

West Virginia History Bowl

Official Rules (revised Oct. 2018)

A. General Information

1. The West Virginia History Bowl is presented by the West Virginia Department of Arts, Culture, and History and is dedicated to West Virginia history, arts, literature, government, architecture, and geography.
2. The tournament is based on a double elimination playoff. Participation is limited to two teams per school. Regional tournaments are held in all eight West Virginia educational regions and the top two teams from each regional tournament will represent each region at the state tournament at the Culture Center in Charleston.
3. A play-in tournament will be held at the conclusion of all regional tournaments for teams that were unable to participate in a regional competition or that did not qualify for the state tournament in a regional competition. Participation is limited to two teams per school.
4. Each team in the tournament must be sponsored by a school faculty member, or school-approved sponsor from a full-time academic institution in West Virginia, which includes public schools, private schools and home school education associations.
5. Each team must meet all registration requirements by established deadlines.
6. Each team member must:
 - a. be enrolled as a full-time eighth-grade student at a participating school, as defined in rule A-4 above;
 - b. reside in West Virginia, or attend a West Virginia school during the school year of the competition;
 - c. have an acceptable attendance and discipline record;
 - d. have a G.P.A. of 2.5 or greater; and
 - e. have approval from a participating school official.
7. The participating schools will be responsible for all travel and expenses related to participation in the West Virginia History Bowl, regional tournaments, and play-in tournament.
8. Regional and play-in tournaments will be held under the same set of rules as established for the West Virginia State History Bowl Competition.

B. Tournament Officials

1. All decisions of the tournament director are final.

2. The term "tournament director" includes the director's designated representatives or committees.
3. Each game will have a moderator. The moderator will read the questions, enforce time limits, supervise the clock, determine the correctness of answers, award and deduct points, and otherwise enforce the rules of competition.
4. Other officials and judges may be provided to assist the moderator with his or her duties including, but not limited to, keeping a running score, recognizing, and supervising the clock. The moderator may consult with other officials at any time to assist in determining the correctness of an answer.

C. Equipment

1. Matches will be played with a lockout system ("buzzer"), electronic equipment that determines which player signals first. Should no working lockout systems be available, tournament officials may require players to signal by physical means.
2. Teams may agree to use a partially working lockout system. If either team objects, the game will be played or resumed without a lockout system.
3. In the absence of a completely functioning lockout system, a designated official (who might be the moderator) will be the final judge of which player signaled first. These determinations are not protestable.
4. In the event a player is physically unable to use the lockout system, accommodations will be made. Tournament officials must be notified prior to the start of a match.
5. Each player is responsible for monitoring whether his or her own signaling device is operating properly throughout a match. If a signaling device malfunctions, only the current tossup or the just completed tossup can be replayed, subject to the moderator's ruling that the malfunction affected play of that question.
6. If buzzers are of a table top design, they must remain on the table surface during tossup portions of the game.

D. Participants

1. All participants are presumed to be responsible individuals and will be treated as such. Players, coaches, sponsors and schools are responsible for any liability arising from their conduct while at the regional, play-in, and/or state tournament, or while traveling to or from such events.
2. A team consists of up to four players who meet all eligibility rules. Alternates and replacement players will not be allowed once registration has been completed on the day of the tournament.
3. No player may play for two different teams in the course of a tournament.
4. A coach is a person who acts in a recognized advisory role to a particular team. A coach may not be a player for any team in the tournament. A team can have an unlimited number of coaches, but only one may be designated the official coach prior to each match. A team may change its official coach at halftime, during a timeout, or before the first overtime question. A person may act as a

coach, official or otherwise, for any number of teams. If a team has only a single coach, that person will be assumed to be the official coach.

E. Matches

1. Each game consists of two halves:

a. The first half of each match will last 10 minutes and will consist of a maximum of 30 questions that will alternate between teams with correct answers being worth 1 point. A captain will be identified for this half and will answer for the team, or identify a team member to provide their answer. A coin toss prior to the start of the match will determine which team answers first.

b. The second half will last 10 minutes and will consist of a maximum of 30 tossup questions. Teams will receive 1 point for each correct answer.

2. In the case of a tie between two teams, a tie breaker of three 1-point tossup questions will be given to determine the winner.

3. There are no penalties for incorrect answers.

F. Time

1. Lateness of more than 5 minutes will result in a forfeit, unless this lateness is the fault of the tournament, or the tournament director is satisfied with other good cause.

2. A game consists of two halves, each 10 minutes long, or until all of the questions provided for the game have been read, whichever comes first. If the score is tied at the end of the game, an overtime period will be played.

3. The clock starts when the moderator begins reading the first question of each half.

4. When the clock sounds the end of time, the half or game shall end with the conclusion of the current question cycle. In particular:

a. If the moderator has just finished a question or an unanswered tossup question and has not yet begun the next question, then the half is over. A question is considered to have been begun when the first syllable of the actual question is read. Preliminary statements (e.g., "Here's the next tossup" or "Tossup 23") do not count as having started the question.

b. If the moderator is reading a question, then he or she shall continue reading it, giving both teams a chance to answer, and their full time allotment to signal. If the question goes unanswered, then the half is over.

c. If the moderator is reading a first-half question that alternates between teams, the half shall end when that question is over.

5. The team with more points at the end of the game wins. If the score is tied:

- a. An off-the-clock overtime period consisting of three tossup questions will follow. These tossups will be read from the original set (if unread questions remain) or may be obtained from the tournament director.
 - b. If the game is still tied after the first overtime, a second overtime of three questions will take place. If additional overtime rounds are needed they will consist of three tossup questions per round until a winner is determined. These tossups will be read from the original set (if unread questions remain) or may be obtained from the tournament director.
6. The clock shall not stop, except:
- a. when a timeout is called (only between questions).
 - b. when stopped by a game official to resolve a serious problem; to discipline, warn, or eject a player; to replace a question; or to acquire replacement questions when necessary.
 - c. at the end of the half.
7. Each team has one 30-second timeout per game. Timeouts do not carry over from game to game, nor are teams given additional timeouts in overtime periods.
- a. Only an active player or official coach may call a timeout. A timeout is called by saying "timeout" or "time."
 - b. A timeout may be called only before the beginning of a tossup question or alternating question cycle. Once the tossup question or alternating question has begun, a team cannot call a timeout for the duration of that cycle.
 - c. Game officials will ignore any attempt to call a timeout at any other time, unless they consider such an attempt unsporting behavior.
 - d. Game officials will also ignore any attempt to call a timeout by a team that has already called one. Repeated or disruptive attempts to call additional timeouts shall be considered game-delaying tactics and may result in a player's warning or ejection.
8. The timepiece used by the game officials is the official time and is not protestable.

G. Tossup Questions

1. Players may not communicate with anyone other than tournament officials during the tossup round unless a timeout has been granted.
2. A player may signal to answer a tossup question at any point after the moderator has begun reading the question. If a player answers a question incorrectly, no other member of that player's team may answer that question.
3. When a player has signaled, a game official will acknowledge ("recognize") the player by name, by number, by pointing toward the player, or merely by looking at the player. There is no penalty if a player who has signaled answers before being acknowledged.

4. If a player signals before the moderator has finished reading the question, the moderator will stop at that point. If the response given is incorrect, the moderator will finish the question for the other team only, if it is still eligible to answer the question. The moderator need not reread the entire question, but should resume at a natural point in the question.
5. An answer to a tossup must begin within 5 seconds after the player has been recognized. An answer begun after the moderator has said "Time" will be treated as no answer.
6. Players have 5 seconds to signal after the moderator has finished reading the tossup. If the player answers incorrectly, the other team (if it is eligible to answer) will then have 5 more seconds to signal.
7. Decisions as to whether players have exceeded the allotted time to signal or to answer may be rendered only by the game officials of a given match and are not protestable.
8. If the player who answers is a teammate of the first player to signal, the moderator will treat the response as an incorrect answer and turn the question over to the other team.
9. If a player who answers is not a teammate of the first player to signal, the moderator will ignore the answer (even if it is correct), and will recognize the player on the other team who had actually signaled. Only that player will have a chance to answer, as the non-signaler has disqualified his team on that tossup.
10. If a player answers because an official incorrectly identified who signaled first, the question must be replaced.
11. If the moderator inadvertently reveals the answer to a question after one team has given an incorrect answer, but before the other team has had a chance to answer, the moderator will read a tossup for the second team only, off the clock. If neither team has had a chance to answer, the tossup is thrown out and replaced off the clock.

H. Alternating Questions

1. Alternating questions begin in the first half of each match. The moderator will flip a coin provided by the tournament director. Each team will be identified by a side of the coin. The team whose side faces up after the flip will go first in the alternating round.
2. The moderator will read each alternating question one time during a question cycle. If the moderator misreads the question, he or she has the option to reread the question. If a team answers a question incorrectly, the other team may ask to have the question repeated. The moderator may decline to repeat the question, however, if he or she believes the request is made for the purpose of stalling (i.e. running down the clock to prevent the opposing team from having further chances to score).
3. Teams may confer on alternating questions. The captain will give the answer for the team or clearly indicate who will give the answer. If conflicting answers are directed at the moderator, the captain will be asked to choose the team's answer. The determination of whether an answer was directed at the moderator is unprotestable.
4. A team has 10 seconds to answer an alternating question. After reading each alternating question, the moderator will prompt the team for an answer after 5 seconds. Once prompted, the

captain of that team must begin answering, or must immediately designate the person who will answer.

5. A team may begin its answer before the end of an alternating question. In such cases, the moderator stops reading when the team begins its answer.

6. If a moderator inadvertently reveals the answer to an alternating question, the next alternating question will be read.

7. If the moderator reveals an answer following an incorrect answer without the second team having an opportunity to answer the question, the next alternating question will be posed to the second team only and the other team will not have an opportunity to answer. The next question will then return to the alternating cycle.

I. Correct Answers

1. To receive credit, a response must indicate accurate ("correct") and precise ("unambiguous") knowledge of the correct answer. The moderator's question sheet will also list acceptable alternate answers. The minimal information for a correct answer is underlined (Arthur Boreman or "My Home Among The Hills").

2. If a player gives an answer that demonstrates accurate, relevant knowledge, but is ambiguous, the moderator will prompt by saying something like "more information, please" (e.g., a player says Roosevelt, and the answer sought is Eleanor Roosevelt). Unless otherwise noted by the question, the moderator will not state what type of information is sought by the prompt (e.g., it would be inappropriate for the moderator to say "I need a first name").

3. A captain who has been prompted on an alternating question may quickly check with a teammate for the further information, or simply designate that person to give the additional information, so long as it is not done in an unsporting attempt to delay the game. This may not be done on a tossup.

4. The moderator will accept only the first answer given by a player, except:

a. when a question calls for multiple answers.

b. when subsequent information given by the player makes the first answer more specific.

5. If the first answer is correct, but subsequent information given by the player is incorrect (e.g., giving an initial answer of "Boreman," and then answering "John Boreman"), then the answer will be ruled incorrect.

6. In rare cases, an otherwise acceptable answer may be ruled incorrect when it creates ambiguity with another plausible answer (e.g., even though first and last names are almost always sufficient, John Adams would not be acceptable - or promptable - for John Quincy Adams, as it creates confusion with the full name of his presidential father).

7. The moderator will read the correct answer at the end of each question if neither team answers correctly.

8. If the moderator determines that a response was given in an unsporting manner (e.g., to delay the game or insult an opponent), the moderator shall issue a warning or ejection to the player and shall also rule the response incorrect.

9. While the Department of Arts, Culture, and History strives to include all acceptable alternate answers, players should resist giving esoteric equivalents when they know the more common response. The verification of such responses may slow down a tournament needlessly. Also, many supposed equivalents vary in subtle ways from the answer sought, and may be wrong for highly technical reasons.

J. Protests

1. Active players and official coaches may indicate their intention to protest during a match by quickly saying "protest" after an answer or action they deem to be incorrect. So long as this does not disrupt or delay the game, the moderator should acknowledge the intent (by saying "noted") and continue with the match. The nature of the protest should be taken up at halftime or at the end of the game.

2. Protests may be addressed to the moderator only by an active player or by the official coach at the end of a half, the end of the game, or during a timeout. All protests about events in the first half must be lodged before the second half begins. All protests about events in the second half must be made within 5 minutes of the end of the game and before the protesting team leaves the game room. The only protest that may be lodged while the clock is running is that the moderator has just accepted a tossup answer from a player other than the one who has signaled.

3. The person making the protest should briefly explain the nature of the protest to the moderator, other game officials, and a representative of the other team. Protestable matters include the acceptability of an answer, the execution of game procedures, scoring errors, insufficient prompting, and like factors that have a concrete and quantifiable effect on the game.

4. If a question contains a verifiable factual error which misled a player into giving a reasonable response, the response given will be accepted as correct only if the information available when the player signaled uniquely identified the given response. Otherwise, the question will be replaced as if the moderator had prematurely revealed the answer.

5. If a question contains a verifiable factual error which misled a player into giving no response (leading either to an unanswered question or a question answered by the opposing team), the question will be replaced.

6. Technical protests, such as an incorrect score, as well as protests that can be quickly resolved, may be handled by the staff in the affected game. Insofar as possible, the game must not be delayed because of protests. Similarly, while protests may be lodged during timeouts, protests will not be adjudicated until the end of the half, except in exceptional situations in which the moderator decides the problem can be quickly corrected within the 30-second timeout period.

7. For protests lodged in the first half, game officials should try to quickly resolve the protest to both teams' satisfaction. If this cannot be done, the protest will be deferred to the end of the second half. No protest(s) will be adjudicated unless it (they) could change the outcome of the match. For example, if one team loses by 5 points and protests a 1-point bonus answer, the protest will not be considered. If the game officials are unable to resolve a protest quickly to both teams' satisfaction, the protest may be appealed to the tournament director.

8. The tournament director may resolve a protest with or without a protest committee, depending upon the protest (e.g., one that simply requires verifying the correctness of an answer with a reference source). The decision of the tournament director is final.

9. If a protest is upheld, the remedy is to restore the game to its condition had the error not been made. Thus, all points erroneously awarded or not awarded shall be removed or added. If a team was incorrectly credited with a tossup or an alternating question the points will be removed. If the other team was not given a chance to answer the tossup or alternating question, it shall hear a replacement question.

K. Ethics and Conduct

1. All players, coaches, institutional representatives, and other persons associated with a team are bound by an honor code to behave responsibly and ethically. This includes, but is not limited to: treating all other participants and staff with courtesy, neither giving nor receiving impermissible assistance, not creating the temptation for another to cheat, abiding by all decisions of the tournament staff, not colluding with another person to "fix" a match result, not intentionally "throwing" a match, honestly reporting details of game situations to tournament officials, and promptly reporting violations of this honor code to a tournament staff member.

2. Any tournament official may find that a player, coach, institutional representative, or other person associated with a team during the tournament has committed misconduct. Misconduct includes disruptive behavior, unethical behavior, any violation of the honor code, or other unsporting conduct. Officials may interpret these categories broadly. Teams are responsible for the conduct of all persons associated with that team.

3. All instances of misconduct must be reported to the tournament director at the conclusion of the game, or as soon as practical.

4. Instances of misconduct may result in sanctions to be determined by the tournament director. These sanctions include, but are not limited to, suspension of a participant from one or more matches, loss of game(s) for a team, score or clock adjustment, or expulsion of an entire team from the tournament.

5. Unless the tournament director decides otherwise, other staff may not impose sanctions, except that a moderator must eject from a game any person found to have committed misconduct a second time during that game (i.e., a tournament director may give the staff greater powers to sanction than this minimum). A player ejected from a game may not participate in future rounds of the tournament.

6. Sanctions are not appealable.