

North County Academic League Rules

Addendum 2 - Question Style Guide

Updated: October 15, 2022

A. Identifying Individuals

In general, only last names are required. However, if a student chooses to give a first name and the first name is incorrect, the answer should be considered incorrect. Where there are duplicates (e.g., Roosevelt), first names are also required. Individuals who are best known by other than their last name, or no real last name exists (e.g. Michaelangelo, Pope John Paul II) should be identified in that way. In some cases, either part of someone's common name would be considered acceptable (e.g. Leonardo or Da Vinci),

B. Math and Science Units

In nearly all cases, all math and science questions are edited so that no units are required in computation or conversion questions. Students do not have to say phrases such as "square units" or "cubed units" when referring to areas or volumes. Most science questions have been edited so that the unit is part of the question. There are questions where a "unit" is in fact the answer in a concept question (e.g. What is the S.I. unit for measuring mass?) In these questions, the unit is the answer and must be given.

C. Math Values

In general, all math answers must be given in fractional form in lowest terms (no mixed numbers), simplified form, or in the form requested in the answer (e.g. imaginary numbers must be given in $a+bi$ form). In general, students should not be given points for fractions which are not reduced, radicals left in the denominator, or answers which are not consistent with the form or unit asked in the answer. However many times there are several alternative answers which are all acceptable, whenever possible, these answers have been included in the questions.

D. Math and Science Constants/Variables

Nearly all questions which require a student to use a conversion factor that may have multiple values (e.g. acceleration due to gravity) state the conversion factor to be used. We will continually try to follow the rule whenever possible. Some constants (e.g. "pi", "e") traditionally are not converted to numerical values during computations. Unless otherwise instructed to do so, students should not convert those constants to a numerical value when doing computation.

E. Spelling

In all spelling questions, both English and foreign language, capitalization and diacritical marks have been omitted and should not be given. Once started the spelling cannot be altered. Unless a question specifically asked that a word be spelled, students should not be asked to spell a word to receive points.

F. Foreign Language

In general, foreign language questions require the student to spell the translation of some English word or phrase. Unless commonly used in English, no foreign language phrases will be part of the actual question. Unless specified, articles are not required. If a student chooses to include an article in their answer, and the article is incorrect, the answer should be considered incorrect.