



Academic Challenge Quiz

An exciting, fast-paced quiz bowl highlighting students' knowledge and thinking skills
Contest Support provided by individual volunteers

General Contest Rules

Revised August 2024

Question Resources

Questions come from available resources (See *Resource List for Current Year* on ACQ page) or are created by Academic Rodeo. They are a mix of academics, fine arts, potpourri, and current events.

Current events questions will be taken from current State, National or International news of significance. Every effort is made to avoid scandalous or inappropriate topics. No local info will be used without prior notice unless it is of national importance. Names of elected state and national officials, those running for office, and other notable figures in the news tend to show up in questions.

Resource materials are not infallible. Occasionally, answers in resource materials may be incorrect or have become outdated since it was published. If the incorrect answer is obvious (as in a math problem or other common information), the answer given by a team member will be considered incorrect, even though the given answer may appear as a correct answer in the resource material.

If a team member gives an answer that appears to be incorrect from the resource material, but the Moderator and/or judges are confident that the answer given is correct, the team gets credit.

Formats

HIGH SCHOOL: We have made some changes to the High School format

The High School Bracket has been set with a limit of 24 teams. Your school/group is allowed to have 2 teams if there are spots available. After the deadline, the schools registered will have one team placed first, then their second teams will be placed according to the school's registration dates (earlier registrations get priority). As teams DROP, the second teams will continue to be placed according to their registration dates. **PLEASE** drop IMMEDIATELY if you decide you will not participate as this will allow other teams to be placed in the bracket. A random draw will occur to determine specific bracket placement.

No longer will each team have an automatic 2nd match.

Half of the teams will compete each of the two days in the High School Tournament First Round. First Matches will occur in the morning. Teams winning their First Match, will move forward in the tournament on the right side of the bracket for their Second Match that afternoon.

Additionally, from the teams that do NOT win their first match, the two teams with the highest scores for that day move to the left side of the bracket for a second chance match. Their match will be immediately after lunch on the day they compete in their First Match. The winning team from that match on each day will move to the right side of the bracket and meet on the day of Finals.

MIDDLE SCHOOL: No changes have been made to this format. See "Middle School Tournament" information below.

Schedules

First Round Matches are held in December. There will be 2 days of competition per level (2-MS & 2-HS). The MS and HS teams making it to the finals will compete on the same day during the ACQ finals in February.

Teams

Each team consists of 6 students. In any match, 4 of the 6 students sit at the table to represent the team in the match. The remaining 2 students are usually seated behind the team at the table, but they may **NOT** assist in answering any questions. One team member is designated as Captain. The Captain and the three other members competing in each match, should be designated before the start of the match.

In **rare instances** of illness and conflicting school or group activities, a team may compete with only 3 members, but should contact Academic Rodeo in advance, if possible, or immediately upon arrival.

A Coach/Sponsor must be present at each match to certify team members and alternates.

General Arrangements

Teams will sit at a table with a buzzer and microphone for each player. Alternates will be seated in the audience or behind the team and may **NOT** attempt to assist in answering questions.

Matches may be set for two or three teams, depending on the number registered and the best bracket arrangement to complete the tournament in a reasonable period.

At the beginning of a match, after the team is seated, the team will be supplied with half-sheets of paper for a quick "brain dump". This may be used by the team when trying to remember information quickly. No other paper and/or lists may be brought to the table. Doing so will result in disqualification.

Panel of Judges

Each school or group **must provide one scorekeeper** when they are competing in a match. An additional neutral scorekeeper will be provided by Academic Rodeo. The ACQ Moderator and ACQ Director will resolve any issues related to correctness of answers or procedural issues. When necessary, a question may be eliminated and replaced at the discretion of the Academic Rodeo Director. Scorekeepers should review rules and procedures prior to the match.

Seeding

Pairings in the tournament are by random draw conducted by Academic Rodeo. If byes are necessary to complete the draw, they will be awarded to the highest scoring teams from the previous year.

Occasionally after the tournament has begun, a team will drop from the tournament, allowing a team to move ahead without an opponent. This is unavoidable and a part of the tournament process.

Protest Provision

The decision of the Director, Moderator, and, in some instances, the judges will be the final word on questions and answers that are protested. If a consensus cannot be reached on a question, that question will be eliminated, and another question will be asked. Please note the following three points:

1. Protest for any reason must be lodged before the winning team is announced in any match.
2. Only the team sponsor may lodge a protest and it should be done **quietly to the Academic Rodeo Representative** at the match. NO ONE, even Coaches should blurt out a protest in the middle of a match, especially one being timed.
3. The Moderator will clarify this protest provision at the beginning of each competition.

Judges may disqualify any team when anyone other than the team Coach/Sponsor interferes with the flow of the competition. Team coaches should provide guidelines to parents attending the contest.

Winning Team(s)

All teams will remain seated until a winner has been identified in each tournament.

The team with the highest number of points at the end of the match will be declared the winner and will proceed to the next level in the tournament bracket. (See the Academic Challenge Quiz Bracket.)

Procedures are in place if there is a tie at the end of a match. It usually involves a short Toss-up Match of 30 or more questions where any team member at the table may answer.

Awards

1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place teams are awarded in the Middle School and High School Levels.

The team receives a trophy. Team members receive Place Ribbons.

Members of placing teams may apply for Middle School or High School Scholarships.

Middle School Tournament

Middle School Tournament, grades 6 through 8, modified single-elimination format

Each **Middle School** or Group may have 1 team of 6 students. Students may be in 6th, 7th, or 8th grades. However, ONLY TWO 8th Grade students may sit at the table in any given match. More than two 8th graders may be registered, but in the event of illness or absences, this could affect the team's ability to have all 4 students at the table in a match. Schools with 6th Grade as the highest level may compete with an all 6th grade team.

Middle School matches are arranged in a modified single-elimination bracket and the tournament occurs over multiple days. Teams move into a second chance bracket after a first loss. One of the Teams with a loss from the First Round Prelim Matches will eventually emerge and move back into the bracket with the Teams that advanced from the First Round.

Head to Head Competition for Middle School

School matches will be set-up in 3 Periods. Occasionally, in the interest of time, matches for a particular day or round may be modified with fewer questions or a shorter time allotment for sets of questions. This could occur when there have been numerous cancellations and reschedules due to weather or illness issues.

In **Middle School** matches, the 4 seated at the beginning of the match may be switched after the 2nd Period for the 3rd Period Rapid Fire Round. They must maintain no more than two 8th Grade students at the table when a switch is made.

First Period - Toss-up Round (Approximately 6 to 8 minutes)

During this Period, team members may consult freely to determine an answer, and any team member may buzz in to indicate they have an answer for the question, **but the Captain must give the team's answer.**

The Moderator will read a toss-up question in its entirety. If a team member buzzes in before a question is completed, the Moderator will stop reading, and the Captain must answer the question before the light goes off (approximately 8 seconds). If the answer is incorrect, the Moderator will read the question again, if requested, and will give the other team(s) the opportunity to **immediately** answer the question (within 10 seconds). If no team buzzes in, the Moderator will move to the next Toss-up question. Toss-up questions will continue to be asked until a question is answered correctly.

The team winning the toss-up question is given **2 minutes** to answer **20 questions**, each with a value of 10 points. Team members may consult freely, but the official team answer must come from the Captain and only an answer from the team captain will be recognized by the Moderator. The team Captain must verbally "pass" on a question to be asked the next question when the team cannot answer the current one. If all 20 are presented in less than 2 minutes, the team will be asked any passed questions in the order originally asked. A 20-point bonus is awarded if all 20 questions are answered correctly.

When there are only two teams in a match, the second team will take its turn with a second set of 20 questions when the first team completes its 2 minutes. When there is a third team, a second toss-up question will be given to determine which team will answer the second set of questions. The remaining team will then attempt to answer the third set of questions.

In Modified versions of this Period, the time may be reduced to 1 minute.

Second Period – Toss-up Round (Approximately ten minutes)

Although not a timed Period, timings exist to move the match along. Any team member may buzz in, and any team member may answer the questions in this toss-up round. However, the Moderator will accept the first answer heard when several answers are being given at the same time. When the buzzer is pushed, someone from the team must answer the question immediately after being recognized by the Moderator and before the light goes off, approximately 8 to 10 seconds. If a team member buzzes in before a question is completed, the Moderator will stop reading.

If the answer given is incorrect, and if the Moderator is not interrupted by a buzzer, the Moderator will read the entire question again and will ask if anyone has an answer. The opposing team(s) may immediately buzz in and answer the question before the light goes off.

When no correct answer is given, or no attempts have been made to answer the question, the moderator will move on to the next question. Either team may ask for the question to be repeated BEFORE a team has buzzed-in to answer. Questions will count 20 points. The maximum number of questions in this Period will be 20. A 20-point bonus will be awarded if the same team answers all 20 questions.

In Modified versions of this Quarter, only 10 questions are given.

Teams may swap alternates with members at the table prior to the 3rd Period.

Third Period – Rapid Fire Round

This round consists of short, rapid-fire questions requiring quick answers. Categories for the sets are social studies, math, spelling, language arts, science, and potpourri. Any team member may answer questions in this Quarter.

A toss-up question will be asked to determine which team answers each set of rapid-fire questions. Any team member may interrupt the toss-up question to answer after buzzing in. If a team member buzzes in before a question is completed, the moderator will stop reading. If an incorrect answer is given by the team winning the toss-up, the question will be read in its entirety and other team(s) will have an opportunity to buzz-in immediately to answer the question, and someone from the team must answer before the light goes off, approximately 8 to 10 seconds. Toss-up questions will continue to be asked until a question is answered correctly.

Questions will be in 6 sets of 11 questions, with each answer counting 5 points. The team will have 1 ½ minutes or 90 seconds to answer the set of questions. Any team member may answer the rapid-fire questions. The team may pass on any question. Passed questions will be repeated in the order originally presented if time remains.

Any team answering all questions in a set will be given a 20-point bonus for that set.

In Case of Tie

In case of a tie at the end of a match, competition will continue in the same manner as in the third quarter toss-up round, with sets of 35 questions, until the tie is broken.

A special set of 35 questions is used to determine 2nd and 3rd Places in the Tournament.

High School Tournament

High School Tournament, grades 9 through 12, modified single-elimination format

Each **High School** or Group may have 2 teams of 6 students. Students may be in 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grades. However, **ONLY TWO from 11th and 12th grades** may sit at the table in any given match. More than two 11th or 12th graders may be registered, but in the event of illness or absences, this could affect the team's ability to have all 4 students at the table in a match.

HIGH SCHOOL: We have made some changes to the High School format

The High School Bracket has been set with a limit of 24 teams. Your school/group is allowed to have 2 teams. All teams above 24 will be on the waiting list. As teams DROP, you will be moved into a spot. **PLEASE** drop IMMEDIATELY if you decide you will not participate as this will allow other teams to be placed in the bracket. When all teams are registered, a random draw will occur to determine specific bracket placement.

No longer will each team have an automatic 2nd match.

Half of the teams will compete each of the two days in the High School Tournament First Round. First Matches will occur in the morning. Teams winning their First Match, will move forward in the tournament on the right side of the bracket for their Second Match that afternoon.

Additionally, from the teams that do NOT win their first match, the two teams with the highest scores for that day move to the left side of the bracket for a second chance match. Their match will be immediately after lunch on the day they compete in their First Match. The winning team from that match on each day will move to the right side of the bracket and meet on the day of Finals.

Head to Head Competition for High School

School matches will be set-up in 3 Periods. Occasionally, in the interest of time, matches for a particular day or round may be modified with fewer questions or a shorter time allotment for sets of questions. This could occur when there have been numerous cancellations and reschedules due to weather or illness issues.

High School teams may swap alternates and members at the table at the end of the 2nd Period for the 3rd Period Rapid Fire Round.

First Period - Toss-up Round (Approximately 6 to 8 minutes)

During this Period, team members may consult freely to determine an answer, and any team member may buzz in to indicate they have an answer for the question, **but the Captain must give the team's answer.**

The Moderator will read a toss-up question in its entirety. If a team member buzzes in before a question is completed, the Moderator will stop reading, and the Captain must answer the question before the light goes off (approximately 8 seconds). If the answer is incorrect, the Moderator will read the question again, if requested, and will give the other team(s) the opportunity to **immediately** answer the question (within 10 seconds). If no team buzzes in, the Moderator will move to the next Toss-up question. Toss-up questions will continue to be asked until a question is answered correctly.

The team winning the toss-up question is given **90 seconds** to answer **16 questions**, each with a value of 10 points. Team members may consult freely, but the official team answer must come from the Captain and only an answer from the team captain will be recognized by the Moderator. The team Captain must verbally "pass" on a question to be asked the next question when the team cannot answer the current one. If all 15 are presented in less than 90 seconds, the team will be asked any passed questions in the order originally asked. A 20-point bonus is awarded if all 16 questions are answered correctly.

When there are only two teams in a match, the second team will take its turn with a second set of 16 questions when the first team completes its 90 seconds. When there is a third team, a second toss-up question will be given to determine which team will answer the second set of questions. The remaining team will then attempt to answer the third set of questions.

In Modified versions of this Period, the time may be reduced to 1 minute.

Second Period – Toss-up Round (Approximately ten minutes)

Although not a timed Period, timings exist to move the match along. Any team member may buzz in, and any team member may answer the questions in this toss-up round. However, the Moderator will accept the first answer heard when several answers are being given at the same time. When the buzzer is pushed, someone from the team must answer the question immediately after being recognized by the Moderator and before the light goes off, approximately 8 to 10 seconds. If a team member buzzes in before a question is completed, the Moderator will stop reading.

If the answer given is incorrect, and if the Moderator is not interrupted by a buzzer, the Moderator will read the entire question again and will ask if anyone has an answer. The opposing team(s) may immediately buzz in and answer the question before the light goes off.

When no correct answer is given, or no attempts have been made to answer the question, the moderator will move on to the next question. Either team may ask for the question to be repeated BEFORE a team has buzzed-in to answer. Questions will count 20 points. The maximum number of questions in this Period will be 17. A 20-point bonus will be awarded if the same team answers all 17 questions.

In Modified versions of this Quarter, only 10 questions are given.

Third Period – Rapid Fire Round

This round consists of short, rapid-fire questions requiring quick answers. Categories for the sets are social studies, math, spelling, language arts, science, and potpourri. Any team member may answer questions in this Period.

A toss-up question will be asked to determine which team answers each set of rapid-fire questions. Any team member may interrupt the toss-up question to answer after buzzing in. If a team member buzzes in before a question is completed, the moderator will stop reading. If an incorrect answer is given by the team winning the toss-up, the question will be read in its entirety and other team(s) will have an opportunity to buzz-in immediately to answer the question and must answer before the light goes off, approximately 8 to 10 seconds. Toss-up questions will continue to be asked until a question is answered correctly.

Questions will be in 6 sets of 11 questions, with each answer counting 5 points. The team will have 1 ½ minutes or 90 seconds to answer the set of questions. Any team member may answer the rapid-fire questions. The team may pass on any question. Passed questions will be repeated in the order originally presented if time remains.

Any team answering all questions in a set will be given a 20-point bonus for that set.

In Case of Tie

In case of a tie at the end of a match, competition will continue in the same manner as in the third quarter toss-up round, with sets of 35 questions, until the tie is broken.

A special set of 35 questions is used to determine 2nd and 3rd Places in the Tournament.