

2026 Wildcat Spelling Bee Guidelines

1. The Pronouncer will say the word.

- Speller shall have a full minute to spell a word. Speller may ask the Pronouncer (1) for alternate pronunciation, (2) for definition, (3) to use the word in a sentence, (4) repeat the word. Time begins once the word is given. If the speller asks for alternate pronunciation, or for the word to be used in a sentence or for a definition or to repeat the word, time will start once the definition or the sentence is provided. It is the speller's responsibility to understand the word.
- If a word has one or more homonyms, the Pronouncer indicates which word is to be spelled by defining the word. If no definition of a homonym is given, any correct spelling of any homonym of the word will be accepted.
- Speller will be encouraged to pronounce the word before spelling it and after spelling it. However, no contestant will be eliminated for failing to pronounce a word.
- Having started to spell a word, the speller may stop and start over, retracing the spelling from the beginning; but in retracing, there cannot be a change of letters or sequence from those first pronounced. (i.e. The word is CAT. "C-T-A" may not be changed to "C-A-T" during start over). If letters or their sequence is changed in the respelling, the speller will be eliminated.
- Judges encourage spellers to face them when pronouncing and spelling the word.
- Speller will not be disqualified based upon noting or failing to note punctuation or spacing within a word. The speller will be judged only based upon uttering the correct sequence of letters in the correct order.
- If the word is spelled correctly, the judge will say correct and the contestant will return to his/her seat.
- If the word is spelled incorrectly, the judge will say incorrect and spell the word. The contestant will be asked to take a seat off stage, and another word shall be given to the next contestant in line.

2. Spellers must spell the word correctly to move on to the next round.

3. Words in the competition can be from the distributed study list or off the list. However, the words used in a particular round will not be mixed from both the lists.

4. The last person standing in Grade level will be the grade level winner, and the last person standing overall will be the Sinnott Spelling Bee Champion.

The judges determine whether or not words are spelled correctly.

Sinnott Spelling Bee follows Scripps National Spelling Bee rules for local spelling bees.

Please silence your phones. Please no flash photography during the competition.

There will be no kid drop off. A parent/guardian should be present at all times during the competition.

There are no sample rounds. The event will start with a child in the lowest grade chosen at random.

End of Bee Procedures:

All spellers misspell: If none of the spellers remaining in the spelling bee at the start of a round spells a word correctly during that round, all spellers remain in the competition and a new spelling bee round begins.

One spells correctly: If only one speller spells correctly in a round, he/she is declared the winner. A new spelling round will be used to determine 2nd and 3rd place.

Last two spellers: The final round shall “volley” back and forth until a speller misspells a word. If one speller misspells a word, the other speller will get a new word. The second speller must spell the word correctly in order to win.

Ties: All spellers eliminated in the same round are tied for the same place. After the champion has been determined, we will do tiebreaker rounds to determine the second and third place.