

2020 OPTIMIST BRAIN BOWL COMPETITION RULES

RECENT REVISIONS

1. Teams or members may be disqualified for violating normal rules of conduct or these Rules, at the discretion of the Tournament Director(s).
2. "Hovering" over the buzzer is now allowed. Inadvertent "buzz-ins" are the team's responsibility.

TEAM MAKE-UP

3. Teams consist of two to six members of 6th, 7th, or 8th graders, but only FIVE can compete in each round. No team member changes may be made once a round is under way. All team members must be entered on a Round Roster sheet at the beginning of the first round at the regional tournament. This final Roster establishes the team for the entire day AND for the championship if the team qualifies for it. Any members who are not currently present but that will arrive later in the day, or at the championship tournament, must be included on this Roster.
4. The grade level of the oldest team member determines the competition level of the team. Sixth grade teams must consist of only sixth graders. Seventh grade teams must have at least one seventh grader. Eighth grade teams must have at least one eighth grader. Both seventh and eighth grade teams may also include sixth or seventh grade students.
5. Each team selects a team member to sit in a designated seat and act as the spokesperson, the only member who can give the answer. This helps prevent team members from shouting out answers, encourages the teams to take the time to discuss their answers, and helps the judges to listen properly for team answers. A team may change its spokesperson during the competition, but may not do so during a round.
6. One team member is to sign, and thereby accept on behalf of the team, the score sheet at the end of each oral round. Score sheets are also signed by one of the judges. Note that corrections MAY occur during the day due to protests and identification of weak questions/answers. We suggest the team keep track of the team's scores for all oral rounds played during the morning.

THE RULES

7. Questions are asked from all academic areas.
8. Team members may not bring phones, ipods, smart watches, or other electronic devices to the competition tables. ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES in the competition room must be turned off and stored, as directed by the Reader.
9. The Brain Bowl Competition generally consists of one written round, four preliminary oral rounds, then three oral elimination rounds that determine the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade champions as well as the consolation round of third/fourth place teams. All teams participate in the written round and four oral rounds in the morning, with one oral round sometimes being a "bye," depending on team numbers and circumstances. The top eight teams at each grade level advance to the oral elimination rounds in the afternoon. The second elimination round involves the winners from the first elimination round (four teams at each grade level). The final oral round involves the winners from the second elimination round (two teams at each grade level) to determine first and second place, and the losers from the second elimination round to determine third/fourth place.
10. If there are an odd number of teams at any grade level, some teams will have a bye. Those teams' scores for a bye will be determined by averaging the scores for their other oral rounds.
11. All teams compete in the written round, but will do so at different times. It consists of 50 written multiple-choice questions and is scheduled as a standard round. Team members (5 max.) work together and turn in one team answer sheet. Teams must not discuss the written round after they have taken it, as they may be providing information to teams which have not yet taken the written round.
12. The oral rounds, elimination rounds, and final rounds each involve two teams competing against each other and consist of 30 questions each. Multiple sessions of the oral rounds and elimination rounds are held simultaneously in various rooms. Verbal answers are accepted only from a team's designated spokesperson. Any team member may activate the "buzzer" on behalf of his or her team, but only answers supplied by the spokesperson will be accepted. Answers blurted out by other team members will be ignored.
13. Each team is seated at its own table, and each table has a single "buzzer." Scratch paper will be provided. The only paper allowed at the table is that provided by the officials.

14. Notes by “spectators” may only be taken by one designated coach per team per oral round. No other spectators may take notes. If the team does not have a designated adult coach for that round, an alternate team member not participating in the round may take notes for the team if so desired.
15. The Reader reads the questions one at a time. Both teams have the opportunity to ring the buzzer and answer each question. The “buzzers” allow only one lamp to be lit at one time - the *first one* in. A team which accidentally rings its buzzer will be treated as though it has intentionally done so.
16. A team may ring in at any time during the reading of a question or within 15 seconds after the question has been fully read. If a team rings in *before* the question is completely read, the Reader will immediately stop reading, and the question will not be completed for that team. The team that rings in first has 15 seconds from the time it rang in to discuss and present an answer. To answer a question correctly, the spokesperson must give an answer promptly when or before being called upon to do so at the end of the 15 seconds. Silence, or any attempt to stall when called upon to give an answer, will be treated as a wrong answer. Incomplete answers are wrong answers if not completed within the time given.
17. The second team should always be working on an answer while the first team is using its 15-second answer time. The second team may communicate quietly with each other during this time. Their communication should in no way disturb the first team.
18. If the first team gives the wrong answer or fails to answer within the allotted time, the second team has a chance to answer. The second team does not need to ring in. Its allotted time to give an answer starts as soon as the Reader announces that the first team's answer is wrong or that it has not answered in a timely manner.
19. If the entire question was read before the first team rang in, it is not reread for the second team. The second team has 5 seconds to give an answer after the first team gives the wrong answer or fails to answer within the allotted time. The spokesperson must give an answer when called upon to do so at the end of the 5 seconds. Again, silence or any attempt to stall when called upon to give an answer will be treated as a wrong answer.
20. If the first team rang in before the entire question was read but gives an incorrect answer, the question is read in its entirety for the second team. The second team then has a full 15 seconds to discuss and give an answer.
21. Scoring:
 - a. Whenever the first team answers correctly, it receives one point.
 - b. Whenever the *second* team answers correctly, it receives *two* points.
22. Tie scores are allowed in the preliminary oral rounds.
23. No ties are allowed in the elimination rounds or final/consolation rounds. If the score is tied at the end of 30 questions, additional questions are read until one team answers correctly and is declared the winner. Overall 3rd place versus 4th place is resolved by the consolation round competitions. Awards are given to the top FOUR teams in each level at the end of the competition. As started in 2012, the top six teams qualify for the Championship Brain Bowl. 5th place and 6th place are resolved by total point score - morning plus 1st Elimination Round scores.
24. Scores from the preliminary rounds are totaled to determine the top eight teams at each grade level. Written round scores are the first tie-breaker. Further ties are resolved with round scores starting with Round 1, and eliminating any rounds where either team was in the written round or a “bye.” If still tied after Round 5 comparison, a coin toss will determine the tie resolution. The number of points is the key element, not head-to-head competition. These teams advance to the elimination rounds in the afternoon. Point scores from the written and preliminary oral rounds will be posted.
25. Points accumulated during the morning rounds do not carry over to the elimination rounds, except for tie-breaking purposes. The elimination rounds are head-to-head competition. Teams are seeded in the elimination rounds according to their rank after the scores from the morning rounds are totaled.
26. Team members are expected to be courteous to all Officials and other team members at all times. Teams may request confirmation or a clarification of an answer, but they are not to argue with Officials. Apparent errors are to be brought to the attention of the officials so they can try to resolve the issue promptly.

27. Members of the audience, including non-participating alternates, should in no way interact with team members, Readers, Scorekeepers, or Timekeepers during a round, unless so requested by Officials.
28. Only team members and coaches may object to any process, decision or conduct in a competition room, and must follow these rules in doing so. Protests concerning an answer to a question, (such as, for example, you think an accepted answer is incorrect, or you think an alternate answer given by a team should have been accepted as correct also) or concerning the decision of, conduct of, or procedure followed by officials in a competition room, may be filed only by a coach or by a coach's designated representative, and must follow the protest procedure determined by the competition director. Protests must be made promptly - no later than the end of the next round. Each protest made shall be made on a separate protest form, and must include adequate information for the protest judges to consider/resolve the protest, including: team name, grade level of team, round number, question number, and, preferably the name of the Reader in such round. Generally, procedural questions are settled per the Reader's decision. Informational questions may infrequently require adjustments, but the third-party-provided questions and answers will not be researched beyond use of a dictionary. If doubt exists, the provided answer will be considered the correct one.
29. When a question calls for the name of a person, a last name alone shall be considered a sufficient answer unless the question specifically called for more. If a team's spokesperson volunteers an incorrect first name, then that team's answer will be counted as a wrong answer.
30. Tie-Breaker details "restated":
 - a. Elimination Rounds: "Sudden Death"
 - b. For 8th Place, Total Score yields a tie, decided by:
 - i. Written Score
 - ii. Round 1 versus Round 1 - highest score (excluding Written or bye)
 - iii. Round 2 versus Round 2 - highest score (excluding Written or bye)
 - iv. etc.
 - v. Coin toss
 - c. For 6th Place/Championship, Elimination Round 1 loss yields a tie, decided by:
 - i. Total Score
 - ii. Written Score
 - iii. Round 1 versus Round 1 - highest score (excluding Written or bye)
 - iv. Round 2 versus Round 2 - highest score (excluding Written or bye)
 - v. etc.
 - vi. Coin toss

Note: Teams, without changing members, must be prepared to sign-up for the Championship at the time of the Regional event. Teams placing 7th or 8th *may* be asked to fill in if any of the top six teams opt out.