

NCSLMA BATTLE OF THE BOOKS MANUAL

New Logo to be
unveiled shortly!

"In the case of good books, the point is not to see
how many of them you can get through, but rather
how many can get through to you."

~Mortimer Jerome Adler

Sponsored by:

NCSLMA

North Carolina School Library Media Association

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Preface

The purpose of this manual is to provide an orderly framework for conducting Battle of the Books (BOB) competitions at every level. Each school, system, or region using this manual should meet together to share in the planning for system, regional, and/or state battles and to review the organization, procedures, and rules carefully.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Philosophy

The purpose of the Battle of the Books program is to encourage reading by all students. Students, regardless of ability, are exposed to quality literature representing a variety of literary styles and viewpoints by prominent authors in the area of young adult literature. The game format creates interest and excitement in reading. Through the fun and excitement of the competition, students improve reading skills, mature in their choices of reading materials, and acquire a broader knowledge base. Even during the height of the competition, students and coaches should remember that the goal is to READ, not necessarily to win!

History

North Carolina's Battle of the Books can be traced back to a public radio program in Chicago in the 1940s originated by Ruth Harshaw. Librarians exposed to the original show reconstructed the game to encourage reading today.

Michael Leonard, an Illinois native, first introduced the contest in Onslow County when he accepted the position of Children's Librarian for the Onslow County Public Library. His rationale for placing it at the sixth grade level was the dearth of activities in the public library and in the public schools for this aged child. In 1981, Onslow County Public Library sponsored the first North Carolina Battle of the Books contest for sixth graders.

The North Carolina Association of School Librarians assumed sponsorship of Battle of the Books in 1991. In 2000, the North Carolina School Library Media Association (NCSLMA) became a sponsor of Battle of the Books, and independent schools became a region for competition. The first state competition of Battle of the Books was held in 2001-2002.

NCSLMA coordinates the program on a statewide basis.

In 2013, the NCSLMA Executive Board agreed to partner with the NC Association for Scholastic Activities (NCASA). NCASA member schools can now add points toward the Middle School Cup for participation in Battle of the Books.

Chapter 2: Organization

Battle of the Books is organized locally by the participating school system, regionally by a regional committee, and statewide by NCSLMA.

Responsibilities of System and/or Regional Committees

In addition to the primary responsibilities below, these committees are also responsible for coordinating awards, officials, publicity, and the competition sites. Meetings are held as needed for organizing the Battle of the Books program.

1. Promote and organize a Battle of the Books reading incentive program for students.
2. Schedule planning meetings for schools and/or school systems that plan to participate in the program.
3. Verify that the head coach is the School Library Media Coordinator or other certified staff.
4. Provide information to new participants.
5. Verify that the head coach is a member of the North Carolina School Library Media Association.
6. Conduct an evaluation of the program to make recommendations for revisions.

Appoint coordinators to the following areas of responsibility at system and regional competitions: Awards, Officials, Publicity, and Site.

Awards

The State BOB Committee will provide certificate masters for both system level and regional battles. It is suggested that the regional awards be Olympic-style medals: gold for members of the first place team, silver for members of the second place team, and bronze for members of the third place team. System level awards could be a traveling plaque or trophy.

1. Certificate masters may be downloaded from the NCSLMA website.
2. Funding for awards at the system and regional levels is the responsibility of participating schools and regions.

Officials

Each system and regional coordinator will contact and secure all officials and advise the officials of their duties. The officials for the Battle should be knowledgeable of and have an interest in children's and young adult literature and be trained in their position prior to the start of the competition. High school students may be used only as ushers and at the discretion of the coordinators at the elementary and middle school levels.

1. Secure three (3) judges whose duties are to:
 - a. Monitor behavior of competing teams and supervise team rotation (two designated judges, one judge per team).
 - b. Validate and announce all answers as correct/incorrect (one designated judge).
 - c. Make decisions regarding challenges to procedures, questions, answers, or time. Judges will confer before reaching a decision. The judges' decision is final.
2. Secure one (1) moderator whose duty is to:
 - a. Review rules and questions before competition begins.
 - b. When reading the question:
 - i. State team member's name.
 - ii. Read each question as written by the state committee.
 - iii. Again state team member's name to indicate the beginning of time.
 - iv. The words "quote" and "end quote" are unnecessary and will not be used at the state competition.
 - v. Moderator may repeat the question, if requested.
 - c. Wait for confirmation from the judge on the correctness of the answer before moving to the next question.
 - d. Announce scores at the end of each round.
3. Secure two (2) scorekeepers whose duties are to:
 - a. Keep score for each team point.
 - b. Prior to finalizing scores for each round, ensure a coach from each team signs to approve paper score sheets.
 - c. Post scores at each round completion on the score chart and/or an electronic scoreboard.
 - d. Change team names at the end of each round (if applicable).
4. Secure two (2) timekeepers whose duties are to:
 - a. Signal end of 20 seconds if answer has not been initiated by the team.
 - b. Signal end of 10 seconds if rebound answer has not been initiated by the team.
 - c. Timing devices should only make noise to indicate when time expires.
5. Secure two (2) ushers (optional) whose duties are to:
 - a. Distribute programs.
 - b. Supervise traffic at door(s).
 - c. Assist with seating.

Note: The above is ideal for officials. We understand that it can be challenging to secure the appropriate number. For the district and regional competitions, the minimum number of officials for each room is 5: 1 moderator, 2 judges, 1 timekeeper, and 1 scorekeeper.

Publicity

This area of responsibility provides information regarding Battle of the Books. It is recommended that a representative from each participating school or school system participate in publicity.

1. Collect photographs and articles from participating schools.
2. Write articles for media/education publications.
3. Compile archives (notebook) of activities, mailings, minutes, etc.
4. Compile and distribute contest programs.
5. Participating schools or systems may download the Battle of the Books manual from the NCSLMA website.

Site

This area of responsibility provides coordination at the site chosen for the Battle of the Books.

1. Prepare tables and chairs for contestants, judges, timekeepers, speakers, scorekeepers, and coordinators.
2. Obtain materials and facilities needed for the contest.
3. Provide a copy of each book from the official list for use by team members and judges in resolving challenges.

Responsibilities of the State Battle of the Books Committees

The State Battle of the Books Committee consists of a chair and representatives from each region of the state. All state committee members must hold a 076 Master of Library Science degree. The regional representatives serve as regional liaisons with the State Committee. In addition to the primary responsibilities listed below, this committee is also responsible for coordinating awards, officials, publicity, and the site for the State Battle of the Books competitions. Committee members will participate at their own expense except for lodging as provided by NCSLMA guidelines.

1. Regional coordinator will verify that the head coach is the School Library Media Coordinator or other certified staff and a member of NCSLMA.
2. Develop an official booklist by the end of February each year.
 - Determine number of books to be on the list.
 - Collect suggestions for titles from interested persons and participating schools.

- Check availability of titles.
 - Select books for the booklist.
 - Distribute and publicize a booklist.
3. Create and edit questions.
 4. Compile and distribute questions for system, regional, and state competitions.
 5. Design and make available certificates for system, regional, and state competitions.
 6. Organize and direct the Battle of the Books state competition.
 7. Revise Battle of the Books Manual, as needed.
 8. Evaluate the Battle of the Books state competition.

Chapter 3: Procedures

Eligibility Requirements for Participation

All guidelines must be met to participate in the Battle of the Books program. The participants must be:

1. A public, charter, or independent school recognized by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction for the current year of participation.
 - Charter schools will be treated as a separate school system within their respective regions. All participating charter schools within each Region (1- 8) will compete with each other to determine the charter school representative at their appropriate regional competition. If there is only one charter school within a region, the charter school automatically advances to regionals.
 - Independent schools will compete in Region 9.
2. A school with a library that:
 - Is open and staffed a minimum of 20 hours per week by a certified school Library Media Coordinator or other certified staff serving in the role of Media Coordinator. Has a catalogued collection of information resources.
 - Is in a designated space on the site of the school.
 - **Exception** – Early and Middle Colleges that operate within a college campus AND students have access to the college or university library space and collection are exempt from this rule with committee approval.
3. Coach
 - School Library Media Coordinator or other certified staff to serve as the head coach and directly supervise and administer the Battle of the Books team.
 - Be an NCSLMA member.
 - May request assistance from other school employees with specific duties

General Requirements

1. All those participating must be a full-time student attending a public or independent school for which they are enrolled for the current school year.

Elementary School: 4-5 grades (K-6 schools may use 4, 5, and 6)

Middle School: 6-8 grades

Options for other school configurations:

- K-6 schools can have 4, 5, 6 grades and participate in EBOB.
- 5-6 schools participate in EBOB.
- 5-8 schools can have two teams A 5-6 EBOB team and a 7-8 MBOB

team. If only one team is formed, 5-8 can participate in MBOB.

High School: 9-12 grades

2. Each team must have a Battle of the Books (BOB) coach who is a certified School Library Media Coordinator or other certified staff.
3. Each school system may send only one team to the regional competition and each region may send only one team to the state competition.
4. Teams must not exceed the maximum number of 12 members. There is no minimum number. No substitutions will be accepted once the team roster has been submitted to the Regional Coordinator.
5. The BOB Committee has the authority to refuse to allow a team to participate in the event of unsportsmanlike behavior or other extenuating circumstances.
6. In the event of a situation that is not specifically addressed in the BOB rules, the judge's decision is final. At competitions, teams may wear BOB team or school shirts; however, shirts MUST NOT display the titles or authors of books, or quotes from books on the current BOB booklist. Only competing team members, head coach, and one assistant are permitted to wear team shirts at competitions.
7. Teams are representing their schools and districts and should follow their school dress codes.

System Level

Teams will compete at their own expense (Considerations: food, substitute teachers, transportation, if needed).

Coaches

1. Coaches must meet eligibility requirements (see previous section).
2. Provide books for the students to read.
3. Organize a school program.
4. Provide coaching sessions.
5. Select team members.
6. Submit compliance form by the published deadline.
7. Read the books.
8. Provide practice questions.
9. Model good sportsmanship.

Participants

1. All those participating must be a full-time student attending a public or independent school for which they are enrolled for the current school year. For information on teams, see General Requirements (previous section).
2. Read books and prepare for competition.
3. Practice teamwork and good sportsmanship.

4. Attend practice sessions.
5. Attend competition if chosen for the final team.

Coordinator

1. Select date, time, and place for system competition.
2. Organize the contest. Invite judges, timekeepers, scorekeepers, moderator, and ushers to participate.
3. Secure questions from the State Battle of the Books Committee.
4. Meet with the coaches prior to the competition to review rules and organize participants.
5. Meet with the judges prior to the competition to review rules, questions and answers.
6. Provide any requested materials and facilitate the resolution of any challenges.
7. Prepare and present the certificates to the participants.
8. Prepare the packets of contest materials (name tags, name cards, programs, etc.).
9. Ensure that a set of books is available (one set for each room used) during competition in case of challenges.

Contest Procedures

1. Judges (3)
 - a. Monitor behavior of competing teams and supervise team rotation (two designated judges, one judge per team).
 - b. Validate and announce all answers as correct/incorrect (one designated judge).
 - c. Make decisions regarding challenges to procedures, questions, answers, or time. Judges will confer before reaching a decision. The judges' decision is final.
2. Moderator (1)
 - a. Review rules and questions before competition begins.
 - b. When reading the question:
 - i. State team member's name.
 - ii. Read each question as written by the state committee.
 - iii. Again state team member's name to indicate the beginning of time.
 - iv. The words "quote" and "end quote" are unnecessary and will not be used at the state competition.
 - v. Moderator may repeat the question, if requested.
 - c. Wait for confirmation from the judge on the correctness of the answer before moving to the next question.
 - d. Announce scores at the end of each round.

3. Scorekeepers (2)
 - a. Keep a score for each team point.
 - b. Prior to finalizing scores for each round, ensure a coach from each team signs to approve paper score sheets.
 - c. Post scores at each round completion on the score chart and/or an electronic scoreboard.
 - d. Change team names at the end of each round (if applicable).
4. Timekeepers (2)
 - a. Signal end of 20 seconds if answer has not been initiated by the team.
 - b. Signal end of 10 seconds if rebound answer has not been initiated by the team.
5. Ushers (2) (optional)
 - a. Distribute programs.
 - b. Supervise traffic at door(s).
 - c. Assist with seating.

Suggested Materials and Site Considerations

1. Materials
 - a. Electronic or manual scoreboard
 - b. Easels (2) Provide space for team names
 - c. Team member name cards (bold, legible print to be easily read at a distance.
 - d. Team name card stating the name of the school and/or the school system (for regional competition)
 - e. Desk bell (used by the timekeeper to signal the end of the 20 seconds)
 - f. Silent Timing devices (2)
 - g. Certificates and awards
 - h. Sound system
 - i. Printed programs
2. Site Considerations
 - a. Area large enough to seat the teams, contest officials, and the audience
 - b. Reserved section for the teams and the coaches
 - c. Suggested physical arrangement for the contest (See Appendix D)
 - d. Other considerations:
 - Parking
 - Bathrooms
 - Water fountains
 - Temperature control
 - Lighting
 - Acoustics/sound system

- Water by the podium for the moderator
- Breaks as needed
- Snacks and/or lunch
- Refreshments for officials (water, mints, etc.)

Regional Level

Teams will compete at their own expense (Considerations: food, substitute teachers, transportation, and lodging, if needed).

Battle of the Books Regional Committee

1. Announce the date, place, and time.
2. Request questions from the identified State Battle of the Books committee member.
3. Secure the team information from the system level coordinators.
4. Publicize the event.
5. Evaluate the competition.

Regional Coordinator

1. Serve as liaison between the system and state levels as a member of the State Battle of the Books Committee.
2. Facilitate the Regional Battle of the Books Committee.
3. Collect and disseminate relevant forms and information.

Contest Procedures

Same as the system level procedures.

Materials and Site Considerations

Same as the system level materials and facilities.

State Level

Teams will compete at their own expense (Considerations: food, substitute teachers, transportation, and lodging, if needed).

State Battle of the Books Committee

1. Announce the date, place, and time of the state competition.
2. Collect and organize prizes and awards.
3. Prepare certificates for regional BOB participants.
4. Secure the team information from regional BOB coordinators.
5. Publicize events and set up recognition ceremonies.

Contest Procedures

Same as the system and regional levels with the following changes:

- Judges (6)
- Scorekeepers (4)
- Timekeepers (4)
- Ushers (4)

Materials and Site Considerations

1. Materials

- a. Electronic or manual scoreboard
- b. Easels (2) in order to provide space for team names
- c. Team member name cards (bold, legible print to be easily read at a distance)
- d. d. Team name card stating the name of the school and/or the school system (for regional competition)
- e. Desk bell (used by the timekeeper to signal the end of the allotted time, optional)
- f. Silent Timekeeping devices (2)
- g. Certificates and awards
- h. Sound system
- i. Printed programs

2. Site Considerations

- a. Area large enough to seat the teams, contest officials, and the audience
- b. Reserved section for the teams and the coaches
- c. Suggested physical arrangement for the contest (See Appendix D)
- d. Other considerations:
 - parking
 - bathrooms
 - water fountains
 - temperature control
 - lighting
 - acoustics
 - sound system
 - water by the podium for the moderator
 - breaks as needed
 - snacks and/or lunch provided by NCSLMA
 - refreshments for officials (water, mints, etc.)
 - donations and prizes

Chapter 4: Battle of the Books Rules

1. A team will consist of a maximum of 12 members with 6 members allowed to play during a round. Accompanying the team to competition will be the head coach and one assistant coach. There will be no minimum number of players, and substitutions will be allowed between rounds only. Violation of this rule will result in a team's immediate disqualification from the competition.
2. Order of play will be pre-determined by the competition coordinator(s), with each team having an equal opportunity to receive the first question in a round.
3. A round will consist of 12 questions at the state competition. Number of questions per round (6, 8, or 12) may be determined by the district and/or regional coordinators.
4. The moderator will read each question once and will repeat it once upon the request of the team member assigned the question. (The clock will continue to run while the question is repeated).
5. The moderator will say the team member's name, state the question, and repeat the team member's name to start the time. Once a team member has been designated to answer the question, 20 seconds will be allowed to start the answer. The questions will be answered by team members in sequential order. The person answering may get help from his/her teammates within the 20 second time limit, but he/she may not confer until the moderator repeats the team member's name a second time. Once the answer has begun, no more conferring is allowed and a complete answer must be given.
 - a. If any coach or member of a team confers or appears to confer at an inappropriate time, or displays unsportsmanlike conduct, the team will receive a warning from the judges (see Appendix H).
 - b. Additional offenses will result in the offending team forfeiting its opportunity to respond.
 - c. The question will be read again and addressed to the next player in sequence on the opposing team as a rebound question. (Time will be 10 seconds and the score for a correct answer will be two points).
6. Two (2) points will be awarded for each correct book title as it appears on the official booklist. Judges will disregard articles such as "a," "an," and "the" at the beginning of all titles. One (1) bonus point will be awarded for the name of the author as it appears on the official booklist. A team cannot earn bonus points for the author's name unless the title has been stated correctly. **Judges' decisions are final.**
7. If a team fails to answer the question correctly within the allotted time, the question will be read again and addressed to the next player in sequence on the opposing team, who will have 10 seconds in which to begin the answer. The second team offered the question cannot confer until the question has been addressed to them or

- the team will forfeit its opportunity to respond. Points can only be earned for the title. The play will resume with the next question being directed to that same player.
8. At the regional and state level each team will compete with all other teams. The team having the highest cumulative score at the end of all rounds will be declared the WINNER. In the event of a tie, the tiebreaker rule will apply (see below). Teams must compete in all of their scheduled rounds. If a team leaves prior to completing their scheduled rounds, all rounds in which they competed will be deleted from final scoring.
 9. The head coach will accompany their team and sit in the designated competition area while their team is competing. Except for tent cards and team posters, team members and coaches may not carry any materials into the designated competition area.
 10. Conferences between team members and their coaches will be prohibited during rounds; however, conversation will be allowed during the interval between rounds and at scheduled breaks.
 11. Challenges (to questions, answers, procedures, or time) will be handled in the following manner:
 - a. A team member or coach will raise his/her hand and call out "TIME" immediately following the action to be challenged and before the question is redirected or the next question is asked. Only team members and designated coaches will be allowed to challenge.
 - Coaches can only challenge time, scoring, or rotation. Question content may not be challenged by coaches.
 - Participating team members may challenge procedural issues and content of the question directed to their team.
 - b. Challenges should not be based solely on pronunciation of title or author.
 - c. The coordinator will quietly confer with the team and report the concern directly to the judges, using the appropriate challenge form. (See Appendix F).
 - d. If a team challenges the correct answer that has been provided, the team will be given three minutes to locate verification. Timing should begin when the team is given the book and the judge says, "BEGIN TIME".
 - If verification is found, the points will be awarded.
 - If verification cannot be found in the allotted 3 minutes, the question will be redirected to the opposing team and play will resume.
 - During the verification process, the challenging team may confer. There should be no talking, conferring, or appearance of conferring by the opposing team.
 - Once the judges have reached their decision, the coordinator will relay the form to the moderator who will then announce the challenge and decision to the audience, and the battle will resume.

- **The judges' decision is final.**

12. If there is audible prompting from the audience, the question will be disqualified.
13. There will be no entering or exiting the competition area during a round, with the exception of competition officials.
14. At competition, neither team members, coaches, nor audience members may have copies of books on the current Battle of the Books list IN ANY FORMAT.
15. To prevent distractions and maintain the integrity of the competition, no video or audio recording is allowed at any time. Photographing is only permitted before and after the competition.
16. Young children under the age of 5 are not allowed to attend competition rounds.
17. Cell phones, laptops or tablets, and all other electronic devices must be powered off during the competition. With the exception of officials, no one present in the competition room should have a visible cell phone, camera, or electronic device during the competition at any time.
18. No team members should have a cell phone, timing device (including watches), or other electronic device during competition.
19. The Regional Competition will consist of one team from each district competition. State Competition will consist of the one winning team from each region. Teams may only compete in one regional competition.
20. The tiebreaker round will consist of 12 questions. Scoring will start at zero. Rounds will continue until a winner is determined. If more than two teams are tied, each team will play each other, and the team with the highest cumulative score at the end of play will be the winner. (Points are not added to the cumulative scores from the preliminary rounds)

Chapter 5: BOB Competition Timeline

July 2020	Booklist Recommendations Website open to suggestions for next year's titles
August 2020 through October 2020	Join NCSLMA
September 2020 through December 2020	System Level planning School Level planning Regional organizational meeting Conduct staff and student orientations Prepare practice questions Begin reading and select team
September 24-26, 2020	Attend NCSLMA Conference – Winston-Salem, NC
November 1, 2020	Complete electronic compliance form on NCSLMA website
January 2021	Organize system level contests, invite officials, select site, read and organize practice sessions
January 15, 2021	District-level question request forms due (form needs to be closed on Jan. 16 with note about contacting Allison directly if any changes need to be made)
January 15, 2021	Booklist Recommendations Website closes
January 25 – March 12, 2021	System Level competitions Elementary deadline is March 31
March 1, 2021	New booklist announced by NCSLMA Middle School State Battle of the Books Committee
March 5, 2020	Regional-level question request forms due (form needs to be closed on March 6 - note: contact committee directly if any changes need to be made)
April 23, 2021	Final date for regional competitions
April 26, 2021	Final deadline to send lists of regional winners' team members to NCSLMA Middle School State Battle of the Books Committee Chair
TBD (April 30 or May 7 or 14, 2021), Wake Tech, Raleigh, NC	NCSLMA Middle School State Battle of the Books Competition

Appendices

Appendix A: Guidelines for Questions

Overview for Question Preparation

1. After the book lists are finalized by the State Battle of the Books Committees, books are assigned to the State Battle of the Books Committee members for reading and preparing questions.
2. Questions must be typed in the following format:
Question: In which book ...
Title:
Author:
Page number:
Book format:
3. Questions must be submitted to the State Battle of the Books Committee by the indicated date to be edited, duplicated, and distributed.
4. System and regional level participants in the Battle of the Books program will utilize questions provided by the State Battle of the Books Committee. The quality of questions is most important to good "battles." To maintain the integrity of the questions and the yearly competition, questions will not be distributed following the competition. Likewise, videotaping of the competition will not be allowed.
5. Practice and school level questions will be the responsibility of school coaches, and will not be supplied by the NCSLMA State Battle of the Books Committee.

Guidelines for Writing Questions

1. Read the book once through in its entirety before writing questions.
2. Use the provided Excel Template
3. Write system, (easier), regional (moderately difficult), and **20** state (most difficult) questions. (Note: state questions only apply to the middle school competition)
4. Highlight the passage in the book. Please use **three different highlighter colors**, one color for system, another for regional and one for state. (any color you choose) Please do not leave post-it notes in your book.
5. Avoid using character's names in questions.
6. Avoid pronouns such as he, she, her and his as much as possible and still maintain proper grammar.
7. Avoid using names of major setting locations.
8. Proper names of places remote to the setting can be used.
9. Do not use **a major word** that appears in the book's title.
10. Avoid questions that can be answered by more than one title. In which book do

characters become involved in a military conflict? *The War That Saved My Life* and *A Night Divided*.

11. Avoid rather vague questions. In which book is a family terribly worried about their father? This statement is in *I am Malala* but it could also appear in other books.
12. Run spell check.
13. Do not use information written by people other than the author. Epilogues, prologues, and notes written by the author will be used to write questions.

Procedures for Acquiring Questions

The Regional Coordinator or designee shall:

- receive questions;
- distribute questions to System Level Coordinators; and
- discuss the policies and procedures associated with receiving, distributing, and securing questions.

Receiving Questions

- Questions will be delivered electronically via e-mail to the Regional Coordinator or designee.
- Regional Coordinators that are coaches must complete the Designee Identification Form and email it to the designated State committee member.
- Fill in the Regional Coordinator or designee information on the System Level Question Request Form before sending it out.
- If a designee is assigned, notify System Level Coordinators of the change and explain why—Regional Coordinators that have a team may not receive the questions.
- Forward a copy of the System Level Request Form to each System Level Coordinator.
- Completed forms should be returned to the Regional Coordinator or designee.

Distributing Questions

- The Regional Coordinator or designee will distribute questions to the System Level Coordinator one week prior to the competition date.
- Schools that are the sole participants in their school system, therefore unable to participate in a system level competition against 1 or more schools will NOT receive system level questions.
- Questions may not be used for practice or any other purpose except the competition.
- The Regional Coordinator or designee will determine the number of rounds to be distributed. The number of rounds sent will be determined by the number of teams competing plus six (6) extra rounds for tiebreakers and to cover other situations.
- Use the following table to determine the number of rounds each system will receive. Remember the number of rounds is based on the number of teams competing:

Appendix B: Criteria for Middle School Booklist

The list of books for the upcoming year should be determined by the NCSLMA Middle School State Battle of the Books Committees by the end of February. Book nominations will be accepted from the public through the NCSLMA website beginning in July of each year. Nomination period will close the Friday before Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

The following criteria will be used in the selection of books:

1. A variety of reading levels will be represented.
2. Interest level:
 - a. Consider a variety of plots, settings, and styles.
 - b. Consider a variety of subject areas: adventure, animals, fantasy, realistic fiction, science fiction, historical fiction, biography, folk literature, classics, North Carolina, provide characters that represent multiple stakeholders, etc.
 - c. Quality--select well-reviewed titles that are popular and will “stand the test of time.”
 - d. Availability--books must be currently available.
 - e. Only one book from a series can be included on the reading list in any given year.
 - f. Graphic novels may be used if deemed appropriate by the committee. (All questions will come from the text only.)
3. Recommended selection guides for middle school collections will be used to select titles to be included on the Battle of the Books list, such as Booklist, School Library Journal, etc. Priority will be given to national award winning titles, such as Newbery Award, Coretta Scott King Award, etc.
4. Book nominations will be accepted from the public through the NCSLMA website beginning July of each year. Nomination period will close the Friday before Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.
5. Titles will be eligible to stay on the list for 3 cycles, but are limited to no more than 3 cycles before being retired.

Responsibilities of the MBOB committee members

1. Determine number of books to be on the list.
2. Collect suggested titles from interested persons and participating schools.
3. Read and discuss nominated books following selection guidelines and procedures.
4. Select books for the booklist.
5. Check availability of titles with both school and public library suppliers.
6. Publicize booklist.

Appendix C: Criteria for High School Booklist

The list of books for the upcoming year should be determined by the NCSLMA High School State Battle of the Books Committee by the end of February. The following criteria will be used in the selection of books:

1. A variety of reading levels will be represented.
2. Interest level:
 - a. Consider a variety of plots, settings, and styles.
 - b. Consider a variety of subject areas: adventure, animals, fantasy, realistic fiction, science fiction, historical fiction, biography, folk literature, classics, North Carolina, provide characters that represent multiple stakeholders, etc.
 - c. Quality--select well-reviewed titles that are popular and will “stand the test of Time.”
 - d. Availability--books must be currently available.
 - e. Only one book from a series can be included on the reading list in any given Year.
3. Recommended selection guides for high school collections will be used to select titles to be included on the Battle of the Books list, such as Booklist, School Library Journal, etc. Priority will be given to national award winning titles, such as Newbery Award, Coretta Scott King Award, etc.
4. Book nominations will be accepted from the public through the NCSLMA website beginning July 1 of each year. Nomination period will close the Friday before Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Responsibilities of the HBOB committee members

1. Determine number of books to be on the list (maximum of 15).
2. Collect suggested titles from interested persons and participating schools.
3. Read and discuss nominated books.
4. Select books for the booklist.
5. Check availability of titles with both school and public library suppliers.
6. Publicize booklist.

APPENDIX D: Criteria for Elementary School Booklist

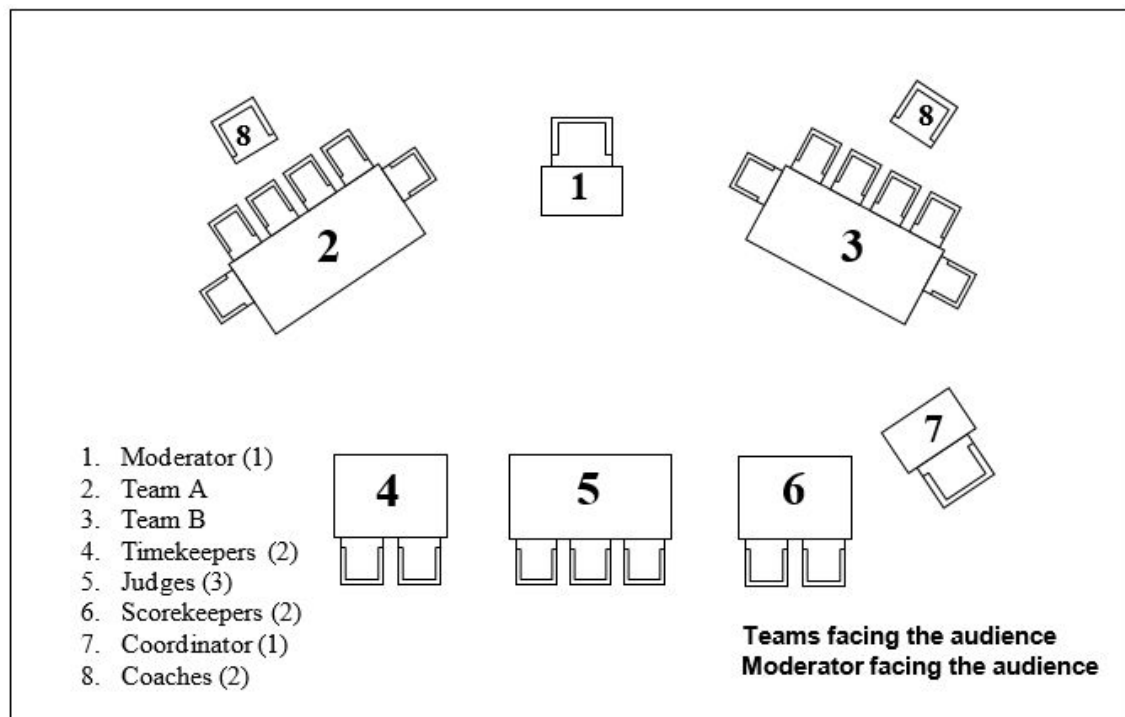
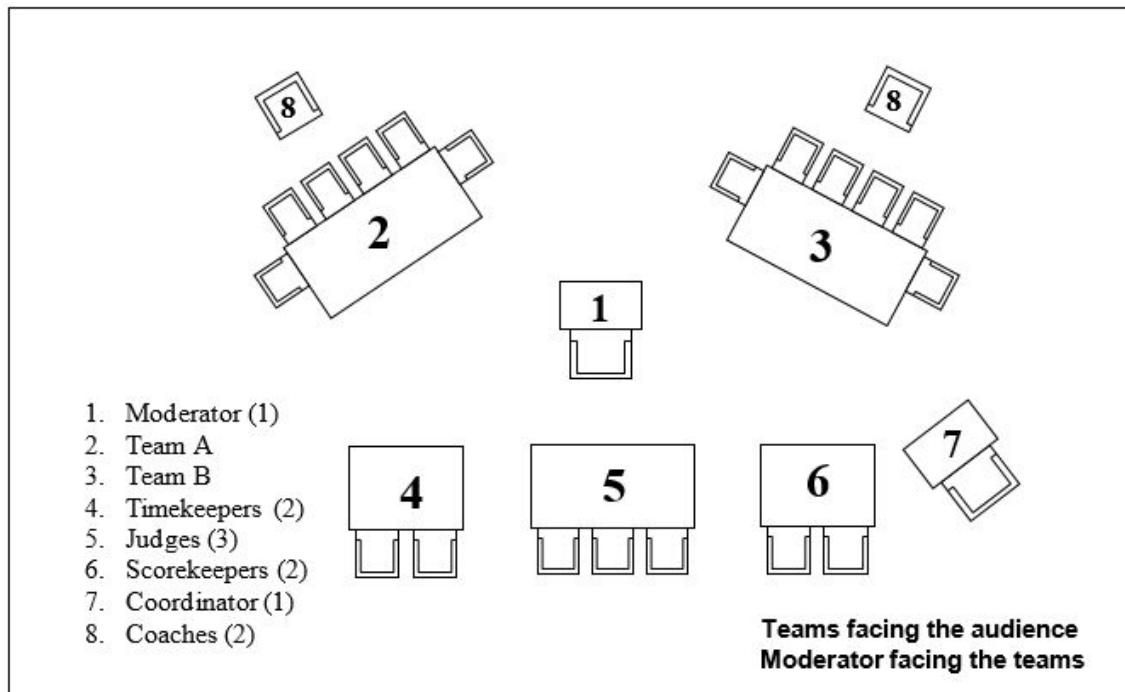
The list of books for the upcoming year should be determined by the NCSLMA State Elementary Battle of the Books Committee by the end of February. The following criteria will be used in the selection of books:

1. A variety of reading levels will be represented. Whenever possible, approximately ½ of the list will be composed of books on grade level, with the remaining ½ of the list encompassing books both above and below grade level.
2. Interest level:
 - a. Consider a variety of plots, settings, and styles.
 - b. Select an equal number of books for boys and girls.
 - c. Consider a variety of subject areas: adventure, animals, fantasy, realistic fiction, science fiction, historical fiction, biography, folk literature, classics, North Carolina, provide characters that represent multiple stakeholders, etc.
 - d. Quality--select well-reviewed titles that are popular and will “stand the test of time.”
 - e. Availability--books must be currently available, preferably in paperback.
 - f. Only one book from a series can be included on the reading list in any given year.
3. Number of books: Maximum of 15
4. Recommended selection guides for elementary school collections will be used to select titles to be included on the Elementary Battle of the Books list, such as Booklist, School Library Journal, etc. Priority will be given to national award winning titles, such as Newbery Award, Coretta Scott King Award, etc.
5. The booklist published by the EBOB committee will be the official title list and will not contain subtitles.
6. Book nominations will be accepted from the public through the NCSLMA website beginning July 1 of each year. Nomination period will close the Friday before Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Responsibilities:

- Determine the number of books to be on the list (maximum is 15).
- Collect suggested titles from interested persons and participating schools.
- Read and discuss nominated books.
- Check availability of titles with both school and public library suppliers.
- Select books for the booklist.
- Publicize booklist.

Appendix E: Possible Physical Arrangement for Contest



Coach's chair MAY be in front of the team facing the audience.

Appendix F: Challenge Form

System Level: ___ Regional Level: ___ State Level: ___

1. Challenging Team: _____

2. Challenge:

- Question content
- Same answer in another book

List book: _____

Page number: _____

- Procedures

____ Time

____ Scoring

____ Rotation

Judges' Decision:

Appendix G: Challenged Title Guidelines

Suggested Guidelines for a Challenged Battle of the Books Title

The NCSLMA State Battle of the Books Committees has set high standards and employed exemplary professional procedures in its selection of Battle of the Books titles. Since participation in the program is voluntary, the following guidelines are suggested for handling a challenged title:

1. Follow the district's policies and procedures for reconsideration of materials.
2. If the district votes to remove the book, it may be eliminated from their district **competition.**
3. The district is still eligible to participate in competition at any level. However, **questions at the regional and state levels will contain questions from all books.**
4. The NCSLMA School State Battle of the Books Committee reserves the right to make the final decision for removing any title handled by local reconsideration committees from the statewide list.

Appendix H: Warning Form

RULE: If any coach or member of a team confers or appears to confer at an inappropriate time or displays unsportsmanlike conduct, the team will receive a warning from the judges. Additional offenses will result in the offending team forfeiting its opportunity to respond.

Team/Coach Name	Round Number	Conferring Inappropriately	Unsportsmanlike Conduct

Appendix I: Samples of Middle School Battle of the Books Questions

1. In which book does a character hear the familiar sound “snick” as a door is being locked?

Skeleton Man
Joseph Bruchac
Page: 56
Paperback

2. In which book does a character state, “*Being a mother is like trying to hold a wolf by the ears?*”

Walk Two Moons
Sharon Creech
Page: 53
Paperback

3. In which book is an alarm set off just for fun?

Among the Hidden
Margaret Peterson Haddix
Page: 62
Paperback

4. In which book is a character washed out of the galley and overboard by a huge wave?

Castaways of the Flying Dutchman
Brian Jacques
Page: 39
Paperback

Appendix J: Virtual Competition (in the event of virtual/remote learning)

Virtual BOB Competition Guidelines

These guidelines are designed to be used in the event that in-person competitions are unable to be held, due to a pandemic, natural disaster, or other circumstance that warrants school closure or cancellation of sports competitions and/or field trips. Districts have the flexibility to opt for virtual competitions by agreement from participating schools. At the regional and state levels, in person competitions are the default, and virtual competitions should be held only in a situation where in person competitions are not possible.

In order to hold a virtual competition, each region's winners will have to agree upon a virtual meeting platform (Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, Zoom) that everyone can use if one is not mandated for use by NCSLMA for these events. If possible, competitions should be recorded for viewing by NCSLMA officials only at a later date.

1. There should be one main base room for officials, and links to the locations of the two competing schools. The separate main base location should house the regional coordinator or designee, the moderator, an official judge, timekeeper, and manual and/or electronic scorekeeper. Committee members would be invited to oversee competition at the main base location to maintain integrity of the competition at regional and state levels.
2. Schools would need to have someone on-site at each competition location as a timekeeper and "local judge" to avoid technology lags and other issues that may arise. If lagging or buffering is an issue with the connection, competition officials *can choose to extend the time allowed to answer questions by 5 to 10 seconds as long as timing consistency is kept with all participating teams*. Competing locations should also have an additional scorekeeper, and the three scorekeepers (main base, and one for each competing school) should agree to all scores before they are officially recorded. Since coaches have to agree to scoring, an assistant coach could serve as the site scorekeeper.
3. Regions should develop a schedule of competition times, or have all teams signed in at once. If all teams are signed in at once, teams not competing should be muted and video off when not competing. This allows viewing of competition by other teams, and all teams being signed in at once is optional. Strict guidelines should be stated to all participants that cameras should be on but that mics should be turned off at the start and while competing teams are answering. Only teams who are currently competing should be unmuted, and the competing teams mics should be on at all times for officials to listen for conferring out of turn.

Districts would have the option to participate or not and of course, if the school is closed that team would not be able to participate. **All Coaches should sign an agreement stating that they have explained the virtual rules to their teams. This agreement will be provided to coaches prior to the start of regional competitions if virtual competitions are required by the region. (See Appendix K)**

For the safety of the competitors and officials, every effort should be made to limit the number of competitors within 6 feet of each other. If there are additional team members not competing in a round, they should distance themselves from others. Masks should be worn as required by state and local guidelines. If masks are worn, only the person to whom a question is addressed should remove their mask if needed for clarity.

We need to have consistency across all three levels **Only regions and coaches that sign and agree to these distance/virtual competition requirements can participate. If virtual competitions appear to be necessary, committee chairs will send out more information and suggestions on how to run a virtual competition smoothly. The above guidelines lend themselves to situations where each team can physically be present in the same room together. If we need guidelines on how to run the virtual competitions from each competitor's home while on remote learning, then more flexible guidelines will be discussed and issued to regional chairs and contacts.**

In the event that no competitions are able to be held due to cancellations of competitions by school districts, then book lists will be recycled the following school year as long as no questions have yet been distributed to districts.

Appendix K: Virtual Competition Agreement (in the event of virtual/remote learning)

I _____ have thoroughly explained the virtual rules
Coach's Name
to my team members. We understand that failure to follow these rules can result in a
warning or a loss of points.

Coach's Signature

Date