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# The National History Bee and Bowl & US Geography Olympiad

## 2013-2014 High School Division Guide For New Schools, Students, and Teams

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# 1. Introduction

Welcome to The National History Bee and Bowl and The United States Geography Olympiad! We're glad you're interested in participating in our high school tournaments for the 2013-2014 school year. This guide will provide an overview of how The National History Bee and Bowl and The United States Geography Olympiad work, and how you and your school can get involved. While this guide may not answer all your questions, it should give you a good sense of what you need to know to get started, and where to turn for additional information.

## Our Own History

NHBB was founded in the summer of 2010 by David Madden, a former high school and college quiz bowl player who at the time was taking courses to become a history teacher himself. In the spring of 2010, just for fun, David organized a history quiz tournament at his former high school in Ridgewood, NJ which was attended by about 150 students from the NJ/NY/CT tri-state area. After the tournament, he realized that there was no nationwide history quiz competition for either individual students or teams. And thus, rather than becoming a history teacher in the usual sense, he founded The National History Bee and Bowl.

In our first year (2010-2011), we ran 32 tournaments throughout the USA, and a National Championship for 98 teams in Washington, DC. For our second year, we added a middle school division, increased the number of our high school tournaments to 63, established tournaments in Europe and Asia under the banner of The International History Bee and Bowl, and welcomed 184 high school and 12 middle school teams to our National Championships. Our third year (2012-2013) then saw the number of high school tournaments increase to 79, the number of teams at our National Championships increase to 196 high school and 26 middle school teams, our middle school National History Bee quadruple in size, the debut of our elementary school tournaments, and we also started The United States Geography Olympiad.

Not content to rest on our laurels, we are planning lots of new features for 2013-2014. We anticipate running 100-110 high school regional tournaments, launching an all-US History Bee for high schoolers, inaugurating our Asian Championships (and 12 new tournaments overseas), and making the first plans for the first-ever International History Olympiad to be held in the summer of 2015. Overseeing all of this is a full-time staff of four, and hundreds of tournament directors, logistical coordinators, volunteers, and advisers.

With so much going on, we want you and your school to be a part of the country (and the world's) fastest growing academic quiz competitions! Now on to the basics of how it all works...

## Overview of NHBB & USGO

The National History Bee and Bowl (hereafter, NHBB) and The United States Geography Olympiad (hereafter, USGO) are open to all primary and secondary students in the USA. This guide provides an overview of NHBB's high school division and the USGO in its entirety. If you are interested in NHBB's elementary and middle school divisions, please see either [www.historybee.com](http://www.historybee.com) or email [info@historybee.com](mailto:info@historybee.com).

At the high school level, NHBB is contested in two stages. The first stage is the regional or state tournaments. The second stage is the National Championships. Please note that while certain tournaments may be designated state tournaments or state championships, these function organizationally the same as tournaments that are called regional tournaments. Otherwise, there is no difference between regional and state tournaments (i.e. you don't need to qualify at a regional in order to attend a state tournament – all are welcome to attend state tournaments. The process of qualifying for the National Championships also works the same way at tournaments designated regional or state tournaments). Both the regional/state tournaments and the National Championships feature a Junior Varsity and a Varsity division. In the History

Bowl, Junior Varsity teams consist entirely of students in 10<sup>th</sup> grade or younger. Younger students may also form all or part of a Varsity team. In the History Bee, all 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders must play in the JV division, and all 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders must play in the Varsity division. For the US Geography Olympiad, the JV / Varsity cutoff is a birthdate to be consistent with the International Geography Olympiad, which the US Geography Olympiad is an official qualifying competition for at the National Championships. Each student born on or before June 30, 1998 is a Varsity student for USGO purposes, regardless of what grade they are in. Each student born on or after July 1, 1998 is a JV student for USGO purposes. Per International Geography Olympiad rules, only Varsity students are eligible to compete at our National Championships for one of the four spots on Team USA at the International Geography Olympiad. This will next be held in August 2014 in Krakow, Poland.

At all regional or state tournaments, both the History Bee (for individual students) and the History Bowl (for teams) are contested. The Bee and the Bowl are held at different times during the day, so everyone who wishes to can compete in both. We also hold a qualifying exam during the lunch break for the US Geography Olympiad during the lunch break of the tournament. Each of the three component competitions of a tournament (Bee, Bowl, and Geography) has a separate entry fee (typically, \$15, \$75, and \$10 respectively). Students and teams may enter whichever they wish, or all three.

Teams (in the History Bowl) and Students (in the History Bee) typically play 5 preliminary rounds in the History Bowl and 3 preliminary rounds in the History Bee at a regional or state tournament. Those who finish in the top half of the rankings after the preliminary rounds in both the Bee and the Bowl qualify to attend our National Championships, which will be held on the weekend of April 25-27, 2014 in Arlington, VA and Washington, DC. Students who finish in the top half of the USGO qualifying exam rankings at each tournament (or if their score places them in the top half of all students across the USA) also qualify for the National Championships of the United States Geography Olympiad (on the same weekend).

For the 2013-2014 school year, we anticipate having a total of 100-110 regional and state level qualifying tournaments across the USA. Each tournament is conducted on a particular set of questions – either A set, B set, or C set. A set questions are slightly longer and more challenging than B set, and B set is slightly more challenging than C set, though the overall differences are pretty slight. Students and teams may play up to three times at a regional or state tournament, but they must always play on a different set of questions, of course. If one student from a school plays on a particular set, then no one from their school may play on that set again.

The History Bee and the History Bowl both have students utilize a buzzer-system to ring in to answer the questions (as on certain TV quiz shows), and focus on all aspects of history. US history forms roughly 50% of the questions; “world” history the other 50%. Questions may reference the history of science, literature, the arts, religion, mythology, philosophy, historical geography, recent history, and the history of sports and entertainment, in addition to what is usually thought of when one thinks of “history.” The USGO likewise asks questions on all aspects of geography, with political geography, physical geography, cultural geography, environmental geography and historical geography all being referenced. While at the National Championships, the History Bee and Bowl very closely resemble the regional and state competitions (just with somewhat more challenging questions), the National Championships of the USGO contains both a multiple choice exam and a quiz bowl tournament similar in style to the History Bee. USGO is solely an individual competition; there are no teams.

## 2.Regional and State Competitions

### A.History Bowl

The History Bowl is contested at all regional and state tournaments, and indeed, the majority of the time at each tournament is spent contesting the History Bowl. With rare exceptions, all regional and state tournaments are single-day events which are held on weekend days. Nearly all are held on Saturdays, though a few are held on Sundays. Tournaments usually begin with a check-in period beginning at 7:30 or 8am and an opening meeting at 8:30 or 8:45. Certain tournaments may begin a bit later. Tournaments will typically last until late afternoon. Smaller tournaments end around 4:00-5:00pm. Larger tournaments (with more playoff rounds) can last until 6:30-7:15. Since teams bow out of the playoffs in each round, only the last two teams (and perhaps, students on other teams from their respective schools) are still there at the very end of the day. Thus, most teams will be able to leave sometime between 3:00pm and 5:00pm. Each tournament has its own website at [www.historybowl.com](http://www.historybowl.com) and [www.hs.historybee.com](http://www.hs.historybee.com). By late September 2013, any tournament which has had its host site and date confirmed (and is thus marked with a green dot on the map), will also have the exact schedule of the day posted on its website. These websites also show which question set a tournament is using, who is directing and coordinating it, and which teams will be attending.

Teams looking to attend a History Bowl must register for each individual tournament they wish to attend online at least three days in advance at [www.historybowl.com](http://www.historybowl.com). It is also possible to register in advance for the History Bee and the USGO qualifying exam, but this is not required (in other words, same day registrations at the tournament are permitted for the Bee and USGO). Teams do NOT need official school approval; indeed, if this is an issue, contact NHBB and you can play under an assumed name. However, all students on a team must attend the same school (no all-star teams!) although it is permitted for public middle school students to play on high school teams that they would normally feed into (this is not allowed for magnet schools). Up to four students may play at any given time on a History Bowl team. At regional and state tournaments, the maximum permitted team size is 6. Students can substitute in and out during quarter breaks in the Bowl rounds, or between rounds. There is no minimum team size; “teams” of 1 student are permissible. In fact, the 2013 National Champion in the National History Bowl was a single student.

Teams of 1 student play for \$25 at a tournament. Teams of 2 students play for \$50. Teams of 3-6 students play for \$75. Teams receive a \$5 discount for each functioning buzzer system they bring to a tournament. It is not required to bring a buzzer system, but it is required to bring one reader for every two teams or fraction thereof (e.g. a school bringing 5 teams must provide 3 readers) for each tournament, or a \$50 penalty per missing reader is assessed. Teams not bringing a reader must notify [director@historybowl.com](mailto:director@historybowl.com) or the Tournament Coordinator for their event if they are not bringing a reader, or if they are a “team” of 1 student. Teams of 1 student are exempt from bringing a reader, as long as they notify [director@historybowl.com](mailto:director@historybowl.com) or the Tournament Coordinator in advance. Teams of 2 students are not exempt from bringing a reader, but can request that the reader requirement be waived by notifying [director@historybowl.com](mailto:director@historybowl.com) or their Tournament Coordinator at least 3 days in advance.

At all tournaments, History Bowl rounds consist of four quarters. For an explanation of how a round works, and the official rules, please see the “Game Format” and “Official Rules” links on the website at [www.historybowl.com](http://www.historybowl.com). For further information on how tournaments are structured, please see the “Tournament Format” link.

## **B. History Bee**

At almost all regional and state level tournaments, the tournament begins with three rounds of the History Bowl. Then, usually around 11:00am, we break and then conduct the three preliminary rounds of the History Bee. Students can typically sign up for the History Bee on the day of the tournament, as long as they arrive by 10:30 at the latest. Students who do not choose to participate in the History Bee effectively have an extended lunch break, and should bring some schoolwork or other diversion. That said, the History Bee is lots of fun too, and is far and away the largest individual buzzer-based quiz competition in the USA, so they should give it a shot.

At all tournaments, History Bee rounds consists of 30 questions. Usually there are 5-8 students in a History Bee room who play at any given time. When a student reaches 8 points per round (1 point is scored for a correct answer, though being the third student incorrect on a question before the reader has finished reading incurs a -1 point penalty), that student is then done for duration of that round. This way, a student who is exceptional does not have a chance to answer all the questions to the detriment of the other students in the room. However, students who hit their quota of 8 points at any time in the round get 1-5 bonus points based on how quickly they finish. Thus 8 standard points + 5 bonus points makes 13 a perfect score for a round. A combined perfect score of 39 is typically reached only 5-10 times across the country in a given competition year.

At the end of the three preliminary rounds, students who finish in the top half of their respective draws (i.e. JV and Varsity) will qualify for the National Championships. The top 2-32 students then make the finals (the number depends on how many students are in the draw). The format of the finals can vary a bit from tournament to tournament, but in almost all cases, it takes place in the mid-afternoon after the final two preliminary rounds of the History Bowl, but before the Bowl playoffs commence.

## **C. US Geography Olympiad**

After the third preliminary round of the History Bee is over, tournaments usually enter their lunch break. During the early part of the lunch break, the qualifying exam of the United States Geography Olympiad is offered. In rare cases, the lunch break (or pizza break) is held at a different point in the schedule, but whenever it is held, the USGO exam will take place. Those students who choose to take the exam will still have time to get food, though.

The Qualifying Exam for the USGO is a 50 question multiple choice test with 4 possible answers to each question. Students receive 2 points for a correct answer and -1 for an incorrect answer. If an answer is left blank, 0 points are scored. Over 800 exams were taken in the inaugural year of the USGO in 2012-2013 and only 1 perfect score of 100 was registered (by a 7<sup>th</sup> grader!). Like the History Bee and Bowl high school-level tournaments, the USGO is open to elementary and middle schoolers, but unlike NHBB, which has separate competitions for elementary and middle schoolers, the USGO Qualifying Exam and National Championships are offered only in conjunction with the high school-level tournaments of NHBB.

Students who finish in the top half of the USGO qualifying exam at their site, or if their score places them in the top half nationwide, then become eligible to compete in the National Championships. The National Championships will be held on the Friday afternoon and evening of April 25, 2014 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, VA. The National Championships will consist of both a multiple choice exam and a quiz bowl competition. The Qualifying Exam may be taken up to 3 different times (a different version is offered at A set, B set, and C set tournaments) and costs \$10 per exam. The National Championships will cost \$70 total.

For further information on the US Geography Olympiad, including sample qualifying exams, a breakdown of how the questions are distributed on different topics in geography, and the full rules and results, see the official website at [www.geographyolympiad.com](http://www.geographyolympiad.com)

## **3.National Championships**

The 2013-2014 competition year for both NHBB and the USGO will conclude on the weekend of Friday-Sunday, April 25-27, 2014 with our fourth annual National Championships. Last year, nearly 1000 students attended, and we are expecting between 210-250 teams in the History Bowl, 400-500 students in the History Bee, and 175-250 students for the US Geography Olympiad. It promises to be an exciting weekend of competition, and we would be delighted for you and your school to join us! To qualify, you simply need to finish in the top half of either the Varsity or Junior Varsity draws at any regional or state competition for the History Bee, finish with at least a .500 record in the preliminary rounds of the History Bowl (or win a playoff game), or finish in the top half of a qualifying exam (at either the tournament site, or overall nationally) for the USGO.

The costs this year are \$555 for a History Bowl team, \$85 for a student in the History Bee, \$50 for a student in the Consolation Bee (open only to those students who are at Nationals with their Bowl teams, but who didn't qualify for the Bee), and \$70 for a student in the US Geography Olympiad. Discounts of \$20 are applied per team in the Bowl for bringing a buzzer system, and up to \$185 for providing an *experienced* reader. At Nationals, providing a reader is optional (and incurs a discount for each portion of the competition that a reader can read for), as opposed to being mandatory at state/regionals. Teams of 1 student in the History Bowl will pay a \$185 entry fee, and teams of 2 students will pay a \$370 entry fee, with the possibility of discounts as usual.

The National Championships for the History Bowl consists of 5 morning preliminary rounds for both Varsity and JV teams. These rounds are conducted in a round robin grouping of 6 teams. Teams that finish typically in the top 3 of these 6 then go on to play 5 more "Upper Bracket" rounds in the afternoon, while teams that finish in the bottom 3 of their morning group of 6 then go on to play either 3 or 5 more rounds in the afternoon. Junior Varsity teams in the morning and Varsity consolation teams in the afternoon typically play their games at a site of cultural or historic importance. NHBB staff chaperone travel to and from these sites to avoid confusion. On Saturday evening, the top 32 Varsity and 16 JV teams then qualify for a single elimination playoff bracket. The first three rounds of both the Varsity and JV are held on Saturday evening; the remaining matches are held on early Sunday afternoon before the Bee playoffs. Small public schools also compete for a separate title at Nationals; the farthest advancing JV and Varsity teams who qualify as small schools are deemed small school champions. If the top two small school teams make it to the same playoff round (but no farther), then a playoff game is played to determine the national small school champions.

The National Championships for the National History Bee are contested entirely on Sunday, April 27, 2014 at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, VA. This will consist of 6 rounds for the standard competition, and 5 rounds for the consolation competition. Each round will have 35 questions, but otherwise function the same as the state or regional tournaments. After the preliminary rounds are done, the top students (the number will be a function of the number of students in the field) will then qualify for the playoffs. The playoffs are held over 3 stages – the final stage of the Varsity is a match among 4 students to be the first to acquire 15 points; the final stage of the JV is a match among 2 students to be the first to acquire 12 points.

At the National Championships, various prizes will be offered. In 2013, a grand total of \$20,000 was offered to the top teams and students in the History Bee, History Bowl, and USGO. We anticipate a similar prize structure for 2014, but as of September 2013, cannot confirm this. In addition, practice matches will also be held on Friday evening, along with an Opening Ceremony, and possibly other events as well.

## **4. How to Prepare – Resources**

Starting a team in the History Bowl, or beginning to participate as an individual student in the History Bee or the USGO might look like a daunting task, but there are many available resources to help guide you in your preparations. The best of these is our past questions, so you can get a sense of what this year's questions will be like. In fact, for the 2013-2014 competition season, there are virtually no changes in the difficulty, style, or overall content of the questions from 2012-2013. Visit <http://www.hsapq.com/samples> (in particular, sets 24, 26, 27, 30, and 37-40). The other HSAPQ (that's High School Academic Pyramid Questions) sets, along with the high school sets at [www.quizbowlpackets.com](http://www.quizbowlpackets.com) can also be very helpful, though those contain questions on all subjects, not just history.

For study guides, visit <http://www.naqt.com/YouGottaKnow/> and [www.acequizbowlcamp.com](http://www.acequizbowlcamp.com). And don't overlook the study notes of the ACE courses that NHBB's Executive Director David Madden has taught at <http://www.historybowl.com/study-guide/>. The Resources Guide at this same link can also be helpful. This link also has a copy of the official NHBB scoresheet for the History Bowl, which can be downloaded and useful during practices.

For the Official Rules of the History Bowl, see <http://www.historybowl.com/official-rules/>. There's also a guide to being a reader for NHBB matches here as well. For the Official Rules of the History Bee, see <http://hs.historybee.com/official-rules/> while the Official Rules of the US Geography Olympiad are available at [www.geographyolympiad.com](http://www.geographyolympiad.com).

The only piece of equipment that is used for NHBB matches is a lockout buzzer system for at least 8 students (e.g. 4 on each team). NHBB recommends purchasing the 10 person Tabletop Officiator model from [www.andersonbuzzersystems.com](http://www.andersonbuzzersystems.com). This system has 3 major advantages over every other system out there. First, to the best of our knowledge, it is the cheapest system that contains all the functionality needed for gameplay. It retails for about \$210 plus shipping. If you find a cheaper system somewhere else, let us know! Secondly, this model (and NOT the Anderson "hand held" model) is very easy to set up. Since the buzzers are already attached to each other, typical set up or take down time is only about 2 minutes. Other systems can take up to 10 or more minutes and are far more cumbersome. Finally, the Anderson Tabletop Officiator model is very durable – we take them around the world for our international tournaments too – and as long as they are treated well, they very rarely break.

It is not required to have a buzzer system to attend NHBB tournaments, but we highly recommend it, since it will help your team practice in a fun setting that simulates tournament gameplay. Additionally, we offer discounts of \$5 at regional or state tournaments or \$20 at the National Championships for bringing buzzer systems that allow at least 8 people to play.

Finally, in terms of preparing for tournaments, most standard high school history textbooks and courses are very helpful, though you will also want to branch out a little bit. Reading *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, and *The Economist* can be very helpful for "recent history" questions, while a basic knowledge of world and US geography is not only helpful for USGO, but for many NHBB questions too. Often, students may be guided to an answer based on geographic or linguistic clues within the questions (e.g. a reference to "Brussels" in a question about the history of Belgium or Italian sounding names helping to clue students in to thinking about the history of Italy). Also, don't overlook a basic knowledge of the history of sports and entertainment. While that probably shouldn't be the major focus of your preparation efforts,

questions on classic movies, TV shows, songs, and famous moments in sports all do come up as well, and may be slightly beyond the scope of a standard history textbook. We also *strongly* urge you and your school to acquire a basic familiarity with the history of Asia, Africa, Oceania, and Latin America. Realistically, there's not a tremendous amount of questions we can ask about here (since these topics are often neglected in schools). However, basic questions on the history of these regions does come up at all tournaments. Your best guide here is likely to be past NHBB question packets. You might want to make notes from those packets, as that information is repeatedly referenced. It's not overly difficult to master, but a little studying and preparation can go a long way here in particular. Don't get bogged down with things that are far too obscure in general. Instead, stick with topics that have come up before in past questions – they are your best guide to what will likely be asked about in 2013-2014 as well.

## **5. How to Prepare – Strategies**

NHBB and USGO differ from certain competitions in that it is possible in both NHBB and USGO to do very little preparation specifically for the competitions, and still achieve a decent degree of success in them. If students have typically done well in their history or geography classes, or have a natural interest in the subjects and have read a decent amount on their own in these fields, that can often lead to a fair amount of success, especially in areas of the country that do not have many active all-subject quiz bowl teams.

However, in order both to have as much fun with NHBB/USGO as possible, learn as much through the experience as possible, and succeed to the greatest degree (especially at Nationals), a certain amount of preparation is needed. There's no "right" or "wrong" amount of time to put in preparing; nor is there a universally accepted way as to how to go about doing this. That said, we strongly urge you and your team to consider the following approaches to preparing for tournaments:

### **1) Play high quality all-subject quiz bowl tournaments, not just NHBB/USGO!**

NHBB grew out of the national community of all-subject quiz bowl tournaments (hereafter, referred to as QB). At most, there are 4 or 5 chances to compete in NHBB sponsored tournaments in a given year, but depending on your area, there could be as many as 20 other all-subject tournaments. Almost without exception, the best students and teams at our National Championships also compete in these tournaments. Because NHBB takes a very broad view of history, perhaps over 50% of the questions at a standard QB tournament contain information that could also come up in an NHBB event. The more you play QB in addition to NHBB, the more you will learn and improve, and you'll have more incentives to study and prepare on your own, since you'll be able to put that knowledge to more frequent use!

However, do note that not all tournaments are created equal. While almost any tournament can give you a chance to test your knowledge, we advise you in particular to play tournaments written on "pyramidal" questions of the sort that NHBB uses. These questions are fairer and more informative than other styles, as they reward students with deeper knowledge. They also promote critical thinking by encouraging students to think through the topics being referenced in the questions in an attempt to find the correct answer.

Keep abreast of QB tournaments in your area, and with developments in QB in general through the online QB forums at <http://www.hsquizbowl.org/forums/> There's a separate forum for NHBB here too. Be sure to add a signature to your profile before you begin posting. Generally speaking, QB players and coaches are very willing to offer advice about both NHBB/USGO and QB in general.

## **2) Be familiar with the style of our questions and game format, and don't make avoidable mistakes!**

This sounds easy (and it is), but it's often overlooked by new teams and students. Be sure you know the basic rules of how our competitions work, and practice running games in the standard format. Two errors we often see among new teams in particular, are when the one team gets a tossup question wrong, and then a player on the other team rings in before the end of the question and answers incorrectly. Remember that questions get easier as they go along, and since the first team to answer incorrectly can't ring in again, the second team should wait until the question is done. Then, perhaps allow 1 second to allow a student who is certain to ring in; then, if no one has rung in after a second or so, someone can ring in and take an educated guess. Another mistake we often see is mismanaging the clock in a 60 second round. If you don't know the answer here, guess quickly or pass! Don't spend too much time on one question, just go on to the next.

The basics of competition are not complicated, but some familiarity with the game format and rules can be very helpful towards ensuring success, especially among new students and teams.

## **3) Practice systematically with your teammates (and on your own as well).**

The majority of NHBB teams do practice at least a little bit with their teammates prior to tournaments, but not all practices are created equal. Does practice consist exclusively of reading old question packets, or is some effort made to ensuring that common topics are known by team members (perhaps through flashcard drills)? Do you "cross-train" by playing in all-subject QB tournaments (or even watching *Jeopardy!*)? That can be helpful too.

Above all, though, while practice should be fun, it should be conducted efficiently. A well-run 45 minute practice accomplishes more than 2 hours spent getting distracted. Also, you will want to break experienced players and new players up, so as not to discourage new players from being overwhelmed. And we can't emphasize enough the value of writing topics down in a study notebook! If you just read old questions or play old questions, that's good. But if you figure out what topics are going unanswered and write them down, that's great. We particularly recommend doing this for questions in a field (say, Roman history, or Chinese history) that you might be focusing on. Also, don't feel as if you need to write down everything in a question, but instead, focus on the point in the question right before the point where you recognized the answer. That's probably the next thing you should learn about that topic (since information towards the end of questions is referenced overall more frequently).

## **4) Divide and conquer**

In the History Bee and USGO, you're on your own, so this strategy won't help you there. However, in the History Bowl, it's often helpful to split up various topics, or periods in history with your teammates. Do you have someone who knows a bit about Asian history? You should, but it's better to have just 1 person studying Asian history, than 3 people studying Asian history and no one studying Latin American and African history. Have a look at the Official Question Distribution file here <http://www.historybowl.com/official-rules/> and then make sure all bases are covered. Also, don't feel as if you need to split up areas equally among 4 teammates. If one student in particular is a strong player, or if one or two students show a capacity to take on increased studying commitments, then they should perhaps take more topics; letting the remaining students on the team be specialists. Even a team with 1 incredible player can benefit from having teammates who study particular topics in great depth and can score points whenever they come up.

## **5) Focus on knowledge retention**

Finally, remember that NHBB/USGO are very broad-based competitions. This makes studying for them different from studying for a typical history test (where you are at some level going to forget things after the test is done, in order to prepare for the next one). Even if you are studying for a final exam or an AP exam, the emphasis is on studying for that 1 test.

But since NHBB/USGO (and QB) tournaments reward a knowledge of all aspects of history and geography at each tournament, and since tournaments are held on a recurring basis each year, you need to focus on long-term memory and knowledge retention. This is a different skill than cramming for a test, and takes time and repetition to master. However, in the long run, it's a far more rewarding way of approaching education, as that knowledge is far more likely to stay with you into college and beyond, being useful in many instances in life.

You and your team can master this skill by keeping notes in a notebook, and frequently reviewing information until you "have it down cold." Additionally, while the vast array of possible question topics may seem daunting at first, there's a high degree of repetition from one NHBB set to another (and to a lesser extent, from one set of QB questions to another). If you play and practice frequently, you'll become a great player quicker than you ever thought possible. And you'll find that history and geography courses become much easier too.

## **6. How to Prepare – Logistics and Fundraising**

No guide for preparation for NHBB and USGO would be complete without a discussion of the logistics and fundraising that often go into making it possible to attend tournaments. Ideally, your school will be supportive of the participation of you and your team in our competitions. In the absolute best scenario, this would entail paying for participation fees and travel to attend both NHBB and QB tournaments throughout the year, a trip to the National Championships, and a stipend for a coach. That, however, is sadly relatively rare among schools, and especially among new teams. In many instances, a team will need to demonstrate a certain level of commitment and/or success, before the school administration decides to help with funding. And even here, it's no guarantee.

To get around these hurdles, consider the following steps. First, while NHBB requires a reader to be brought along with a team to a tournament, we do not require any sort of official participation from your school. While teams must be comprised of members entirely from one school, it does not have to be considered a school activity. Teams without school support can call themselves something else (or have their school name omitted from results posted online) if it helps make participation easier.

Secondly, consider appealing to a local historical society, museum, or local businesses for funding support. If you have a track record of success, or can explain to them that you are taking your preparations seriously, you may find fundraising to be easier than you think. Next, consider holding a fundraiser, which could be anything from a bake sale to a townwide quiz tournament (where each team of 4 adults needs to pay \$100 per team, say). This could be an effective way to earn funding. Beyond that, consider writing questions for NAQT (email [naqt@naqt.com](mailto:naqt@naqt.com)) if you have some experience in playing and knowing the fundamentals of writing good questions. This can also help you improve your game by learning more as you write.

Finally, in terms of logistical planning, consider forming an official club or team and designating one person to be responsible for administrative matters, such as registering for and paying for tournaments, and figuring out transportation to events. Ideally, this would be a coach, but on many teams, students take the initiative and handle these tasks (which is fine with us). Sometimes parents take the lead here too, especially on driving teams and students to tournaments, which is also fine (just remember to thank them next Mother's Day or Father's Day!) Again, there's no right or wrong way to go about these logistical matters. The primary point is to make sure that someone is on top of them, and that they do not get overlooked amid your preparations that focus on studying and practicing. It doesn't do you any good to have prepared for a tournament, only to not be able to attend due to financing or logistical difficulties

## **7. US History Bee & International History Olympiad**

NHBB has expanded in many different ways since its founding in 2010. With the 2013-2014 upon us, we're excited to launch a new competition this year, and announce a new overarching worldwide competition which will debut in the summer of 2015. Respectively, these are the United States History Bee and the International History Olympiad. The US History Bee will be an individual, buzzer-based competition that will focus on all aspects of US History. It will debut in early 2014 at various qualifying tournaments around the USA. The majority of these will be held after school; some may be held on weekends that do not conflict with nearby standard NHBB tournaments. The top students will then qualify to compete in our inaugural US History Bee National Championships, to be held during the day on Friday, April 25, 2014 before the start of the USGO Nationals. Additional information will be available shortly – if you have further questions in the meantime, or if your school is interested in hosting a US History Bee regional tournament for your area, please contact [info@historybee.com](mailto:info@historybee.com)

In addition, with the growth of NHBB's international tournaments to at least 15 countries around the world for the 2013-2014 school year, we are excited to be in the initial planning stages for the inaugural International History Olympiad. This will be held at a US university during the summer of 2015 for a full week. Buzzer-based quiz tournaments will form part of the program, but many additional events will be held as well. These will include, among others, a research-based competition, a historical scavenger hunt, historical debates and simulations, field trips, seminars with professors, and more. Additional information, including eligibility requirements will become available during the course of the 2013-2014 school year. For US students, however, it is projected that students and teams will need to qualify by finishing in the top half of the draw at the National Championships. It will be possible to qualify for the 2015 History Olympiad as early as the 2014 National Championships, however – that much is certain. Additionally, students who are seniors in 2014 will be allowed to compete at the History Olympiad even if they have 1 year of college under their belts. For further information, please see the "International History Olympiad" tab at [www.ihbbglobal.com](http://www.ihbbglobal.com) (our international homepage). By the summer of 2014, the History Olympiad will have its own website at [www.historyolympiad.com](http://www.historyolympiad.com).

## **8. Further Information**

We hope that this guide has given you and your school a good overview of how NHBB and USGO work, and what they have to offer for the 2013-2014 school year. However, far more information is available at our websites. For further questions, please see the respective websites first – [www.historybowl.com](http://www.historybowl.com) for the National History Bowl, [www.hs.historybee.com](http://www.hs.historybee.com) for the National History Bee High School Division, and [www.geographyolympiad.com](http://www.geographyolympiad.com) for the US Geography Olympiad. Additional requests for information may be directed to NHBB and USGO Executive Director David Madden at [director@historybowl.com](mailto:director@historybowl.com). Alternatively, you may try calling (201) 661 3524 for information beginning on October 12.

Thank you for your interest in The National History Bee and Bowl and The United States Geography Olympiad, and we look forward to seeing you at one of our tournaments soon!