

American Spaces - Central Asia

Local & National & Regional Spelling Bees 2020

Administrative Guidelines

INTRODUCTION

American Spaces throughout Central Asia will organize and host local and national Spelling Bee competitions (CA Bee 2020) from December 2020 through March 2020. Most American Spaces/Corners will organize local bees and send the top three winners to national bees in each of the Central Asian countries. The top four winners from the national contests will participate in the 2020 Regional Central Asian Spelling Bee, to be held at the American Corner Bishkek in April 2020.

Local, national and regional bees are excellent opportunities to support education and to promote American English and American culture, to showcase the partnership between the United States and Central Asia, and to build a strong regional network of Spaces.

COMPETITION DATES

Bee CA 2020 will be conducted in three phases:

- a. The Regional Central Asian Bee will take place at the American Corner in Bishkek on Saturday, **April 24, 2020** (date TBC).
- b. The National Spelling Bees should take place before Monday, March 30, 2020 to allow three weeks to organize logistics (flights, local transport, hotel, visas if needed).
- c. All local Spelling Bees should take place at least three weeks prior to the National Spelling Bee, in order to organize logistics. Local bees should not take place earlier than December 2019 due to unavailability of new word lists.

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS (must meet all of these requirements)

- a. Must be a citizen of the country where studying and participating in the Bee. (i.e. Must be a citizen of the Kyrgyz Republic to participate in the Bee in Kyrgyzstan; cannot participate in the Bee in Kyrgyzstan if not a citizen of the Kyrgyz Republic.)
- b. Full-time college or full-time undergraduate university students currently enrolled at an institute of higher education (i.e. college, university) in the country of citizenship, to be verified by presentation of university student ticket.
- c. Participants can have studied in the U.S. (or another English-speaking country) previously, but currently must be enrolled as a full-time student in a college or as a full-time undergraduate in a university in the country of citizenship.
- d. Between the ages of 18 (on or before March 1, 2020) and 25 (cannot have turned 26 before April 30, 2020).

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- e. Can have participated in the local or national bees in 2019 as long as they meet all the other eligibility requirements, but **cannot** have participated in the 2019 Regional Central Asian Spelling Bee in Bishkek and in the 2018 Regional Central Asian Selling Bee in Almaty.
- f. Additional local eligibility requirements may be needed in order to limit the contestants to a reasonable group size for the local bees (i.e. in Kazakhstan, each local bee is limited to 50 participants so that the bees will not take more than several hours.)

ORGANIZATION

- a. The top winners of each local bee will take part in the National Spelling Bees. (The number is dependent upon local conditions. For example, in Kyrgyzstan, the top three winners from each local bee will participate in the KG National Spelling Bee.)
- b. The top four contestants from each of the five Central Asian countries will travel to Bishkek for the Regional Bee. However, if Turkmenistan cannot participate in the Bee, either virtually or in person, funding may be available for the top five contestants from KG, KZ, TAJ and UZ to participate (TBC).
- c. Each country must develop registration forms and set their own limit on the number of participants in the local bees. (KG will provide an example of the registration that it is using.)
- d. Advertising and marketing may include:
 - o Send informative letters or diplomatic notes to the Ministries of Education and Culture, to colleges and universities, and to American Space host institutions;
 - o Develop a logo, banner and t-shirts for the local and national events (KG will provide a centralized logo and design for use in local and national events);
 - o Develop social media advertising that can be adapted at the local level to promote the event among eligible candidates (KG will provide an advertisement template that can be used in local and national events);
 - o Develop social media advertising to promote the national and regional events to encourage spectators (KG will provide an advertisement template for this).
- e. American Councils and PAS Bishkek are developing beginner, intermediate and advanced word lists for the local, national and regional bees, to include word, part of speech, definition, language of origin, and sample sentence. Words should reinforce university level English and include words that might be found in TOEFL, IELTS, SAT, GRE, etc. tests.
 - o No live streaming (this includes Facebook Live) of any of the local or national bees, since the word lists will be the same throughout the Central Asian region.
 - o If shooting video, do not include more than a few words in a video clip, since the word lists will be the same throughout the Central Asian region.
 - o The word lists should only be distributed to the pronouncers/judges. Contestants should not have access to the lists in advance. All printed lists must be collected after the conclusion of each bee and must be destroyed (please don't provide to local teachers, judges, students, etc. – many will ask.)
- f. After the local and national competitions, all judges and pronouncers must complete the survey (link to be provided by American Councils) in order to track word usage and ensure overall quality control of word lists across countries.

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- g. The same competition guidelines will apply to the local, national and regional bees, except where differences are stated.
- h. Bee CA 2020 is free to all participants. Contestants do not pay for registration, certificates, name tags, t-shirts, refreshments, nor travel for winning contestants.
- i. Prizes for the local and national bees are determined locally. The prize for the winner of the Regional Central Asian Bee will be a laptop computer (TBC).

Competition Guidelines

A. COMPETITION RULES

A.1. Local Bees

1. This is an English language Spelling Bee.
2. All spellers spell one word in each round. Upon incorrectly spelling a word, the speller is eliminated and can join the audience. All spellers eliminated in the same round are tied for the same place.
3. Spellers have two minutes to spell a word. Spellers can ask the pronouncer to repeat the word, define it, use it in a sentence, provide the part of speech, provide the language of origin, and/or provide an alternative pronunciation if available. Spellers cannot ask for an alternate definition.
4. All new rounds begin with contestants spelling in their original order.
5. At the beginning of any round in which only three spellers remain, this will be the Championship Round. If only one contestant spells a word correctly, the contestant will move alone to the next round and be given the opportunity to spell the next word. If the contestant spells the word correctly, he/she will be declared the winner. The winner, along with the two runner-ups, will participate in the National Spelling Bee.
6. If the contestant spells the word incorrectly, all contestants remaining in the bee at the start of the Championship Round will remain in the competition. The next Round will begin.
7. If there is no round with three correct spellers, (only two, for example), the Championship Round will be completed with two contestants and the winner and the first runner-up will compete in the National Bee. To determine the second runner-up, all contestants who spelled a word correctly in the most recent round will compete to become the second runner-up. (Note, if more than three spellers from each local bee will go on to the National Bee, you will need to have a third runner-up, etc.)

A.2. National Bees

1. – 4. Same as above.
5. At the beginning of any round in which only four spellers remain, this will be the Championship Round. If only one contestant spells a word correctly, the contestant will move alone to the next round and be given the opportunity to spell the next word. If the contestant spells the word correctly, he/she will be declared the winner. The winner, along with the three runner-ups, will participate in the Regional Spelling Bee in Bishkek.
6. If there is no round with four correct spellers, (only two or three, for example), the Championship round will be completed with two (or three) contestants and the winner and the first runner-up will

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compete in the National Bee. To determine the second and the third runner-ups, all contestants who spelled a word correctly in the most recent round will compete to become the runner-ups. Runner-ups must be selected in order to ensure a larger number of participants in the contest.

A.3. Regional Bee

1. – 4. Same as above.
4. The Regional Spelling Bee is winner takes all. If, in any round, only one contestant spells a word correctly, the contestant will move alone to the next round and be given the opportunity to spell the next word. If the contestant spells the word correctly, he/she will be declared the winner.
5. If the contestant spells the word incorrectly, all contestants remaining in the bee at the start of the previous round will remain in the competition.
6. There are no runner-ups in the Regional Bee. Only one participant will be selected to be the grand prize winner.

B. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

B.1. The Speller.

1. The speller faces the pronouncer/judges and pronounces the word before and after spelling it.
2. The speller says each letter distinctly.
3. The speller may ask the pronouncer to say the word again, define it, use it in a sentence, provide the part of speech, provide the language of origin, and/or provide an alternative pronunciation if available. (The pronouncer cannot provide an alternate definition.)
4. The speller may stop and start over. However, once a letter is pronounced, the speller may not change it or rearrange the letters. If a sequence is changed, the speller will be eliminated.
5. The speller is responsible for any misunderstanding of the word, unless:
 - The pronouncer did not provide a correct pronunciation.
 - The pronouncer provided incorrect information regarding the definition, part of speech, etc.
 - The speller correctly spelled a homonym of the word and the pronouncer failed to either offer a definition or distinguish the homonyms.

B.2. The Pronouncer and Dictionary Consultant

1. The pronouncer must be a native American English speaker.
2. The pronouncer clearly pronounces the word twice, saying, "The word is father. Father."
3. If a word has one or more homonyms, the pronouncer indicates which word is to be spelled by defining the word.
4. The pronouncer responds only to speller's requests (except in the case of a homonym) for repetition of the word, a definition, use of word in a sentence, part of speech, language of origin and alternate pronunciation. The pronouncer will answer all questions within the time constraints.
5. The pronouncer (or one of the judges) will spell the word, if/when a judge indicates that the word is spelled incorrectly and the speller is eliminated.

B.3. The Judges (three judges)

4. The three judges can be any nationality.

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5. The judges are in control of the Bee and their decisions are final.
6. After a speller finishes spelling the word, one of the judges will say “CORRECT” if the word is spelled correctly and will ring a bell (or hit a glass with a spoon) if the word is not spelled correctly. If the word is not spelled correctly, one of the judges or a pronouncer will spell the word.
7. Disqualifications for reasons other than misspelling:
 - Speller takes longer than the two minute allotted time.
 - Speller rearranges the letters in the word.
 - Speller engages in unsportsmanlike conduct, i.e. whispers the letters, nods or shakes his/her head when another speller is spelling, etc.
 - Speller utters unintelligible or nonsense sounds.
8. Spellers will NOT be disqualified for:
 - Asking a question.
 - Failing to pronounce the word either before or after spelling it.

B.4. The Time Keeper

1. The time keeper may be any nationality.
2. The time keeper ensures that each speller receive a maximum of 2 minutes in front of the microphone to spell the word. The time starts when the pronouncer first pronounces the word.
3. When 1 minute and 30 seconds have passed, the time keeper holds up a sign that says “30 Seconds Remaining.”
4. The time keeper will ring a bell or hit a glass with a spoon two times to mark that time is up and that the speller is disqualified.

B. 5. The MC/Host

1. The MC/Host may be any nationality.
2. The MC/Host introduces the pronouncer, the judges and the time keeper.
3. The MC/Host reads the rules of the competition.
4. The MC/Host calls out the name of the speller to prompt each speller to approach the microphone.
5. The MC/Host provides one fact about each speller (i.e. hobby, favorite book, movie, sport, school subject, as provided in the registration form) every time the speller’s name is called and he/she is approaching the microphone.

Example 1:

Pronouncer: “The word is Father. Father”

Timer begins to time 2 minutes.

Speller: “May I have a definition?”

Pronouncer: "Father: A man who has conceived a child."

Speller: "May I have a sentence?"

Pronouncer: "My father was so happy the day my brother was born."

Speller: "Father. F - A - T - H - E - R. Father."

Judge: "CORRECT!"

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Example 2:

Pronouncer: "The word is Farther. Farther."

Timer begins to time 2 minutes.

Speller: May I have a definition?

Pronouncer: "Farther: To or at a more distant or remote point."

Speller: "May I have a sentence?"

Pronouncer: "The church is 3 miles from my home while the school is only two. The church is farther than the school."

Speller: "Farther. F - A - T - H Farther. F - A - R - T - H - E - R. Farther."

Judge: "INCORRECT! "

Pronouncer or Judge: "The correct spelling is: F - A - R - T - H - E - R."

(It's incorrect because the student changed the spelling midway through. The spelling must be correct from the beginning.)