



Official Rules for The National History Bowl – Varsity & Junior Varsity Divisions (last revised Jan. 29, 2019)

I. Eligibility

- a. Any student in primary or secondary education is eligible to compete.
- b. Students who form a team must all be currently enrolled at the same school on the date of the tournament (with the exception of younger students and homeschooled students as outlined below). This also holds for students who transfer schools over the course of the year; they are not permitted to compete for their old school if the old school qualifies for the National Championships but the new school does not.
- c. There is no limit on the number of teams a school can bring to a tournament, unless the tournament itself is limited. At United States tournaments, host school teams can enter up to six teams free of charge; for subsequent teams, they must pay the standard rate.
- d. Up to four students can play at once; teams at the Regional and State tournaments are limited to carrying two substitutes. There is no limit to the number of students per team at the National Championships.
- e. Teams of 1-3 students are always allowed to compete as well; the minimum number of students on a team is 1.
- f. Students cannot switch team affiliation during the course of a Regional or State tournament, nor during the National Championships. However, they can switch affiliation within their school from one tournament to another.
- g. If a team withdraws at any point during the competition, games that it has played up to that point maintain their validity. If this results in a bye for any team, however, the tournament will ignore Wins-Losses as the first determining factor of playoff placing.
- h. Junior Varsity & Middle School Eligibility
 - i. Students younger than high school age are allowed to compete in the middle school division or with a non-magnet public high school team in their school district. Elementary school students are allowed to compete, but should be cognizant of the difficulty of the questions.
 - ii. Students who are enrolled at a private school which has students both in grades 8 and younger and grades 9 and above may draw from their pool of younger students for their high school level teams.
 - iii. Teams composed entirely of students in 10th grade and younger are welcome to participate in the Junior Varsity division.
 - iv. Students in grades 10 and younger are allowed to compete on Varsity teams at all levels of the competition, including the National Championships.
 - v. The students at the National Championships do not at all need to be the same students who competed at the tournament where the school qualified. Students who played at the Junior Varsity level are welcome to play on Varsity teams at Nationals, as well as vice versa (if said student is in 10th grade or younger).

- vi. All Regional & State tournaments will have both a Varsity and Junior Varsity Division, provided that there are at least two JV teams (otherwise there is no separate JV champion – with just one JV team in the draw, that team will play only other Varsity teams and will not be the official JV Champion for that tournament). If there are at least four middle school teams, middle school teams will play in an entirely separate division during the preliminary rounds. If there are at least two middle school teams, a separate middle school final will be played in any case (see two paragraphs below in point viii). If there is only one middle school team, it will play high school teams exclusively, and a separate middle school champion for that tournament will not be named.
- vii. In cases where Middle and Junior Varsity teams play teams in a higher division in the preliminary rounds, their opponents will be chosen with care by the schedulers so that they tend to avoid playing the top teams.
- viii. If there are exactly two teams in either the JV or Middle school division, they will typically play each other in a final, with the team with the best overall record (or point total if tied), taking a 50 point advantage into the final match. If both record and point total are tied, then no team will take an advantage into the final. The teams will play each other in the prelims, but this will only count just as any other prelim game would regardless of the outcome. This rule can be overridden, though, at the discretion of the tournament director and/or NHBB staff.
- ix. If there are three or more JV or Middle teams, then only games played against teams in those divisions count for determining JV or middle school rank. A .500 record or better against either 1) teams in one's division or 2) against all teams played, is necessary to qualify for Nationals.
- i. Three separate Regional & State question sets will be in use during the competition year. Schools and homeschool associations are only permitted to play each set once. Students who attend a tournament but do not play in it, or whose teammates attend a tournament using a particular question set, thus forego eligibility for any subsequent tournament using that question set.
- j. Homeschooler Eligibility
 - i. Homeschoolers are welcome to compete. If they do not have an official grade designation, then a birthdate in the fall will be considered the cutoff point for Junior Varsity eligibility (students born that day and more recently will then be JV). Contact NHBB or see the homeschool page on the website for the official cutoff date. This rule is only in effect if they do not have a grade that they are considered being part of.
 - ii. Homeschoolers can compete with the non-magnet public school teams they would otherwise attend.
 - iii. Homeschoolers can compete as part of already existing associations with less than 5000 students in secondary education, with no geographic limitations.
 - iv. Homeschoolers (whether in an association or not) may compete with other homeschoolers from the same county (no matter what the population), or with homeschoolers from neighboring counties, as long as the combined population of the counties does not exceed 500,000. For jurisdictions that do not have counties, contact NHBB for an ad hoc ruling on this question before registering.
 - v. Students who do not belong to a particular association can compete with other homeschool students (who do belong to associations) under the terms of point iv above, but cannot join existing associations for the purpose of competing.
 - vi. Homeschool teams who qualify for Nationals can accept new players who did not compete at the qualifying tournament under the terms outlined above.
- k. Geographic Eligibility

- i. There are no geographic restrictions on participation; theoretically a team from Maine could compete in Hawaii.
- ii. Teams who win state tournaments who are not from that state are designated “State Tournament Champion” while the “State Champion” designation then goes to the next highest ranking team who was from the state where the tournament was held.
- iii. In California and New York, and other such states lacking a tournament, the “State Champion” designation will be applied at NHBB’s discretion after the completion of all of the Regional tournaments within those states.
- iv. If a school has two separate campuses, they must compete together if they are one kilometer in distance or less from each other. If they are more than a kilometer apart, they must compete separately (as they are thus considered separate schools).

II. Registration and Advisor Obligations

- a. Teams must register online at www.historybowl.com by 7pm Eastern time on the Wednesday prior to any Saturday tournament.
- b. Teams may be allowed to compete if they register after this, including the day of the tournament, but it is at the discretion of NHBB whether to allow it.
- c. For the National Championships, teams must register by March 31. Again, teams may be allowed to compete if they register after this, including the day of the tournament, but it is at the discretion of NHBB whether to allow it.
- d. Schools are required to bring at least one coach/parent/other adult in order to read and keep score or pay a \$50 penalty fee. Schools bringing three or four teams must bring two readers/scorekeepers; schools bringing five or more teams must bring three readers/scorekeepers. Penalty fees are assessed by school, but vary by number of teams; i.e. a school with 3 teams and no reader pays \$100 in penalty fees. Please do not make us have to enforce this rule, and please let us know in advance if your advisor refuses to read!
- e. Schools who are being solely represented by one student at a tournament are exempt from this requirement. Students competing on teams of 2 may request this rule to be waived, but this is at the discretion of NHBB and should not be assumed.
- f. Schools are not required to bring a reader to the National Championships; however, they may receive a discount if they do so. NHBB reserves the right to limit the number of such discounts on offer, though teams who have been promised a discount will not be denied it, even if their reader is then not needed.
- g. Teams who do not submit payment in advance of the tournament or pay the day of the tournament are liable to pay a late registration fee per team. This fee must then be paid before such schools can compete at any subsequent NHBB event.

III. Questions

- a. Questions are produced and edited by NHBB’s staff and by writers contracted for this purpose.
- b. All tossup questions used The National History Bowl will be “pyramidal” in nature, with more obscure information being referenced at the beginning of the question, followed by more familiar and widely-known information towards the end. Note that 60 second round questions and bonus questions (which are to be answered by one team at a time) are not written in this format.
- c. Three question sets will be in use at the Regional & State level for the competition year, known as A Set, B Set, and C set. Questions in A set are slightly longer and harder; questions in B and C sets are of comparable length, with C set on the whole being very slightly easier than B set.

IV. Equipment

- a. The sole piece of equipment used in The National History Bowl is a lock-out buzzer system, which is used for all tossup questions. Buzzer systems should have at least eight functioning buzzers and an easy way to distinguish who rang in first.

V. Tournament Structure

a. Regional & State Level

i. Preliminary Rounds

1. The schedule for the Preliminary Rounds will be made shortly after the close of registration for the tournament. Registration closing dates are listed on the website www.historybowl.com and any exemptions to the close of registration must be requested to the Executive Director.
2. Every effort will be made by NHBB to create a schedule that takes into account the strength of teams, as well as a desire to keep teams from the same school from playing each other in the preliminary rounds. Requests to alter the schedule will not be honored unless an obvious error has been made (e.g. scheduling two teams against each other twice in the preliminary rounds).
3. There is no set method of scheduling, whether round robin, Swiss Pair, random, or otherwise. In most instances, 5 games are listed on the schedule without any brackets.
4. All games are played to completion, i.e. there are no ties at the end of a game. Tiebreaker questions do not have points attached to them; they are only valid for determining the winning team.
5. After five preliminary rounds are completed, the top teams will advance to the Playoff Rounds. In tournaments where there are an odd number of teams within a division (e.g. some teams have a bye and only play four matches), then won-loss record will not be used to determine advancement, unless there are 5 teams in a division, and all play each other exactly once, or if three teams are in a division and all play each other exactly twice.

- a. If two teams are tied on won-lost record after the Preliminary Rounds, the below procedures are used to break the tie.

- i. Highest total points scored (at tournaments with an odd number, the same procedure henceforth described is used to break ties among teams with the same number of points).
- ii. Strength of schedule, as defined by the won-lost record of the tied teams' opponents and then average intradivisional points scored, if necessary.
- iii. Head-to-head result, if applicable.
- iv. At the buzzer, tied teams play sudden death tossups until one is answered correctly.

- b. If three or more teams are tied after the Preliminary Rounds, the above procedures are used until one or more teams are eliminated from the tie.

ii. Playoff Rounds

1. A number of teams, will advance to a single-elimination tournament to determine the Regional or State History Bowl Champion for a particular event.
2. The number of teams who advance will vary from one tournament to the next – the below schematic in sections a-e is not an official rule. Typically, though,
 - a. At tournaments with 7 teams or fewer, the top two teams will advance.

- b. At tournaments with 8-11 teams, the top 4 teams will advance.
 - c. At tournaments with 12-23 teams, the top 8 teams will advance.
 - d. At tournaments with 24-35 teams, the top 12 teams will advance.
 - e. At tournaments with 36 or more teams, the top 16 teams will advance.
3. Teams will be seeded from 1 to N, with N being the number of teams qualified to the Playoff Rounds, based on their ranking from the Preliminary Rounds.
- a. In an eight-team playoff, the quarterfinal matches will be 1 v 8, 2 v 7, 3 v 6, and 4 v 5. The first semifinal will be 1-8 v 4-5 while the second will be 2-7 v 3-6.
 - b. In a twelve-team playoff, the top four seeds will receive a bye to the quarterfinals. First Round games will be 8 v 9, 5 v 12, 6 v 11, and 7 v 10. Quarterfinals will be 1 v 8-9, 4 v 5-12, 3 v 6-11, and 2 v 7-10. The first semifinal will be 1-8-9 v 4-5-12 while the second will be 3-6-11 v 2-7-10.
 - c. In a sixteen-team playoff, the First Round will be 1 v 16, 8 v 9, 4 v 13, 5 v 12, 3 v 14, 6 v 11, 7 v 10, and 2 v 15. The quarterfinals will be 1-16 v 8-9, 4-13 v 5-12, 3-14 v 6-11, and 7-10 v 2-15. The first semifinal will be 1-16-8-9 v 4-13-5-12 while the second semifinal will be 3-14-6-11 v 7-10-2-15.
4. Games that reach their conclusion with a tie score will continue with sudden-death, tossups until one team wins.

iii. Shortened Tournaments.

- 1. Upon occasion, a shortened tournament may be held with 3 preliminary rounds and 2 playoff rounds. Generally tournaments run on this format are held after school and are often used as makeup tournaments. Other amounts of rounds are also conceivably possible in rare circumstances.

b. High School National Championship Level

i. Qualification

1. Varsity

- a. Varsity teams qualify for Nationals by posting a .500 record or better among their matches at any Regional or State tournament, by posting a .500 record or better against Varsity teams, or by winning a playoff match.

2. Junior Varsity

- a. Junior Varsity teams may qualify for Nationals by posting a .500 record or better among their matches at any Regional or State tournament, by posting a .500 record or better against Varsity teams, or by winning a playoff match. JV teams must win at least one match, even if they only play Varsity teams, in order to qualify for JV Nationals, though.
- b. If a school has the same players compete at various tournaments, they cannot qualify additional teams for Nationals at the subsequent tournaments if one of the players on a team at the subsequent tournament was on a team that qualified at a prior tournament. The exception to this is if a 9th or 10th grader plays on a Varsity team at one site, and they qualify a Varsity team, then said player can compete at a subsequent site and the school can qualify a JV team (or vice versa). The school may then bring both a Varsity and a JV team to Nationals, though the player in question can only compete on one team or the other at Nationals (i.e. moving between divisions at Nationals is not permitted – a player may only play on one team at Nationals).

- c. As noted above, any team that would otherwise qualify to play in the Junior Varsity Division may elect to play in the Varsity Division of the Regional and State History Bowls if they so choose. If they do not qualify for Nationals at the Varsity level, they are eligible to submit a Wild Card application for entry into the JV National Championships based on their performance. They can do this by emailing the Executive Director at: director@historybowl.com. JV teams that compete in the Varsity Division at the Regional or State Bowls and qualify for the Varsity National Championships, but who wish to compete in the JV Division at Nationals are permitted to do this, and vice versa for schools who qualified Varsity teams who nonetheless wish to compete in the JV Division at Nationals.

ii. Preliminary Rounds

1. Teams will typically play five morning preliminary round matches in a bracket of 6 teams, balanced by geographic diversity and ability.
2. Varsity and JV teams will not play each other under any circumstances at Nationals.
3. The top 3 teams in each bracket will advance to the Contention (i.e. Upper Bracket) rounds in the afternoon. In rare cases, a fourth place team may also qualify for the Contention rounds.
4. Teams in the Contention rounds will play an additional five games in a bracket of six teams in the afternoon. The afternoon brackets will typically consist of two teams who finished first in their bracket in the morning, two teams who finished second, and two teams who finished third.
5. Teams who do not qualify for the Contention Rounds will instead compete in the Consolation Rounds. The Consolation Rounds will consist of a bracket of four or six teams playing three or five rounds against each other, with a possible tiebreak if teams have identical records after Round 3 or 5.
6. Procedures regarding tied games and ties for standing and seeding are the same as they are for the Regional and State Preliminary Rounds, with the exception that Wins-Losses will always be the first criteria used to determine placing, even if a bracket only has five teams (if one didn't show, for example).

iii. Playoff Rounds

1. 32 teams will advance to the Championship Playoffs from the Contention Rounds in the Varsity Division and JV Divisions.
2. Teams are ranked for the playoffs first based on Standing in their Contention Round bracket, followed by Wins-Losses in afternoon matches, followed by average points in afternoon matches. If teams are tied in all three respects, the tiebreaker will then be morning round standing, then morning Wins-Losses, then morning average points, followed by sudden death tiebreak questions, if needed.
3. In the Junior Varsity, the Round of 32 will be 1 v 32, 16 v 17, 9 v 24, 8 v 25, 4 v 29, 13 v 20, 12 v 21, 5 v 28, 2 v 31, 15 v 18, 10 v 23, 7 v 26, 3 v 30, 14 v 19, 11 v 22, and 6 v 27. From there, the bracket follows the sixteen team model outlined previously.
4. In the Varsity, teams are grouped into "snaked" groups of four (i.e. a group with the 1, 16, 17, and 32 seeds; a group with the 2, 15, 18, and 31 seeds, etc.) The winner of the group of four, determined first by W-L, then by points, then by 5 power-marked sudden death tiebreaks if necessary (if 3 or 4 teams are tied, then all play these over a series of round robin play), then moves on to the 8 team single elimination superplayoffs. Teams

in the superplayoffs are ranked first by evening W-L, then evening total points, then by afternoon record, then by afternoon total points, etc.) to determine seedings.

5. Procedures for breaking tied games in the Championship Playoffs are the same as those in the Regional and State Playoff Rounds.

VI. Game Structure

- a. At no point at any level of the History Bowl competition will a wrong answer incur a loss of points.
- b. On tossup questions, only the player who has buzzed in will be permitted to answer. The light on the buzzer system, or the main console corresponding to the player who signaled, will be sufficient recognition for the player to give his or her answer. Players may in addition be recognized by name by the moderator, but the moderator is not required to do this, nor is the student required to wait for the moderator to recognize the student before he or she answers.
- c. Each game will consist of four quarters.
- d. Players may be substituted between quarters, but not during a quarter.
 - i. Substituted players may re-enter the game during another substitution opportunity.
 - ii. A substitution opportunity will exist between the end of the fourth quarter and the beginning of the extra questions to decide the game.
 - iii. Substitutions made before the third quarter must be made before the 3 categories from which teams can pick are announced.
- e. There are no timeouts, though coaches are permitted to have a brief word with their teams between quarters. The moderator may stop play at any time for any reason he or she believes warrants a stoppage.
- f. Each quarter and each round will contain a mix of questions from different historical periods, locations, and fields of history. The distribution of the questions will be outlined in an addendum to the Official Rules.
- g. The first quarter will consist of ten relatively short tossups worth ten points each in the State and Regional Competitions. At Nationals, the first quarter consists of 8 tossups in the morning rounds, 10 questions in the afternoon rounds, and 12 questions in the evening and Sunday rounds.
 - i. For all tossup questions (not just first quarter questions), students have up to three seconds to begin giving their answer once they ring in. They will not be prompted by the moderator to begin speaking. Rules a, b, and c below are thus valid for all tossups in the National History Bowl.
 - a. Once the student has rung in, the student may not stop speaking if doing so would go over the allotted three seconds.
 - b. Students may adjust their answers before being ruled incorrect by the moderator, even if they have said a plausible answer, though moderators should rule on a question being correct or incorrect as soon as possible after a complete and plausible answer has been given. If the moderator begins ruling a student incorrect or correct, a student may not at that point adjust their answer.
 - c. Students may not adjust their answers after the three seconds have elapsed; again, timing is at the moderator's discretion and is not protestable.
- h. The second quarter will consist of eight slightly longer tossups worth ten points, except in the afternoon (in which case it's 10) and evening and Sunday Playoff Rounds at the National Championships (in which case it's 12). After each correctly answered tossup, only the team that answered the tossup correctly is entitled to an opportunity to answer a related bonus question worth ten points.

- i. Team members may confer on the bonus questions. The moderator will allow five seconds, then say “Answer , please” (or equivalent), after which an answer must be given within two seconds.
- ii. The moderator will take the first answer directed towards him or her as the team’s response. The moderator’s judgment as to whether or not an answer was directed towards him or her is not protestable. If there is a lack of clarity, the moderator may ask one person to speak for the team. Answers may be adjusted while speaking, but not if the moderator has already said “correct” or “incorrect”, nor if doing so would go over the allotted seven seconds.
- i. The third quarter will be a 60-second “lightning round” consisting of eight very short questions on one theme.
 - i. Teams must make substitutions before hearing the three categories which will be presented to the teams at the start of this round.
 1. In the preliminary rounds at regional and state tournaments, the team who is trailing will play first and choose their category first.
 - a. If the teams are tied, the last team to be trailing at regional and state tournaments will go first.
 2. In the playoff rounds at regional and state tournaments, the team that is in the lead will play first and choose their category first.
 - a. If the teams are tied, the last team to be leading in the playoff rounds and regional and state tournaments will play first and choose their category first.
 3. In all rounds at the National Championships, the team that is in the lead will play first and choose their category first.
 - b. If the teams are tied, the last team to be leading in all rounds at the National Championships will play first and choose their category first.
 - ii. Teams will hear all eight questions in a row, before the other team has a chance to respond to hear any questions answered incorrectly. Moderators should take care to speak clearly and quickly.
 - iii. Teams may pass if they do not know the answer to a question, but they will not be allowed to go back and answer questions that are passed.
 1. Teams may confer during the 60-second round, but the moderator will not move on to the next question until an answer has been directed at him or her and ruled correct or incorrect, or the team has passed.
 - iv. If a team begins giving its answer as the time is expiring, it will be counted, as long as the student does not then hesitate or attempt to adjust their answer. The moderator’s judgment as to whether or not the answer was begun before, at, or after the end of the sixty seconds is not protestable. The moderator stops reading immediately when time expires, not at the end of that question.
 - v. If time runs out before a team has finished the round, questions not read at all do not bounce back to the other team. If a question was only read in part, then only the exact part read is read on the bounceback.
 - vi. Teams can interrupt the reader, but if they are wrong, then the other team gets to hear the whole question on the bounceback. The same is true for passed questions.
 - vii. After the team has had its sixty seconds to answer their eight questions, the moderator will turn over any missed or passed questions to the opposition.
 1. For timing purposes, bouncebacks are treated like bonus questions.

- viii. After this is completed, the process is repeated for the other team, starting with their choosing from the two remaining categories. Then the ones they miss go over to the first team according to the same rules.
- j. The fourth quarter consists of eight (at Nationals ten in the afternoon rounds, and 12 in the evening and Sunday rounds) longer tossups worth thirty, twenty, or ten points each depending upon the point in the question where the correct answer is given.
 - i. The markings that determine when the point value switches are blind to the players; moderators should not indicate where such markers are located in the question at any time.
 - ii. The decision of whether or not an answer was given in time to earn thirty or twenty points based on the moderator's judgment of where he or she stopped reading in relation to the markings in the packet is not protestable.
- k. All games that are tied after the fourth quarter will require a sudden-death tiebreaker using tossups. The first team to answer a tossup correctly wins and advances. Tiebreak questions do not have a point value.

VII. Game Protocols

a. Pre-game

i. Moderator Responsibilities

1. The moderator will, prior to the start of the game, conduct a buzzer check to insure the buzzer system is fully functional. If the buzzer system is not fully functional, the team may decide whether or not to continue with that system in its current state, or ask for a replacement. The buzzer check may be omitted if everyone feels it is unnecessary. Lack of having performed a buzzer check is in and of itself not grounds for protest.
 - a. If a replacement is asked for, the moderator will request one from the Tournament Director.
 - b. If no replacement is available, the moderator will also indicate what the players without working buzzers will need to do to signal. The moderator's judgment as to whether a non-buzzer signal was before or after a buzzer signal is not protestable.
2. The moderator will ensure the correct teams are playing in his or her room prior to the start of the match and that the correct packet is about to be read to those teams.
 - a. The moderator may, in cases where there are not enough volunteers to provide a scorekeeper to every moderator, also function as the scorekeeper.
3. The moderator will relay any pertinent information to the players that may have been communicated between rounds by the tournament staff.

ii. Team Responsibilities

1. The team will introduce itself as their school name as well as any designation such as A, B, C, etc. if their school has brought more than one team to the event. The scorekeeper or the moderator may delay the start of the match until this designation is made.

b. During the Game

i. Moderator Responsibilities

1. The moderator will read each of the questions in a manner that allows both teams, and each player on those teams, to hear the question clearly.
 - a. Moderators may be asked by the players to either speed up or slow down. While requests from players may be taken into consideration, the ultimate pacing of each game is at the moderator's discretion. If the Tournament

Director is unsatisfied with the pace of the room in finishing games, he or she will advise the moderator or replace the moderator.

- b. Moderators are not expected to pronounce every word in the game packet without error. Moderators may take reasonable steps to indicate what the word they are attempting to pronounce actually is, such as spelling the word, if they feel such efforts are necessary.
 2. The moderator will make his or her best effort to stop reading the question when he or she hears a player signal to answer.
 3. The moderator will indicate when a question is either a tossup or bonus.
 4. The moderator may indicate whether answers to the eight questions he or she is reading in the sixty second round are correct or not or may skip that step to save time.
 5. The moderator will indicate verbally whether or not the question has been answered correctly or incorrectly.
 6. The moderator may ask coaches, if present, if they will be making substitutions between quarters. If a coach is not present for one or both sides, the captain will assume the responsibility of confirming whether or not there will be substitutions. Teams do not need to wait to be prompted for substitutions between quarters; they can just do it.
 7. The moderator will ask for an announcement of the final score at the end of the game if there is a scorekeeper present; otherwise, he or she will make that announcement to the room. Score checks may be done on request by teams during the game, within reason. If it is close, the moderator should give frequent score checks, though failure to do so, nor an inaccurate score check during the game is not grounds for protest.
 8. The moderator will only comment on the correctness of an answer, the score, whether a question is a tossup or a bonus, or to keep order in the room. It is not the place of the moderator to make editorial comments about the content or style of the questions in front of the players. Such comments should be directed to the Tournament Director, preferably after the tournament.
 9. Any moderator may, at the tournament director's sole discretion, be reassigned to a different room to remove an existing or potential conflict of interest.
 10. Any moderator may, at the tournament director's sole discretion, be removed from moderating duties based on observations by tournament staff or complaints from at least three different teams that said moderator has failed to fulfill the expectations outlined above.
- ii. Team Responsibilities
1. Once a player from a team has given an incorrect answer, that team must not signal to answer that same question again.
 2. Players may bring their personal notebooks to the playing area to allow for note-taking and future study, but the moderator reserves the right to ask a player, team, or both teams to discontinue note-taking if he or she feels the notebooks are being used to gain an advantage in the current game.
 3. During tossup questions, players may not talk amongst each other or communicate in writing while the question is being read.
 - a. A student who confers illegally will be indicated by the moderator and the conferral will be treated as an incorrect answer.
 4. Teams will refrain from conversing during bonus questions that they have not earned the right to answer.

5. Teams may confer during their opposition's third quarter round, but the moderator reserves the right to interrupt the round and caution or sanction a team if he or she believes the conferral is interfering with the active team's ability to hear and/or answer the question being read.
 6. Teams must respond to moderator prompts honestly and quickly.
 - a. A player may not attempt to gain an advantage in the case where the moderator did not hear the initial answer by changing said answer from what was said, or deferring to a teammate in the case of a bonus or third quarter question.
 - b. If a moderator prompts a player for more specific information regarding the answer, the player does not receive additional time to consider such information before providing it. The moderator reserves the right to call time on a player who he or she believes is stalling.
- c. After the game
- i. Moderator Responsibilities
 1. The moderator will double-check the scoresheet, making sure all appropriate information regarding player names, scores, and questions answered or unanswered is filled in on the paper.
 2. The moderator will reiterate any announcements made before the game relayed by the tournament staff.
 3. If the game in question is a playoff game, the moderator should tell the winning side which room they should report to next.
 4. The moderator will secure the questions and return them, along with the scoresheet, to the tournament headquarters.
 - ii. Team Responsibilities
 1. The players will comply with announcements made by the moderator regarding the tournament.
 2. The players will leave the room in as good a condition as they found it, disposing of any trash by appropriate means.

VIII. Protests

- a. What is protestable?
 - i. Correctness of an answer
 1. An answer is given that is believed to be correct, and the answer in the question packet is not correct.
 2. An answer is given that is believed to be correct and equivalent to the answer in the question packet.
 - a. A special case of this is pronunciation. While protestable, since the material of the protest depends on what was heard by the moderator, these protests are more likely to be denied.
 3. An answer that is given is ruled incorrect, but should have been prompted for more specific information.
 4. An answer that is given was ruled incorrect due to the question packet asking for more information than was required to uniquely identify the answer.
 - ii. Factual content of a question
 1. The question contained a factual error that led a player to give an incorrect answer.
 2. The question contained a factual error that led to the question being unanswerable.

- iii. Execution of game protocols
 - 1. The moderator did not follow a protocol which led to a direct, quantifiable affect on the score.
 - 2. The moderator and/or scorekeeper did not award the correct number of points for a correct answer.
 - 3. The moderator did not permit the inactive team their opportunity to answer the active team's missed or passed question(s) during the third quarter.
 - a. If this occurs, the moderator should proceed with the remainder of the third quarter, if applicable. In the very unlikely event that both teams are denied their opportunity in this fashion, the moderator should report to the Tournament Director for a resolution. Otherwise, the moderator will read the remaining category to the aggrieved team, but that team can only score as many points as they were entitled to from the questions missed when the error occurred.
 - 4. The moderator revealed the answer to a tossup question before allowing the other side, if eligible to answer, an opportunity to do so.
 - a. If this occurs, the moderator should refer to the backup questions provided by the tournament headquarters and read one only to the aggrieved team(s).
 - 5. The buzzer malfunctioned in such a manner that a player was unable to answer a question. Buzzers should be checked to make sure they were indeed malfunctioning.
- b. When can a protest be filed?
 - i. Players may protest before the next quarter begins, or before the protesting team leaves the room for protests in the 4th quarter or tiebreakers.
 - ii. The protesting player should write out or voice to the moderator the reason for protest at the conclusion of the game.

The protesting team should remind the moderator of the protest that had previously been noted. The moderator should then take the details of the protest to the Tournament Director.
 - iii. If a player leaves the game room, he or she may not protest anything that occurred prior to the time he or she left the room, unless the player left the room to help receive a ruling on the protest.
 - iv. Procedural protests ONLY (i.e. a wrong score being tabulated) may be filed until the beginning of the Playoff Rounds.
 - v. If the protest would change the result, then both teams must remain in the room or reconvene at a later point and wait for the protest to be resolved.
 - 1. During the Preliminary Rounds, if a protest would not change the result of the game, it will be taken to tournament headquarters and held until the end of the Preliminaries. If that protest would change a team's status as to whether or not they have qualified for the playoffs or their seeding within those playoffs, the protest will be resolved at that point.
 - 2. During the Playoff Rounds, if a protest would not change the result of the game, it will be dismissed by the moderator at the end of the game.
- c. Who will resolve a protest?
 - i. In the event of a minor error, such as scoring, the moderator and scorekeeper may attempt to resolve the protest if they feel it would not cause undue delay to the game.
 - ii. In the event that a minor error cannot be resolved quickly, or on any protest regarding the factual correctness of a question or an answer, the protest will be brought to the Tournament

Director, who may or may not convene a protest committee of tournament or NHBB staff to adjudicate the protest.

- iii. At the National Championships, a designated Protest Committee of will handle all protests. A majority vote is required for resolution. In the event of an abstention, the Tournament Director reserves the right to make a final ruling, but he will only do so in cases where at least two members of the Protest Committee are not in agreement, or in cases where the lone dissenting member of the committee appeals to the Tournament Director in protest of the protest resolution.
 - iv. At the Regional and State Level, all decisions of the Tournament Director are final with regard to all protests and, more generally, any interpretation of the above rules. If students believe that the rules were not followed, they should contact the Executive Director with their reasons as soon as possible upon conclusion of the tournament. The Executive Director reserves the right to provide redress of grievances in such cases. This is only reserved for extreme circumstances, however – an honest mistake or close judgment call on the part of the Tournament Director is not normally grounds for such a final appeal.
- d. How will a protest be resolved?
- i. Protests should be brought to the attention of the Tournament Director, or their designated appointee(s).
 - ii. If the protest is taken to the Tournament Director and resolved at that level, the Tournament Director or his or her designate will go to the game room and announce the resolution to all players, including the reasoning for the decision.
 - iii. The Tournament Director may call upon any and all resources available at the tournament site to resolve a protest, including but not limited to: internet research, library research, consulting with tournament staff, consulting with coaches who have teaching experience relevant to the material being protested, and consulting with people outside the tournament who have experience relevant to the material being protested. Any sources used to resolve the protest will be disclosed when the resolution of the protest is announced.
- e. What is NOT protestable?
- i. Timing decisions are not protestable, including but not limited to the time allowed after buzzing in, the time allowed after a tossup is finished, and the time allowed for a prompt for more specific information to clarify an answer.
 - ii. Judgment calls of the moderator are not protestable, including but not limited to which player was allowed to answer, what the moderator hears as directed towards him or her, and which player signaled first in the case of players playing a non-fully functional buzzer set.

IX. Additional Sanctions

a. Lateness

- i. If a team does not check in with the registration desk fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled start of the first Preliminary Round game, it risks being dropped from the tournament unless that team has contacted the Tournament Director and he or she is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the delay. NHBB may, but is under no obligation to, delay matches to wait for late teams.
 - 1. An extra team may be held in reserve, to take the place of a missing team if the spot vacated by that team would result in an odd number of teams overall.
- ii. If a team is present but one, two, or three of its players are missing at the start of a round, the match will proceed as scheduled. The player(s) may enter the match during a time when they arrive.

- iii. If a team is late reporting back from a scheduled break in the tournament, the match will begin without them after a five minute grace period or at the discretion of the tournament director. If that team should then appear after the start of the match, they may enter the match during a time when substitutes are allowed.
- b. Misconduct
 - i. Acts constituting misconduct will be interpreted **broadly** by the tournament staff and should include, but are not limited to, excessive use of profanity during games, incessant talking between tossups, and refusal to comply with the instructions of the moderator and/or tournament staff. Students may be charged with misconduct by any member of the tournament staff; sanction will be determined by the Tournament Director, including but not limited to disqualification and forfeiture of national qualification, games won, prizes, and the like.
- c. Intentional Damage
 - i. Any intentional action to damage or destroy the physical property used to stage the tournament, including but not limited to buzzer systems, desks, monitors, computer equipment, film equipment, tables, chairs, game rooms, or the personal property of other players, will be grounds for immediate disqualification and subject to additional sanction by the Executive Director up to and including a life ban for individuals and a program ban for the school. The tournament host may, at its discretion, bill the offending team's school for the damages.
- d. Intentional Cheating
 - i. Any student who attempts, by physical or electronic means, to gain access to the questions in an attempt to gain a competitive advantage for himself/herself or others who may play the questions in the future before, during, or after the tournament will be subject to a life ban.
 - ii. Any moderator who attempts to keep copies of the questions before they are cleared by The National History Bee and Bowl for distribution are subject to a life ban and, potentially, litigation.
 - iii. Any coach who attempts to keep copies of the questions before they are cleared by The National History Bee and Bowl, for distribution are subject to a life ban, a program ban for their current and future institutions, and, potentially, litigation. The same applies if any coach is found to have encouraged a student found to have violated Part I of this section of the rules.
 - iv. At the sole discretion of the Executive Director, any student or coach currently serving a suspension or ban by any state or national academic competition organization, or who has conducted his or herself in inappropriate or illegal ways may also be suspended or ban for participating in the events run by The National History Bee and Bowl. Such a ban is considered a last resort and is reserved for extreme circumstances.

X. Addenda & Rule Changes

- a. NHBB reserves the right to make changes to these rules between tournaments, including the addition, omission, or revision of rules.
- b. During tournaments, Tournament Directors and NHBB Staff reserve the right to make rule changes to cover unexpected circumstances not covered in these rules (e.g. procedures in cases of severe weather)