



Access Life America Spelling Bee Format and Rules:

There are 2 levels of competition in Access Life America Spelling Bee. Contestants must participate based on their Grade in either Level I or Level II. They are not allowed to participate in both levels.

- **Spelling Bee Level I: Grades K, 1, and 2**
- **Spelling Bee Level II: Grades 3, 4, and 5**

Both Spelling Bee Level I and Spelling Bee Level II will have 2 phases as noted below:

Phase I (Written Test, 20 Points):

- This will be a Written Test with 20 spelling questions.
- Contestant will be given a mix of misspelled words and fill in the blanks.
- Contestant will need to circle the correct spelling from the list of choices provided.
- All Phase I Answer sheets should be returned at the end of the contest for grading. Answer sheets will NOT be made available after grading.
- Unclear and illegibly marked choices will not be counted. Contestants are expected to mark the choices clearly and legibly.
- The contestant will be awarded One Point for each correct answer and zero for an incorrect answer. There will be no negative points for an incorrect answer and no partial credits.
- If more than one choice is marked for a given question, no point is awarded. The decision of the judges is final.
- **Top 6 scorers from each level (Level I and Level II) will advance to Phase II (Oral Round).**
- Parents are not allowed in Phase I.

- **Tiebreaker Rules for Phase I:**

The tiebreaker rules apply ONLY if there are at least 5 or more contestants participating and at the discretion of the judges. After tabulation of scores (out of a total of 20) from Phase I if there is a tie, the scheme outlined below is followed in the order given, to break the ties:

- Phase I score (words 1-20)
- Phase I score among words 16-20
- Phase I score among words 11-15
- Phase I score among words 1-10

If the above steps fail to break the tie in question, Access Life America may use additional measures to resolve them or award joint scores to advance to the next level (Phase II).



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Phase II (Oral):

Phase II consists of rounds of oral spelling and continuing until a champion is declared (or co-champions are declared).

Oral Round Procedure:

- The Pronouncer will pronounce the word to the contestant.
- The contestant will pronounce the word, spell the word, and pronounce the word again.
- The contestant may request to have the word pronounced again or ask for a definition, language origin, parts of speech, or a usage of the word in a sentence. This information will not be provided by the pronouncer unless requested by the contestant. If a contestant takes undue advantage of this, the Pronouncer/Judge will advise the contestant accordingly.
- If a word has one or more homonyms, the pronouncer will indicate which word is to be spelled.
- The Judge will have the responsibility for stopping the student if contestant fails to pronounce the word or if the student pronounces the word incorrectly.
- Pronouncing the word before and after is not mandatory but encouraged.

Retracing:

- Having started to spell a word, a student may stop and start over, retracing the spelling from the beginning. However, in the retracing, there can be no change of letters and their sequence from those first pronounced.
- If any letters and/or their sequence are changed in the respelling, the speller will be disqualified.

Elimination:

- All spellers in Phase II spell one word in each round. Upon incorrectly spelling a word, the speller is immediately eliminated from the competition. The next word is given to the next contestant. If two spellers are eliminated in deciding rounds, both spellers may be tied for the winning place.
- *Exception:* If all spellers in a round misspell, all remain in the competition and a new round begins with the spellers spelling in their original order. If only one speller in the first round spells correctly, a new one-word round begins and the speller is given an opportunity to spell the next word on the list (anticipated winning word). If the speller succeeds in correctly spelling the anticipated winning word in this one-word round, the speller is declared the champion. If the speller misspells the anticipated winning word in a one-word round, a new round begins with all the spellers who spelled correctly and incorrectly in the previous round: these spellers spell in their original order.
- The judges' decision is final.



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The contestant is encouraged to:

- Pronounce the word before spelling. This is to ensure that the student has heard the correct word.
- Look at the Pronouncer when spelling the word.
- Spell the word orally. Contestants will not be allowed to write the word before spelling it.
- Pronounce the word again after the word is spelled.
- Speak clearly and loudly. The judges' decision is final in determining the correctness of the spelling, which may be misunderstood if not spoken clearly.

Timing:

- The contestant shall have 30 seconds from the time contestant pronounces the word until contestant must begin spelling the word. If the contestant is unable to start spelling, at the end of the 30-second period, contestant shall be reminded by the Pronouncer, who will be informed by the Judge/Timekeeper.
- Once the contestant begins spelling the word contestant will have 30 seconds to complete the spelling of the word.
- A contestant will be disqualified if contestant does not follow the above listed timing rules.

Disagreements:

- In any circumstances, no one from audience should approach the judges' panel.
- It is the responsibility of the contestant to pose any question relating to the spelling of the word by requesting permission to approach the judges only when it is their turn in the contest. This should not happen when other contestant is already given a word to spell.
- If the challenge cannot be resolved, the judges will call for a brief time-out to confer. The judges' decision shall be final and no appeal or confrontation or argument is entertained.
- In case more than one spelling is listed for a word in the Webster's dictionary, the particular spelling enunciated by the contestant shall be accepted as correct, if the word either matches the pronunciation and definition provided by the pronouncer, or it is clearly identified as being a standard variant of the word the contestant has been asked to spell. No other source is allowed in this regard.
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General Procedures:

- No talking will be allowed either among the contestants or among the audience. This will distract contestants and judges.



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- No assistance from audience is given to any contestant. If a contestant receives assistance from anyone in the audience, the contestant will be disqualified. We expect highest dignity and respect from all contestants and audience to encourage all the kids to win the contest.
- We request the audience to remain seated all the time when Spelling Bee in progress. This will help contestants to have better focus and improve their winning chances.

List of Words:

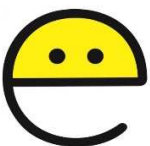
- Published list of 500 practice words are available here:
 - **[Spelling Bee Level I: Grades K, 1, and 2:](#)**
 - http://accesslifeamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/AccessLifeAmerica_WordList_SpellingBee_Level_I_2017.pdf
 - **[Spelling Bee Level II: Grades 3, 4, and 5:](#)**
 - http://accesslifeamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/AccessLifeAmerica_WordList_SpellingBee_Level_II_2017.pdf
- **Phase I (Written Test):** Out of **20** Phase 1 Questions, **10** will be taken from the published 500 practice words. The questions consist of a mix of misspelled words and fill in the blanks.
- **Phase II (Oral):** All Questions will be asked from the published list of 500 practice words.
 - *If the pronouncer uses up all words from the subset of oral round published list words and still there is no winner, judges may direct the pronouncer to ask off-list words to declare a winner.*

Winners:

Based on Phase II, the judges will determine the winners. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners shall be declared.

Awards & Certificates:

- All contestants in Access Life America Spelling Bee 2017 will be given “Certificate of Participation” from Access Life America.
- Trophies will be presented to top **3 winners** in Level I and Level II at a later date during a separate event.



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