

# US Academic Bowl Nationals Rules

Thank you for participating in today's Academic Bowl! This document is intended as an outline of the rules of the competition. If you have specific questions regarding more detailed aspects of the rules, please ask a tournament official. The Academic Bowl is played in two sections – Preliminaries and Playoffs. Academic Bowl games feature two teams of four players in a game consisting of two halves separated by a sixty-second round section.

-Each half consists of 8 tossups and associated 3-part bonuses where each part is worth 10 points. If a tossup is answered correctly, the answering team will control a bonus within the same broad category as the tossup. The other team will have opportunities to answer bonus questions missed by the controlling team. If a tossup is not answered correctly, the corresponding bonus is not read to either team

-Students who buzz in early on tossup questions will receive 20 points for their team. Tossup questions answered correctly towards the end are worth 10 points. Students are not told where the "power mark" is in the question (i.e. the boundary between it being worth 20 or 10 points).

-At no point in the course of the games for the Bowl will you be deducted points for a wrong answer.

-This year, timing works the same way as in History Bowl matches on tossups and bonuses (i.e. 5 seconds on tossups to give an answer, eight seconds on bonus questions – including bouncebacks – and also on 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter round bouncebacks - then "answer please" from the moderator, then five more seconds to give an answer). If the question goes unanswered for 5 seconds, after it's been read, then it's dead, and the next tossup is read. If someone rings in during these 5 seconds and is incorrect, then the other team gets a fresh 5-count if they haven't yet rung in.

-Students may change their answer before the moderator has ruled correct or incorrect, but the moderator should rule as quickly as possible once an answer has been directed at them. Decisions of timing and whether an answer was directed at the reader are non-contestable.

-Teams may substitute players between the first half and the announcement of the category rounds, between the end of the category rounds and the start of the second half, and/or after regulation, before the overtime tossup(s).

-During any tossup question, you may not confer verbally or in writing with your teammates. You may raise your hand, extend your buzzer, or gesture in ways that indicate you **know the answer, but not what the answer is**. Conferencing illegally with your teammates on a tossup will be treated as if you buzzed in an answered the tossup incorrectly.

-On bonuses and in category rounds, talking to your teammates is permitted and encouraged, though attempts to talk loudly so that the opposing team cannot hear the question will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

-If you wish to protest a question or answer, **you must bring it to the reader's attention before leaving the room at the end of the game**. If the reader botches a question, there are makeup questions with each round that can be used.

-The category distribution of the 14 tossups includes 3 Literature, 3 Science, 3 History, 1 Math, 1 Fine Arts, 1 Religion & Mythology, 1 Social Studies, and 1 Pop Culture. Each bonus matches the category of the tossup, though not necessarily the subcategory (i.e. a Biology tossup may have an Astronomy bonus).

Category rounds are played at halftime. After a short break to allow substitutions, the three categories and themes will be announced. Substitutions cannot be made once the categories have been announced. Each game will have one Literature round, one History & Geography round, and one Science round. Each round has 6 short questions, each worth 10 points, on a given theme. **The team that is leading** will choose one of the three categories and will try to answer as many of the six questions as possible. If you don't know an answer, you may pass, but you will **not** be permitted to return to passed questions; a pass is treated as an incorrect answer. The first answer directed by the team captain to the moderator will be accepted as the answer.

If the first team gets an answer wrong or time is called, then the other team gets an immediate chance to answer. At that point, the moderator should not reveal the answer or reread the question to the second team! The moderator just says "incorrect" or "bounceback" and then the other team then gets eight seconds to confer, and then a prompt, and then five seconds to start giving their answer, just like the first team. Then the first team goes back to their next question, etc.

Once the first category's questions are finished, the team that had been trailing after the first half selects one of the two remaining categories and the process repeats.

-If a team correctly answers all six questions in a category, they receive a 20 point bonus for a total of 80 points on their round. No such bonus points are awarded if the two teams combine to correctly answer all six questions.

-After the two rounds and bouncebacks have been completed, there will be a short break for substitutions before the second half.

-If the game is tied after the second half, teams will play sudden victory tossups; first correct answer wins the game.

The preliminary rounds will consist of 5 games. At the end of the fifth game, all results will be tabulated and all teams **(usually ranked by won/loss record, then by points, then by opponents' combined record, then by opponents' points, unless there is an odd number of teams)** will be rebracketed and play another 3 games. After that, the top 4 elementary and the top 8 middle school teams advance to the Playoffs, which are a single-elimination competition. Good luck, and have fun!