

Coastwise Spelling Prize: Spring La Jolla Spelling Bee

(Contest Rule Book)



Contestant Rules

- All words will be sourced from the Scripps national spelling bee list or *Merriam-Webster unabridged dictionary* ([see resources](#))
- Each speller has **one minute** to attempt to spell the given word.
- The speller makes an effort to utter each letter of a given word and enunciate clearly and at reasonable volume for judges to hear.
- **Misunderstandings:** the speller is responsible for any misunderstandings of the word unless:
 - **1.** The pronouncer never provides correct pronunciation
 - **2.** The pronouncer provided incorrect information regarding definition, part of speech, or origin
 - **3.** The speller correctly spelled a homonym of the word and the pronouncer failed to offer definition or distinguish homonyms
- All contestants will have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their spelling ability. Each grade's respective spelling bee will be a four round contest with **no eliminations in the first round.**

- The speller will be eliminated if they spell the selected word incorrectly **starting in the second round** of the contest.
- In round four, the final contestants will continue to spell words until the final speller can be crowned champion. There will be no ties for 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place.
- Each grade will have an individual spelling list corresponding to their age group.
- In the event of a time constraint or necessary tie-breaker, contestants may receive vocabulary from the grade level one above their own.
- Each speller may request a word's: **Definition, Origin, Pronunciation, Part of Speech, and Use in a Sentence.**

Pronouncer Rules

- **The pronouncer** should strive to pronounce all words according to their diacritical markings in the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*.
- **Homonyms:** If a word has one or more homonyms, the pronouncer indicates which word is to be spelled by defining the word
- **Speller's Requests:** In oral competition the pronouncer responds only to the speller's request for repetition of words:
 - **Speller Can Request:** pronunciation, definition, a sentence, a part of speech, language of origin, and alternate pronunciations.
- When presented with requests for alternate pronunciations the pronouncer must check for alternate pronunciations in the *Merriam-Webster* dictionary.
- If the speller wishes to ask if the dictionary lists a specific root word as the root of the word to be spelled, the speller must specify the pronunciation of the root (not spelling), its language, and definition.
- **Pronouncer Sense of Helpfulness:** The pronouncer may offer word information without the speller having to request information, **If** the pronouncer senses that

the information is helpful information and that it appears in the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*

Judge Rules

- The judges listen carefully to determine whether or not words are spelled correctly and uphold the rules of the contest.
- The decisions by judges are final.
- **Misunderstandings:** The judges will not respond to speller's questions about the word and its pronunciation, but if the judges sense that the speller has misunderstood the word, the judge will direct the speller and pronouncer until a reasonable attempt has been made to assist in the spellers understanding of the word.
- It is sometimes difficult to detect a misunderstanding until a spelling error is made at which point judges and pronouncers are no longer responsible.
- **Pronouncer Errors:** The judges compare the pronouncer's pronunciation to that of diacritical markings of *Merriam-webster Dictionary*. If the judges feel as though the pronouncer's pronunciation does not match the dictionary the judges will direct pronouncer to correct the error.

Special Accommodations

The Coastwise Spelling Prize: La Jolla Spring Spelling Bee is happy to accommodate any specific diagnosed medical needs of contestants. We strive to create a joyous, educational, and competitive event for all spelling bee contestants.

Judges have discretionary power to amend spelling bee rules and requirements on a case-by-case basis for spellers who have needs based requirements.

Any special requests should be submitted via email at info@coastwisegroup.com or over the phone at 707-481-0687.