



Spelling

GRADES: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7-8 | ENTRIES: 3 PER SECTION | TIME: BASED ON RECORDING

2026-2027

Qual ♦ Dist ♦ State*

*Grades 2-3 do not advance to State.

SECTIONS. Each grade 2-6 competes separately while grades 7-8 compete together.

ENTRIES. As many as THREE students from each section may be entered in the Spelling District Contest from each school.

ADVANCING TO STATE. First and second place winners from sections based on the grades 4, 5, 6, and 7-8 will advance to State. Third place winners will be alternates. **For grades 2 and 3, this contest concludes at District and does not advance to the State Tournament.**

NATURE OF THE CONTEST. Contestants learn by memory to write or print (in pencil or dark ink) the spelling words found on the **current year's** "PSIA Spelling List," used for all competitions during this year. The spelling lists change each year, and the full lists consists of 600 words for grades 2 & 3, 800 words for grades 4 & 5, and 900 words for grades 6 & 7/8. The tests in competition consist of the following numbers of words:

Grades 2 & 3:	50 words on test
Grades 4 & 5:	75 words on test
Grades 6, & 7/8:	100 words on test

Should there be an error on the Spelling Lists, a correction will be posted in the PSIA Newsletter (found online and emailed to all current campus coordinators at the time of publication). Approximately 25% of the words in the spelling test will be outside words. For this contest, an outside word is any word selected from the official spelling authority, the *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 12th Edition*, that does not appear on the official study list. Grades 2 & 3 will have **13** words from outside. Grades 4 & 5 will have **19** words from outside. Grades 6, & 7/8 will have **25** words from outside. Outside words on each test will be pronounced **AFTER** the list words and carry a greater value than the regular list words. When pronounced, Outside Words will feature the definition and/or an example sentence. Some words on the test may be derivatives of the original word, or have different suffixes or prefixes.

(example: "orderly" may be "orderliness")

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE CONTEST.

The contest director will announce the time and place that contestants and one adult should report for verification of the scoring of tests. (Substitutes taking the place of absent registered contestants should notify the contest director know as they enter the room to save time in roll call.) Contestants are then given their cover sheet, on which their Contestant ID label containing the student's name, school, city, and grade level, has already been placed. Answer sheets for the tests are then distributed, and contestants are asked to place their ID numbers and grade levels only in the spaces provided on each page.

The contest director will begin the contest by playing the audio that will have the pronunciations **TWICE** at approximately 10 to 12-second intervals, and at about 5 to 6 words per minute. Additional time may be provided for more difficult words for which the pronouncer provides a sentence and/or definition. As contestants hear the words pronounced on the audio, they should begin writing/printing the spelling of the word in the spaces provided on the answer sheet. The Contest Director and Assistant Director in the room will monitor students and adjust sound on the audio, as needed. Contestants may **NOT** request the repronunciation of words, and they may not speak during the contest pronunciation time. Directors of the contest **MUST NOT repeat words**. The audio presentation must stand as the test. Contestants must use clean erasers and they may not write on their erasers or on any of their body parts before or during the contest. Words **MUST** be written only on the blanks provided on the test answer sheet by the correct number for each word.

SCORING. Award 5 points for each Spelling List word spelled correctly. Award 7 points for each Outside Word spelled correctly. No points are added or deducted for misspelled, skipped, or unanswered test items. Only proper nouns as indicated on the Official List may be capitalized, and letter formation throughout the word **MUST** be correct (**including capital letters, dotted i's and diacritical marks, such as umlauts and accents**) for the contestant to receive credit. The word list

provides the correct capitalization for each word. Words **MUST** be written beside the correct question number to be counted correct. Question numbers are pronounced for each word on the audio. Words may be marked-out or erased without penalty.

VERIFICATION PERIOD.

Please follow instructions provided on page 16 of the PSIA Academic Handbook. Use your *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, 12th Edition*, to look up any word that may be in question.

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 for the Contestant” and in the “Checklist for Contest Directors” and the “Grader Instructions.” Preparation for the Spelling Contest should include instruction in the rules of the English language, prefixes, suffixes, and root words. Providing meanings and definitions for words that are more difficult or those that have multiple meanings and spellings is helpful in providing differentiation during the contest.

PERSONNEL NEEDED FOR CONTEST.

1. *Contest Director.* May be a coach of contestants in the contest, but preferably not.
2. *Two Assistant Directors.* A knowledgeable coach from a different school other than director’s. One Assistant Director may serve as the Hall Monitor when the testing begin.
3. *Graders.* Contest and Assistant Directors must also serve as graders. To expedite the grading process, provide at least two graders for every **6** papers. **All graders must be able to read cursive.**

NOTE ON GRADING. Remember to have a *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, 12th Edition*, along with the official PSIA Spelling List, on hand during grading and at the Verification Period. These will be the only “official” sources for word spellings. Unless otherwise indicated on the official Spelling List, British spellings of words are not to be considered as correct spellings in this contest.

SPELLING LISTS and RESOURCES.

The official current year “Spelling List” can be found online in the PSIA Resources section of the website. The Spelling Contest packet contains the rules, tips for success, and spelling words for all grade levels may be ordered from the PSIA Store online.

CDs, tapes, definitions, sentences, computer practice software, and other resources are available through these supplemental companies:

ASW Enterprises
Box 737
Abilene, TX 79604-0737
800 627-9030
www.aswenterprises.com

TEP (35% Off Price of Dictionary)
800 443-2078
www.tepbooks.com

HEXCO, Inc.
800-PAJAMAS
www.hexco.com

Shall and Must List

Contestants **shall** write their Contestant ID on the Answer Sheets and not their name or their school name.

Result: Contest director should remedy the answer sheet by erasing or covering up the identifying information.

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