



# Rules for the 2018 American Library Spelling Bee

(Adapted from the rules for the Scripps National Spelling Bee)

## 1. Eligibility:

A student qualifying for the 2018 American Library Spelling Bee in Karlsruhe must meet the following requirements:

- The contest is open to all students 16 or younger throughout the 2017/2018 Baden-Württemberg school year. Therefore, the student must have been born **after July 27, 2001**.
- The student must have registered for the Spelling Bee and paid the € 5 registration fee by **February 10, 2018**.

## 2. Format:

The contestants will be divided into two groups based on the language of instruction of their school program.

- a. "E-Bees": the language of instruction is English
- b. "Bees": the language of instruction is not English.

Students who qualify for the "Bees" group may participate in the "E-Bees" group if they so desire. However, students who qualify for the "E-Bees" group may not participate in the "Bees" group. Students who primarily speak English at home are encouraged but not required to sign up for the "E-Bees" group.

The competition has two parts:

**Part One** is the preliminary contest, consisting of a 30-word written spelling test.

- A 200-word list is available online for each of the two groups ("E-Bees" list and "Bees" list).
- The 30-word preliminary written test will consist of 20 words taken from the respective group's 200-word list plus 10 challenge words (not from the list). The challenge words will only be counted in the event of a tie.
- Part One will take place at the American Library in Karlsruhe on **February 23 & 24, 2018**.
- Registration deadline is **February 10, 2018**. Forms are available online or at the American Library.
- The written spelling test may also take place in a proctored classroom **with prior consent of the Spelling Bee organizers**. The completed tests must be received by the BeeHive no later than Tuesday, **February 27, 2018**.
- Twenty students from each group will progress to the Spelling Bee Final. Students will be informed if they have made it to the final, but the written tests remain the property of the American Library Spelling Bee organizers and will neither be shown nor sent to students or their parents or teachers.

**Part Two** is the Spelling Bee Final. It is a contest involving multiple rounds of oral spelling.

- The contest will take place on **Saturday, March 17, 2018** at the American Library in Karlsruhe.
- In every round, the contestants will be asked to spell one word each.
- For each contestant, the pronouncer will say a word and use it in a sentence. The contestant must then say the word, spell it, and repeat the word to signify when s/he is finished.
- Contestants may not go back and change the spelling of a word once they have started.
- If a contestant misspells a word, the judges will ring a bell and provide the correct spelling, whereby the contestant is eliminated from the contest.
- If the contestant correctly spells the word, s/he will proceed to the next round.
- The next round will start when all the contestants of the previous round have spelled a word.
- If all contestants in a given round spell incorrectly, then the round will be repeated. All contestants eliminated during the same round will be tied for the same place.
- The contest will continue until a first, second and third place winner have been determined.

## 3. Words:

The pronouncer, with help from the Word Master, will use the published word lists. However, at some point and at the discretion of the judges, the pronouncer will go off list and use a special list of challenge words that the Word Master has prepared. These words will not be disclosed to the contestants ahead of time. The Word Master will strive to choose words that are unambiguous as far as regional spelling or pronunciation are concerned.

## 4. Time constraints:

The contestants will have two minutes to spell each word. Timing will begin once the pronouncer has provided the word and its definition. The judges will disqualify any contestant who does not provide a complete spelling before the expiration of the time limit.

## 5. The pronouncer's role:

The pronouncer is also the Master of Ceremonies (MC) and facilitates the smooth running of the Spelling Bee. He or she will strive to pronounce the words according to standard American English diacritical markings.

Homonyms: If a word has one or more homonyms, the pronouncer will indicate which word is to be spelled by defining the word.

Contestants' requests for word information: During the oral competition the pronouncer will respond to the contestants' requests for a word's definition, sentence, part of speech or language(s) of origin.

Pronouncer's sense of helpfulness: The pronouncer may offer word information—without the contestant having requested it—if the pronouncer senses that the information would be helpful.

## 6. The judges' role:

The judges uphold the rules and, aided by the Word Master, determine whether or not the contestants spell the words correctly. The decisions of the judges are final, and there is no right of appeal. In the unlikely event that the judges are unable to agree, the decision of the Word Master is final, and there is no right of appeal.

Interaction with the contestants: Because seeing lip movements may be critical to detecting misunderstandings or misspellings, the contestants should face the judges when spelling a word.

Misunderstandings: The judges will participate in the exchange of information between the contestants and the pronouncer if they feel that clarification is needed. The judges will listen carefully to the contestants' pronunciation of the words, and if they sense that a contestant has misunderstood a word, they will work with the contestant and pronouncer until they are satisfied that reasonable attempts have been made to assist the contestant in understanding the word. While the judges are responsible for attempting to detect a contestant's misunderstanding, it is sometimes impossible to detect a misunderstanding until a spelling error has been made. The judges are not responsible for any contestant's misunderstanding.

Pronouncer errors: The judges will compare the pronouncer's pronunciation with the diacritical markings in the word list. If the judges feel that the pronouncer's pronunciation does not match the pronunciation specified in the diacritical markings, the judges will direct the pronouncer to correct the error as soon as it is detected.

## 7. The contestants' role:

The MC will ask the contestants to follow the "triple S" rule: "Say it, Spell it, Say it again". First saying a word gives the contestant a chance to think about the word before spelling it, and it gives the pronouncer and the judges a chance to make sure that the contestant has understood the word correctly. Repeating the word after spelling it shows the judges that the contestant has finished. The MC will remind the contestants of the "triple S" rule if they forget. The contestant's answer is not considered complete until s/he has repeated the word.

Contestants must make an effort to say each letter distinctly and with enough volume to be understood by the judges.

Pronunciation of the alphabet: The contestants must use the correct American English pronunciation for the letters in the given words. Contestants who do not pronounce the letters correctly will be eliminated from the contest.

For example, contestants may not mix up "g" and "j", "i" and "e" or "c" and "z".

In American English:

- "g" sounds like "gee"
- "j" sounds like "jay"
- "i" sounds like "eye" or the "i" sound in "pie"
- "e" sounds like the "e" in "me"
- "c" sounds like "sea"
- "z" rhymes with "g", "e" and "c"

Contestants' requests for word information: After receiving a word from the pronouncer, a contestant may ask for 1) the word and/or the sentence to be repeated, 2) a definition, 3) the word's part of speech, and 4) its language(s) of origin.

Misunderstandings: Contestants are responsible for any misunderstanding of a word unless (1) the pronouncer did not provide correct pronunciation; (2) the pronouncer provided incorrect information regarding the word's definition, part of speech, or language of origin; or (3) the contestant correctly spelled a homonym of the word and the pronouncer failed to distinguish between the homonyms.