



The National History Bowl

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Varsity and Junior Varsity Official Rules Summary

This document is intended as an outline of the rules of the competition. If you have specific questions regarding more detailed aspects of the rules, please reference the full National History Bee and Bowl Official Rules (accessible in PDF form at <http://www.historybowl.com/resources/official-rules/>). The History Bowl is played in two sections – Preliminaries and Playoffs. During the Preliminary Section, you will be playing as a team of up to four players at once against another team of up to four players in a game that consists of four quarters. The minimum number of students on a team is one. The maximum number is 6 at regional tournaments, and unlimited at Nationals. **Players cannot switch teams during a tournament (though team lineups can change from one event to the next, including for Nationals).**

For All Quarters

-At no point in the course of the games for the Bowl will teams be deducted points for a wrong answer.

-Teams may substitute members of your team between quarters of play. If a team wishes to substitute before the 3rd quarter, substitutions must be made before the categories are announced.

-If teams wish to protest a question or answer, **they must bring it to the reader's attention before the first question of the next quarter is read, or before they leave the room at the end of the final quarter.** If the reader botches a question, there are makeup questions with each round that can be used. Only students that were playing on a team at the time it was read (i.e. not including substitutes) and 1 designated coach can protest per team.

-During any tossup question, players may not confer verbally or in writing with their teammates. Players may raise their hands, extend their buzzers, or gesture in ways that indicate they **know the answer, but not what the answer is.**

-On bonus questions and the 60 second rounds (i.e. the 3rd quarter of each match), talking with teammates is permitted and encouraged. Conferring illegally with teammates on a tossup question will be treated as if a player buzzed in and answered the tossup incorrectly.

The first quarter consists of ten relatively short buzzer questions worth 10 points each for a correct answer. After the moderator is done, or after a player has rung in, players have **3 seconds to start giving their answer.** If one team rings in and answers incorrectly after the end of the question, the other team then receives 3 seconds after the moderator says "Incorrect" to the first team. This holds true in the second and fourth quarters too. **If a team is incorrect, and the question has not been finished, the moderator does not go back to the start of the question, but picks up from where the moderator had left off. These rules on reading and timing hold for all buzzer questions.**

For all questions, regardless of what style, once a player begins to speak, they can go back and correct themselves until the moderator indicates they are correct or not. They may give extra information if it doesn't make the answer wrong (e.g. saying "Vienna, Austria" even if "Vienna" would suffice or "Hamlet by Shakespeare") but they cannot "go fishing" by saying a list of things at once (e.g. "Hapsburg Empire, Maria Theresa, Austria, Vienna!").

The second quarter consists of eight buzzer questions worth 10 points each for a correct answer. If a team answers one of these correctly, that team will be entitled to one bonus question which is also worth 10 points. In this

competition, the other team cannot “steal” or “rebound” their bonus. **Our bonuses do not “bounce back”**. On bonus questions and 60 second round questions, the captain can designate a team member to give the answer if they clearly indicate this, but if not, then the moderator will take the first answer directed at them from any student on the team. On bonus questions, the moderator should prompt for the answer five seconds after having finished reading, and then allow an additional two seconds for the team captain (or designated person) to start giving an answer.

The third quarter consists of the 60 second categories. **RULES CHANGE AS OF OCT. 2018!** **In the preliminary rounds, the team that is trailing** will have a choice from three categories. If the teams are tied, then the team that was most recently trailing picks first. Each category has a theme and 8 short questions fitting the theme.

In the playoffs, however, the team in the lead will pick first from one of three categories. If the teams are tied, then the team that was most recently in the lead picks first.

A team will have 60 seconds to answer as many of these 8 questions as possible. Time begins on the first word of the question (the “lead in” – e.g.: “In the history of France, who or what was...” does not count officially as part of the question, and should be read just once before the clock is started). If a team doesn’t know an answer, they may pass, but they will **not** be permitted to return to passed questions; a pass is treated as an incorrect answer.

-The first possible answer that anyone on the team says which is clearly directed at the moderator will be the answer taken unless the team designates a captain to speak for them (this is not required). After the trailing team has finished its round, the other team will be prompted for their answers to the missed questions. These are treated like bonus questions, i.e. the team has five seconds to answer each, then is prompted, then has an additional two seconds. **If a team gets all 8 questions right, then they get a 20 point bonus. Theoretically this can happen on the bounceback too.**

Then, the team that had been leading selects from one of the two remaining categories and the process repeats itself. The third category thus is not read to either team. If a team begins its answer while time expires, it will be counted. The decision if the answer was begun before the time expired is a judgment call of the reader, and is not protestable.

-Also, if during the 60 seconds round, a team is not able to finish all 8 questions, the other team only gets to hear on the bounceback the questions that had been read to the first team. If a fraction of a question has been read, then only up to that point in the question is read to the other team. If a team interrupts the reader and is incorrect, however, then the full question will be read to the other team on the bounceback.

The fourth quarter consists of 8 longer buzzer questions worth **30, 20,** or 10 points each for a correct answer depending at what point in the question it is answered. On the questions, **bold and underlined indicates a point where it is worth 30 points.** **Bold only indicates where it is worth 20 points.** Regular text indicates where it is worth 10 points.

At the end of the preliminaries, all of the results will be tabulated, and the top teams (**usually ranked first by won-loss record, and then by points, and then by opponents’ combined record, and then points, unless there is an odd number of teams**) will advance to the Playoffs. If there is an odd number of teams, then byes will often be used, and the average score will be used for the bye for teams with them, and then advancement is done on points alone. **CHECK WITH YOUR DIRECTOR! Sometimes, specific tournament rules can override this usual way of doing things for the playoffs.**

The Playoffs are usually a single-elimination seeded competition, however, the director reserves the right to use other rules (including what is known as “advantaged finals” – if this method is used, it will be explained in greater detail at the tournament, as it can vary based on the number of teams in the draw). Check with your director for how many teams will make the playoffs in each age division.

GOOD LUCK AND HAVE A GREAT TIME!!!