Bishop Garrigan Invitational Quiz Bowl Tournament

BASIC RULES

REVISED 2026

The tournament rules are modified from the guidelines of the National Academic Association. Many of the specific rules address problems that have occurred in past tournaments.

TEAMS

Not more than four players may compete on a team in any given game. Alternates may be used, but substitutions can only be made between games. Teams may play with fewer than four players (and as few as 1) if necessary.

BEHAVIOR & SPORTSMANSHIP

Players and coaches are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship throughout the tournament. They are expected to be polite to each other and to tournament officials. In general the decisions of tournament officials are considered final. If an individual exhibits extremely poor sportsmanship, room officials may rule that the student's team forfeit the game in question or the tournament manager may disqualify the team from the tournament and ask them to leave the premises.

TOURNAMENT SIZE AND STRUCTURE

The total number of teams is dependent on the facilities available. There is a limit of 4 teams per school, with the exception of the host school or in the event that a school offers to fill in for a no-show team.

All teams will compete in four preliminary games against randomly assigned opponents. Preliminary games will generally be played in a three-team format, with a twenty-minute limit (timed from the office, with bells sounding) for the toss-up and bonus rounds, followed by ten minutes for the lightning round. After the four preliminary games, the top eight teams (based primarily on win record, then on points scored) will advance to a single-elimination tournament. In the final round, a consolation game (for 3rd/4th place) will also be played. Play-off games are in a two-team format, and rounds are not timed. Awards will be presented to the top four teams.

TOSS-UP ROUND

The toss-up round consists of twenty-five toss-up questions. The reader will read a toss-up question. In general electronic signals will be used. If there is a malfunction, students may "slap" to indicate they want to answer a question, and the judge will recognize the student who signaled either by saying the school name and player number or by simply making an obvious gesture toward the player. Once recognized, the student should immediately answer the question. An answer that is not virtually immediate should be considered wrong. The reader may use personal knowledge to rule an answer correct or incorrect, or the reader may ask the student for more complete information. If the reader is unsure of an answer, the answer printed on the script will be considered the only correct answer. In any event, the decision of the officials is final. If a student answers a toss-up question correctly, the student's team earns 10 points. If a question is interrupted and a wrong answer is given, the reader should finish the question (it is not necessary to repeat the part that has already been read). The other team(s) have the opportunity to signal and answer, also for 10 points. Only one person per team may attempt to answer each toss-up question. If no team answers correctly after a brief pause (of about 5 seconds), the reader should give the correct answer and go on to the next question. No penalties are assessed for wrong answers or for interrupting a question. The toss-up round is not formally timed. When the last question is read, the round ends.

BONUS ROUND

The bonus round consists of seven toss-up questions, which may be followed by up to seven bonus questions. The toss-up questions are presented and answered as in the toss-up round. When a team answers a toss-up question correctly, the team earns the right to answer the corresponding bonus question. Bonus questions generally have several parts, each of which is worth a stated number of points (if this number is inadvertently left off, assume each part is 5 points). The reader should read the introduction to the question and the first part. Team members may then confer for 5 seconds. The reader should ask for an answer, and then the team captain (or another team member designated by the captain) must answer immediately. The reader will say whether the answer was right or wrong and then repeat the process for the next part of the question.

Team members may take notes and quietly confer while questions are being read, during the allotted five seconds of conference time, and while the captain is giving the answer. The answer that counts, however, is that of the captain or his/her designee.

The team may ask that the question be re-read, but that will count as their conference time; in that instance, they must supply an answer as soon as the reader has finished re-reading the question.

Some questions ask for a list of three or more answers. In such cases, the reader will allow 15 seconds of conference time after the question is read. Then the reader will ask for a response, and the captain (or designee) must immediately give the list of answers. Fifteen seconds is the time for any list, regardless of the number of answers required.

In general each part of a bonus question is worth 5 points. Any exception to this is given in the reader's script.

After the team has answered the bonus question, the reader should give the correct answers to any questions that were missed and announce how many points were scored on the bonus. Then the reader should go on to the next toss-up question for all teams.

If no team answers a toss-up correctly, the corresponding bonus is thrown out. If for some reason a bonus later in the round is unusable, the reader may go back to one that was skipped.

TIME SIGNAL

This year there will be no formal timing of rounds. However readers should keep the room moving. The toss-up and bonus rounds should take about twenty minutes, and the lightning round should take about another five minutes.

LIGHTNING ROUND

The lightning round consists of sets of ten questions, with all questions in a set from the same category. At the end of the bonus round, the reader will announce the score and read the categories available for the lightning round. The team in last place will choose first among the categories. The leading team always chooses last. If there is a tie, the tied team that most recently answered a question chooses first. Each team has a turn at the lightning round. The reader first reads the introduction and the sample question at the top of the script. (The introduction does **not** count as part of the time.) Then, when the timer says "go", the reader quickly reads the questions one by one. All team members may confer in the lightning round, although it is recommended that they do this fairly quietly. The captain **should** be the official spokesperson for the team, but readers may accept the first clearly audible answer they hear. For each question, the captain may either give an answer of say "pass". If the team passes, the reader will read the next question. The reader may not go on until the captain has given a response. If the team passes, the reader will read the next question. If time remains after all ten questions have been read once, the reader will repeat questions that were passed, and the team may again try to answer them. When time expires, the reader will announce how many questions were answered correctly and read the correct answers to those that were answered wrong. The other team may not answer questions the first team answered wrong. The team will earn 10 points for each correct answer in the lightning round. When each team has answered its category of lightning round questions, the round ends. There will always be one more category of questions than there are teams, so one category will remain unread.

TIES

If teams are tied in a preliminary game, the tie will remain unbroken, and all teams in the room will receive a win. In play-off games, there can be no tie. If the score is tied at the end of a play-off game, up to three questions may be asked in toss-up format. The third of each set of tie-breakers is always a forced-choice question that must end the tie. The first team to answer one of these questions correctly will receive those 10 points and win the game.

FINALISTS

The top 8 teams will become finalists. Advancement is determined primarily by the team's winning record. Teams will earn 1 points for a win and 0 points for a loss. (Ties count as wins.) The teams with the mopst wins advance first. If there is a tie among teams after points from win record are assigned, the total points earned by each of the tied teams will be used to break a tie. If a tie remains, but all teams will advance to the play-offs, the teams will be seeded alphabetically (with the first team alphabetically receiving the lower seed). If a tie remains to determine the 16th-seeded team, the tied teams will be called together for a special forced-choice tie-breaker. If there is a question as to the score in the game, the score on the judge's official score sheet will be considered the official score. Teams should check this sheet before they leave the room after a game.

NO-SHOWS AND ASSIGNED BYES

In some cases there may be fewer than two teams competing in a preliminary game. The game will go on, regardless of the number of teams. (In theory, a team could play a solo game.) In this case, all team will receive an automatic win. Unless a team scores an unusually excessive number of points in such a game, no changes will be made to the score. If room officials or the tournament director deem the score unusually high, it may at their discretion be adjusted to 150% of the team's highest score in any other round when determining placement for the finals.

PROBLEMS WITH QUESTIONS

While all questions have been proofread and checked a minimum of three times, occasionally problems may occur. This can happen because the reader mispronounces a word, there is a typographical error in the question, or the reader misinterprets an answer. Any appeals should be addressed to the reader politely, but immediately. They should be settled promptly—before the game continues. On toss-up or bonus questions, the reader may simply opt to throw out the question (or substitute a bonus question that was previously skipped). If a question of interpreting the answer is necessary, the room officials may confer. If they are unable to reach a decision, the exact answer printed on the script will be considered the only right answer. In the unlikely event that an obviously incorrect answer is printed on the script, the question should be thrown out. (Teams should keep in mind, though, that many questions are phrased as "according to …" some source; sources may occasionally differ, but the answer according to the stated source is considered correct. Where sources are not stated, they are generally *USA Today* or the *World Almanac*) If a serious problem should occur in the lightning round, the reader may either rule that the affected team may either accept the outcome of the game or answer the extra category that was chosen by none of the teams. In all cases, the decision of the room officials is final.

ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE ANSWERS

When the answer calls for a name, last names are acceptable, except where several famous people share the name (example: Roosevelt). Royalty should be identified by name and number (examples: Queen Elizabeth I, Pope John Paul II). First names or common nicknames are acceptable for people or fictional characters that are most often called by those names (examples: Cher, Michelangelo, El Greco, Dracula). Centuries may be identified by date or number (example: 20th Century **or** 1900s). Decades should include the century, unless there can be no confusion about what is meant (1930s, not just the '30s—unless the question implies the 20th Century). Names of places should be the English name that was in common use in the era the question refers to (examples: Russia in 1995, Soviet Union in 1985; Turkey after WWI, Ottoman Empire before WWI). The United Kingdom may be called Britain or England, and the United States may be called America—unless a question is specifically worded to imply otherwise. Abbreviations are acceptable if they are commonly understood (examples: USA, NATO, BASIC computer language). Foreign names and extremely difficult English words may be mispronounced, but should be understandable. Readers may ask students to spell their answers on such terms. Mathematical answers should be in standard form, reduced to lowest terms, unless the question allows otherwise. Where an expression simplifies to a single number, only the single number is correct (examples: 1, rather than "$\sin^2 x + \cos^2 x$" and 1,000,000, rather than 10^6). Science answers normally require the simplest term that applies to a concept. Spelling answers must be exact, and are according to *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*. If the dictionary allows alternate spellings, all are given as acceptable answers. Famous quotations and titles should normally be exact, unless the question states otherwise. Articles such as "a", "an", and "the" may be added, omitted, or interchanged without affecting the correctness of answers, and other small changes may be made (example: "the date that will live in infamy" is correct for than "a date which will live in infamy"). In general, if a question causes confusion, the reader may ask for more information. If the team is unable to supply more information, the answer will be considered wrong.