



Oregon Battle of the Books Official Handbook

2014-2015

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For more information and resources, visit our website:
<http://oboblsta.pbworks.com/>

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Introduction

Oregon Battle of the Books, OBOB, is a statewide **voluntary** reading motivation and comprehension program sponsored by the Oregon Association of School Libraries (OASL) and the Oregon Library Association (OLA), in conjunction with a Library Services and Technology Act grant through the Oregon State Library. Students in 3rd-12th grade, regardless of ability, are exposed to quality literature representing a variety of literary styles and viewpoints. The mission is to encourage and recognize students who enjoy reading, to broaden reading interests, to increase reading comprehension, promote academic excellence, and to promote cooperative learning and teamwork among students.

Lists of books are chosen, and questions are written for each grade level division. Students read the books, discuss them, quiz each other on the contents, and then compete in teams of four students to correctly answer questions based on the books in a "quiz show" format. Half of the questions will begin with the words "In Which Book" so that the answer will be a title **and** author and the other questions will be "Content" questions with the title of the book supplied. Teams may participate at local, district, regional, and state levels of competition.

New lists of titles for each level are compiled each year by the selection committee based on the "Criteria for the Selection of Titles." An attempt is made to vary the titles chosen according to genre and difficulty so that readers may encounter a broad range of books.

History

The original idea for Battle of the Books came from a radio program sponsored by the Chicago Public Library in the early 1940s which featured teams of students from different Chicago schools each week. It was revived in the 1960s by one of those child contestants who grew up to be a school librarian in Illinois.

Battle of the Books was brought to Oregon by school librarian and author Sybilla Cook in the 1970s. Word spread about the program through various library conferences. Successful local Battle programs developed in various parts of Oregon throughout the ensuing decades including Salem, Roseburg, Springfield and Beaverton. Never a mandated program, it has continued to be popular because it works. Parents are enthusiastic. Teachers and librarians find children read more books as they learn the pleasures of teamwork and academic competition.

In 2006, with the encouragement of State Librarian Jim Scheppeke, OASL President Allen Kopf formed a committee to submit a grant to the Oregon State Library for a statewide Battle of the Books program. Upon receipt of the first LSTA grant, the committee moved forward with the statewide plan to be implemented in the 2007-2008 school year. The state OBOB Committee was then formed to bring various disparate Oregon programs together into one cohesive state-wide effort and the Oregon Battle of the Books was born. OBOB has continued ever since with the support from LSTA grants, the Oregon Association of School Librarians, the Oregon Library Association, and countless volunteers from all over the state, including, local businesses, local service clubs, both public and school librarians, teachers, school administrators, and parents, just to name a few.

Organization

The Oregon Battle of the Books is organized locally by participating school systems, regionally by a regional committee, and statewide by the OBOB Steering Committee. The Executive Committee is comprised of the following chairs: Administrative, Outreach, Financial, Title, and Questions as well as the Secretary and Treasurer. The full OBOB Steering Committee includes representatives from OBOB regions throughout the state and meets in person in August, November, January, and February of each year and by teleconference in April to discuss policies and issues and select titles for the next school year. Librarians and school personnel interested in joining the Steering Committee should contact the Administrative Chair at OBOB1sta@gmail.com.

The OBOB Executive Committee will oversee the collection and distribution of information, questions, and book lists. Registration of participating school teams takes place each fall on the OBOB website and registration must be completed prior to announced deadlines for a school to participate in their designated regional tournaments. A participation fee is required of schools to support the OBOB committee in operating state and regional tournaments and in providing book grants to schools. (Registration information is available on the OBOB Wiki <http://oboblsta.pbworks.com/>) At the direction of the OBOB Executive Committee, regional committees will conduct the regional competitions according to rules set out in this handbook.

General Player and Team Rules

- All students participating must be in grades 3-5, 6-8, or 9-12 for the current school year.
- Students must participate within the school that they are registered. A school may not form a team consisting of students registered at multiple schools.
- Each team must have a sponsor from their school who is a school library media specialist, library paraprofessional, or other school staff member.
- Composition of the team members may not change once the regional battles have started.
- Regional competitions do not require participation in a district/county/ESD competition. State battles do require participation in the regional competitions.
- Each school may send only one team, per division, to the regional competition (grant recipients must attend and compete in the regional competitions).
- Each region will send its top team in each division to the state competition. Some regions will be allowed to send more than one team to the state competition, depending on the number of registered teams competing at the regional competition. Regional managers will be notified of the number of teams their region is allowed to send to state each year before they host their regional competition.
- Teams are usually made up of four members, with one optional alternate, for a total of five members. However, no more than four students may participate in any given battle.
- There may be only one alternate. This alternate may take the place of another player for a battle. When the alternate is used, the alternate must remain in competition for the entire battle. No other substitutions may be made during a battle.
- No other person may assist in answering any question directed to a team, or any challenge decisions, including the team's coach. The Moderator will disqualify a team determined to be receiving outside help.
- In the event of a situation that is not specifically addressed in the OBOB rules, the decision of the Moderator/co-Judge(s) in the room for that battle is final.
- The OBOB Committee has the authority to refuse to allow a team to participate in the event of unsportsmanlike behavior or other extenuating circumstances.

Student Registration Clarification:

Students who are currently homeschooled may participate in OBOB as a member of a school team within the public school attendance boundaries of the school in which the student's parents reside (as per ORS 339.460 section B, part f). Homeschooled students may not, however, form a team on their own. Homeschooled students wishing to participate in OBOB should contact their local school library for OBOB related class and/or practice requirements (ORS 339.60, Sec B(e)). Homeschooled students may be placed on a school OBOB team at the local level following the same procedures and guidelines used for traditional students.

Coach Rules and Responsibilities

- Prepare the teams by reviewing procedures and rules.
- At regional and state competitions, the coach or designee will serve as a Judge in the room each time their team battles.
- Conduct practice battles which follow OBOB protocol.
- Encourage and moderate discussions about the books.
- Encourage as many student participants and teams as possible at the school level.
- Direct teams in writing their own practice questions if additional questions are desired.
- Offer moral support to the Moderator during battles and help manage audience behavior.
- Must secure adult supervision for the team at all regional and state competitions.
- Reinforce that the focus of this program is to celebrate the love of reading, and promote good sportsmanship for both teams and spectators.
- Must bring a complete set of books to regional and state competitions.
- May need to provide volunteer(s) at regional and state, if requested by the regional manager.
- Communicate and confirm attendance at regional and state competitions.
- Check in when the whole OBOB team arrives at tournament.
- Follow the specific guidelines provided for coaches at the regional and state competitions.
- Attend the mandatory volunteer training prior to the Regional and State (if attending) Competitions.

Regional and State Tournament Rules & Procedures

- 1) All electronic devices in the room must be in the off mode during all battles. Photos may only be taken before and after a battle.
- 2) No videotaping of battles may occur at regional and State competitions. Coverage of the competition by local media may occur if students involved have parent permission submitted to the Regional Manager.
- 3) There will be 16 questions at local, regional, and state battles (8 “In Which Book” and 8 “Content”). The final match at regional and state battles will consist of 32 questions.
- 4) Competitions begin with a round robin pool with the top scoring teams going into a single elimination tournament. All teams play at least twice.
- 5) Each team will bring a set of the OBOB books and hand them to the Moderator when they enter the room for each battle.
- 6) Teams are usually made up of four members with one optional alternate, for a total of five members. All competing members must be physically present for a battle.
- 7) Of the four competing members, one will serve as the spokesperson throughout each battle.
- 8) Alternate members, who are not playing, will sit in a designated audience area during battles.
- 9) Two teams will compete during a single battle. A coin toss will be held before the start of each battle. The winning team decides where they want to sit. (Efforts will be made to ensure teams can quietly discuss answers among themselves without fear of being overheard by the opposing team.)

- 10) The team that sits on the left of the Moderator will always be given first chance at the odd-numbered questions, and the team on the right will always be given first chance at the even-numbered questions. The "odd" team (on the Moderator's left) will go first and be read question number one.
- 11) The Moderator will review the rules with the participating teams and find out who is serving as the spokesperson for each team. Answers will be accepted only from that spokesperson; no other team member's answer shall be heard or recorded during that battle.
- 12) The Moderator will shuffle and number the question cards. The Moderator will ask a question, prefacing the question with the name of the team it is directed to. Timing starts immediately after the question has been read for the first time. Teams will have 15 seconds to quietly discuss the question among themselves. **Only the first answer the spokesperson gives will be accepted; the team cannot use up the time left to guess other answers.** Moderator will not ask for more information or details. Acceptance (or not) must be based on what the spokesperson responds, without prompting.
- 13) Discussion must stop as soon as time is called, and the question must be answered immediately. If the spokesperson does not immediately begin to answer, or if discussion continues, the Moderator turns to the other team and reads the question to them. That team then has 15 seconds discussion time. When time is called, the spokesperson will be given a chance to answer without hesitation.
- 14) During a battle, a team's spokesperson may request a repeat of a question. All repeats must take place within the 15-second time limit, which starts after the question is read for the first time. Having the question repeated does not restart the time.
- 15) "In Which Book" questions will be read first and are worth a total of 5 points. In the case of a partially correct response, the first correct response (whether it be author or title) will be worth 3 points, and the second correct response will be worth 2 points. Book titles and authors must be stated as listed on the official OBOB book lists and OBOB website. <http://oboblsta.pbworks.com>. Omission of the articles *a*, *an*, and *the* at the beginning of a title will be accepted as correct.
- 16) For "Content" questions, 5 points are given for the complete answer. Designated two-part questions will be scored with 3 points for the first correct answer given and 2 points for the second correct answer given. No partial scores will be given unless the question is designated "Two-part."
- 17) If a team gives an incorrect answer, the question is repeated to the other team with another 15 seconds to discuss. In the case of an "In Which Book" or two-part "Content" question, if part of an answer given by the first team is correct, the portion they have correct will be revealed by the moderator prior to the question being passed to the other team to attempt to pick up the other two points. Note: If the acquiring team does not answer correctly, play does NOT pass back to the other team. In the event that neither team answers correctly, the moderator will provide the correct answer.
- 18) Regardless of who scored on the previous question, even-numbered questions will be read to the even team, and odd-numbered questions will be read to the odd team. This means that an acquiring team may get to answer two questions in a row: the one it acquired, followed by their own.
- 19) If a question is being read and the spokesperson interrupts the reader, that team's spokesperson must answer the question immediately.
- 20) An answer is considered correct even if mispronounced, as long as the Moderator can discern that's the way those letters could possibly be pronounced.

- 21) Multiple questions may appear on certain titles and some titles may not be asked about at all.
- 22) Teams may not use a title/author list or notes of any kind.
- 23) At the end of a battle, the Moderator announces and allows **15 seconds** for challenges to be articulated through the team's spokesperson only. While challenges are not encouraged, the opportunity is provided. The teams are each limited to one challenge per round. If there are no challenges, the final score will be announced, and a winner will be declared. The battle will be considered complete, and no further challenges will be entertained. A team may only challenge a question that they were asked.
- 24) In the event of a challenge, this procedure will be followed:
- The challenging team will have 2 minutes to find and mark the page (with a post-it note) where the answer can be found in the book they named. The Moderator will not provide page numbers.
 - The Timekeeper will begin timing after the Moderator recognizes the challenge and copies of the book are given to the challenging team. During the team's two-minute challenge discussion time, the opposing team, the audience, and tournament officials will maintain a respectful silence, the same as during the normal 15-second think time.
 - The official Timekeeper will announce the end of the 2 minute time period (no countdown) and discussion must immediately stop.
 - The challenging team's spokesperson will show the Judges the exact wording supporting their challenge.
 - The Moderator & Judges determine whether the challenge is successful or not. An answer may be considered correct by way of evidence and reasoning given by the challenging team. If the Judges accept the challenge as successful, and the other conditions for gaining a score were fulfilled, the points shall be awarded and the scores amended.
 - Only one team will be awarded the points for a correct answer to a given question.
 - The Judges and Scorekeeper will amend the points. Amending points may mean points are removed from the team who was presented the question and awarded to the challenging team.
 - The decision of the Moderator & Judges in the room is final.
- 25) Accepting the score: Teams will accept and confirm the score. The battle will be considered complete when each team has been provided an opportunity for a challenge and the score sheets have been initialed by each spokesperson.
- 26) Bracket seeding for quarterfinals is based on total points earned in pool play. Wins in the preliminary rounds **do not** determine which teams move on to the semifinals. Each team plays two times during pool play. If there is a tie for the last spot in bracket play, there will be a tiebreaker battle.
- 27) At the regional and state competitions, a **tiebreaker battle** may be played to break a tie between two or more teams. All teams will be asked one "In which book" (IWB) question and then all teams will be asked one "Content" question. At the end of the tie breaker round, any teams that are still tied will repeat this process until a winner is determined. No team may acquire points from another team's incorrect answer. Challenges ARE allowed at the end of each tiebreaker round with the usual challenge time in effect.

Battle Officials

The Moderator, Scorekeeper, Timekeeper, and Judges will work collaboratively to provide a fair and enjoyable battle.

Moderator's Role

Site Logistics

- Cluster team chairs in such a way that team members can confer easily with physical separation between the two teams.
- Have teams face the Moderator (with backs to the audience).
- Moderator sits or stands at the front of the room facing the teams.
- When coaches act as Judges, they should sit one on either side of Moderator (on the opposite side from their team)
- Teams will hand the Moderator a set of OBOB books when they enter the room.
- In the event that a team member is hearing impaired and needs a sign-language interpreter, the interpreter will stand near the moderator and simultaneously sign the question as the Moderator reads it.

Battle Procedures

- Attend the mandatory volunteer training prior to the Regional and State (if attending) Competitions.
- Check that you have your room packet with all items needed to run a battle (i.e. in-which-book questions and content questions, coin, timer (may be provided by the coaches, score sheets, pencils, post-it notes, disclaimer, battle rules, and official list of titles and authors)
- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Introduce yourself and the teams.
- Politely request cell phones be turned off.
- Remove the questions for this battle from the envelope.
- Ask the Timekeeper to do the coin toss.
- While the coin toss is occurring, state aloud that you will be shuffling the questions and numbering the front of each of the cards 1 through 8. Note that there is usually one or two extra questions in each packet. These additional questions are available in case the Moderator inadvertently makes a mistake concerning a question.
- The team winning the coin toss may choose whether they wish to answer even or odd questions. If the team chooses odd questions, they sit on the Moderator's left. The team sitting on the Moderator's right will receive even questions.
- Remind the audience they are to be silent spectators. The Moderator may, at any time - before, during or after a battle - request that a team member, coach and/or audience member leave the battle room. The battle will not proceed until the disturbance has been resolved.
- Ask the Scorekeepers and Judges if they have the teams' school names on the score sheet and on the board. Say, "_____ School is answering odd-numbered questions and _____ School is answering even-numbered questions." The

Scorekeeper will keep score on the white board or chalkboard where the teams can see it. One of the Judges will keep score on the official paper score sheet.

- Ask each team the name of their spokesperson.
- Inform the teams that you will be reading “In Which Book” questions first followed by “Content” questions.
- Prior to reading each question, state clearly the team’s school name and the question number. This helps the Scorekeeper and Judges.
- Only the team’s spokesperson can give the Moderator an answer to the question. Only the first answer the Spokesperson gives will be accepted. If the Spokesperson begins to answer the question prior to the completion of the question the Moderator will stop reading the question and determine whether the answer is correct or not.
- Moderator’s response should be “Correct” or “Incorrect”. Confer with Judges to reach consensus, if necessary. Note the score on the question card. If an incorrect response was given, note the answer provided (this is helpful if there is a challenge).
- If the team does not get the answer correct, the question will be repeated to the opposing team who then has 15 seconds to collaborate. Each team can answer a question only once.
- Read the question in its entirety, then look up and make eye contact with that team.
- Teams have 15 seconds to collaborate.
- A spokesperson may ask to have a question repeated as many times as he or she wants within the 15-second collaboration time. However, the clock will not restart at the re-reading of the question.
- If a team needs the entire 15 seconds to collaborate, the spokesperson must answer immediately when time is called.
- The Moderator will award 5 points for each correct answer. In the case of partially correct "In Which Book" questions, three points is given for a correct title or author, and play then passes to the other team. The moderator rereads the question, stating which part was correct, and asking for the other part of the answer. This ‘acquiring’ team is given 15 seconds to collaborate and may be awarded 2 points for a correct response.
- Occasionally there will be a two-part "Content" question. State that clearly before reading the question. Award 5 points for a completely correct answer. A partially correct answer will be awarded 3 points, and play will then pass to the opposing team. The moderator rereads the question, stating which part was correct, and asking for the other part of the answer. That team may earn 2 points for a correct response. Consult with the Scorekeeper to be certain points have been recorded correctly.
- The Moderator will note the score on the question card and should note the incorrect response given. (If a challenge should occur it will be helpful to refer back to the incorrect answer given.)
- Do not score partial points for "Content" questions unless it is a designated two-part question.
- At the end of the battle, ask, "Are there any challenges?" and allow 15 seconds for a challenge from either team’s spokesperson. If there are no challenges, the battle is over.
- If there is a challenge, refer to the "Protocol for Challenges".
- At the conclusion of a challenge, the scores may need to be adjusted.

- Ask the spokespersons to initial the final score on the score sheet.
- Hand the official score sheet to the OBOB runner who will take it to the scoring room.

Coach's Role (for Competition)

- Teams will hand the Moderator their concealed set of OBOB books when they enter the room.
- For each regional and state battle, the coach or designee will serve as a Judge. The person acting as the Judge must have attended the volunteer training prior to the competition.
- When the battle is finished, encourage your team to respond cheerfully to the other team: "Good Job" or "Great Battle" or something similar.
- Remind team members to thank battle officials.
- Remember to have the team take their book set with them.
- Do not allow parents or team members to argue about the questions/answers.
- During battles a coach may not communicate (verbally or nonverbally) with their team OR take notes.

Judge's Role (Coaches serve as co-Judges)

- If the answer given is the same as what is on the card the Moderator will say "Correct".
- If the spokesperson's answer is not exactly the same as the answer on the card, the Moderator may consult with the Judges. If consensus cannot be reached between Judges, the Moderator will render the decision. The Moderator's decision is final.
- The Judges may also need to determine if the correct answer has been given within the prescribed time.
- The Judges will make certain there is no help given to teams by others outside the team.
- One of the Judges will keep the official score on the score sheet provided.
- If the Moderator forgets to ask if there are any challenges, remind him/her.
 - Then circle "Yes" on the score sheet that the challenge was offered.
- If neither team has a challenge, the battle is over.
- If one or both teams choose to challenge, assist the Moderator following the "Challenge Protocol".
- The decisions made by the Moderator with the co-Judges input are ALWAYS FINAL and there is NO further discussion.
- Give official score sheet to the Moderator for the spokespersons to initial at the end of the battle. The Moderator will hand the score sheet to the OBOB runner.

Scorekeeper's Role

- Attend the mandatory volunteer training prior to the Regional and State (if attending) Competitions.
- The Scorekeeper will keep score on a chalkboard or whiteboard where it is visible to both teams and the audience. One of the co-Judges will also keep score on the official OBOB score sheet.

- After the Timer has conducted the coin toss, and the winner of the coin toss has chosen to answer even or odd-numbered questions, write the school names on the board.
- Listen as the Moderator announces the school name and question number and award the points correctly.
- The Moderator will also write the scores on the individual question cards.
- Add up the scores at the end of the battle.
- Compare scores with the Judge's paper score sheet and the Moderator's scoring on the question cards.

The basics of scoring:

- The team that wins the coin toss chooses whether to have odd or even questions. The team answering the odd-numbered questions must sit to the Moderator's left, and their school's name goes on the left side of the board . See example below.
- The team answering the even-numbered questions sits to the Moderator's right, and their school's name is on the right side of the board.
- All questions are worth 5 points. If a team gets only the title correct on an "In Which Book" type of question they receive only 3 points. The other team then gets a chance to give the correct author for 2 points. The same procedure is followed should the correct author and incorrect title be given. Follow the Moderator's guidance.
- Occasionally there will be a 2-part "Content" question. It will be stated on the question card, and the Moderator will announce that this is a 2-part question. Follow the Moderator's guidance to determine whether 5, 3, or 2 points are awarded.
- Ask the Moderator to pause the battle should any conflicts in scoring arise.
- Example:
-

Smith School (odd questions)

*1. 5

2. 2

*3. 0

4. 5

*5. 5

6. 0

Etc.

Jones School (even questions)

1. 0

*2. 3

3. 5

*4. 0

5. 0

*6. 5

Etc.

* = first asked

Timekeeper's Role

- Attend the mandatory volunteer training prior to the Regional and State (if attending) Competitions.
- Oversees the coin toss. (Suggest letting the team that enters the area first call the coin toss or have the teams pick a number from 1 and 10 to determine who calls the toss.) Toss a coin and let that team spokesperson say "heads" or "tails".
- The team that wins the coin toss may choose to answer either the odd-numbered or even-numbered questions.

- The team answering the odd-numbered questions will sit on the Moderator's left. The team answering the even-numbered questions will sit on the Moderator's right.
- The Moderator will read each question aloud. Start the stopwatch as soon as the Moderator finishes reading the question. Time for 15 seconds and verbally call "TIME" when the 15 second collaboration time is up. A team's spokesperson may choose to answer in less than 15 seconds. Once the spokesperson begins to answer, stop timing. Do not interrupt an answer to call TIME.
- If the team uses the entire 15 seconds to collaborate, they must answer immediately upon "TIME" being announced.
- At the end of the battle, the Moderator will ask each spokesperson if there is a challenge. Provide 15 seconds for a decision to challenge to be determined.
- If a team chooses to challenge a question, they will have 2 minutes to find the page or passage in the book supporting their answer. Begin timing this 2-minute period when the Moderator hands the team their book. Call "TIME" when 2 minutes have elapsed. The team may find their page before the 2 minutes are up. If the spokesperson hands the book to the Moderator indicating they are finished, stop timing. Do not count down the time (such as "one minute remaining").
- Announce the end of the 2 minute time period. All team discussion must stop, and the Spokesperson must give an answer.

Protocol for Challenges

- After the battle, the Moderator will ask both team spokespersons if they want to challenge only ONE question. A team may only challenge a question that they were asked.
- The teams have 15 seconds for their spokesperson to respond.
- If both teams wish to challenge a question, handle one team at a time. The team to the Moderator's left should go first. The other team must remain silent.
- Ask the team which question they wish to challenge. Read the question aloud. The team must provide reference for the same answer to the question that they gave during the Battle. Moderator should be able to refer back to answer noted on the question card. In other words, during a challenge, a team may not offer a *different* answer from the one they gave during the battle.
- The Moderator will provide the team with both copies of the book provided by each coach.
- The challenging team will have 2 minutes to find and mark the page numbers (with a post-it note) where the answer can be found in the book they named. The Moderator will not provide page numbers.
- The Timekeeper will begin timing **after** the Moderator provides the books to the challenging team. The other team, coach and audience must remain quiet during the 2 minutes.
- The Timekeeper will announce the end of the 2 minute time period, and discussion must stop. There will be no countdown of time.
- Only the challenging team's spokesperson will show the Judge the exact wording that supports their challenge.
- The Moderator and co-Judges determine whether the challenge is successful or not. An answer may be considered correct by way of evidence and reasoning provided

by the challenging team. If the Moderator and Judges accept the challenge as successful, and the other conditions for gaining a score were fulfilled, the points shall be awarded and the scores amended.

- Only one team will be awarded the points for a correct answer by the Moderator.
- The Moderator, or a Judge, will explain the decision and process of amending points to the teams.
- The Moderator and both the Scorekeeper (using the board) and the co-Judge (using the official OBOB paper score) will amend the points. Amending points may mean points are removed from the team who was presented the question and awarded to the challenging team. In other words, Team A was asked the question and got it wrong. Team B was able to answer the question correctly according to the answer on the card. Team A challenges the incorrect answer that they gave. It is determined that in fact, Team A's original answer was correct (via successful challenge). Team A will receive the points and Team B will have the points removed from their score.
- The Moderator's decision is ALWAYS FINAL and there is NO further discussion.
- A team can challenge the decision on an answer they gave for which they feel they should have received points. A team may only challenge a question that they have been asked and must prove their original response.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where do I find basic information about Oregon Battle of the Books?

Visit the website at: <http://oboblsta.pbworks.com/>

How does a student participate?

A student participates by reading from the book list provided for that year's Oregon Battle of the Books and discussing those titles and competing in battles with their teammates. Make sure your school is registered by the date listed on the official OBOB website.

<http://oboblsta.pbworks.com/>

Who competes at the Regional OBOB battles?

Any school registered in OBOB may send **one team per division** to their Regional competition. Grant recipients must participate and compete.

Students must participate with the school in which they are registered. Teams may not be made up of students from more than one school.

Students who are currently homeschooled may participate in OBOB as a member of a school team within the public school attendance boundaries of the school in which the student's parents reside (as per ORS 339.460 section B, part f). Homeschooled students may not, however, form a team on their own. Homeschooled students wishing to participate in OBOB should contact their local school library for OBOB-related class and/or practice requirements (ORS 339.60, Sec B(e)). Homeschooled students may be placed on a school OBOB team at the local level following the same procedures and guidelines used for traditional students. Students enrolled in virtual schools will follow the same guidelines as homeschooled participants.

Definition of a school:

All schools listed in the ODE directory are eligible. Although the directory no longer lists private schools, they are still eligible. A school is defined as “an elementary or secondary school offering a comprehensive instructional program.”

Virtual School: Students enrolled in Virtual Schools will follow the same guidelines as home school participants.

Where do the students get the books?

School libraries should have copies of each book on the list. Public libraries, book fairs, and local bookstores will also be apprised of the titles and will most likely have them available.

When do the students read the books?

The school battles should be completed by the end of February. The reading list for the following school year is announced sometime in May. Reading through the summer is completely optional but available to students.

What is a battle?

A typical battle is a tournament or game, somewhat like Jeopardy, in which student teams earn points by answering questions about the books on the book list.

Can we change our school team after the regional battle? Can we add or change members?

Your 5 member team, 4 members and alternate, may not change after the names have been sent in to the regional coordinator as listed on the OBOB website. Names of team members need to be submitted to the regional coordinator two weeks prior to regional competition. However, teams of four may add an alternate before the team member names are submitted.

How do alternates participate in the regional/state level competition?

An alternate may only replace a team member between battles; never during a battle. Players may not be substituted once a battle has begun.

Do students have to read all the books?

No. Many students read only about half of the books. There are a few readers who complete the whole list, but there are some who might only be able to read five of the books.

Do I need other schools to have a battle, or can I just have only one at my school?

It is best to start small. The first time you conduct a battle, we recommend that you do it alone at your school site. To participate in the Regional Competition your school must simply be registered as a participating school. Some school districts offer district-wide competitions for practice purposes. All registered school teams are invited to attend the regional competition no matter what their status is at the district level.

How do I get started?

Have your school purchase books from the book list and develop an in-house reading incentive system to encourage students to read these books. Request questions for your competition by registering your school in OBOB (via our website) and begin to find sponsors and helpers to support and conduct your local battle at your site or region.

May I use the OBOB logo?

The logo is available for any Oregon Battle of the Books promotional activity, with the proviso that the Oregon Association of School Libraries must be given credit for their sponsorship. Should the logo be used by any commercial entity, the sponsorship credit must be printed somewhere on the same page on which the logo is used.

Who else is participating in Oregon?

Participants are listed on the OBOB website.

Who can I contact if I need help?

You can contact one of the OBOB participants in your area.

Do we need to have awards for the winning teams?

We suggest that you find ways to honor all participants.

How can I find out more information?

Information is posted on our OBOB Webpage. If you have questions, please contact us. <http://oboblsta.pbworks.com/>

Criteria for the Selection of Titles

Oregon Battle of the Books is an optional program in the schools. A child's participation is voluntary. Different criteria are used for the selection of these titles than those used in selecting materials for required activities in individual school districts.

Note to Parents: The Oregon Battle of the Books is a voluntary program. OBOB welcomes students in grades 3-12 to participate. The titles are selected with the reading level and maturity in mind--depending on grade level. You may feel that the content and/or theme of one or two of the titles are inappropriate for your child. Not all OBOB team members are required to read all books on that year's list and students should not be assigned specific books to read for a grade if students or parents have reservations about the content suitability of that title.

Books chosen for the Oregon Battle of the Books list are selected keeping in mind the following criteria:

Number of titles:

16 titles per 3rd-5th and 6th-8th grade division; 12 titles per 9th-12th grade division.

Grade level/reading level

Balanced grade/reading level

Interest:

A variety of subject areas, plots, settings, and styles

Balanced interest for boys/girls and wide range of maturity levels within divisions

Chosen from a variety of genres: realistic fiction, nonfiction, fantasy, science fiction, historical fiction, mystery, multicultural, and Oregon representation

Quality of the books:

Select high quality, well-reviewed, age-appropriate titles.

Award winners such as the Newbery, Oregon Readers Choice, etc., will be considered

Books on previous lists:

Titles may have been used as OBOB titles previously.

Titles must not be repeated within at least four years of being on the list

Availability of titles:

Books should be currently available in paperback format whenever possible

Intellectual freedom:

In accordance with the Library Bill of Rights and its interpretations, titles that otherwise meet the selection criteria will not be excluded:

"because of the origin, background or views of those contributing to their creation;" or

"because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval;" or

"because of actual or suspected parental objections;" or

"in an effort to avoid controversy with parents."

Promotional Ideas

A wide variety of ideas have been submitted for promoting the program and motivating students to read. Several ideas are outlined below.

- Involve parents, teachers, administrators, and the public as much as possible.
- Use video recordings from local battles in previous years.
- Do group orientations for students, staff, and parents.
- Do book talks using battle books.
- Make bookmarks from each level's official book list.
- Organize bookmark contests with students.
- Design visible displays or bulletin boards publicizing the program.
- Saturate school bulletins, district newsletters, and other handouts with program information.
- Encourage teachers to read books or portions of books aloud to students.
- Hold contests to redesign book covers, design a school logo for Battle of the Books, prepare for the toughest questions, etc.
- Have students create large posters of book covers to display.
- Develop a variety of study guides or literature units related to the battle books that include games, crossword puzzles, "first line" quizzes, etc.
- Create a large display including title/author lists, participant's names, and places to chart each student's progress.
- Hold a party or a library sleep-over for students who read all of the books on their list.
- Purchase unabridged audio recordings
- Take team pictures and prominently display them.
- Create murals about OBOB books to place on display in the lobby.

- All-school read: pick one book from the OBOB selection for the WHOLE school to read.
- Classroom teachers meet, read, and discuss the OBOB books.
- OBOB blog for school community.
- Book stores: ask for promotional area.
- Free book giveaway: focus on OBOB titles for summer reading.
- Distribute bookmarks.
- Create a school logo contest which any student is able to enter. Use requirements such as: Oregon Battle of the Books, school, year listed, and specific size needed for logo. Students can be the judges for greater investment, and the winner's logo is included on the school t-shirt the teams wear to Regionals/State. This has been done with a color printer/iron on transfer with success. The logo winner also receives a t-shirt.
- The list is only limited by your own creativity and time! Students who participate in the Oregon Battle of the Books are usually easy to motivate and are enthusiastic. (Do not forget to save a copy of everything you do as a guide for next year).

How to Manage Public Relations

The real key to a publicity campaign is planning. Keep a schedule or timeline for yourself as a reminder of when to notify the parents of impending competitions, when to call the media, when to submit newsletters for district publications, when to bring in your camera to record momentous events, etc. Please include in publicity items that the Oregon Battle of the Books is sponsored by the Oregon Association of School Libraries.

- Local newspapers, local radio and television stations, as well as statewide publications, are anxious to read and hear about what is occurring in the schools. Even if you have to take the pictures and write the articles, record the interviews, or set up the video gear yourself, it will be worth the effort. Communications with the parents and the community about this popular school program will also open channels that can later be utilized when support for this and other worthy programs may be needed.
- Do a presentation on the Oregon Battle of the Books for open house.
- Get local merchants to display not only the books but also rules and prizes.
- Invite local dignitaries to assist with battles.
- Send out regular parent letters and news releases.
- Send individual invitations to school board and city council members to attend Oregon Battle of the Books finals in their communities. (Also, invite school board/city council members to be officials!)
- Create a link at your local school to OBOB webpages.
- Connect public library webpages to the OBOB webpages.
- Connect with Youth Services at local public libraries for support (displays, promotion, etc.)
- Present at a PTO/PTA or board meeting.
- Present a mock battle at a board meeting and other various locations.
- The Oregon Battle of the Books Committee will be keeping historical data and will be in contact with the media. Please send digital photographs, as well as local news reports, to the Oregon Battle of the Books Chair for use in statewide publicity.

- Just remember to communicate with those around you who might otherwise miss out on important events. Also, save everything you do - every invitation you send, every letter home, every news item, every photo you take, every timeline you prepare. You may wish to reuse items, or remind yourself about ideas from year to year.

Question Appendix

Sample Battle of Books Questions

The following sample questions are examples of appropriate wording for question writers. Both "In Which Book" and "Content" questions may be written for the same portions of a book. Questions in the competition will include additional information from the book on each card.

Sample "In Which Book" questions (answered with the book's title and author):

In which book does one of the characters write a love note as a prank?
Little Women by Louisa May Alcott p. _

In which book does a character receive a postcard with a skyscraper on the front?
Play to the Angel by Maurine Dahlberg p. _

In which book is a tombstone used for something other than marking a grave?
The Wright Brothers by Russell Freedman p. _

In which book does a child get to work alongside adults as an assistant in a hospital?
Close Encounters of a Third World Kind by Jennifer J. Stewart p. _

In which book does the main character live on a 12 acre rock surrounded by water?
Al Capone Does My Shirts by Jennifer Choldenko p. _

In which book does a family participate in "Las Posadas"?
Becoming Naomi Leon by Pam Munoz Ryan p. _

In which book is a character saving money to buy a gorilla?
Clementine by Sara Pennypacker p. _

In which book does a character lose both parents in a boating accident?
The Fellowship of the Ring by J. R. R. Tolkien p. _

Sample Content questions (answered with specific information from the book):

Little Women
 What does Amy do to destroy Jo's book?
 Answer: burn it in the fireplace
 p. _ Author: Louisa May Alcott

Play to the Angel

What prized possession does Greta's mother plan to sell?

Answer: a piano

p. _ Author: Maurine Dahlberg

The Wright Brothers

What do the Wright Brothers do with a damaged tombstone?

Answer: they build a printing press

p. _ Author: Russell Freedman

Close Encounters of a Third World Kind

Two Parts: What two jobs are assigned to Annie?

Answer: care for her sister AND help in the hospital

p. _ Author: Jennifer J. Stewart

Al Capone Does My Shirts

What is the name of the island where Moose Flanagan lives?

Answer: Alcatraz

p. _ Author: Jennifer Choldenko

Becoming Naomi Leon

What festival do Naomi and Owen attend?

Answer: "Las Posadas"

p. _ Author: Pam Munoz Ryan

Clementine by

Two Parts: What are the two things that Clementine fears?

Answer: pointy things AND boomerangs

p. _ Author: Sara Pennypacker