

# **Oregon Battle of the Books (OBOB) Official Handbook 2016-2017**

The OBOB Project is supported in part through a LSTA grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services through the Library Services and Technology Act, administered by the Oregon State Library and is supported by the Oregon Association of School Libraries--a division of the Oregon Library Association

The purpose of this handbook is to record the official rules and guidelines adopted and amended as necessary by the OBOB committee. This handbook also serves as a vehicle of introducing and explaining the procedures used for battles. The Regional Manager Manual is intended to provide resources to assist Regional and State managers in organizing their competitions using standardized procedures . The OBOB State Committee recommends the Official Handbook be used for local competitions as well.

For more information and resources, visit our website:

<http://oboblsta.pbworks.com/>

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# Oregon Battle of the Books Statewide Committee

## **State Executive Committee Members:**

**Administrative Chair:** Stephanie Laing

**Outreach Chair:** Courtney Snyder

**Financial Chair:** Korie Jones Buerkle

**Question Chair:** Michelle Barnes

**Treasurer:** Linda Fukasawa

**State Tournament:** Libby Hamler-Dupras and DeAnn Orand

**Secretary:** Meg Miranda

**Outreach Chair:** Courtney Snyder

**Title Selection Chair:** Jennifer Thompson

## **Regional Managers:**

Kelly Bartlett, Leslie Brown, Karyn Buchheit, Korie Jones Buerkle, Sara Green, Lisa Griffith, Jennifer Hitchcock, Judy Kulluson, Tammy Lanz, Shelby Linn, Heidi Pramuk, Christy Sander, Suzie Schwitzer,

## **Title Selection Committee:**

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## Introduction

Oregon Battle of the Books, OBOB, is a statewide **voluntary** reading motivation and comprehension program sponsored by the Oregon Association of School Libraries (OASL) and the Oregon Library Association (OLA), in conjunction with a Library Services and Technology Act grant through the Oregon State Library. Students in 3<sup>rd</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade, regardless of ability, are exposed to quality literature representing a variety of literary styles and viewpoints. The mission is to encourage and recognize students who enjoy reading, to broaden reading interests, to increase reading comprehension, promote academic excellence, and to promote cooperative learning and teamwork among students.

Lists of books are chosen, and questions are written for each grade level division. Students read the books, discuss them, quiz each other on the contents, and then compete in teams of four students to correctly answer questions based on the books in a "quiz show" format. Half of the questions will begin with the words "In Which Book" so that the answer will be a title and author and the other questions will be "Content" questions with the title of the book supplied. Teams may participate at local, district, regional, and state levels of competition.

New lists of titles for each level are compiled each year by the selection committee based on the "Criteria for the Selection of Titles." An attempt is made to vary the titles chosen according to genre and difficulty so that readers may encounter a broad range of books.

## History

The original idea for Battle of the Books came from a radio program sponsored by the Chicago Public Library in the early 1940s which featured teams of students from different Chicago schools each week. It was revived in the 1960s by one of those child contestants who grew up to be a school librarian in Illinois.

Battle of the Books was brought to Oregon by school librarian and author Sybilla Cook in the 1970s. Word spread about the program through various library conferences. Successful local Battle programs developed in various parts of Oregon throughout the ensuing decades including Salem-Keizer, Roseburg, Springfield and Beaverton. Never a mandated program, it has continued to be popular because it works. Parents are enthusiastic. Teachers and librarians find children read more books as they learn the pleasures of teamwork and academic competition.

In 2006, with the encouragement of State Librarian Jim Schepcke, OASL President Allen Kopf formed a committee to submit a grant to the Oregon State Library for a statewide Battle of the Books program. Upon receipt of the first LSTA grant, the committee moved forward with the statewide plan to be implemented in the 2007-2008 school year. The state OBOB Committee was then formed to bring various disparate Oregon programs together into one cohesive state-wide effort and the Oregon Battle of the Books was born. OBOB has continued ever since with the support from LSTA grants, the Oregon Association of School Librarians, the Oregon Library Association, and countless volunteers from all over the state, including, local businesses, local service clubs, both public and school librarians, teachers, school administrators, and parents, just to name a few.

## Organization

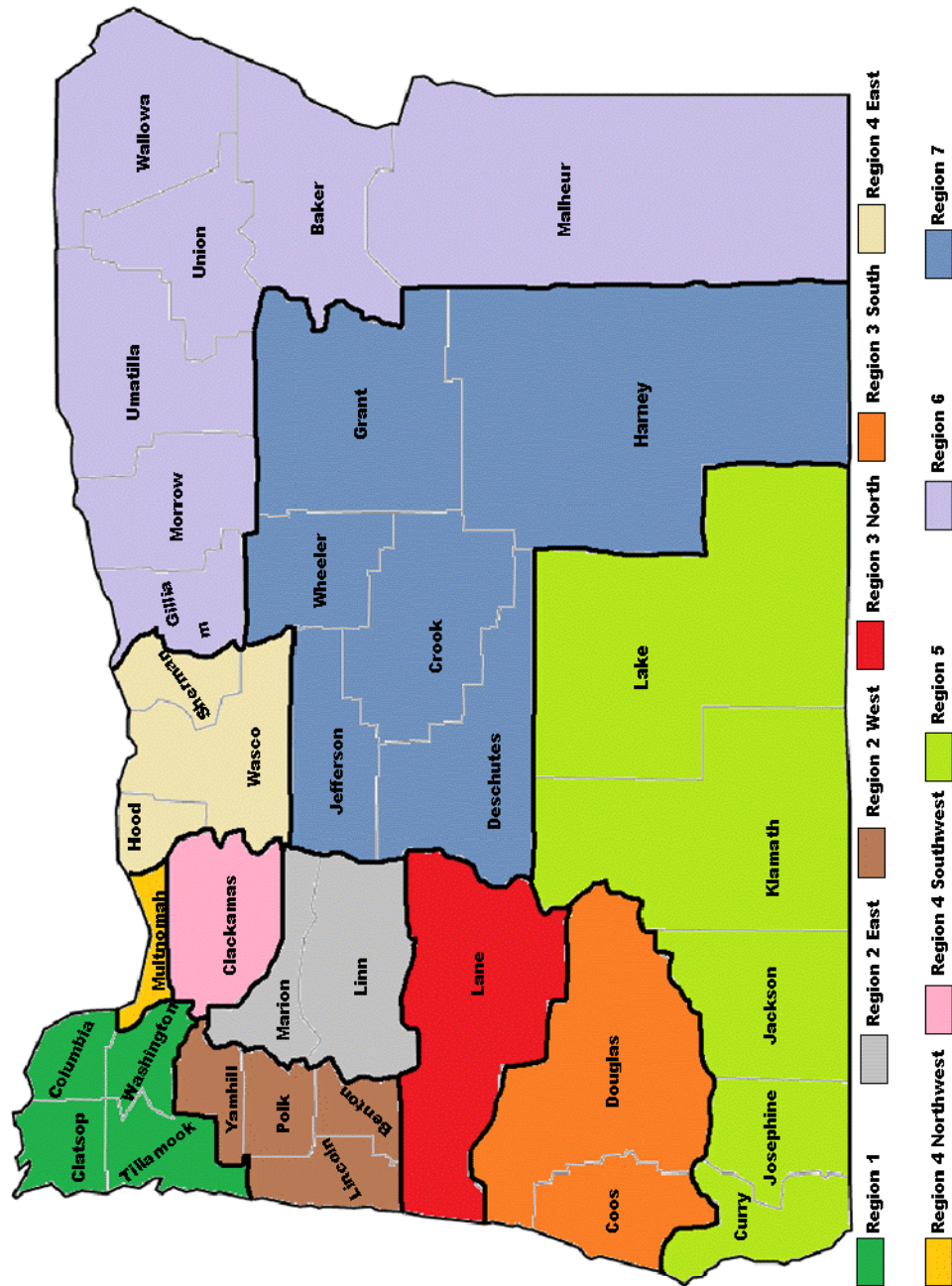
The Oregon Battle of the Books is organized locally by participating school systems, regionally by a regional committee, and statewide by the OBOB Steering Committee. The Executive Committee is comprised of the following chairs: Administrative, Outreach, Financial, Title Selection, Questions Chairs as well as the Secretary, Treasurer and the OBOB State Tournament Co-Managers. The full OBOB Steering Committee includes representatives from OBOB regions throughout the state and meets in person in August, November, January, February and April of each year to discuss policies and issues and select titles for the next school year. Librarians and school personnel interested in joining the Steering Committee should contact the Administrative Chair at [OBOBlsta@gmail.com](mailto:OBOBlsta@gmail.com). All OBOB Committee members are volunteers.

The OBOB Executive Committee will oversee the collection and distribution of information, questions, and book lists. Registration of participating school teams takes place each fall on the OBOB website and registration must be completed prior to announced deadlines for a school to participate in their designated regional tournaments. A participation fee is required of schools to support the OBOB committee in operating state and regional tournaments and in providing book grants to schools. Registration information is available on the OBOB Wiki <http://oboblsta.pbworks.com/>. At the direction of the OBOB Executive Committee, regional committees will conduct the regional competitions according to rules set out in this handbook. A Regional Manager Manual is also available with organizational information and official handouts

The OBOB Executive Committee is responsible for the guidelines and rules stated in the Official Handbook and the Regional Manager Manual. The OBOB program strives to be inclusive of all Oregon students in grades 3-12. From time to time special accommodations are required to allow students with unique abilities to participate on a team. Accommodations will be approved by the Executive Committee prior to the beginning of the regional tournaments. Accommodations will not be allowed that give a team an unfair advantage during competition.

Tournaments will take place in regions established by OASL (see map). Due to the number of schools participating within a region it may be necessary for a region to be subdivided. Subdivision of a region will be overseen by the Executive Committee.

# OBOB Regions



Note: Region 2 is only divided at the elementary level. There will be changes to Region 4 to be announced – watch the OBOB website for the latest information

## General Player and Team Rules

- All students participating must be in grades 3-5, 6-8, or 9-12 for the current school year. Team members do not have to be in the same grade.
- Students must participate within the school that they are registered. A school may not form a team consisting of students registered at multiple schools. However, students who are registered in multiple schools may be a member of a team from any school at which they are officially registered.
- Each team must have a sponsor from their school who is a school library media specialist, library paraprofessional, or other school staff member.
- Composition of the team members may not change once the team members have been registered for the Regional tournament. Should a team member be unable to participate in the Regional competition another school team member may be chosen to replace the missing member prior to the registering at the Regional competition. Note that fair play is encouraged – hand picking, “cherry picking” or “stacking” a team to send to regionals is considered to be contrary to good sportsmanship. Teams may not add members should the team qualify for the State Tournament.
- Regional competitions do not require participation in a district/county/ESD competition. State Tournament battles do require participation in the Regional competitions.
- Each school may send only one team, per division, to the Regional competition (grant recipients must attend and compete in the Regional competitions).
- Each region will send its top team in each division to the State Tournament competition. Some regions will be allowed to send more than one team to the state tournament competition, depending on the number of registered teams competing at the regional competition. Regional managers will be notified of the number of teams their region is allowed to send to state each year before they host their regional competition.
- Teams are usually made up of four members, with one optional alternate, for a total of five members. However, no more than four students may participate in any given battle. Teams may have less than four players.
- There may be only one alternate. This alternate may take the place of another player for a battle. When the alternate is used, the alternate must remain in competition for the entire battle. No substitutions may be made during a battle.
- No other person may assist in answering any question directed to a team, or any challenge decisions, including the team’s coach. The Moderator will disqualify a team determined to be receiving outside help.
- Team players must be present in the room for pool play and all other battles. Battles may be delayed because of the tie breaker battles but teams must be present and ready to play when the announcement to begin is given.
- In the event of a situation that is not specifically addressed in the OBOB rules, the decision of the Moderator with the input from the co-Judge(s) in the room for that battle is final.
- The OBOB State Committee has the authority to refuse to allow a team to participate in the event of unsportsmanlike behavior or other extenuating circumstances.

## **Student Registration Clarification:**

Students who are currently homeschooled may participate in OBOB as a member of a school team within the public school attendance boundaries of the school in which the student's parents reside (as per ORS 339.460 section B, part f). Homeschooled students may not, however, form a team of their own. Homeschooled students wishing to participate in OBOB should contact their local school library for OBOB related class and/or practice requirements (ORS 339.60, Sec B(e)). Homeschooled students may be placed on a school OBOB team at the local level following the same procedures and guidelines used for traditional students.

Students enrolled in on-line school programs who wish to participate in OBOB will follow the same public school attendance boundary residential guidelines as given above for home schooled students.

All public, charter and private schools are welcome and encouraged to participate in OBOB.

## **Coach Rules and Responsibilities**

- Become familiar with all the rules and procedures provided in this handbook and commit to following them.
- Prepare the teams by reviewing procedures and rules.
- At regional and state competitions, the coach or designee will serve as a Judge in the room each time their team battles.
- Conduct practice battles which follow OBOB protocol. Practice questions are not provided by OBOB. Please note that it is strongly suggested that local competitions follow the same rules and procedures used at the regional and state tournaments. This will help students to become familiar with the rules that will be followed at the regional and state competitions.
- Encourage and moderate discussions about the books.
- Encourage as many student participants and teams as possible at the school level.
- Direct teams in writing their own practice questions if additional questions are desired.
- Offer moral support to the Moderator during battles and help manage audience behavior.
- Must secure adult supervision for the team at all regional and state competitions.
- Reinforce that the focus of this program is to celebrate the love of reading, and promote good sportsmanship for both teams and spectators.
- Must bring a complete set of books to regional and state competitions.
- May need to provide volunteer(s) at regional and state, if requested by the regional manager.
- Communicate and confirm attendance at Regional and State competitions. Note that team members must be available to battle during the entire time of Regional and State tournaments.
- Check in when the whole OBOB team arrives at tournament.
- Follow the specific guidelines provided for coaches at the regional and state competitions.
- Attend the mandatory volunteer training prior to the Regional and State (if attending) Competitions.



## Regional and State Tournament Rules & Procedures

- 1) All electronic devices in the room must be in the off mode during all battles. Photos may only be taken before and after a battle.
- 2) No videotaping of battles may occur at Regional and State competitions. Coverage of the competition by local media may occur if students involved have parent permission submitted to the Regional Manager and State Tournament managers.
- 3) There will be 16 questions at local, regional, and state battles (8 "In Which Book" and 8 "Content"). The final match at regional and state battles will consist of 32 questions (16 of each type).
- 4) Competitions begin with a round robin pool with the top scoring teams going into a single elimination tournament. All teams play at least twice. Advancing teams will be determined by the total of the scores.
- 5) Each team will bring a set of concealed OBOB books and hand them to the Moderator when they enter the room for each battle.
- 6) Teams are made up of up to four members with one optional alternate, for a total of five members. All competing members must be physically present for a battle. Teams may battle with less than four players.
- 7) Of the four competing members, one will serve as the spokesperson throughout each battle. The role of spokesperson may be changed or rotated in a tournament but not during a battle.
- 8) Alternate members, who are not playing, will sit in a designated audience area during battles.
- 9) Two teams will compete during a single battle. A coin toss will be held before the start of each battle. The winning team decides where they want to sit. (Efforts will be made to ensure teams can quietly discuss answers among themselves without fear of being overheard by the opposing team.)
- 10) The team that sits on the left of the Moderator will always be given first chance at the odd-numbered questions, and the team on the right will always be given first chance at the even-numbered questions. The "odd" team (on the Moderator's left) will go first and be read question number one.
- 11) The Moderator will review the rules with the participating teams and find out who is serving as the spokesperson for each team. Answers will be accepted only from that spokesperson; no other team member's answer shall be heard or recorded during that battle.
- 12) The Moderator will shuffle and number the question cards. The Moderator will ask a question, prefacing the question with the name of the team it is directed to. Timing starts immediately after the question has been read for the first time. Teams will have 15 seconds to quietly discuss the question among themselves. **Only the first answer the spokesperson gives will be accepted; the team cannot use up the time left to guess other answers.** Moderator will not ask for more information or details. Acceptance (or not) must be based on what the spokesperson responds, without prompting. Note: the opposing team may discuss the question during the 15 seconds or until the other team's spokesperson starts talking but they must be very quiet so as not to disturb the other team.
- 13) Discussion must stop as soon as time is called, and the question must be answered immediately. If the spokesperson does not immediately begin to answer, or if discussion continues, the Moderator turns to the other team and reads the question in its entirety to

them. That team then has 15 seconds discussion time. When time is called, the spokesperson will be given a chance to answer without hesitation.

- 14) During a battle, a team's spokesperson may request a repeat of a question. All repeats must take place within the 15-second time limit, which starts after the question is read for the first time. Having the question repeated does not restart the time. If the moderator stumbles while reading a question he/she should stop and start over without penalty to the team.
- 15) "In Which Book" questions will be read first and are worth a total of 5 points. In the case of a partially correct response, the first correct response (whether it be author or title) will be worth 3 points, and the second correct response will be worth 2 points. Book titles and authors must be stated as listed on the official OBOB book lists and OBOB website. <http://oboblsta.pbworks.com>. Omission of the articles *a*, *an*, and *the* at the beginning of a title will be accepted as correct.
- 16) For "Content" questions, 5 points are given for the complete answer. Designated two-part questions will be scored with 3 points for the first correct answer given and 2 points for the second correct answer given. No partial scores will be given unless the question is designated "Two-part."
- 17) If a team gives an incorrect answer, the question is repeated in its entirety to the other team with another 15 seconds to discuss. In the case of an "In Which Book" or two-part "Content" question, if part of an answer given by the first team is correct, the portion they have correct will be revealed by the moderator prior to the question being passed to the other team to attempt to pick up the other two points. Note: If the acquiring team does not answer correctly, play does NOT pass back to the other team. In the event that neither team answers correctly, the moderator will provide the correct answer.
- 18) Regardless of who scored on the previous question, even-numbered questions will be read to the even team, and odd-numbered questions will be read to the odd team. This means that an acquiring team may get to answer two questions in a row: the one it acquired, followed by their own.
- 19) If a question is being read and the spokesperson interrupts the reader, that team's spokesperson must answer the question immediately.
- 20) If the moderator makes a mistake while reading a question such as giving the answer, the question shall be thrown out and another question substituted in its place. The substitute question shall be numbered with the number of the original question. If the moderator's error is made while presenting to an acquiring team the substituted question will be presented to the team that first received the question (i.e. an acquiring team cannot answer a question that the first team did not have an opportunity to answer).
- 21) An answer is considered correct even if mispronounced, as long as the Moderator can discern that's the way those letters could possibly be pronounced.
- 22) Multiple questions may appear on certain titles and some titles may not be asked about at all.
- 23) Neither teams nor audience members may use a title/author list or notes of any kind.
- 24) At the end of a battle, the Moderator announces and allows **15 seconds** for challenges to be articulated through the team's spokesperson only. While challenges are not encouraged, the opportunity is provided. The teams are each limited to one challenge per round. If there are no challenges, the final score will be announced, and a winner will be declared. The battle will be considered complete, and no further challenges will be entertained. The moderator will follow the procedures and rules for challenges provided in this handbook.

- 25) Accepting the score: Teams will accept and confirm the score. The battle will be considered complete when each team has been provided an opportunity for a challenge and the score sheets have been initialed by each spokesperson.
- 26) Bracket seeding for quarterfinals is based on total points earned in pool play. Wins in the preliminary rounds do not determine which teams move on to the semifinals. Each team plays at least two times during pool play. If there is a tie for the last spot in bracket play, there will be a tiebreaker battle.
- 27) At the regional and state competitions, a **tiebreaker battle** may be played to break a tie between two or more teams. All teams will be asked one “In which book” (IWB) question and then all teams will be asked one “Content” question. At the end of the tie breaker round, any teams that are still tied will repeat this process until a winner is determined. No team may acquire points from another team’s incorrect answer. Challenges ARE allowed at the end of each tiebreaker round with the usual challenge time in effect.

## Battle Officials

***The Moderator, Scorekeeper, Timekeeper, and Judges will work collaboratively to provide a fair and enjoyable battle.***

### Moderator's Role

#### Site Logistics

- Cluster team chairs in such a way that team members can confer easily with physical separation between the two teams.
- Have teams face the Moderator (with backs to the audience).
- Moderator sits or stands at the front of the room facing the teams.
- When coaches act as Judges, they should sit one on either side of Moderator (on the opposite side from their team)
- Teams will hand the Moderator a set of OBOB books when they enter the room.
- In the event that a team member is hearing impaired and needs a sign-language interpreter, the interpreter will stand near the moderator and simultaneously sign the question as the Moderator reads it.

#### Battle Procedures

- Be familiar with the rules and regulations provided in this handbook.
- Attend the mandatory volunteer training prior to the Regional and State (if attending) Competitions.
- Check that you have your room packet with all items needed to run a battle (i.e. in-which-book questions and content questions, coin, timer (may be provided by the coaches, score sheets, pencils, post-it notes, disclaimer, battle rules, and official list of titles and authors)
- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Introduce yourself and the teams.
- Politely request cell phones be turned off.
- Remove the questions for this battle from the envelope.
- Ask the Timekeeper to do the coin toss.
- While the coin toss is occurring, state aloud that you will be shuffling the questions and numbering the front of each of the cards 1 through 8. Note that there is usually one or two extra questions in each packet. These additional questions are available in case the Moderator inadvertently makes a mistake concerning a question.
- The team winning the coin toss may choose whether they wish to answer even or odd questions. If the team chooses odd questions, they sit on the Moderator's left. The team sitting on the Moderator's right will receive even questions.
- Remind the audience they are to be silent spectators. The Moderator may, at any time - before, during or after a battle - request that a team member, coach and/or audience member leave the battle room. The battle will not proceed until the disturbance has been resolved.
- Moderator asks that each school's name card be visible to the Moderator during the battle.

- Ask the Scorekeepers and Judges if they have the teams' school names on the score sheet and on the board. Say, " \_\_\_\_\_ School is answering odd-numbered questions and \_\_\_\_\_ School is answering even-numbered questions." The Scorekeeper will keep score on the white board, giant scoresheet or chalkboard where the teams can see it. One of the Judges will keep score on the official paper score sheet.
- Ask each team to identify their spokesperson.
- Inform the teams that you will be reading "In Which Book" questions first followed by "Content" questions.
- Prior to reading each question, state clearly the team's school name and the question number. This helps the Scorekeeper and Judges.
- Only the team's spokesperson can give the Moderator an answer to the question. Only the first answer the spokesperson gives will be accepted. If the spokesperson begins to answer the question prior to the completion of the question the Moderator will stop reading the question and determine whether the answer is correct or not.
- Moderator's response should be "Correct" or "Incorrect". Confer with Judges to reach consensus, if necessary. Note the score on the question card. If an incorrect response was given, note the answer provided (this is helpful if there is a challenge). The moderator may share the question card with the judges while the team is considering their answer.
- If the team does not get the answer correct, the question will be repeated to the opposing team who then has 15 seconds to collaborate. Each team can answer a question only once.
- Read the question in its entirety, then look up and make eye contact with that team.
- Teams have 15 seconds to collaborate.
- A spokesperson may ask to have a question repeated as many times as he or she wants within the 15-second collaboration time. However, the clock will not restart at the re-reading of the question.
- If a team needs the entire 15 seconds to collaborate, the spokesperson must answer immediately when time is called.
- The Moderator will award 5 points for each correct answer. In the case of partially correct "In Which Book" questions, three points is given for a correct title or author, and play then passes to the other team. The moderator rereads the question, stating which part was correct, and asking for the other part of the answer. This 'acquiring' team is given 15 seconds to collaborate and may be awarded 2 points for a correct response.
- Occasionally there will be a two-part "Content" question. State that clearly before reading the question. Award 5 points for a completely correct answer. A partially correct answer will be awarded 3 points, and play will then pass to the opposing team. The moderator rereads the question, stating which part was correct, and asking for the other part of the answer. That team may earn 2 points for a correct response. Consult with the Scorekeeper to be certain points have been recorded correctly.
- The Moderator will note the score on the question card and should note the incorrect response given. (If a challenge should occur it will be helpful to refer back to the incorrect answer given.)

- Do not score partial points for "Content" questions unless it is a designated two-part question.
- At the end of the battle, ask, "Are there any challenges?" and allow 15 seconds for a challenge from either team's spokesperson. If there are no challenges, the battle is over.
- If there is a challenge, refer to the "Protocol for Challenges".
- At the conclusion of a challenge, the scores may need to be adjusted.
- Ask the spokespersons to initial the final score on the score sheet.
- Hand the official score sheet to the OBOB runner who will take it to the scoring room.

## **Coach's Role (for Competition)**

- Prior to any competition please review good sportsmanship guidelines with your team.
- Teams will hand the Moderator their concealed set of OBOB books when they enter the room.
- The school name card will be visible to the Moderator during the team's battles.
- For each Regional and State battle, the coach or designee will serve as a Judge. The person acting as the Judge must have attended the volunteer training prior to the competition.
- When the battle is finished, encourage your team to respond cheerfully to the other team: "Good Job" or "Great Battle" or something similar. The coach should also be positive.
- Remind team members to thank battle officials.
- Remember to have the team take their book set with them.
- Do not allow parents or team members to argue about the questions/answers.
- During battles a coach may not communicate (verbally or nonverbally) with their team OR take notes.

## **Judge's Role (Coaches serve as co-Judges)**

- The judges will sit next to or behind the moderator. Judges will not sit on the same side as their team (efforts will be made to keep judges and their teams out of hearing and eye contact).
- If the answer given is the same as what is on the card the Moderator will say "Correct".
- If the spokesperson's answer is not exactly the same as the answer on the card, the Moderator may consult with the Co-Judges. If consensus cannot be reached between Co-Judges, the Moderator will render the decision. The Moderator's decision is always final and there is no further discussion.
- The Co-Judges may also need to determine if the correct answer has been given within the prescribed time.
- The Co-Judges will make certain there is no help given to teams by others outside the team.
- One of the Judges will keep the official score on the score sheet provided.
- If the Moderator forgets to ask if there are any challenges, remind him/her.
  - Then circle "Yes" on the score sheet that the challenge was offered.

- If neither team has a challenge, the battle is over.
- If one or both teams choose to challenge, assist the Moderator following the "Challenge Protocol".
- The decisions made by the Moderator with the co-Judges input are ALWAYS FINAL and there is NO further discussion.
- Give official score sheet to the Moderator for the spokespersons to initial at the end of the battle. The Moderator will hand the score sheet to the OBOB runner.

## Scorekeeper's Role

- Become familiar with scoring procedure and the contents of this handbook.
- Attend the mandatory volunteer training prior to the Regional and State (if attending) Competitions.
- The Scorekeeper will keep score on a chalkboard, giant scoresheet or whiteboard where it is visible to both teams and the audience. One of the co-Judges will also keep score on the official OBOB score sheet.
- After the Timer has conducted the coin toss, and the winner of the coin toss has chosen to answer even or odd-numbered questions, write the school names on the board.
- Listen as the Moderator announces the school name and question number and award the points correctly.
- The Moderator will also write the scores on the individual question cards.
- Add up the scores at the end of the battle.
- Compare scores with the Judge's paper score sheet and the Moderator's scoring on the question cards.

## The basics of scoring:

- The team that wins the coin toss chooses whether to have odd or even questions. The team answering the odd-numbered questions must sit to the Moderator's left, and their school's name goes on the left side of the board . See example below.
- The team answering the even-numbered questions sits to the Moderator's right, and their school's name is on the right side of the board.
- All questions are worth 5 points. If a team gets only the title correct on an "In Which Book" type of question they receive only 3 points. The other team then gets a chance to give the correct author for 2 points. The same procedure is followed should the correct author and incorrect title be given. Follow the Moderator's guidance.
- Occasionally there will be a 2-part "Content" question. It will be stated on the question card, and the Moderator will announce that this is a 2-part question. Follow the Moderator's guidance to determine whether 5, 3, or 2 points are awarded.
- Ask the Moderator to pause the battle should any conflicts in scoring arise.

- Example:

Smith School (odd questions)

\*1.  $\frac{5}{\quad}$   
 2.  $\frac{2}{\quad}$   
 \*3.  $\frac{0}{\quad}$   
 4.  $\frac{5}{\quad}$   
 \*5.  $\frac{5}{\quad}$   
 6.  $\frac{0}{\quad}$   
 Etc.

Jones School (even questions)

1.  $\frac{0}{\quad}$   
 \*2.  $\frac{3}{\quad}$   
 3.  $\frac{5}{\quad}$   
 \*4.  $\frac{0}{\quad}$   
 5.  $\frac{0}{\quad}$   
 \*6.  $\frac{5}{\quad}$   
 Etc.

\* = first asked

## Timekeeper's Role

- Be familiar with the role of timekeeper and the contents of this handbook.
- Attend the mandatory volunteer training prior to the Regional and State (if attending) Competitions.
- Oversees the coin toss. (Suggest letting the team that enters the area first call the coin toss or have the teams pick a number from 1 and 10 to determine who calls the toss.) Toss a coin and let that team spokesperson say "heads" or "tails".
- The team that wins the coin toss may choose to answer either the odd-numbered or even-numbered questions.
- The team answering the odd-numbered questions will sit on the Moderator's left. The team answering the even-numbered questions will sit on the Moderator's right.
- The Moderator will read each question aloud. Start the stopwatch as soon as the Moderator finishes reading the question. Time for 15 seconds and verbally call "TIME" when the 15 second collaboration time is up. A team's spokesperson may choose to answer in less than 15 seconds. Once the spokesperson begins to answer, stop timing. Do not interrupt an answer to call TIME.
- If the team uses the entire 15 seconds to collaborate, they must answer immediately upon "TIME" being announced.
- At the end of the battle, the Moderator will ask each spokesperson if there is a challenge. Provide 15 seconds for a decision to challenge to be determined.
- If a team chooses to challenge a question, they will have 2 minutes to find the page or passage in the book supporting their answer. Begin timing this 2-minute period when the Moderator hands the team both copies of the challenged book. Call "TIME" when 2 minutes have elapsed. The team may find their page before the 2 minutes are up. If the spokesperson hands the book to the Moderator indicating they are finished, stop timing. Do not count down the time (such as "one minute remaining").
- Announce the end of the 2 minute time period. All team discussion must stop, and the Spokesperson must give an answer.



## Protocol for Challenges

- After the battle, the Moderator will ask both team spokespersons if they want to challenge a question. A team may only challenge a question that they were asked. Each team may only offer one challenge per battle.
- The teams have 15 seconds for their spokesperson to respond.
- If both teams wish to challenge a question, handle one team at a time. Ask the teams which question they wish to challenge. The team to the Moderator's left should go first. The other team must remain silent.
- In the event that both teams were asked the same question and neither response matched the answer provided on the question card and both teams challenge that question, the team that was asked the question first will be given the first opportunity to prove their challenge. If that answer is accepted by the judges that team will be awarded the appropriate points and the second team will not be allowed to challenge that question but will be given the opportunity to challenge a different question.
- Read the question aloud. The team must provide reference for the same answer to the question that they gave during the Battle. Moderator should be able to refer back to answer noted on the question card. In other words, during a challenge, a team may not offer a *different* answer from the one they gave during the battle.
- The Moderator will provide the team with both copies of the book provided by each coach.
- The challenging team will have 2 minutes to find and mark the page numbers (with a post-it note) where the answer can be found in the book they named. The Moderator will not provide the page number(s) of the the answer given on the question card. Note that not all of the page numbers will be exact because of different printings.
- The Timekeeper will begin timing **after** the Moderator provides the books to the challenging team. The other team, coach and audience must remain quiet during the 2 minutes.
- The Timekeeper will announce the end of the 2 minute time period, and discussion must stop. There will be no countdown of time.
- Only the challenging team's spokesperson will show the Judge the exact wording that supports their challenge. The spokesperson shall not explain their answer.
- The Moderator and co-Judges determine whether the challenge is successful or not. An answer may be considered correct by way of evidence and reasoning provided by the challenging team. If the Moderator and Judges accept the challenge as successful, and the other conditions for gaining a score were fulfilled, the points shall be awarded and the scores amended.
- Only one team will be awarded the points for a correct answer by the Moderator.
- The Moderator, or a Judge, will explain the decision and process of amending points to the teams.
- The Moderator and both the Scorekeeper (using the board) and the co-Judge (using the official OBOB paper score) will amend the points. Amending points may mean points are removed from the team who was presented the question and awarded to the challenging team. In other words, Team A was asked the question and got it wrong. Team B was able to answer the question correctly according to the answer on the card. Team A challenges the incorrect answer that they gave. It is determined that in fact, Team A's original answer was correct (via successful

challenge). Team A will receive the points and Team B will have the points removed from their score.

- The Moderator's decision is ALWAYS FINAL and there is NO further discussion.
- A team can challenge the decision on an answer they gave for which they feel they should have received points. A team may only challenge a question that they have been asked and must prove their original response.

## Frequently Asked Questions

Where do I find basic information about Oregon Battle of the Books?

Visit the website at:<http://oboblsta.pbworks.com/>

How does a student participate?

A student participates by reading from the book list provided for that year's Oregon Battle of the Books and discussing those titles and competing in battles with their teammates. Make sure your school is registered by the date listed on the official OBOB website.<http://oboblsta.pbworks.com/>

Who competes at the Regional OBOB battles?

Any school registered in OBOB may send **one team per division** to their Regional competition. Grant recipients must participate and compete.

Students must participate with the school in which they are registered. Teams may not be made up of students from more than one school.

Students who are currently homeschooled may participate in OBOB as a member of a school team within the public school attendance boundaries of the school in which the student's parents reside (as per ORS 339.460 section B, part f). Homeschooled students may not, however, form a team on their own. Homeschooled students wishing to participate in OBOB should contact their local school library for OBOB-related class and/or practice requirements (ORS 339.60, Sec B(e)). Homeschooled students may be placed on a school OBOB team at the local level following the same procedures and guidelines used for traditional students. Students enrolled in virtual schools will follow the same guidelines as homeschooled participants.

Definition of a school:

All schools listed in the ODE directory are eligible. Although the directory no longer lists private schools, they are still eligible. A school is defined as "an elementary or secondary school offering a comprehensive instructional program."

Virtual School: Students enrolled in Virtual Schools will follow the same guidelines as home school participants.

Where do the students get the books?

School libraries should have copies of each book on the list. Public libraries, book fairs, and local bookstores will also be apprised of the titles and will most likely have them available.

When do the students read the books?

The school battles should be completed by the end of February. The reading list for the following school year is announced sometime in May. Reading through the summer is completely optional but available to students.

#### How do I get questions for my school battle?

Local questions are distributed to registered schools by email usually in December or early January. Please do not share the questions with non-registered schools.

#### What is a battle?

A typical battle is a tournament or game, somewhat like Jeopardy, in which student teams earn points by answering questions about the books on the book list.

#### Can we change our school team after the regional battle? Can we add or change members?

Your 5 member team, 4 members and alternate, may not change after the names have been sent in to the regional coordinator as listed on the OBOB website. Names of team members need to be submitted to the regional coordinator two weeks prior to regional competition. Teams of four may add an alternate before the team member names are submitted to the regional coordinator.

#### How do alternates participate in the Regional/State level competition?

An alternate may only replace a team member between battles; never during a battle. Players may not be substituted once a battle has begun.

#### Do students have to read all the books?

No. Many students read only about half of the books. There are a few readers who complete the whole list, but there are some who might only be able to read five of the books.

#### Do I need other schools to have a battle, or can I just have only one at my school?

It is best to start small. The first time you conduct a battle, we recommend that you do it alone at your school site. To participate in the Regional Competition your school must simply be registered as a participating school. Some school districts offer district-wide competitions for practice purposes. All registered school teams are invited to attend the regional competition no matter what their status is at the district level.

#### How do I get started?

Have your school purchase books from the book list and develop an in-house reading incentive system to encourage students to read these books. Request questions for your competition by registering your school in OBOB (via our website) and begin to find sponsors and helpers to support and conduct your local battle at your site or region.

#### May I use the OBOB logo?

The logo is available for any Oregon Battle of the Books promotional activity, with the proviso that the Oregon Association of School Libraries must be given credit for their sponsorship. Should the logo be used by any commercial entity, the sponsorship credit must be printed somewhere on the same page on which the logo is used.

### Who else is participating in Oregon?

Participants are listed on the OBOB website.

### Who can I contact if I need help?

You can contact one of the OBOB participants in your area or send your question to [oboblsta@gmail.com](mailto:oboblsta@gmail.com) and the question will be considered by the State committee.

### Do we need to have awards for the winning teams?

We suggest that you find ways to honor all participants.

### How can I find out more information?

Information is posted on our OBOB Webpage. If you have questions, please contact us at <http://oboblsta.pbworks.com/>

## **Promotional Ideas**

A wide variety of ideas have been submitted for promoting the program and motivating students to read. Several ideas are outlined below.

- Involve parents, teachers, administrators, and the public as much as possible.
- Use video recordings from local battles in previous years.
- Offer group orientations for students, staff, and parents.
- Do book talks using battle books.
- Make bookmarks from each level's official book list.
- Design visible displays or bulletin boards publicizing the program.
- Saturate school bulletins, district newsletters, and other handouts with program information.
- Encourage teachers to read books or portions of books aloud to students.
- Hold contests to redesign book covers, create bookmarks, design a school logo for Battle of the Books, etc.
- Have students create large posters of book covers to display.
- Develop a variety of study guides or literature units related to the battle books that include games, crossword puzzles, "first line" quizzes, etc.
- Create a large display including title/author lists, participant's names, and places to chart each student's progress.
- Hold a party or a library sleep-over for students who read all of the books on their list.
- Purchase unabridged audio recordings
- Take team pictures and prominently display them.
- Create murals about OBOB books to place on display in the lobby.
- All-school read: pick one book from the OBOB selection for the WHOLE school to read.
- Classroom teachers meet, read, and discuss the OBOB books.
- OBOB blog and/or Facebook for school community.
- Hold discussion sessions to help teams prepare for tough questions.
- Book stores: ask for promotional area.
- Free book giveaway: focus on OBOB titles for summer reading.

- Distribute bookmarks.
- Create a school logo contest which any student is able to enter. Use requirements such as: Oregon Battle of the Books, school, year listed, and specific size needed for logo. Students can be the judges for greater investment, and the winner's logo is included on the school t-shirt the teams wear to Regionals/State. This has been done with a color printer/iron on transfer with success. The logo winner also receives a t-shirt.
- Check your local Public Library for their promotional ideas, including practice questions.
- The list is only limited by your own creativity and time! Students who participate in the Oregon Battle of the Books are usually easy to motivate and are enthusiastic. (Do not forget to save a copy of everything you do as a guide for next year).

## How to Manage Public Relations

The real key to a publicity campaign is planning. Keep a schedule or timeline for the media, when to submit newsletters for district publications, when to bring in your camera to record momentous events, etc. Please include in publicity items that the Oregon Battle of the Books is sponsored by the Oregon Association of School Libraries.

- Local newspapers, local radio and television stations, as well as statewide publications, are anxious to read and hear about what is occurring in the schools. Even if you have to take the pictures and write the articles, record the interviews, or set up the video gear yourself, it will be worth the effort. Communications with the parents and the community about this popular school program will also open channels that can later be utilized when support for this and other worthy programs may be needed.
- Do a presentation on the Oregon Battle of the Books for open house.
- Get local merchants to display not only the books but also rules and prizes.
- Invite local dignitaries to assist with battles.
- Send out regular parent letters and news releases.
- Send individual invitations to school board and city council members to attend Oregon Battle of the Books finals in their communities. (Also, invite school board/city council members to be officials!)
- Create a link at your local school to OBOB webpages.
- Connect public library webpages to the OBOB webpages.
- Connect with Youth Services at local public libraries for support (displays, promotion, etc.)
- Present at a PTO/PTA or board meeting.
- Present a mock battle at a board meeting and other various locations.
- The Oregon Battle of the Books Committee will be keeping historical data and will be in contact with the media. Please send digital photographs, as well as local news reports, to the Oregon Battle of the Books Chair for use in statewide publicity.
- Just remember to communicate with those around you who might otherwise miss out on important events. Also, save everything you do - every invitation you send, every letter home, every news item, every photo you take, every timeline you prepare. You may wish to reuse items, or remind yourself about ideas from year to year.

## Criteria for the Selection of Titles

**Oregon Battle of the Books is designed to be an optional program in the schools. A child's participation should be voluntary. Different criteria are used for the selection of these titles than those used in selecting materials for required activities in individual school districts.**

**Note to Parents:** The Oregon Battle of the Books is a voluntary program. OBOB welcomes students in grades 3-12 to participate. The titles are selected with the reading level and maturity in mind--depending on grade level. You may feel that the content and/or theme of one or two of the titles are inappropriate for your child. Not all OBOB team members are required to read all books on that year's list and students should not be assigned specific books to read for a grade if students or parents have reservations about the content suitability of that title.

**Books chosen for the Oregon Battle of the Books list are selected keeping in mind the following criteria:**

### Number of titles:

- 16 titles per 3rd-5th and 6th-8th grade division; 12 titles per 9th-12th grade division.
- Grade level/reading level
- Balanced grade/reading level

### Interest:

- A variety of subject areas, plots, settings, and styles
- Balanced interest for boys/girls and wide range of maturity levels within divisions
- Chosen from a variety of genres: realistic fiction, nonfiction, fantasy, science fiction, historical fiction, mystery, multicultural, and Oregon representation

### Quality of the books:

- Select high quality, well-reviewed, age-appropriate titles.
- Award winners such as the Newbery, Oregon Readers Choice, Beverly Cleary Children's Choice Award etc., will be considered

### Books on previous lists:

- Titles may have been used as OBOB titles previously.
- Titles must not be repeated within at least four years of being on the list

### Publication Information

- Published by a recognized, mainstream publisher (no self-published titles will be considered)
- Titles must be available in sufficient numbers for purchase through major book distributors such as (but not limited to) Ingram, Follett, Scholastic, etc.
- Books should be currently available in paperback format whenever possible.
- Books should be currently available in paperback format whenever possible.

### Intellectual freedom:

*In accordance with the Library Bill of Rights and its interpretations, titles that otherwise meet the selection criteria will not be excluded:*

*"because of the origin, background or views of those contributing to their creation;" or  
"because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval;" or  
"because of actual or suspected parental objections;" or  
"in an effort to avoid controversy with parents."*

## **Book Selection Process**

Title selection is a year-long process that is taken very seriously by members of the Title Selection Committee.

### Title Selection Committee members

All members of the title selection committees are trained professionals. They must be teachers, librarians or instructional coaches and/or serving on the General Board, or a person retired from one of these positions.

### Title Nomination

- Starting October 1 and ending November 15, title nominations will be solicited from members of the general public for consideration for the next year's reading list. All members of the reading community are encouraged to nominate titles, including parents, students, teachers, librarians, etc.
- Beginning on November 16, nomination feedback will be solicited from the reading community on titles that are on the nomination list. Any new titles added by the committee will be placed on the nomination feedback list--community members are encouraged to check back in to the nomination feedback for starting in January and continuing through February to give feedback on any titles added by the title selection committee.
- New titles may be added by the Title Selection Committee starting at the January OBOB State Committee meeting. Three members of the committee must agree before a new title can be added to the nomination list, and titles should only be added by the committee to fill a gap in a particular area (for example, a lack of nominations in non-fiction or lack of nominations for male, high interest titles, etc.).
- Titles from the ORCA (Oregon Readers' Choice Award) and Beverly Cleary Children's Choice Award are automatically added to the OBOB nomination list.

### Committee procedure

- Original nomination lists will be shared with the full statewide committee through November 15. Once Title Selection Committee consideration officially starts at the November statewide committee meeting, title lists and comments remain confidential.
- One committee member at each division level will be in charge of editing the confidential title list.
- A book will only be selected for the final list if at least three committee members have read the book and agree that it is a good choice for of the list.
- Publishing considerations – is it available in paperback and is it self-published?
- The committee will check availability of titles prior to putting the book on the list.

### Final title lists

- The committee will strive to have half of titles chosen at the January meeting. However, this may not always be possible.
- Once a title has been placed on the final list and announced to the public, it cannot be removed, except in the event that a title will be unavailable in adequate numbers for participating schools.

## Question Writing Guidelines

Completed sets of questions must be submitted to the Question Manager for each level by **August 15 (or earlier)** so that they can be edited and made available in a timely manner.

Prepare for writing questions by first reading the entire book. Each book will have **80 questions: 40 “content” and 40 “in which book” questions**. Questions will be from *all* parts of the book.

- Limit questions to a maximum of **twenty words** each, including the words “In which book.”
- All questions should be written in **present tense** (does/do or is/are).
- Record *the first* page number where the answer can be found.
- Do not rephrase a “content” question to create an “in which book” question. Each question must be original.
- Avoid writing questions that use key words from the title or have answers that can be guessed by the title alone. For example: “In which book does a character look for a certain stone?” for *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone*.
- Question writers are encouraged to read all of the books on their title list. If that is not possible, please read those with similar themes, of the same genre, or set in the same time period. This helps eliminate “In Which Book” questions that can be correctly answered by multiple titles.
- Try to include a variety of types of questions. Some common ruts that have occurred include overuse of asking for character names (consider plot points, settings, important symbolic or other object) and overuse of quotations. Some of the best tension-breaking moments during competition tend to be the occasional question about a funny scene or where the answer includes memorable funny or witty phrases or words.

### **Content Questions:**

- Be accurate. in phrasing the question: use the exact wording that is used in the text. Do not use synonyms. Example: *Stargirl takes Leo to her enchanted place. Where is her enchanted place? (Answer: in the desert)* The adjective used in the book is *enchanted*, one should not substitute “special” or “favorite” for *enchanted*.
- Do not include “gimme” questions, questions that have only a very limited number of possible answers (which would “give away” the answer to the second team if the first answered incorrectly), or “zinger” questions that would require a photographic memory.



- Content questions should have a single answer. Do not start the question with the words “How” or “Why” as the answers elicit a more open and varied response that becomes difficult to judge.
- Answers to Content Questions should be concise and include acceptable variations of wording with the word “**OR**” included to make it clear to the reader that any of the stated answers is acceptable. Examples: Fido **OR** the dog **OR** Jane’s pet **OR** the black lab; jacket **OR** coat **OR** parka; blacksmith **OR** mechanic **OR** Bob’s uncle
- If the answer is to be a person’s name, the question should be framed so that a name is the answer, i.e. “**What is the name** of the character that climbed the mountain?” There may be several appropriate answers: “John Smith” **OR** “John” **OR** “Mr. Smith”. If all of those answers are accurate, they all should be included as answer options.
- Avoid asking for the exact name of a character unless that character is a significant figure in the story and **NOT** a minor character that only briefly appears.
- If the actual name is not required, then beginning the question with the word "who" is acceptable, but be sure to list all acceptable answers. Example: “Who fed the cat while the family was gone?” Answer: Sam’s stepmother **OR** Shirley
- Use parentheses around a word if that word is acceptable but not an essential part of the answer: Examples: (Guacamole) green or (permanent) (red) marker
- Use the word "NOT" if a word should not be used as part of the answer: Examples: Orange juice (NOT just "juice") Trigonometry and Tears (NOT "T and T") Be certain, however, that the wording of the question warrants using "NOT" in the answer.
- If the topic is addressed in more than one place in the book, be sure to include all possible acceptable answers. Example: If on page 100 it says Morgan's closet is filled with cardboard boxes, and on page 200 it says the boxes are full of stuffed animals, then the answer to a question about the contents of the closet should be: cardboard boxes **OR** stuffed animals; and both page numbers should be listed, separated by a semi-colon.
- Be specific about the type of answer wanted. Example: If the desired answer is a measurement such as 42 inches tall, versus a comparison to something else, then state the question appropriately: NOT: “Exactly how tall is the witch?” which requires the acceptable answers to include: 42 inches **OR** as tall as the fence **OR** as tall as her cousin, since all those answers were used in the book. BETTER: “In measurement, how tall is the witch?”
- Some of your Content questions should be two-part questions.
- "Two-part Content Questions" always start with the exact phrase: “**Two parts:**” Write the variations of acceptable answers with the connecting word “**AND**” between the possible answers (or commas if there are several possibilities). For example: "Two parts: What are the first names of Zach's great aunts?" Marie **AND** Rose. "Two parts: Name two of the foreign countries that Bailey visits in the summer." Any Two: Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Canada

### **In Which Book Questions:**

- For **IWB questions**, avoid indicating the gender of the character if possible. Avoid using the “he/she” combination pronoun; instead, reword the sentence (i.e. "In which book does a character ride a horse?" or "... is a horse ridden by its owner?")
- Use correct grammar. It is not acceptable to say, "In which book does a character ride their horse?"

- For **IWB questions** do not use key words from the title within the questions.
- Avoid writing questions that are so specific that the book or answer is given away. NOT: “In which book is a character hospitalized for many months because of polio?” BETTER: “In which book is a character hospitalized for many months because of an illness?”
- Avoid questions whose answers might easily be found in more than one book. Editors will try to catch these errors. But it helps if question writers have read several of the titles, especially titles within the same genre.

## Submitting the Questions

Question writers will be given a template in Excel to submit the questions to the question manager. It is important to honor the August 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. Question managers will be available to answer questions from writers.

### For “In which book” questions:

Write the question first, and then fill in the page number. Only include multiple page numbers if each page is necessary to fulfill the IWB scenario.

### **For Content questions:**

Enter the question, the page number of the answer, and the answer(s) to the question. The reader will start out each content question with the title of the book. **Do not insert the title into the beginning of the question.**

### **For All Questions:**

Determine at which competition each question will be used. Easier questions should be designated for local levels and the most challenging questions should be left for the state level competition.

Tip: One way to make a question easier or harder is decrease or increase the level of specificity required in the answer. For example, asking, “Who stole the cookie from the cookie jar?” may allow flexibility in the answer such as “Mary,” “Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary,” or “The girl who grows her garden with cockle shells all in a row.” Whereas asking, “What is the full name of the character who stole the cookie from the cookie jar?” requires the rigidity of only one, correct answer.

For Elementary (3-5) and Middle School (6-8) levels: Designate 22 questions for local (school) use with an “L” in column D of the spreadsheet, 9 with an “R” for the Regional Competition and 9 with an “S” for the State Competition. Easiest questions usually go in the “local” set and more difficult questions are reserved for “regional” and “state” competitions.

High School (9-12): As in years past, designate 18 questions for local (school) use, 11 for the Regional Competition and 11 for the State Competition.

Question writers will proofread their work before sending in the questions. Reading each question aloud as if you are the moderator in a competition. Perhaps have someone else proofread also for grammar, readability, etc.

**The questions should be kept confidential at all times to protect the integrity of this program.**

**All questions due to the question editor of your level by August 15.** Question editors and the Question Manager have additional work to prepare the question cards for schools by early December.

## **Sample Battle of Books Questions**

**The following sample questions are examples of appropriate wording for question writers. Both "In Which Book" and "Content" questions may be written for the same portions of a book. Questions in the competition will include additional information from the book on each card.**

**Sample "In Which Book" questions (answered with the book's title and author):**

In which book does one of the characters write a love note as a prank?

Little Women by Louisa May Alcott p. \_

In which book does a character receive a postcard with a skyscraper on the front?

Play to the Angel by Maurine Dahlberg p. \_

In which book is a tombstone used for something other than marking a grave?

The Wright Brothers by Russell Freedman p. \_

In which book does a child get to work alongside adults as an assistant in a hospital?

Close Encounters of a Third World Kind by Jennifer J. Stewart p. \_

In which book does the main character live on a 12 acre rock surrounded by water?

Al Capone Does My Shirts by Jennifer Choldenko p. \_

In which book does a family participate in "Las Posadas"?

Becoming Naomi Leon by Pam Munoz Ryan p. \_

In which book is a character saving money to buy a gorilla?

Clementine by Sara Pennypacker p. \_

In which book does a character lose both parents in a boating accident?

The Fellowship of the Ring by J. R. R. Tolkien p. \_

**Sample Content questions (answered with specific information from the book):**

Little Women

What does Amy do to destroy Jo's book?

Answer: burn it in the fireplace

p. \_ Author: Louisa May Alcott

What prized possession does Greta's mother plan to sell?

Answer: a piano

p. \_ Author: Maurine Dahlberg

### The Wright Brothers

What do the Wright Brothers do with a damaged tombstone?

Answer: they build a printing press

p. \_ Author: Russell Freedman

### Close Encounters of a Third World Kind

Two Parts: What two jobs are assigned to Annie?

Answer: care for her sister AND help in the hospital

p. \_ Author: Jennifer J. Stewart

### Al Capone Does My Shirts

What is the name of the island where Moose Flanagan lives?

Answer: Alcatraz

p. \_ Author: Jennifer Choldenko

### Becoming Naomi Leon

What festival do Naomi and Owen attend?

Answer: "Las Posadas"

p. \_ Author: Pam Munoz Ryan

### Clementine by

Two Parts: What are the two things that Clementine fears?

Answer: pointy things AND boomerangs

p. \_ Author: Sara Pennypacker