

A quick guide to The Premier's Spelling Bee

Important dates for 2019

2019 Event	2019 Dates	2019 School weeks
School Entries Open	Tuesday 30 April	term 2 week 1
School Entries close	Friday 5 July	last day term 2
Deadline for regional finalist names	Friday 9 August	Term 3 week 3
Regional Finals	Monday 2 to Friday 13 September	Weeks 7 and 8 term 3
State Finals, Sydney	Friday 8 November	Term 4 week 4

Who is eligible to compete?

The Premier's Spelling Bee is open to all NSW government primary, central and community schools. The competition comprises two divisions – junior for Years 3 and 4 and senior for Years 5 and 6. Each school can enter two students per division to a maximum of four students per school.

How do schools enter the Premier's Spelling Bee?

An online entry form for the competition is available from 30 April 2019, first week of term 2, here on the Premier's Spelling Bee website. Entries should be submitted before close of business on the final day of registration, 5 July 2019, last day of term 2. Please ensure that you include contact details for the teacher who will be looking after the entry. All teachers must provide a direct departmental email address (or the school's email if appropriate) to assist with our organisation. Entries can be submitted before schools know the names of the students they will be entering. There will be a web form available in June for school coordinators to register their students' names.

How much does entry cost?

There is no cost associated with the Premier's Spelling Bee.

What are the competition stages?

Schools either follow official competition procedures or devise their own spelling activities to select students (a maximum of 4, 2 per level) to represent the school at regional finals. These will take place throughout NSW, in term 3 weeks 7 and 8. The Premier's Spelling Bee Coordinator will advise schools of the dates and venues of regional finals early in Term 3. The winner of each division of

each regional final goes on to the state finals: please note, the runner-up does not. State finals will be held on a Friday 8 November, 2019, in the Eugene Goossens Hall, ABC Centre, Ultimo.

What does the school spelling bee coordinator do?

School Spelling Bee Coordinators should submit the online entry form for their school and download the 2019 word lists when they become available in May. They'll then need to select the school's representatives, by running in-school heats, preferably in a similar format as regional and state finals, and submit those names no later than Friday 9 August 2019. Once all the details are finalised, coordinators will receive an email with details of the venue and date of the final their school will be attending. There are links to [frequently asked questions](#) and [guidelines and procedure documents](#) to help first-time coordinators and the [Spelling Bee Support Officer](#) is always happy to help. [This 30 minute film on our website](#) was designed to help coordinators organize their in-school competition as well as assist schools who host a regional final.

What word lists are used?

Words for the competition are provided by Macquarie Dictionary and are divided into several categories. Junior and senior students study different word lists. Regional and state finals also include unseen words in later rounds. Word lists will be available for download from The Arts Unit website from Tuesday 30 April 2019. School spelling bee coordinators who entered in 2018 will be notified of their availability and given the access password as an email confirmation of the school's entry.

What are the competition procedures?

At each final, there is a demonstration round using simple words to help familiarise contestants with the competition format. No one is eliminated in this round. This is followed by elimination rounds of increasing difficulty. The announcer reads the word, then a sentence including the word, and then repeats the word again. Each contestant must repeat the word to the satisfaction of the announcer before they spell, and then say the word again to indicate they have finished spelling. Up until this point, contestants may self-correct if they clearly indicate that they are starting again. Students have 45 seconds in which to spell the word. A warning bell is rung at 30 seconds with two bells at 45 seconds to indicate the contestant's time has expired. Contestants may ask the announcer to repeat the word – this is included in their 45 second time limit. Any self-corrections must also be made within the time limit. At the second bell, any incomplete spelling will be taken as

the contestant's final answer. When a student has finished spelling a word, the announcer will either state 'That is correct' or 'that is incorrect. The correct spelling is...'

How is a winner determined?

At the regional and state finals, the elimination process continues round by round. To win the competition a contestant must spell more words correctly than all the other contestants. A contestant will only be eliminated if at least one other contestant in the same round spells their word correctly. If all contestants in a particular round misspell their words then no one is eliminated.

What are the prizes?

All regional finalists receive a certificate of participation. Regional winners and runners up receive a Budget Dictionary and Thesaurus from Macquarie Dictionary. Macquarie Dictionary will also provide each regional final host school with a free school-wide subscription access to the Dictionary & Thesaurus online. This will provide the whole school with the ongoing opportunity to practice their spelling and help their fellow students in the lead up to the 2019 State Final.

State finalists receive silver medallions, a Macquarie Dictionary, and other book or game prizes. State Champions receive gold medallions and are acknowledged along with their school on a perpetual trophy. State winners and runners-up also receive a free Macquarie Student App download, and a one year subscription to Macquarie Dictionary & Thesaurus Online for their school.

Organisation and sponsorship

The competition is organised by The Arts Unit of the NSW Department of Education. The official media partner is ABC Radio Sydney. The official word list supplier is Macquarie Dictionary. Modern Teaching Aids are our principal sponsor and Scrabble is the official prize sponsor.

