

Section 932: CURRENT ISSUES AND EVENTS CONTEST

- (a) REPRESENTATION.
 - (1) *Individual Competition.* Each participant high school may enter as many as four individuals in the district meet, all of whom may place. In districts with more than eight schools, district executive committees may elect to limit entries to three.
 - (2) *Team Competition.* The individuals entered at district constitute the team. A team must have a minimum of three contestants compete in order to participate in the team competition. The team score is determined by adding the highest three individual scores in the objective portion of the contest. All four members of the winning team will advance to the next higher level of competition.
- (b) ELIGIBILITY. The contest is open only to those students eligible under Subchapter M.
- (c) QUALIFICATION; SUBSTITUTES; ALTERNATES.
 - (1) *Individual Competition.* First, second and third place contestants will advance to the regional and state meets. If an individual qualifier cannot compete at the next higher meet, the alternate shall be notified and allowed to compete.
 - (2) *Team Competition.* The winning team from each district in each conference will advance to regional competition. The winning team from each region in each conference will advance to state competition. If a member of a school's team is unable to compete at the next higher level of competition, only one substitution may be made. The substitute must give the contest director a letter certifying eligibility signed by a school administrator. (See Section 903 [b] [4].)
- (d) NATURE OF CONTEST; ESSAY REQUIRED. The contest will focus on a basic knowledge of current state, national and world events and issues. "Current events" are defined as those which have occurred during the current school year. The content will consist of questions which will be posed in such a way as to allow for objective grading and an essay question that all participants are required to answer. Contestants who fail to write an essay shall be disqualified.
- (e) LENGTH OF TESTING PERIOD. Sixty minutes will be allotted for the actual testing period exclusive of time required for instructions. The period begins when students are instructed to start and ends when time is called.
- (f) SOURCES USED FOR COMPOSING TESTS. National daily newspapers or Texas metropolitan newspapers, business newspapers, specialized periodicals, weekly news magazines, journals of political or social nature, and other periodicals that report, summarize or explain world events shall be considered as contest sources. "Current events" web pages available via the Internet are also excellent sources of information.
- (g) MATERIALS. Contestants must furnish their own number two pencils and erasers. The League will furnish a test and tie breaker. Contest directors shall provide contestants with scratch paper. Contestants may write on the exam. Textbooks, periodicals, and other reference sources may not be brought into the contest room.
- (h) CONTESTANTS REMAIN IN ROOM. Contestants may not leave and return to the contest room during the contest except in cases of medical or other emergency. In that event, the student must receive permission to leave the contest room and must be accompanied by a monitor while outside the contest room. Students who leave and return to the contest room without permission shall be disqualified.
- (i) INSTRUCTIONS TO CONTEST DIRECTOR.
 - (1) *Contest Roster.* A contest roster listing contestants will be created from schools' online entries.
 - (2) *Announcement.* Announce the time for the verification period and announcing results.
 - (3) *Seating.* Exclude all persons except contestants, the contest director, and an assistant and/or monitor from the room.

- (4) *Numbering Contestants.* Each contestant should be assigned a number. This number should be indicated on the contest roster.
- (5) *Roll Call.* Call roll from the contest roster and replace any contestant who is not present with a certified substitute at district and the certified alternate at regional.
- (6) *Test Distribution.* Distribute the tests. The contest director should instruct the contestants to write the assigned number in the top right-hand corner of the answer sheet.
- (7) *Start and Stop Signals.* Give the signal to start, and after exactly 60 minutes have expired, give the signal to stop.
- (8) *Turning in Papers.* Contestants may turn in papers and exit the contest room as soon as they complete the test and the tie breaker.
- (9) *Graders.* The contest director will select judges to grade tests. Coaches may serve as graders of the objective portions of the contest. Impartial judge(s) who have no vested interest in the outcome should be selected to grade the essays.
- (10) *Grading the Contest.* The objective portion of the test may be machine or hand graded. If hand graded, each test should be graded and errors initialed by the graders.
- (11) *Answer Key Errors.* In the case of an error on the answer key of an objectively-scored contest, graders should notify the UIL State Office of the nature of the error and/or contact the respective state contest director to seek clarification. Mistakes in the answer key should be corrected, and papers should be judged on correctness rather than on an incorrect answer given in the key.
- (12) *Scoring.*
 - (A) *Individual Scoring.* The objective portion of all tests will be scored. A judge or judges will then evaluate the essays of the eight contestants with the highest scores in the objective portion of the test. If a tie occurs for the eighth slot, then essays of contestants tied for the eighth slot shall be judged. Each essay will be read and assigned a score based on a zero to 10 scale, with 10 being the highest score possible. This score will be added to the point total from the objective portion of the test, resulting in an overall score. If, at this point, a tie exists, then those essays involved in the tie will be judged one against the other(s) to break the tie. See (14) (a). The decision of the judge(s) is final.
 - (B) *Team Scoring.* First place is awarded to the team that has the highest composite score in the objective portion of the contest. The team score consists of the top three individual scores.
- (13) *Places.*
 - (A) *Individual Competition.* First place is awarded to the contestant receiving the highest overall score, second place to the contestant with the next highest, third place to the next highest and so on.
 - (B) *Team Competition.* First place is awarded to the team receiving the highest cumulative score in the objective portion of the contest only, and second place to the team making the next highest. Team members also qualify to compete for individual awards.
 - (C) *Wild Card.* Each region's highest-scoring second place team may advance to the regional academic meet. In case two or more teams tie for the wild card berth, the highest objective score of the fourth place member of the team will be used to break the tie. Should two or more contestants who are the fourth place member of the team have the same objective score, then a tie will be declared, and all involved in the tie shall advance. A team that does not contain a fourth member forfeits the right to participate in the tie breaker. If neither team has a fourth member, neither shall advance. In order to be eligible as a wild card representative, district results must be certified online no later than 5 p.m. on the Monday following the final district academic week. Failure to meet the deadline or to submit correct scores disqualifies the district

from advancing teams as wild card representatives. The highest-scoring second place team from the regional meets may advance to the Academic State Meet.

- (14) *Ties.*
 - (A) *Individual Competition.* If a tie exists after the grading of the essays, then those essays involved in the tie will be judged one against the other(s) to break the tie. When a tie occurs, those contestants who are tied shall be awarded a place before any other places are awarded.
 - (B) *Team Competition.* In case two or more teams tie for first or second place, the highest objective score of the fourth place member of the team will be used to break the tie. Should two or more contestants who are the fourth place member of their team have the same objective score, then a tie will be declared and all involved in the tie shall advance. In the event of a team tie, the team score to be reported is the sum of the top three scores from each school. A team that does not contain a fourth member forfeits the right to participate in the tiebreaker. At the state meet, a tie or ties for the first place overall team shall not be broken.
- (15) *Criteria for Essay.* The essay should be of an expository nature. The essay should be judged on content first. Writing style, clarity, and precision of composition should be secondary considerations. The essay should be approximately 200 words in length. Students should attempt to substantially develop a full range of points relative to the essay prompt. In the question of quality versus quantity, judges will determine whether an essay that introduces many points shall be scored higher than an essay that develops fewer points more substantially.
- (16) *Unofficial Results.* Unofficial results of individuals who appear to have placed first through sixth place and of the first place team should be announced.
- (17) *Verification Period.* Prior to the announcement of official results, contestants and/or coaches should be permitted to examine for no more than 15 minutes the contestant's answer sheet with a copy of the test and answer key. During this period, they should verify that it is the correct paper, and look for possible errors in the grading or the recording of objective scores. The essay score is subjective and shall not be subject to protest. Questions should be resolved at this time. The contest director should also announce team scores. After all questions have been answered, contest directors should collect all tests and answer sheets so that none remains with the contestant or coach. Coaches or contestants not present for the viewing period forfeit their opportunity to raise questions.
 - (A) *Tabulation Error.* If it is evident that an error has been made in tabulation, only the contest director is authorized to correct it.
 - (B) *Answer Key Errors.* In the case of an error on the answer key of an objectively-scored contest, graders should notify the UIL State Office of the nature of the error and/or contact the respective state contest director to seek clarification. Mistakes in the answer key should be corrected, and papers should be judged on correctness rather than on an incorrect answer given in the key.
- (18) *Announcing Official Results.* The contest director should announce the name and school of first through sixth place individuals and the first and second place teams.
- (19) *Returning the Papers.* If results are final and all test questions resolved, entries may be returned no sooner than the end of the contest on the Saturday of the respective district week. See the *District Spring Meet Manual* for procedures for returning district meet test papers to schools. Provided there are no unresolved questions concerning any of the papers, and provided the regional test is held on a Saturday, the regional directors may return the respective papers to the contestants the day of the meets following the verification period and announcement of official results.
- (20) *Points.* Individual points are awarded through sixth place; first and second place teams are awarded points. See Section 902.