps National Spelling Bee, vocabulary is an important part of the competition, both orally and written. Scripps introduced an emphasis on vocabulary during the 2012 Bee. The purpose was to ensure not only correct spelling but understanding the definitions of words. So now we include vocabulary rounds at the regional and state levels, and highly recommend at least one, if not more rounds, are implemented at the school and county levels. It is important to utilize the resources from SNSB that are included and available through their website after registration.

Q: Where can I get practice/study material for my child or students?

A: The GAE Spelling Bee Committee does not furnish any practice list of words to use for your speller. The ultimate recommended guide is using *Webster's 3rd New International Dictionary Unabridged Online* as a study reference. It is available at: <http://unabridged.merriam-webster.com/>. Also, study information such as *Scripps' Spell It!* study guide is available for download by your school at www.spellingbee.com. Your school can access it and other material once they have enrolled with Scripps and have the receipt of the enrollment fee. Those materials may be downloaded and printed for the school winner for ongoing study.

In addition, there is additional study information available for purchase from various websites and through apps available from Apple and Android over the Internet.

Below are some sites that provide spelling and vocabulary materials:

- www.hexco.com
- www.nationalgeographic.org/bee
- www.khanacademy.org (SAT vocabulary words)
- www.vocabulary.com
- www.phonicsestore.com
- www.myspellit.com
- www.geospell.com

Other materials may be found online at www.amazon.com and through Kindle. Remember, some are free and others cost a fee.

Q: My speller won the bee in his/her classroom. What is the next level of competition for my speller?

A: The levels of advancement are as follows: classroom, school, county/system, region, and finally state.

Q: When and where is my county/system bee being held?

A: First check your county/system calendar for the date, place and time of your bee. If the information is not posted on the yearly calendar, then call the central office and find out who is in charge of your local bee. Usually the English Language Arts department will have that information. If all else fails, contact your GAE Local Association President (can find at gae.org) and ask for the person in charge of the spelling bee for your county/system.

Q: How will I find out information about my next level of competition for my speller?

A: At each level, the bee coordinator should forward your information to the coordinator at the next level of competition. In the event you do not receive information regarding the next level of competition, contact the GAE office at gaebee@gae.org or your region consultant for assistance.

Q: My speller is the alternate at his/her competition. Does my speller need to attend the competition although he/she is not participating?

A: The attendance of the speller is entirely up to the speller and the parent. However, if one of the qualifying spellers does not show up there is a chance the alternate would then be allowed to participate.

Q: How do spellers advance to the state level?

A: Only 20 spellers advance to the state level. The top two spellers from each of the nine bee regions, plus the top two spellers from the GISA [private schools] bee, will make up the 20 spellers at the state level bee.

Q: I homeschool my child(ren). How do I get him, her or them involved?

A: Whether you are an individual homeschool or part of a homeschool group, your child can participate in the Bee. Please go to www.gae.org/spellingbee and download the *Procedures, Rules and Regulations (PRR)* manual. It will have all of the information you need on how to participate. Look especially at page 5. You will have to register and pay a fee through Scripps either as an individual household or group. If you still have questions, please don't hesitate to contact your State Spelling Bee Consultant for your Region (see pages vi or 25 in *PRR*) or contact GAE at gaebee@gae.org

Q: As a charter school, how do I participate?

A: By the definition of the Georgia State Department of Education, charters are public schools. Therefore, all charters will participate in the county/school system level bee for which local school board they continue to report. The charter should be in contact with the central office of that system to attain county/system level bee information, e.g. superintendent's office. The charter will hold its own school bee to determine who moves on the county/system level.

Q: Am I able to charge admission to my Bee?

A. No fees should be charged for participation in or admission to a Bee. The only fees involved are the eligibility fees paid to Scripps by each school.

Q: How can I order the words for my county/system/spell-off Bee?

A. You can order the words for your county/system/spell-off Bee by contacting GAE at gaebee@gae.org or calling 678-837-1100.

Q. What do the following terms mean?

A. **Advocate:** the representative for the participating student who has been designated to lodge a disagreement should there be one. This person could be a teacher, parent (or other family member), counselor, or family friend. This will be the only person allowed to discuss an issue on behalf of the student.

Region: refers to one of the 10 GAE Bee Regions which can be found on pages 25-26 in the *GAE Procedures, Rules and Regulations (PRR)* manual (visit www.gae.org/spellingbee). The county you are in will be in either one of the 9 GAE regions, or your school will be a member of the Georgia Independent School Association (GISA) and you will participate within their statewide region (see contact info on either page iv or 25 of the *PRR*). There are 4 counties that are ineligible to participate in the GAE Bee (see page 30 in the *PRR* for a list).

Finalist: when your Bee has come down to the final two spellers, those are your two finalists. The rules change at that point (see pages 11 and 12 in the *PRR*).

State Bee Consultant: a member of the GAE State Spelling Bee Committee each of whom has responsibility for one of the 9 GAE Bee regions and the GISA statewide Bee region. They are in direct charge of your region level Bees and are your points of contact for sending Region Qualifier forms for those winners attending the region level bees. They also serve to lend advice and guidance to help ensure your local and county/system/spell-off level Bees run smoothly. (See pages vi and 25-26 in the *PRR*.)