



# **Idaho Battle of the Books (IBOB) Official Handbook**

**The purpose of this handbook is to record the official rules and guidelines adopted and amended as necessary by the IBOB Executive Committee. This handbook also serves as a vehicle to introduce and explain the procedures used for battles. It is intended to provide resources to assist Regional Managers in organizing their competitions using standardized procedures. The IBOB Executive Committee recommends the Official Handbook be used for local competitions as well.**

For more information and resources, visit our website:

<http://www.idahobattleofthebooks.org>

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## Introduction/Explanation

Idaho Battle of the Books, IBOB, is a statewide voluntary reading motivation and comprehension program open to all Idaho students in grades 4-12, regardless of ability. IBOB is meant to expose students to quality literature representing a variety of genres, literary styles, and viewpoints. The mission of the program is to recognize students who enjoy reading, share the love of reading with students who have not yet discovered that for themselves, broaden reading interests, increase reading comprehension, encourage academic excellence, and promote cooperative learning and teamwork among students.

There are 3 grade level divisions: Elementary, Middle/Junior High, and High School. In each division, students create teams of 4 (can be 2-5), read the preselected books and discuss them between April and December. In January, teams will battle against other teams at their school/site in a “quiz show” format. Each battle consists of 16 total questions. The first 8 are “In which book” questions whose answers require both the title and author of the book. The second 8 are “Content” questions where the title and author are stated in the question, and the team must correctly answer a specific question about that book. Levels of competition begin at the school or local library level, then continue to regional tournaments, and ultimately a state competition (as those levels are developed with the growth of this program in Idaho).

Each year in April, the new list of titles for each grade level are released. Elementary (4-6) and Middle/Junior High (6-9) divisions have 16 titles and High School (9-12) has 12 titles. These lists are compiled each year by the Selection Committee based on the “Criteria for the Selection of Titles.” IBOB participants/parents can also nominate titles at designated times for the committee’s consideration. Every attempt is made to vary the titles chosen according to genre and difficulty so that readers will enjoy a broad range of books. Care is also taken to ensure a diversity of people, places, and ideas among the chosen titles so that students discover the diversity of our world reflected in the pages of the books. It is not the goal or purpose of IBOB to endorse nor censor titles solely based on race, creed, gender, or sexual orientation of the character(s) or author(s) of a book.

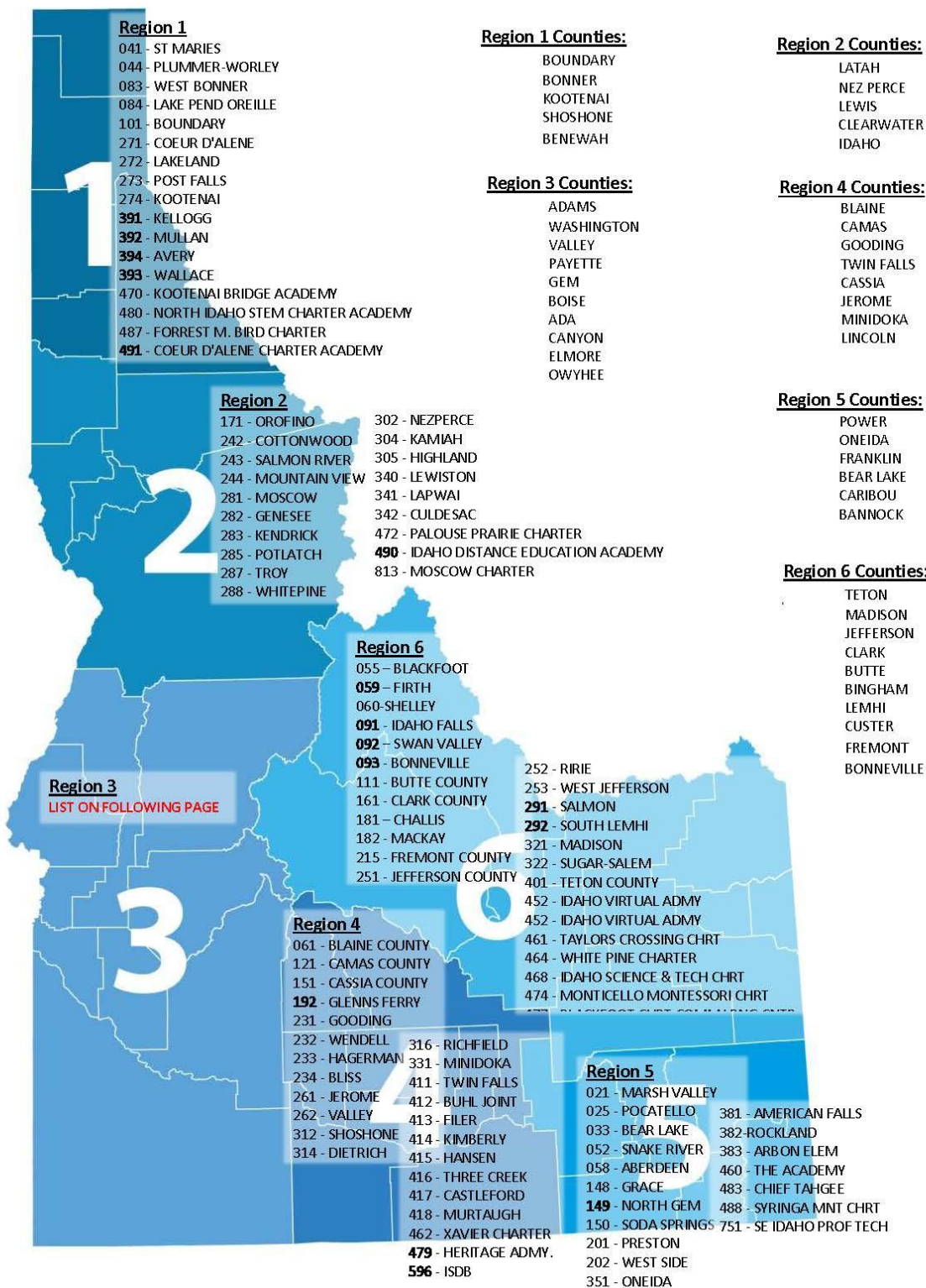
## History

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 became a school librarian as an adult.

Idaho Battle of the Books was largely influenced by the Oregon Battle of the Books program. In Oregon, Battle of the Books (OBOB) was introduced by school librarian and author Sybilla Cook in the 1970s. Word spread about OBOB through various library conferences, and successful local battle programs spanned Oregon throughout the ensuing decades. Parents and participants were enthusiastic about OBOB, and teachers and librarians found that children read more books as they learned the pleasures of teamwork and academic competition.

Idaho has also had a history with Battle of the Books programs, but until 2017 they have largely existed independently from each other. In the 1970s some Boise programs were sponsored by local bookstores, and in other areas, programs existed because of the love and tenacity of parents, teachers, and librarians in various schools/districts. In 2016, the Oregon model of BOB was introduced at a junior high school in the Boise School District. The following year, three other junior high schools joined the program and homeschooled students via the Meridian Public Library District. Meanwhile, the idea of creating a uniquely Idaho program was introduced at the Idaho Library Conference in the fall of 2017. From there a group of passionate and committed volunteers began work on what has evolved into Idaho Battle of the Books, or IBOB.

The goal of the IBOB Executive Committee is to grow IBOB across all of Idaho, in three distinct grade level divisions, with local, regional, and state level competitions each year. If you would like to be involved in this amazing endeavor, or would like to start IBOB at your school, please contact any member of the IBOB Executive Committee, listed at the end of this document.



**Region 3**

001 - BOISE INDEPENDENT  
002 - WEST ADA (MERIDIAN)  
003 - KUNA JOINT DISTRICT  
011 - MEADOWS VALLEY DISTRICT  
013 - COUNCIL DISTRICT  
071 - GARDEN VALLEY DISTRICT  
072 - BASIN SCHOOL DISTRICT  
072 - BASIN SCHOOL DISTRICT  
073 - HORSESHOE BEND SCHOOL DISTRICT  
131 - NAMPA SCHOOL DISTRICT  
132 - CALDWELL DISTRICT  
133 - WILDER DISTRICT  
134 - MIDDLETON DISTRICT  
135 - NOTUS DISTRICT  
136 - MELBA JOINT DISTRICT  
137 - PARMA DISTRICT  
137 - PARMA DISTRICT  
139 - VALLIVUE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
191 - PRAIRIE ELEM. DISTRICT  
193 - MOUNTAIN HOME DISTRICT  
221 - EMMETT INDEPENDENT DIST  
363 - MARSING JOINT DISTRICT  
363 - MARSING JOINT DISTRICT  
364 - PLEASANT VALLEY ELEM DIST  
365 - BRUNEAU-GRAND VIEW JOINT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
370 - HOMEDALE JOINT DISTRICT  
371 - PAYETTE JOINT DISTRICT  
372 - NEW PLYMOUTH DISTRICT  
373 - FRUITLAND DISTRICT  
421 - MCCALL-DONNELLY JT. SCHOOL DISTRICT  
422 - CASCADE DISTRICT  
431 - WEISER DISTRICT  
432 - CAMBRIDGE JOINT DISTRICT  
432 - CAMBRIDGE JOINT DISTRICT  
433 - MIDVALE DISTRICT  
451 - VICTORY CHARTER SCHOOL  
454 - ROLLING HILLS CHARTER SCHOOL  
455 - COMPASS CHARTER SCHOOL  
456 - FALCON RIDGE CHARTER SCHOOL  
457 - INSPIRE VIRTUAL CHARTER  
458 - LIBERTY CHARTER  
463 - VISION CHARTER SCHOOL  
466 - ISUCCEED VIRTUAL HIGH SCHOOL  
473 - THE VILLAGE CHARTER SCHOOL DISTRICT  
475 - SAGE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF BOISE  
476 - ANOTHER CHOICE VIRTUAL CHARTER DISTRICT  
478 - LEGACY CHARTER SCHOOL DISTRICT  
481 - HERITAGE COMMUNITY CHARTER DISTRICT  
492 - ANSER CHARTER SCHOOL  
492 - ANSER CHARTER SCHOOL  
492 - ANSER CHARTER SCHOOL  
555 - CANYON-OWYHEE SCHOOL SERVICE AGENCY (COSSA)  
768 - MERIDIAN TECHNICAL CHARTER DISTRICT  
785 - MERIDIAN MEDICAL ARTS CHARTER

## General Player and Team Rules

- All students participating in the elementary division must be in grades 4-6 for the current school year, junior high/middle school division must be in grades 6-9 for the current school year, and high school must be grades 9-12 for the current school year. Team members do not have to be in the same grade.
- Students must participate within the school they are registered at, unless competing through a public library team. Students who are dual-enrolled at multiple schools may create/join a team from either of the schools at which they are officially registered.
- Each team must have a coach (sponsor). This can be a librarian from a public library, or a representative from the team's school who is either the library media specialist, library paraprofessional, teacher, staff member, or volunteer.
- Teams are usually made up of four participants, but they can have fewer participants. When building a team, it's always best to find "quality" participants (those who will read the books) rather than "quantity" (just finding three friends who agree to be on team).
- Teams may also choose to have an alternate, but there can be only one alternate per team. This alternate may take the place of one of the four participants on the team for a battle. However, when the alternate participates in a battle, the person must remain in competition for the entire battle. No substitutions may be made once the battle has begun.
- The number of teams each school/library may send to the regional tournament will be determined on a year-to-year basis by the IBOB Committee based on participation rates.
- All participants of the two teams battling must be present in the room for all battles. Battles may be delayed because of tie breaker battles, but teams must be present and ready to play when the announcement to begin is given.
- No other person may assist in answering any question directed to a team, or any challenge decisions, including the team's coach, team's alternate for that round, parents, spectators, etc. The Moderator will disqualify a team the moderator recognizes as receiving outside help.
- In the event of a situation that is not specifically addressed in the IBOB rules, the decision of the Moderator, with the input from the co-Judge(s) in the room for that battle, is final.
- The IBOB 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:

- Any participant in the correct grade bracket may compete on a public library-based team.
- Students are ultimately responsible for recruiting their own team members. Libraries may keep a roster of students looking for teammates, but it is not required.
- The teams pick appropriate team names and register under the school, homeschool, or library where they choose to compete.
- Participants may not register at two sites.

- A public library will function as a school, and be subject to the same guidelines for sending teams to regional tournaments.

## **Coach Rules and Responsibilities**

- Become familiar with the rules and procedures provided in this handbook and commit to following them.
- Prepare the teams by reviewing procedures and rules.
- Conduct practice battles following IBOB battle protocol. This will help students become familiar with the rules that will be followed at higher level competitions.
- Encourage and moderate discussions about the books.
- Encourage student participants and teams at the local 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.
- Secure adult supervision for the team at the regional tournament. Reinforce that the focus of this program is to celebrate the love of reading and promote good sportsmanship for both teams and spectators.
- Bring a complete set of print books to the regional tournament.
- Communicate and confirm attendance at the regional tournament. Note that enough team members must be available to battle during the entirety of the regional tournament.
- Check in once the whole team arrives at the tournament. If one (or more) team members may not be photographed, this information must be provided at registration.
- Follow the specific guidelines provided for coaches at the regional tournament.

## **Regional Tournament Rules & Procedures**

1. All electronic devices in the room must be silenced during all battles. Photos may only be taken before and after a battle.
2. No personal recording of battles may occur at regional tournaments. Coverage of the tournament by local media may occur.
3. There will be 16 questions at local and regional battles (eight (8) "In Which Book" and eight (8) "Content"). The final match at regional tournaments will consist of 32 questions (16 of each type).
4. Tournaments begin with "pool play" rounds where the top-scoring teams proceed onto a single elimination tournament. All teams play at least twice in these "pool play" rounds. Advancing teams will be determined by the total of the scores from each round.
5. In the tournament, if a team has to take a "bye" round, the points the team will receive for that round will be the average of the points from every team during the round.
6. Teams are composed of up to four members with one optional alternate, for a possible 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 team that wins the coin toss will choose to answer odd or even numbered questions. The team that answers odd-numbered questions sits on the Moderator's left; those answering even-numbered questions sit on the Moderator's right.
10. The "odd" team (on the Moderator's left) will go first and be read question number one.
11. Efforts will be made to ensure teams can quietly discuss answers among themselves without fear of being overheard by the opposing team, but ultimately it is the team's responsibility to speak quietly enough to not be overheard.
12. 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 will be considered during that battle.
13. 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 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 until the other team's spokesperson starts talking, but they must be very quiet so as not to disturb the other team.
14. 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 informs the team that time is up and now it is the other team's turn to try and steal those points. The moderator reads the question in its entirety to the "second" team, and gives them 15 seconds to discuss. When time is called, the spokesperson will be given a chance to answer and possibly "steal" those points.
15. 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.
16. "In Which Book" questions will be read first and are worth a total of five (5) points. In the case of a partially correct response, the first correct response (whether it be author or title) will be worth three (3) points, and the second correct response will be worth two (2) points. Book titles and authors must be stated as listed on the official IBOB book lists and IBOB website. Omission of the articles 'a,' 'an,' and 'the' at the beginning of a title will be accepted as correct. Also, if a book title is especially long or complicated, a preapproved shortening of the title will be accepted.
17. For "Content" questions, five (5) points are given for the complete answer. Designated two-part questions will be scored with three (3) points for the first correct answer given and two (2) points for the second correct answer given. No partial scores will be given

unless the question is designated "two-part." A question asking for a full name is not considered to be a two-part question.

18. 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.
19. Regardless of who scored on the previous question, even-numbered questions will be first read to the "even team," and odd-numbered questions will be first read to the "odd team." This means that an acquiring team may get to answer two questions in a row: the one it acquired because the other team didn't answer it correctly, followed by its own.
20. If a question is being read and the spokesperson interrupts the reader, that team's spokesperson must answer the question immediately.
21. 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).
22. 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.
23. Multiple questions may appear on certain titles and some titles may not be asked about at all during a round. (There is no guarantee that all 16 books will be represented in each and every battle.)
24. Neither teams nor audience members may use a title/author list or notes of any kind.
25. 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. (see "Protocol for Challenges") 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.
26. 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.
27. 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.
28. At the regional tournament, 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 following are guidelines for those serving in the role of Moderator, Timekeeper, and Score Keeper. These three positions work together to ensure a fair and enjoyable battle.

### Moderator's Role

#### Room Setup

- The Moderator ensures that the room where battles are taking place is set up properly.
- Team chairs should be clustered together to allow team members to confer easily, while maintaining separation between the two teams.
- Teams should face the Moderator, with their backs to the audience.
- Teams will bring a set of IBOB books when they enter the room.
- In the event that a sign-language interpreter is present, the interpreter will stand near the Moderator and simultaneously sign the question as the Moderator reads it.

#### Battle Procedures

- Before the Battle:
  - The Moderator should be familiar with the rules and regulations in this handbook prior to the battle, and attend the mandatory volunteer training.
  - Ensure you have your correct room packet with all the items needed to run a battle ("In Which Book" and ""Content" questions, coin, timer, score sheets, pencils, sticky notes, disclaimer, battle rules, and official list of titles and authors).
  - When teams arrive, introduce yourself and the teams.
  - Request that all cell phones be turned off or silenced.
  - Remove the questions for the battle from the envelope.
  - Do a coin toss, rock paper scissors, choose a number from 1-10, etc. The team that wins will choose whether they want to answer odd or even numbered questions. If the winning team chooses odd questions, they sit on the Moderator's left side. The team sitting on the Moderator's right answers even numbered questions.
  - Make sure that each team's name card is visible to the Moderator.
  - Remind the audience that they are silent spectators. The Moderator may, at any point before, during, or after the battle, request a coach, audience member, or team member to leave the room. The battle will pause, and resume after the disturbance is resolved.
  - Check if the teams' names are on the score sheet and on the whiteboard. The Scorekeeper will keep score on a whiteboard, chalkboard, or poster board where teams and audience can see. The Moderator or Time Keeper will keep score on the score sheet.

- Ask each team to identify its spokesperson--only the spokesperson can give the Moderator an answer to questions. The spokesperson should be seated in the "middlemost" chair from the moderator's perspective.
- During the Battle
  - Inform the teams that you will be reading "In Which Book" questions first, followed by "Content" questions.
  - Prior to reading each question, state the team name and question number to help Scorekeeper keep track.
  - After reading the question, the team will have 15 seconds to confer and answer the question.
  - Only the first answer given by the spokesperson 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 the spokesperson will give the answer.
  - Moderator's response to answers should be ""correct" or "incorrect." If necessary, the Moderator can confer with the Score Keeper or Time Keeper to determine whether the answer is correct. Write the score on the question card.
  - If an incorrect answer is given, write the answer given by the spokesperson (this is helpful in the event of a challenge).
  - If the team does not get the answer correct, the question will be repeated to the opposing team who then has 15 seconds to confer. Each team can answer a question only once.
  - 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 discuss, 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 are 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 two points for a correct response.
  - Occasionally there will be a two-part "Content" question. State that a question is a two-part question clearly before reading the question. Award five points for a completely correct answer. A partially correct answer will be awarded three 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 two points for a correct response. Consult with the Scorekeeper to ensure points have been recorded correctly.
  - Do not score partial points for "Content" questions unless it is a designated two-part question. A question asking the full name of a character is not considered to be a two-part question.

- At the end of the battle, if a spokesperson mentioned their team would challenge a question, verify if that team would still like to challenge that question. 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 each spokesperson to initial the final score on the score sheet.
- Hand the official score sheet to the IBOB 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.
- During battles, a coach may not communicate (verbally or nonverbally) with his or her team OR take notes. Coaches should also not allow parents or team members to argue about the questions/answers.
- When the battle is finished, coaches should encourage their teams to congratulate the other team with, "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 sets with them.

### **Scorekeeper's Role**

- The Scorekeeper should be familiar with the rules and regulations in this handbook prior to the battle, and attend the mandatory volunteer training.
- The Scorekeeper will keep score on a chalkboard, giant scoresheet or whiteboard (depending on what is available in the battle room) that is visible to both teams and the audience. Both team names will be on the board.
- Listen as the Moderator announces the team name and question number and mark scores on the board accordingly. Check in with the Moderator at times to make sure the points are written correctly.
- Add up the points at the end of the battle. Compare totals with the score on the score sheet the Moderator or Time Keeper has been filling out to verify the final score.

### **The basics of scoring:**

- All questions are worth five points.
  - If a team gets only the title correct on an "In Which Book" type of question, they receive only three points. The other team then gets a chance to give the correct author for two points. The same procedure is followed should the correct author and incorrect title be given. Follow the Moderator's guidance.
  - "Content" questions will be 5 points in total. Occasionally there will be a two-part "Content" question. Follow the Moderator's guidance to determine whether five, three, or two points are awarded.
  - Ask the Moderator to pause the battle should any conflicts in scoring arise.

### **Timekeeper's Role (duties can be done by Moderator or Scorekeeper if needed)**

- The Timekeeper should be familiar with the rules and regulations in this handbook prior to the battle, and attend the mandatory volunteer training.
- Start the timing device as soon as the Moderator finishes reading the question. 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, the members have two minutes to find the page or passage in the book supporting their answer. Begin timing this two-minute period when the team begins looking through the book. Call, "Time," when two minutes have elapsed. The team may find their page before the two minutes are up. If the spokesperson hands the book to the Moderator indicating the team is finished, stop timing. Do not count down the time (such as, "One minute remaining"). Announce the end of the two-minute time period. All team discussion must stop, and the Spokesperson must show the Moderator the answer or declare they have not found it.

### **Protocol for Challenges:**

During a battle, a spokesperson can declare that their team would like to challenge a question. Only a spokesperson can declare a challenge. The Moderator then writes down the answer the team gave to the question the team is challenging. At the end of a battle, the moderator verifies if a team still wants to challenge the question. This is only necessary if a challenge has been issued during the battle. In the event that a team challenges a question, the following procedure should be used:

- A team may only challenge a question that was asked of that team, either for the original reading of the question or when a team has the opportunity to steal. Also, a spokesperson can only challenge whether their team's answer was correct, not whether the other team's answer was incorrect.
- Each team may only challenge one question per battle, and the spokesperson will declare this challenge right after points for that particular question have been settled by the moderator.
- If both teams wish to challenge a question, handle one challenge at a time with the team to the Moderator's left going first.
- The Moderator should 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 the answer written down when the spokesperson announced a challenge for that question during the battle. In other words, during a challenge, a team may not offer a *different* answer from the one they gave during the battle.

- The challenging team will have two minutes to find and mark the page numbers where the answer can be found in the book they named. The Moderator will not provide the page number(s) of the answer given with the question. Note that not all of the page numbers assigned to an answer will match exactly due to the use of different editions of a title.
- The Timekeeper will begin timing when the challenging team begins to look through the book or begins to discuss where to find the alternate answer to the question. The other team, coaches, and audience must remain quiet during the two minutes.
- Only the challenging team's spokesperson will show the Moderator the exact wording that supports their challenge. The spokesperson will not explain their answer, only show the evidence from the book that proves the answer they gave is correct.
- The Moderator determines whether the challenge is successful or not. If the Moderator accepts the challenge as successful, the score of the challenging team will be adjusted.
- The Moderator's decision is ALWAYS FINAL and there is NO further discussion.

## Criteria for the Selection of Titles

*Idaho Battle of the Books is designed to be an optional reading program that can be implemented by 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 reading/activities in individual school districts.*

**Note to Parents:** Idaho Battle of the Books is a voluntary program. IBOB welcomes students in grades 4-12 to participate. The titles are selected with both reading and maturity levels in mind, depending on grade level. You may feel that the content and/or theme of a title or some titles are inappropriate for your child. Not all IBOB team members are required to read all books on that year's list. Students should not be assigned specific books to read if students and/or parents and guardians have reservations about the content suitability of that title.

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

### Number of Titles:

- 16 titles per 4th-6th and 6th-9th grade divisions; 12 titles per 9th-12th grade division

### Interest:

- A variety of subject areas, plots, settings, characters and writing styles
- Balanced interest for boys/girls and wide range of maturity levels within divisions
- A variety of genres: realistic fiction, nonfiction, fantasy, science fiction, historical fiction, mystery, adventure, and graphic novels
- Balanced grade level/reading level

### Quality of Books:

- High quality, well-reviewed, age-appropriate titles
- Award winners such as the Newbery, Northwest Regional Choice Award, Printz, and National Book Award, etc., will be considered

### Books on Previous Lists:



- Titles may have been used as IBOB titles previously
- Titles must not be repeated within 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 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 Committee are trained professionals. They must be teachers, librarians, instructional coaches, serving on the IBOB Executive Committee, or retired from one of these positions.

#### Title Nominations:

- At various times throughout the year, 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.
- Committee members can add books to the Title Nominations list throughout the year that fit the book selection criteria.

#### Committee Procedure:

- 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 the list.
- The committee will check availability of titles prior to putting books on the list.

Final Title Lists:

- The committee will strive to have half of the 16 titles chosen at the January meeting. However, this may not always be possible. All titles for next year will be chosen by the spring tournament.
- 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

High-quality, clear IBOB questions lead to smooth battles with few complications or misunderstandings. The following procedures for drafting questions ensure that students receive strong, unambiguous questions that are challenging because of the material involved, not because of the wording of the questions.

## General Process

- Write questions for the whole book, since answers may change throughout a book.
- Write as many questions as you can for each chapter, from the beginning of the book to the end. You want to initially have more than 80 questions, so that you can narrow your pool down to a strong final list of the best 80. Include the referential page number with each question.
- Write questions with less than 20 words when possible.
- Review and revise your questions. If any questions are weak or confusing, try to revise them to make clear questions with clear answers.
- Sort all of your strong questions into levels of hard, medium, and easy. (Plan for at least: 20 easy, 10 medium, and 10 hard.)
- IBOB participants need more difficult questions as they advance through the season and levels of competition, so sort questions accordingly.
- Write unique “In Which Book” and “Content” questions. “In Which Book” questions should not be reworded to make “Content” questions, or vice versa.

## How to Write Good Questions

- **“In Which Book” (IWB) Questions**
  - **Write most questions in the present tense:**
    - *In which book **does** a character inherit a famous painting?*
    - (Write in the past tense if the event in the question occurred before the events in the current story: *In which book **did** a character fall into a well as a toddler?*)
  - **Focus on actions or events:**
    - *In which book does a character visit the zoo every day?*
    - *In which book does a character get chosen for the Mayor’s Award?*
  - **Focus on specific descriptions:**
    - *In which book does a character have fiery orange eyes?*
    - *In which book do characters swim in a purple lagoon?*
  - **Use direct quotes:**
    - *In which book does a character say, “Love won’t feed a hungry belly”?*

- *In which book does a sorcerer say, “With silver and stone I made thee; With Gift and blood I bound thee; With my name I call thee!”?*
    - The quotes should be striking and unique. In the following example, a vague quote that could apply to several books makes a weak question: *In which book does a character say, “Thank you”?*
  - **Use the IWB format instead of writing “Content” questions that require long or complicated answers:**
    - For example, *In which book does a character face a god in a mountain cave to obtain the Dominion Jewel?* is a better question than, *Where does Alanna obtain the Dominion Jewel?* For the second question, the answer could be “on a mountain,” “in a cave,” or “The Roof of the World,” too many options that could lead to tough judgment calls or misunderstandings in a battle.
- **“Content” Questions**
  - **As with IWB questions, write in the present tense:**
    - *What is the name of the artifact Alanna **obtains** from Chitral?*
    - *What is the color of Alanna’s magic?*
  - **Focus on very specific information like character names, dates, numbers, titles, and times of day:**
    - *What is the full name of Thayet’s bodyguard?*
    - *What is Alanna’s official title as Jonathan’s protector?*
    - *On what special day do the traitors try to take over the kingdom?*
  - **Check for clear, short answers:**
    - Answers should not include lengthy descriptions, exposition, analysis, or too many choices. For example, *How does Alanna become accepted by the Bazhir?* has too many possible answers, as before being accepted she wins a fight versus the shaman, befriends young members of the tribe, tries to learn their customs, etc.
  - **Make sure the questions have only one possible answer:**
    - It should be very clear what the question is asking. For example, *Name the animal that accompanies Alanna* could be asking for either the answer *a cat* or the name *Faithful*. To be clear, it should say, *What is the name of the animal that accompanies Alanna?*
  - **Include questions with two-part answers:**
    - *[Two parts] Name two of the silk garments Alanna wears to go out in the blizzard at the Roof of the World. Answer: ANY TWO: shirt, hose, gloves.*
    - Keep in mind that the two halves of the question should be related, not a combination of two separate questions. (For example, *[Two parts] What is the name of Alanna’s brother and what is the color of Roger’s magic?* should be two separate questions.)
    - Include 2 two-part questions for each book.

**Idaho Battle of the Books Executive Committee**

<b>Jeannie Standal</b>	<b>President</b>
<b>Amy Armstrong</b>	<b>Vice-President</b>
<b>Melissa Bollinger</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
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<b>Jennifer Wills</b>	<b>Communication Chair</b>
<b>Rashelle Mack</b>	<b>Question Coordinator</b>
<b>Sara Grimm</b>	<b>Elementary Chair</b>
<b>Lisa Rakes</b>	<b>Middle School Chair</b>
<b>Julie Hatcher</b>	<b>High School Chair</b>
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