

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CONTESTANT

• **ENTRIES.** As many as THREE students from EACH GRADE LEVEL (grades 6, 7, and 8) may be entered in the SCIENCE District Contest from each school. Designated adults representing each school will select contestants to represent the campus at the District Meet based on their abilities and interest in science, as well as other factors, which are decided upon by each school. Each grade level is judged separately in contest.

• **ADVANCING TO STATE.** First and second place winners from each grade will advance to State. Third place winners will be the alternates. (See page 8 for complete rules. See page 108 for an abbreviated chart for contest administration.)

• **NATURE OF THE CONTEST.** The contest presents 50 multiple choice problems. Emphasis in science is placed on three main areas: knowledge of scientific fact, understanding of scientific principles, and the ability to think through scientific problems. This last area is a cognitive challenge requiring students to use higher thinking skills in order to arrive at a “solution” or understanding of a problem without previously having been exposed to that particular set of circumstances. Approximately 40% of the 50-item test consists of Earth Science questions; 40% of the questions are about Life Science; and about 20% are Physical Science. Some overlapping of these scientific areas may be within the test questions, as well.

• **WHAT HAPPENS IN THE CONTEST.** (Substitutes taking the place of absent registered contestants should be sure to let the contest director know as they enter the room to save time in roll call.) The contest director will announce the time and place that contestants and one adult should report for verification of the scoring of tests. Tests, on which the individual Contestant ID label has been placed, and answer sheets will be distributed to contestants face up. Contestants will be instructed to

write their grade levels and ID numbers in the spaces provided on the answer sheets. No calculators, alarm watches or other devices that emit sound are allowed in the contest room.

• **TIME ALLOTTED.** Contestants will have 30 minutes beginning at the start signal to take the test. A 5-minute time warning SHOULD be given. Contestants will remain quietly in their seats until the time has expired.

• **MARKING ANSWERS.** Contestants will use a black pen or pencil to write their CAPITAL letter answers in the blanks provided on the answer sheet. Any marking or erasure in the answer space will constitute an attempt.

• **SCORING.** Add 5 points for each correct answer. Subtract 2 points for each incorrect answer, or for each answer that was attempted, marked through or erased, and did not result in a correct answer. No points are added or deducted for skipped or unanswered test items.

• Mark-outs are acceptable, as long as a correct answer is written beside the mark-out. If an answer is marked out and no correct answer is written in the answer space, 2 points deducted. Erasures are permitted. Any erased correct answer that can still be seen is counted correct. An erased answer that is not correct and does not have a correct answer written over or beside it constitutes an incorrect answer, whereby 2 points are deducted.

• **VERIFICATION PERIOD.** See page 14.



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR COACHES / CONTEST DIRECTORS

• **PREPARATION FOR CONTEST.** Read and follow all instructions provided in the “Rules for ALL Participants” section of the *PSIA Academic Handbook*. Observe and practice with students all rules and procedures delineated in the “Instructions to the Contestant” and in the “Checklist for Contest Directors” and the “Checklist for Graders.” Preparation for the Science Contest should include studies in above grade level state-adopted Science textbooks, from which most of the test items are derived. The reading list of current science publications is also very helpful. Tests from previous years are available on the PSIA order forms

• **PERSONNEL NEEDED FOR CONTEST.**

1. **Contest Director.** May be a knowledgeable coach of contestants in the contest.
2. **Assistant Directors.** Two knowledgeable coaches from different schools other than director's.
3. **Graders.** Director and assistant directors also serve as graders. To expedite the grading process, provide at least two graders for every 15 papers.

• **READING LIST.**

*Popular Science* - <https://www.popsci.com/>  
*ScienceNewsExplores* - <https://www.snexplores.org/>  
 Currently adopted grades 6-9 textbooks, etc.