

# 2009 OPTIMIST BRAIN BOWL COMPETITION RULES

## 2009 ADDITIONS

1. Team members may not bring phones, ipods or other electronic devices to the competition tables. All electronic devices in the competition room must be turned off and stored.
2. Notes may only be taken by one designated coach per team per oral round. Spectators may not 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.
3. All team members must sign a Round Roster sheet for each round.

## TEAM MAKE-UP

1. Teams consist of five members. Although not recommended, teams of less than five will be allowed to compete. Two is minimum.
2. Each team may have a sixth member as an alternate. The alternate may replace another team member in any of the rounds, including the written round. However, no team member changes may be made once a round is under way.
3. 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 younger students.
4. 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 and helps the judges to listen properly for team answers. It also encourages the teams to take the time to discuss their answers. A team may change its spokesperson during the competition, but may not do so during a round.
5. Each team member is to sign, and thereby accept, the score sheet at the end of each oral round. Score sheets are also signed by one of the judges. The team should also keep track of the team's scores for all oral rounds played during the morning. Note that corrections MAY occur during the day due to protests and identification of poor questions/answers.

## THE RULES

6. Questions are asked from all academic areas.
7. The Brain Bowl Competition generally consists of one written round, often a "bye," three or four preliminary oral rounds, two oral elimination rounds, and the final oral rounds that determine the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade champions. All teams participate in the written round and the four oral rounds in the morning, with one oral round often being a "bye." 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).
8. If there are an odd number of teams at any grade level, some teams will have an additional bye. Those teams' scores for a bye will be determined by averaging the scores for their other oral rounds.
9. 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) 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.
10. 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 in various rooms. Verbal answers are given only by a team's designated spokesperson. Although any team member may activate the "buzzer" on behalf of his or her team, only answers supplied by the spokesperson will be accepted. Answers blurted out by other team members will be ignored.
11. 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.
12. 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. Team members must keep their hands to the side of the buzzer; "hovering" directly over the buzzer is not allowed. A team which accidentally rings its buzzer will be treated as though it has intentionally done so.

13. 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 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.
14. 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.
15. 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 within which 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.
16. If the question was read in its entirety 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.
17. If the first team rang in before the entire question was read, 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.
18. Scoring:
  - a. Whenever the first team answers correctly, it receives one point.
  - b. Whenever the second team answers correctly, it receives *two* points.
19. Tie scores are allowed in the preliminary oral rounds.
20. No ties are allowed in the elimination rounds or final 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. The "tie" for overall 3<sup>rd</sup> place is resolved by total score points for the day. Awards are given to the top FOUR teams at the end of the competition.
21. Scores from the preliminary rounds are totaled to determine the top eight teams at each grade level. 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.
22. 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.
23. 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.
24. 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.
25. Only team members and coaches may protest any process or decision, and must follow the procedure determined by the competition director. Protests must be filed only by the coach, and must include basic information: team name, grade, round number, room number, question number, and, preferably, Reader name.
26. 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.
27. 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.