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**YOUTH PROGRAMS**

**Battle of the Books**

**for Middle School Deaf and  
Hard of Hearing Students**

**Interim Rules and Guidelines**

**2020-2021 Online Competition Year**

**(New/changed information is highlighted in yellow)**

# Rules and Guidelines Manual

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## 1. Introduction

The Battle of the Books is an annual competition sponsored by Gallaudet University through its Youth Programs office. For the 2021 competition year, it consists of an online Preliminary Ranking test, a Playoff competition and an online National Battle of the Books competition.

This Rules and Guidelines booklet governs the Gallaudet University Preliminary, Playoff, and National Battle of the Books competitions for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Middle School students (hereafter Battle of the Books). The Battle of the Books is currently entering its 9th year.

## 2. Description and Objectives

There are three divisions in the competition. The divisions consist of students who read at the third/fourth grade levels (Green), fifth/sixth grade levels (Blue), and the seventh and above levels (Buff). The division names are as follows:

**Buff** - one of Gallaudet's primary colors.

**Blue** - one of Gallaudet's primary colors.

**Green** - named after Gallaudet's storied Kendall Green.

The Buff and Blue divisions will have three parts to their competition: a Preliminary Ranking Test conducted through the use of Zoom video conferencing with Gallaudet judges presiding; a playoff competition conducted through the use of Zoom video conferencing with Gallaudet judges presiding; and finally an online national competition conducted through the use of Zoom video conferencing with Gallaudet judges presiding.

The Green division will have two parts to their competition: a Preliminary Ranking Test conducted through the use of Zoom video conferencing with Gallaudet judges presiding; and a playoff competition conducted through the use of Zoom video conferencing with Gallaudet judges presiding.

The objectives of the Battle of the Books are to:

- advocate for literacy amongst deaf and hard of hearing middle school students
- promote a spirit of academic competition and good sportsmanship
- encourage the development of critical thinking skills.

## 3. Eligibility

### 3a. School and Program Eligibility

The Gallaudet's Battle of the Books competition is open to teams of middle school students currently enrolled in recognized schools or programs for deaf and hard of hearing students in the United States. Recognized schools or programs may include residential schools, day schools, mainstream programs, or any other type of educational program having middle-school-aged deaf or hard of hearing students. The Youth Programs office shall determine what constitutes "recognized schools or programs."

The Youth Programs office will give special consideration to two scenarios.

1. When a single school or program does not have enough students to field its own Battle of the Books team, it may ask to assemble a team by combining students from two or more schools or programs in reasonable proximity to each other. In the case of a school district, such as a city or county school system with multiple high schools, district-wide teams may be assembled only when individual schools do not have enough students to field their own teams.

2. A school in a rural area, the school may ask to draw students from a larger geographical area. Other options are for a mainstreamed or home-schooled student to join the team of a local school or program for the deaf. The decision whether to allow external students to participate on the school's team is solely based on the school's discretion.

Written petitions for special consideration will be considered by the Youth Programs office. School and program eligibility decisions will be made on an annual basis. The Youth Programs office may contact individual schools or school districts to verify enrollment numbers.

### **3b. Individual Eligibility**

All Battle of the Books participants must be deaf or hard of hearing. The Youth Programs office reserves the right to request verification from a school official of a member's eligibility to play.

Battle of the Books participants must be in the fifth through eighth grades. Students in the fourth grade and below OR ninth grade and above are not eligible. Students who are taking both eighth grade and high school classes must be enrolled in the eighth grade for at least 50% of their classes.

A student's eligibility for the Battle of the Books is limited to a total of four years, starting in the fifth grade and ending in the eighth grade. We encourage larger schools to use students from the sixth through eighth grades; for smaller schools, an understandable need may arise to use fifth graders in order to be able to field a team.

Note: When a student has played in a specific division (i.e. Blue), the student is not allowed to play in a lower division the following year (i.e. Blue in 2013 to Green in 2014). Students are allowed (and encouraged) to move up to a higher division from year to year as their reading comprehension skills increase.

### **3c. Academic Eligibility and Player Eligibility**

Each student on a Battle of the Books team must be in good academic standing--as defined by their school, program, or school district as of the date of the preliminary competition and again as of the date of the national competition. In particular, Battle of the Books participants must not be on academic probation, academic suspension, or the equivalent from the end of the previous grading period until the dates of the preliminary and national competitions. The Youth

Programs office reserves the right to request verification from a school official that a member is/was eligible to play. If no eligibility requirements exist for extracurricular activities, such as clubs, the school should look to its requirements for athletic eligibility.

The **Buff** division is only for students who read at the seventh grade or above. Fifth grade students may participate as long as they are reading at the seventh grade or above.

The **Blue** division is for students who read at the fifth and sixth grade levels.

The **Green** division is for students who read at the third and fourth grade levels.

To determine the appropriate reading division for your students, the following list includes examples of assessment tools that schools may choose to use: SAT test score (which shows reading comprehension level), NWEA (MAP) test results, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), state standardized test results, etc.

For the Blue division only, the Youth Programs office will send a Google Form for chaperones to fill out with each participant's reading assessment scores in order to ensure that the players on the Blue team are appropriately placed. More information will be shared with Blue division chaperones following registration.

Schools also have full discretion in deciding appropriate consequences for behavior-related issues for their players. The Youth Programs office has no control over what a school decides in relation to behavior-related issues that occur at the school. Chaperones are to communicate with the Youth Programs office if a player is removed from a team after the chaperone has submitted the team's registration.

#### **4. Registration and Number of Players**

Every fall, the Youth Programs office will provide information about registration to schools and programs across the nation. Currently, registration is completed online through the Battle of the Books website. For the 2020-2021 competition, the first day of the registration period will be on **Wednesday, September 16, 2020**, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

The last day to register a team is **Friday, September 18, 2020** at 4:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

There will be no registration fees for the 2020-2021 Battle of the Books competition season.

There will be no maximum number of teams for any of the three divisions. Schools can register up to three teams (one per reading division). All registered schools are welcome to participate in the competition.

The Youth Programs office will send each registered team an email acknowledging their registration. Any follow-up correspondence will be sent by email.

There is no maximum number of players for each team, but the suggested maximum is **six** players (in order to play 3 students in **each of the two chapters of the Preliminary Ranking Test**). The minimum number of players for each team is three players. For schools that have more than three players, the school decides at its own discretion how to use those players in the Preliminary **Ranking Test**. Schools may decide not to use all of their available players if they feel some players have not shown enough commitment to reading the books. If the school advances to the Playoffs, the school must decide which final three players they will use in the Playoff matches. Those three players will become the same players that **will compete in the National competition, if your team advances**. Teams can have one alternative player, in case a player needs to be replaced at the last minute. The alternative player can practice with the team until the National competition. However, the alternative player is to be used as a back-up player only, if needed. The alternative player cannot be used as a substitute player during the Playoffs. If a situation arises in which a team loses one of its players immediately before the National competition and an alternate player cannot be found, that team will be permitted to attend Nationals with two players, but will automatically become ineligible for team awards, individual players will remain eligible for individual awards.

Teams must submit final rosters of all students and chaperones online on or before **Monday, November 2, 2020**. Any roster changes after that date must be approved by the Youth Programs office.

## **5. Designated Chaperone**

**Each team must have at least one chaperone. If a team has two chaperones, the school or program must designate one chaperone as the primary contact person for each division. Only one chaperone can participate in the Zoom matches.**

## **6. Chaperone Guidelines**

In contrast to the Academic Bowl, Battle of the Books chaperones are not allowed to develop practice questions or facilitate discussion about the assigned books for the competition. Chaperones are also not allowed to mandate any assignments for daily or weekly practice (i.e., requiring readers to develop questions, requiring group discussion, etc.), such strategies may be recommended but not mandated. Students will be expected to facilitate their own discussion about the assigned books and develop their own study materials. Chaperones will be required to sign a participation contract online.

A list of what Chaperones CAN do:

- 1) Help students prepare for the competition by explaining the rules and the competition format. A video by the Youth Programs office will be sent to registered teams explaining the rules and guidelines.

- 2) Communicate with Gallaudet's Youth Programs office to ensure registration and so forth.
- 3) Set up a mock competition or a tryouts competition in which students read non-BOTB books and participate in a tryouts test of sorts in which similar rules or a similar competition format is used.
- 4) Give definitions for vocabulary words that students struggle with from their assigned books.
- 5) Encourage students to set up a timeline and/or develop questions for the books (cannot mandate it).
- 6) Help my team prepare for the Playoff and National competitions by showing the Final Chapter video created by the Youth Programs Office.
- 7) Help players practice for the Final Round presentation by holding a mock competition using questions from a non-BOTB book.
- 8) Provide copies of the BOTB Study Guide packet sent by the Youth Programs office.
- 9) **Set up online meetings** and help team schedule practice sessions (cannot be mandated).

A list of what chaperones CAN'T do:

- 1) Answer any questions a student might have about a book except when students request a definition of a word.
- 2) Help develop practice questions relating to the assigned books.
- 3) Mandate the development of possible questions by the team (this **MUST** be done on their own by their own accord).
- 4) Develop a timeline for students to read the books (i.e. mandating that students read Chapters 1 through 10 of a book by a given date).
- 5) Facilitate discussion of the books.
- 6) Find websites or other materials relating to the book and share them with the team.

If it is discovered that a chaperone has violated one of the above guidelines, the team will be disqualified from the current competition and may be suspended for the following year. Parents and other school officials are also asked to maintain the integrity of the competition by adhering to the same guidelines given to the chaperones.

During the Preliminary, Playoff, and the National competitions, chaperones must watch their teams, incommunicado. Chaperones may advise, support, and counsel their teams either before or after the match or during the two-minute breaks, but they cannot talk about the content of the books. Chaperones are not to take notes at all during the competition.

## 7. National Competition Teams

The top eight teams from the **Buff** division and the top eight teams from the **Blue** division will advance to the National competition.

## 8. Player Illness

Barring sudden illness or other emergencies, all players are expected to remain in the competition room for the entire match. Emergency bathroom breaks are excepted and can take place during the two-minute breaks.

If a player on a Playoff team with only three registered players cannot make it due to illness during a match, we will give that team a 1-point default for that player's answer during the Final Chapter. If there are two or more players on a Playoffs team unable to show up for the match and rescheduling is not a possible option, the team automatically forfeits the match.

If a player does not join the Zoom meeting on time for their scheduled match, they will be given 10 minutes past the scheduled time before the team automatically forfeits the match.

## 9. Accessibility Accommodations

If any accommodations are needed for players, besides interpreters, it will be the responsibility of the participating school to provide those accommodations. Gallaudet University will provide the interpreters for the Preliminary Ranking Test, Playoffs, and National competition, if needed.

**Interpreters** – Students may request interpreters to help during introductions and objections, Final Chapter presentation answers, and other special circumstances. Because the competition questions are presented in both ASL and written English, interpreters cannot be used during the actual showing of questions and answers, or to facilitate discussion among teammates.

**Vision and Perception** - A player may request accommodations for a visual or perceptual impairment: for example, the need for a font style, size, or color change, a background color or intensity change. If a player needs equipment accommodations such as a close vision monitor, please work with your school/program to obtain loaner equipment.

**Advance notification of all accessibility accommodations is required by Monday, November 2, 2020 to allow appropriate accommodations to be made, and to ensure that the accommodation does not give any individual or team an advantage over any other individual or team.**

## 10. Match Format

### 10a. Rounds and Number of Questions

#### Preliminary Ranking Test Format

The preliminary competition will consist of one ranking test. This ranking test shall consist of two chapters, designated Chapter One and Chapter Two. The two rounds are played consecutively, with a two-minute break in between.

Chapter 1 will consist of Multiple Choice, Short Answer, and True or False questions for which team members will be allowed to discuss amongst each other before submitting the answers. The **Buff** and **Blue** divisions will have 20 Round 1 questions. The **Green** division will have 12 Round 1 questions.

Chapter 2 will consist of Multiple Choice, Short Answer, and True or False questions for which team members will be allowed to discuss amongst each other before submitting the answers. The **Buff** and **Blue** divisions will have 20 Round 2 questions. The **Green** division will have 12 Round 2 questions.

### **Playoffs Match Format**

Each match shall consist of three chapters, designated Chapter One, Chapter Two, and the Final Chapter. All three rounds are played consecutively, with two-minute breaks in between.

Chapter 1 will consist of 12 Multiple Choice, Short Answer, and True or False questions for which team members will be allowed to discuss amongst each other before submitting the answers.

Chapter 2 will consist of 12 Multiple Choice, Short Answer, and True or False questions for which individual team members will take turns answering. They will not be allowed to discuss amongst each other before submitting the answers.

The Final Chapter will consist of **three** Presentation-Style questions for which team members will take turns giving answers. Each of the three players will answer one question with no help from their teammates. All three questions will be shown before the Final Chapter begins so that each team can decide who will answer each of the three questions.

### **Nationals Match Format**

The National competition will take place over two weeks. The first week will consist of one National ranking test. This Ranking Test shall consist of two chapters, designated Chapter One and Chapter Two. Each chapter will consist of 20 questions. The two chapters are played consecutively, with a two-minute break in between. The scores earned in this National Ranking Test will be used to determine the seeding for bracket play in the second week of the National competition.

The second week of the National competition will consist of the National bracket play. Each match shall consist of three chapters, designated Chapter One, Chapter Two, and the Final Chapter. All three chapters are played consecutively, with two-minute breaks in between.

Chapter 1 will consist of 9 Multiple Choice, Short Answer, and True or False questions for which team members will be allowed to discuss amongst each other before submitting the answers.

Chapter 2 will consist of 9 Multiple Choice, Short Answer, and True or False questions for which individual team members will take turns answering. They will not be allowed to discuss amongst each other before submitting the answers.

The Final Chapter will consist of three Presentation-Style questions for which team members will take turns giving answers. Each of the three players must answer one question with no help from their teammates. There will be three questions shown right before the Final Chapter begins so that teammates can assign themselves one of the three questions.

## 10b. Question Categories and Scoring

### Chapters One and Two

Multiple Choice, Short Answer, and True or False questions will be used for these chapters. For the Preliminary and Playoff matches, questions will be drawn from all three of the assigned Preliminary books in no particular number or order. For the national competition, questions will be drawn from all four of the assigned Nationals books. Each correct answer in Chapter One and Two is worth 2 points.

For the **Green** division, the maximum number of points that can be earned in each of the first two chapters of the Preliminary ranking test is 24, a perfect score for the entire match will be 48. For the **Blue** and **Buff** divisions, the maximum number of points that can be earned in each of the first two chapters of the Preliminary ranking test is 40, a perfect score for the entire match will be 80.

For the Playoff competition, the maximum number of points that can be earned in each of the first two chapters by all three divisions is 24. The maximum number of points that can be earned in the Final Chapter is 15. A perfect score for the entire match will be 63.

For the National Ranking Test, the maximum number of points that can be earned in each of the two chapters is 40 points, a perfect score will be 80.

The maximum number of points that can be earned in each of the first two chapters of the National competition is 18. The maximum number of points that can be earned in the Final Chapter is 15. A perfect score for the entire match will be 51.

### An example of a Multiple Choice question is:

Question: What is the name of Holden's sister in *The Catcher in the Rye*?

- A) Phoebe
- B) Rachel
- C) Priscilla
- D) Chloe

Answer: A or Phoebe

**An example of a Short Answer question is:**

Question: With what weapon was Rue killed in *The Hunger Games*?

Answer: A spear

**\*During the Preliminaries, Playoffs and Nationals matches, the Gallaudet judges will determine whether the written short answers are accepted or not.**

**An example of a True or False question is:**

True or False: Harry Potter received his Hogwarts letter the day he turned ten years old.

Answer: False (Harry received his Hogwarts letter the day he turned eleven years old).

**\*For True or False answers in Chapter One and Two, any “false” answer will be accompanied by an explanation on the answer slide. The explanation is not a required part of the answer, but provided for the benefit of the players and audience members.**

**Final Chapter (for Playoff and National matches only)**

Presentation-Style questions will be used for this chapter. Questions will be drawn from all three of the assigned books (four books for the national competition teams). Right before the Final Chapter starts, teams will be shown the questions then they will need to assign a player to each of the three questions. For an example, see below:

- 1) *The Hunger Games*- Why do you think Katniss volunteered in Prim’s place at the Reaping? (James)
- 2) *Harry Potter*- Why do you think Dobby decided to warn Harry about the terrible things that would happen at Hogwarts? (Rosalie)
- 3) *The Catcher in the Rye*- Why do you think Holden called the people who surround him phonies? (Estella)

Players will be asked a question, then given up to two minutes to write notes and answer the question presentation-style. The judges will score the answers on a scale of 0 to 5 points. The maximum number of points that can be earned in this round is 15 points.

For the Green division, presentation-style questions will still be used, but the questions will be simpler questions such as:

- 1) *Frog and Toad Are Friends*- What was your favorite chapter in the book and why?
- 2) *Dexter the Tough*- In the beginning of the book, why is Dexter always hurting other kids?

## 11. Competition Formats

### 11a. Preliminary Ranking Test Format

During the Preliminary Ranking Test portion of the competition, each team will take one ranking test. All divisions will have their own respective ranking test. Each team within a division will take the same ranking test. The results of this ranking test will help determine the seeding for the Playoff competition bracket. There will be no wins and losses in this part of the competition.

The Preliminary ranking test will happen during the week of January 11-15th. The Youth Programs office will work with the chaperones to schedule a time and date for your team to take the preliminary ranking test.

Participating teams will be expected to excuse their players from school for one two-hour period in order to be able to play their ranking test.

The entire team must be visible when in the Zoom meeting with the Gallaudet judge(s). During the two-minute break between rounds and during timeouts, chaperones may rally, and support their teams. At all other times during a match, chaperones must watch their teams compete with their video turned off.

Team shirts are encouraged for each participating school during the Preliminary Ranking Test and Playoff competition. Schools are responsible for the cost of the team apparel.

All questions in the Match PowerPoints will be signed in ASL using video clips with the English translation appearing on screen as well.

### Preliminary Ranking Test Rounds One and Two

Multiple Choice, Short Answer, and True or False questions will be shown on the screen in both ASL and written English. After the signer has stopped signing the question, all teams will be given one minute to discuss and submit an answer. All answers are to be written on a white board or blank paper and held up to the screen for the Gallaudet Judge to be able to read. A timer will be on the PowerPoint and the answer must be submitted by the team before time expires. If a player has written an answer and has taken his/her pen off the whiteboard before time has expired, the answer can be submitted. If a team is still arguing over which answer to submit and time has expired, the team will not be given a chance to submit an answer. The Gallaudet Judge will determine whether the answer is acceptable or not.

## **Preliminary Ranking Test Results**

Once all participating teams have completed their Ranking Test matches, the results for each division will be announced via email, on the Battle of the Books website, and on the Gallaudet University Youth Programs Facebook page.

## **11b. Playoffs Competition Format**

The results from the Ranking Test will be used to determine the seedings for the Playoff bracket. The bracket play will start with an Opening Round consisting of matches played between the lower ranked teams in each division. The higher ranked teams will earn a bye into the Round of 16. The teams that win their Opening Round matches will advance and will compete in the Round of 16. The tournament bracket is a single elimination tournament. Each match in the Playoffs will be played in front of the Gallaudet judges via Zoom.

After the Round of 16 matches have been played, each division will be left with 8 teams. The final 8 teams for the **Buff** and the **Blue** divisions will then advance to the BOTB National competition. The **Green** division teams will continue bracket play to determine the **Green** division champions.

The exact number of teams that will play in the Opening Round, and those that earn a bye into the Round of 16 will depend on the number of teams that register for the division. For instance, if we have 24 teams registered for a division, we will use a 24-team bracket and teams that were seeded 1-8 in the preliminary ranking test will earn a bye into the Round of 16. Teams 9-24 will play in the Opening Round. The teams that win their Opening Round matches will advance into the Round of 16. Teams that lose their Opening Round match will be eliminated from the competition. Subsequently, teams that lose their Round of 16 matches will also be eliminated from the competition.

## **Playoffs Chapter One and Two**

Multiple Choice, Short Answer, and True or False questions will be shown on the screen in both ASL and written English. Teams will be given **one minute** to answer the question and the timer will start after the signer has stopped signing the question. All answers are to be written on a white board **or blank paper** and shown to the Gallaudet judges **by holding it up to the screen**. An answer must be submitted by the team before time expires. If a player has written an answer and has taken his/her pen off the whiteboard before time has expired, the answer can be submitted. If a team is still arguing over which answer to submit and time has expired, the team will not be given a chance to submit an answer. Gallaudet's judges will determine whether the answer is acceptable or not.

Chapter One will continue to be a team discussion round while Chapter Two will be an individual round in which players take turns answering the questions.

## **Playoffs Final Chapter**

Presentation-Style questions will be shown on the screen in both ASL and written English. Each player will be given up to two minutes to give a presentation-style answer to the judges. The judges will then award points on a 0-5 scale for each answer.

### 11c. National Competition Format

During the BOTB National competition, the eight Buff and Blue teams will first take a National Ranking Test, this format will be similar to the Preliminary competition. There will be 20 Round One questions, and 20 Round Two questions. The National Ranking Test will be used to determine seeding for bracket play.

The Quarterfinal match-ups for both the Buff and Blue divisions will look like the following:

#1 vs #8

#4 vs #5

#3 vs #6

#2 vs #7

The winners of the Quarterfinals round will advance to the Semifinals round. The winners of the Semifinals round will advance to the Championship match. The Third Place and Fourth Place teams will be determined by the points earned by the losing teams in the Semifinals matches.

The procedures for Chapter One and Two of the National competition matches will be exactly the same as the Playoffs portion of the competition.

All aspects of the Final Chapter from the Playoffs portion will remain the same.

## 12. Rules During Matches

### Chapters One and Two

- A. All answers must be written on a dry erase board or blank paper and shown to the Gallaudet judges.
- B. Answers that are communicated to the judges in a way other than writing will not be accepted.
- C. All three team members must give a thumbs up to the Gallaudet judge as a way of confirming that the written answer is the final answer.
- D. Once the dry erase board/paper has been given thumbs up by all of the readers, the answer is considered final and may not be taken back for corrections or additions by any player at any time.
- E. Changes, strikeouts, and corrections must be clear. If changes make the answer ambiguous or illegible, the judges will rule it incorrect. If there is any writing on the dry erase board that is not relevant to the answer, it must be marked out so the judges do not have to guess at which answer is intended. Players are encouraged to circle the correct written answer so the judges can clearly distinguish the final answer.

- F. While this is not a handwriting competition, answers must be written legibly. Legibility is at the discretion of the judges, objections on handwriting will not be considered.
- G. Answers that are not proper nouns need not be capitalized and will be accepted with or without capitals. All proper nouns must be correctly capitalized (i.e. Holden Caulfield, London, etc.) For proper nouns, full names are not required. However, if you include the full name, spelling must be correct for both the first AND last name. If more than one character in the book (i.e., Ron or Fred Weasley) shares the same last name, the first name will be a required part of the answer.
- H. All character names MUST be spelled correctly and capitalized.
- I. For Green and Blue division players, spelling should be as accurate as possible for all non-proper noun answers. Buff division players must spell all key parts of the answer correctly.

### Final Chapter

- A. 1. When a player is giving his/her presentation-style answer, the other players on the team may not communicate in any way with the player giving the answer.
- B. 2. If a player uses spoken English to voice an objection or give his Final Chapter answer, an ASL interpreter, provided by Gallaudet University, will be used to ensure that the Gallaudet judges can understand the player. Interpreters will be instructed to interpret the answer word for word and include any vocal representations of uncertainty or “stalling” (i.e., “umm”).

### 13. Competition Standings

#### 13a. Preliminary Ranking Test Standings

All registered teams in the Buff, Blue, and Green divisions will take the Preliminary Ranking Test. If there is a tie between two teams (or more) in any division, the Youth Programs office will look at which of the two tied teams had the highest score in Chapter Two alone. The team that has the highest combined score for Chapter Two will win the tie. If both teams scored the same number of points in Chapter Two, then we will conduct a Tiebreaker. We will contact the teams who are tied for another match via Zoom. The Tiebreaker will consist of 5 short answer questions. These five Tiebreaker questions will be team discussion questions. The winner of the Tiebreaker will be the first team to get a question right that the other team didn't.

See below for an example situation:

Tiebreaker Question 1

-Team A: correct

-Team B: correct

Tiebreaker Question 2

-Team A: correct

-Team B: correct

Tiebreaker Question 3

-Team A: incorrect

-Team B: incorrect

*(as both teams answered incorrectly, effectively continuing the tie, both teams move on to the next question)*

Tiebreaker Question 4

-Team A: incorrect

-Team B: correct

*(Team B wins the Tiebreaker. Both teams will answer all 5 questions regardless)*

Tiebreaker Question 5

-Team A: correct

-Team B: incorrect

*(Team B still wins, despite getting question 5 incorrect as team A had the first incorrect answer)*

### 13b. Playoffs Competition Standings

All of the teams in the **Buff** and **Blue** Playoffs will have at least one match in front of the Gallaudet judges in the Playoffs. The top eight teams from each division will then be invited to the national competition. If there is a tie between two teams in either division, we will look at the total number of points earned in the Final Chapter by each of the tied teams. If this does not break the tie, we will look at which team amassed the most points in Chapter Two alone. The team that has the highest combined score for Chapter Two will win the tie. If both teams scored the same number of points in Chapter Two, then we will conduct a Tiebreaker. We will contact the teams who are tied for another match via Zoom. The Tiebreaker will consist of 5 short answer questions. These five Tiebreaker questions will be team discussion questions. The winner of the Tiebreaker will be the first team to get a question right that the other team didn't. *(Refer to 13a for an example of a Tiebreaker procedure)*

All of the teams in the **Green** Playoffs will have at least one match in front of the Gallaudet judges. Green division teams will complete the Playoff bracket to determine a Green Division championship team. If there is a tie between two teams in the Green division, we will look at the total number of points earned in the Final Chapter by each of the tied teams. If this does not break the tie, we will look at which team amassed the most points in Chapter Two alone. The team that has the highest combined score for Chapter Two will win the tie. If both teams scored the same number of points in Chapter Two, then we will conduct a Tiebreaker. We will contact the teams who are tied for another match via Zoom. The Tiebreaker will consist of 5 short answer questions. These five Tiebreaker questions will be team discussion questions. The winner of the Tiebreaker will be the first team to get a question right that the other team didn't. *(Refer to 13a for an example of a Tiebreaker procedure)*

### 13c. National Competition standings

The national competition will take place over two weeks. In the first week the teams will take a National Ranking Test. The teams will then be seeded for the tournament bracket the following week based on the points they earned on their National Ranking Test. If two teams (or more) have the same points total after the completion of the National Ranking Test, we will look at the total number of points earned in Chapter Two of as a tiebreaker. The team that amassed the most points in Chapter Two alone will win the tie. However, if this does not break the tie, then we will conduct a Tiebreaker. We will contact the teams who are tied for another match via Zoom. The Tiebreaker will consist of 5 short answer questions. These five Tiebreaker questions will be team discussion questions. The winner of the Tiebreaker will be the first team to get a question right that the other team didn't. *(Refer to 13a for an example of a Tiebreaker procedure)*

After teams have been seeded, the National tournament bracket play begins in the second week. During this bracket play period, if there is a tie between two teams in either division, we will look at the total number of points earned in the Final Chapter by each of the tied teams. If this does not break the tie, we will look at which team amassed the most points in Chapter Two alone. The team that has the highest combined score for Chapter Two will win the tie. If both teams scored the same number of points in Chapter Two, then we will conduct a Tiebreaker. We will contact the teams who are tied for another match via Zoom. The Tiebreaker will consist of 5 short answer questions. These five Tiebreaker questions will be team discussion questions. The winner of the Tiebreaker will be the first team to get a question right that the other team didn't. *(Refer to 13a for an example of a Tiebreaker procedure)*

#### **14. Timeouts and Objections**

There are no timeouts during the Battle of the Books matches.

Objections can be made at any time if a player disagrees with a judge's decision during Chapters One or Two. When a player wants to make an objection, they simply need to **raise their hand** and indicate that they want to make an objection. The player will then explain their rationale for the objection and the judge will then respond with a decision after consulting with the head judge. All answer slides will have the book title and the page number(s) used for obtaining the answer.

A player may not object on handwriting or legibility. Objections cannot be made during the Final Chapter. Chaperones cannot object at all during any point of the matches.

#### **15. Audience Interference**

Only chaperones are allowed to talk to their team during the matches—either during breaks or at the beginning and end of each match.

#### **16. Confidentiality Agreement**

All players, and chaperones are not to share any information about the questions and answers with anyone who was not present during the match, nor are they to share their score in

any manner, including on social media, until after their respective competition period is complete. Sharing scores with individuals not on the team will be considered a violation of the confidentiality agreement. Any violation of the confidentiality agreement will be grounds for immediate disqualification from the competition.

### **17. Sportsmanship and Conduct**

Appropriate sportsmanship and professional behavior is expected from all players, teams, and chaperones at all times throughout all phases of the competition. During each division's competition periods, sharing a team's final score in any manner is considered a violation of the confidentiality agreement and will lead to disqualification from the competition.

Chaperones and their schools are responsible for the behavior of their teams and individual members. All players and chaperones are expected to conduct themselves properly and in accordance with law. Underage drinking, use of illegal drugs or any other type of illegal activity will not be tolerated. A list of infractions and consequences is detailed in the Participation Contract form that each player and his or her parents or guardian reads and signs before the national competition.

The Battle of the Books Executive Committee reserves the right to determine appropriate consequences for any violations committed by a member of a team.

### **18. Communication Devices**

Communication devices may not be used in competition rooms at any time by players or chaperones. This includes beepers, pagers, smartphones, smartwatches, notebook computers, tablets, or any other device that may jeopardize the fairness and integrity of the Gallaudet's Battle of the Books competition. Earbuds or headphones connecting a player to a computer in order to hear their teammates or the ASL to voice interpreter will be allowed.

### **19. Photography and Video Cameras**

During the Preliminary, Playoff, and National competitions, photographs or videos of the team may be taken before or after the match. No still or video photography is allowed during the match that include the question or answer slides of the competition PowerPoint. Still or video photography may be posted to social media sites by any person after the Youth Programs team deems it no longer a confidentiality issue (depending on the competition, this could be at the end of the competition day or at the end of the competition week).

The only exception to this rule will be when the Gallaudet University photographer or videographer needs to photograph or record some aspect of the competition.

### **20. Certificates and Awards**

For all Preliminary competition participants, each will receive a certificate and a t-shirt.

For the **Buff and Blue** divisions, the awards are as follows:

There will be one player selected from each of the top eight schools to the All-Star team and each player will receive individual medallions. An additional player will be selected as the Most Outstanding Player and receive a trophy. The Most Outstanding Player is a student who not only demonstrates excellent knowledge, but also exhibits leadership, team spirit, and a positive attitude toward all. The Battle of the Books Executive Committee will select the winner of this award.

The winning school of the Gallaudet's Battle of the Books competition will receive a plaque for the school for permanent display, and individual trophies for the chaperone and players.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> place team will receive a plaque for the school for permanent display and individual trophies for the chaperone and players. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place teams will receive a plaque for display at the schools.

For the **Green** division, the awards are as follows:

A Championship plaque and individual trophies will be presented to the championship team from the Green Playoffs.

One player will be selected as the Most Outstanding Player. The Most Outstanding Player is a student who not only demonstrates excellent knowledge, but also exhibits leadership, team spirit, and a positive attitude toward all. The Battle of the Books Executive Committee will select the winner of this award.

## **21. Books and Questions**

All books used during the competition are selected by the Battle of the Books Executive Committee. Questions are also developed by the Battle of the Books committee. Every effort will be made to select books that reflect the diversity of the United States and the world. The books selected will be mainly, but not always, contemporary in order to prevent students from using movie adaptations of books to gain an unfair advantage. Participating schools are also expected to **disallow** the use of the books selected as a part of the school curriculum for the same time period.

Schools are responsible for the purchase of the books used for the preliminary competition. Schools can order books for the competition in advance once the books are announced in May 2020. Specific ISBN numbers will be provided for each book because for some books, several editions may exist. Books will be provided by the Youth Programs office for all players that advance to the national competition. National competition books provided by Gallaudet University are for players to keep and must not be reallocated to other students or school resources.

## **22. Copyright of Questions**

All of the questions used in the Battle of the Books competitions are copyrighted and are the sole property of Gallaudet University. No other use of these questions is permitted. Anyone who copies questions in any manner will be asked to leave the competition.

### **23. Infractions and Consequences**

Infractions and Consequences are detailed in the Participation Contract, and are considered part of these Rules and Guidelines. The Participation Contracts will be online and each member of each registered team will be asked to insert their electronic signatures on the online registration forms.

**Note: These Rules and Guidelines are subject to change by the Battle of the Books committee as necessary to maintain a fair and enjoyable competition. Mid-season changes will be kept to an absolute minimum.**

### **24. Timeline of the 2020-2021 Competition**

**Registration period:** Wednesday, September 16 @ 6:00pm EDT to Friday, September 18, 2019 @ 4:00pm EDT

**Distribute books to players:** Friday, October 30, 2020

**Team Registration form due and Registration fee(s) due:** Monday, November 2, 2020

**Sample match sent to chaperones:** early November 2020

**Preliminary Ranking Test:** Monday, January 11-Friday, January 15th, 2021

**Announce Playoff Seeding:** Friday, January 15th, 2021

**Playoffs:** Monday, January 25-Friday, January 29

**Announce Nationals teams:** Friday, January 29, 2021

**Announce books for National competition (and ship to schools):** Friday, January 29, 2021

**Distribute Nationals books to players:** Monday, February 8th, 2021

**National Competition Ranking Test:** Monday, March 29-Friday, April 2, 2021

**\*National Competition Bracket Play:** Monday, April 5-Friday, April 9, 2021

**\*The championship matches will be shown via Facebook Live on Sunday, April 11, 2021.**

**Note: Players that receive books for the National competition are expected to keep the books for personal use after the competition. The books for the National competition are purchased by the Youth Programs office and become the property of the players after receiving them.**

# National Championship Teams

## 2020

**Buff: Indiana School for the Deaf  
Indianapolis, IN**

**Blue: Wisconsin School for the Deaf  
Delavan, WI**

**Green: Kendall Demonstration Elementary School  
Washington, DC**

## 2019

**Buff: Kendall Demonstration Elementary School  
Washington, DC**

**Blue: Venado Middle School  
Irvine, CA**

**Green: Venado Middle School  
Irvine, CA**

## 2018

**Buff: Texas School for the Deaf  
Austin, TX**

**Blue: Kendall Demonstration Elementary School  
Washington, DC**

**Green: Wisconsin School for the Deaf**

**Delavan, WI**

**2017**

**Buff: California School for the Deaf  
Fremont, CA**

**Blue: New Mexico School for the Deaf  
Santa Fe, NM**

**Green: Maryland School for the Deaf  
Frederick, MD**

**2016**

**Buff: Phoenix Day School for the Deaf  
Phoenix, AZ**

**Blue: California School for the Deaf  
Fremont, CA**

**Green: Rhode Island School for the Deaf  
Providence, RI**

**2015**

**Buff: Phoenix Day School for the Deaf  
Phoenix, AZ**

**Blue: Wisconsin School for the Deaf  
Delavan, WI**

**Green: California School for the Deaf  
Fremont, CA**

**2014**

**Buff: Kendall Demonstration Elementary School  
Washington, DC**

**Blue: Kentucky School for the Deaf  
Danville, KY**

**Green: Louisiana School for the Deaf  
Baton Rouge, LA  
&**

**Illinois School for the Deaf  
Jacksonville, IL**

**2012-2013**

**Buff: Texas School for the Deaf  
Austin, TX**

**Blue: Kansas School for the Deaf  
Olathe, KS**

**Green: Texas School for the Deaf  
Austin, TX**