

# Rules for the 2020 American Library in Karlsruhe Spelling Bee

The American Library Spelling Bee is organized by a group of volunteers — *The Bee Hive*.

## 1. Eligibility

A student qualifying for the 2020 American Library in Karlsruhe Spelling Bee must meet the following requirements:

1. The student must have been born **after July 30, 2003**. This means that the contest is open to all students 16 or younger throughout the 2019/2020 Baden-Württemberg school year.
2. The student must have registered for the Spelling Bee and paid the €5 registration fee by **February 22, 2020**. Registration forms are available online or at the American Library.

## 2. Spellers

The spellers will be divided into two groups based on the main language of instruction of their school program:

- a) "E-Bees" — the main language of instruction is English.
- b) "Bees" — the main language of instruction is not English.

Students who qualify for the "Bee" group may participate in the "E-Bee" group if they so desire.

However, students who qualify for the "E-Bee" group may not participate in the "Bee" group. Students who primarily speak English at home are encouraged but not required to sign up for the "E-Bee" group.

## 3. Competition

### a. Preliminary Contest

The preliminary contest is a written spelling test. A 200-word list is available online and at the library for each of the two groups ("E-Bee" list and "Bee" list). The 30-word preliminary written test consists of 20 words taken from the respective group's 200-word list plus 10 challenge words (not from the list). The challenge words will only be counted in the event of a tie.

The proctor reads the word out loud, reads a sentence using the word, and then reads the word again. The speller writes down the word on the provided answer sheet.

The written spelling test may take place in a proctored classroom **with prior consent** of the Bee Hive. The test must be administered between **March 7 and 14, 2020**. This can be either during school hours as part of the normal curriculum or as an after-school activity. The completed tests must be received by the Spelling Bee organizers no later than Tuesday, **March 31, 2020**. All grading will be done by the Bee Hive.

Alternatively, the written test may take place at the American Library in Karlsruhe on **March 13th or 14th, 2020**.

A student may not take the test twice (e.g. once at a school and then again at the library).

**The organizing committee prefers that if a school organizes the written test, then all students from the school take the test at the school at the same time.** If there is a scheduling problem, please contact the Bee Hive right away.

Twenty students with the highest scores from each group progress to the Spelling Bee Final. Students will be informed if they have made it to the final by **April 4, 2020**.

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The written tests remain the property of the American Library Spelling Bee and will neither be shown nor sent to students, parents or teachers.

### b. Final Bee Contest

The spelling bee final will take place on **Saturday, April 25, 2020** at the American Library in Karlsruhe.

The spelling bee final is comprised of two consecutive contests - one for the "Bees" and one for the "E-Bees." The order is determined by the Beehive.

The spelling bee final is a contest involving multiple rounds of oral spelling.

In every round, the spellers will be asked to spell one word each.

For each speller, the pronouncer will say a word and use it in a sentence. The speller must then say the word, spell it, and repeat the word to signify when s/he is finished.

Spellers may not go back and change the spelling of a word once they have started.

If a speller misspells a word, the judges will ring a bell, whereby the speller is eliminated from the contest.

If the speller correctly spells the word, s/he will proceed to the next round.

The next round will start when all the spellers of the previous round have spelled a word. If all spellers in a given round spell incorrectly, then the round will be repeated. All spellers eliminated during the same round will be tied for the same place.

The contest will continue until a first, second and third place winner have been determined.

### The following points pertain to the Final Bee Contest:

#### 1. Words

The pronouncer, with help from the Word Master, will use the published word lists first. However, at some point and at the discretion of the judges and Word Master, the pronouncer will go off list and use a special list of words prepared by the Word Master. These words will not be disclosed to the spellers ahead of time. The Word Master will strive to choose words that are unambiguous with respect to regional spelling or pronunciation.

#### 2. Time constraints

The spellers will have two minutes to spell each word. Timing will begin once the pronouncer has finished reading the word and its sentence. The judges will disqualify any speller who does not provide a complete spelling before the expiration of the time limit.

#### 3. The pronouncer's role

The pronouncer is also the Master of Ceremonies (MC) and facilitates the smooth running of the Spelling Bee. He or she will strive to pronounce the words according to standard American English diacritical markings.

Homonyms: If a word has one or more homonyms, the pronouncer will indicate which word is to be

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spelled by defining the word.

Spellers' requests for word information: The pronouncer will respond to the spellers' requests for a word's definition, part of speech or language(s) of origin, as well as to repeat the word and its sentence.

Pronouncer's sense of helpfulness: The pronouncer may offer word information—without the speller having requested it—if the pronouncer senses that the information would be helpful.

### 4. The judges' role

The judges uphold the rules and, aided by the Word Master, determine whether or not the spellers spell the words correctly. The decisions of the judges are final, and there is no right of appeal. In the unlikely event that the judges are unable to agree, the decision of the Word Master is final, and there is no right of appeal.

Interaction with the spellers: Because seeing lip movements may be critical to detecting misunderstandings or misspellings, the spellers should face the judges when spelling a word.

Misunderstandings: The judges will participate in the exchange of information between the spellers and the pronouncer if they feel that clarification is needed. The judges will listen carefully to the spellers' pronunciation of the words, and if they sense that a speller has misunderstood a word, they will work with the speller and pronouncer until they are satisfied that reasonable attempts have been made to assist the speller in understanding the word. While the judges are responsible for attempting to detect a speller's misunderstanding, it is sometimes impossible to detect a misunderstanding until a spelling error has been made. The judges are not responsible for any speller's misunderstanding.

Pronouncer errors: The judges will compare the pronouncer's pronunciation with the diacritical markings in the word list. If the judges feel that the pronouncer's pronunciation does not match the pronunciation specified in the diacritical markings, the judges will direct the pronouncer to correct the error as soon as it is detected.

Judges will disqualify a speller (1) who refuses a request to start spelling; (2) who does not approach the microphone when it is time to receive the word; (3) who does not comply with the eligibility requirements; (4) who engages in unsportsmanlike conduct; (5) who, in the process of retracing a spelling, alters the letters or sequence of letters from those first uttered; (6) who, in the process of spelling, utters unintelligible or nonsense sounds; or (7) who goes over the time limit of two minutes.

### 5. The spellers' role

Interaction with the judges: The speller makes an effort to face the judges and pronounce the word for the judges before spelling it. The speller, while facing the judges, makes an effort to utter each letter distinctly and with sufficient volume to be understood by the judges. Because seeing lip movements may be critical to detecting misunderstandings or misspellings, the spellers should face the judges when spelling a word.

The MC will ask the spellers to follow the "triple S" rule: **"Say it, Spell it, Say it again."**

First, saying a word gives the speller a chance to think about the word **before** spelling it, and it gives the pronouncer and the judges a chance to make sure that the speller has understood the word correctly. Repeating the word after spelling it shows the judges that the speller has finished. The MC will remind the spellers of the "triple S" rule if they forget. The speller's answer is not considered complete until s/he has repeated the word.

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Pronunciation of the alphabet: The spellers must use the correct American English pronunciation for the letters in the given words. Spellers who do not pronounce the letters correctly will be eliminated from the contest.

For example, spellers may not mix up "g" and "j", "i" and "e" or "c" and "z".

In American English:

"g" sounds like "gee"

"j" sounds like "jay"

"i" sounds like "eye" or the "i" sound in "pie"

"e" sounds like the "e" in "me"

"c" sounds like "sea"

"z" rhymes with "g", "e" and "c" (zed is also allowed)

Spellers' requests for word information: After receiving a word from the pronouncer, a speller may ask for 1) the word and/or the sentence to be repeated, 2) a definition, 3) the word's part of speech, and 4) its language(s) of origin.

Misunderstandings: Spellers are responsible for any misunderstanding of a word unless (1) the pronouncer did not provide correct pronunciation; (2) the pronouncer provided incorrect information regarding the word's definition, part of speech, or language of origin; or (3) the speller correctly spelled a homonym of the word and the pronouncer failed to distinguish between the homonyms.