

## Regional and State Battle Rules & Procedures

1. 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.
2. Competitions begin with a round robin pool with the top scoring teams going into a single elimination tournament. All teams play at least twice.
3. Each team will bring a set of the OBOB books and hand them to the Moderator when they enter the room of the competition.
4. Teams are usually made up of four members with one optional alternate, for a total of five members. All members must be present for a battle. All electronic devices must be in the off mode. Of the four competing members, one will serve as the spokesperson throughout each battle. Alternate members will sit in a designated area during battles.
5. 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 amongst themselves without fear of being overheard by the other competing team.
6. 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 questions.
7. 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.
8. The "odd" team (on the Moderator's left) will go first and be read question number one.
9. The Moderator will shuffle 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 amongst 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.
10. Discussion must stop as soon as time is called, and the question must be answered immediately. If the spokesperson doesn't immediately begin to answer, or if discussion continues, the Moderator turns to the other team and reads the question to them. When time is called the spokesperson will be given a chance to answer without hesitation.
11. During a battle, a team's spokesperson may request a repeat of a question. All repeats must take place within the time limit, which starts after the question is read for the first time.
12. "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> However, omission of the articles *a*, *an*, and *the* at the beginning of a title will be accepted as correct.

13. For "Content" questions, 5 points are given for the complete answer. Designated two-part questions will be scored with 3 points for the first answer given and 2 points for the second answer given.
14. 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 is correct, the portion they have right is revealed prior to the question being passed to the other team to attempt to pick up the other half. 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.
15. 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.
16. If a team has begun its response before time is called, they will be allowed to complete their response.
17. If a question is being read and the spokesperson interrupts the reader, that team must answer the question immediately.
18. 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. The teams will be sent on to their next battle.
19. 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 challenges and the score sheets have been initialed by each spokesperson.
20. An answer is considered correct even if mispronounced, as long as the Judge can discern it.
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 any notes.
23. In the event of a CHALLENGE, this procedure will be followed
  - a. 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.

- b. The Timekeeper will begin timing after the Moderator recognizes the challenge and copies of the book are given to the challenging team.
  - c. The official Timekeeper will announce the end of the 2 minute time period (no countdown) and discussion must stop.
  - d. The challenging team's spokesperson will show the Judges the exact wording supporting their challenge.
  - e. The Judges determines whether the challenge is successful or not. An answer may be considered correct by way of inference. If the Judges accepts the challenge as successful, and the other conditions for gaining a score were fulfilled, the points shall be awarded and the scores amended.
  - f. Only one team will be awarded the points for a correct answer.
  - g. 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.
  - h. The decision of the Judges is final.
24. 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.
25. 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 a tiebreaker round with the usual challenge time in effect.

## Criteria for the selection of OBOB 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.**

**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."*

**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.

## **Oregon Battle of the Books: Creating Readers Across the State**

OBOB is sponsored by Oregon Association of School Libraries, a division of OLA

### Presenters:

Mary McClintock, Retired Roseburg school librarian, OBOB Financial Chair  
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Libby Hamler-Dupras, Retired Salem school library teacher, OBOB State  
Tournament Manager <hdfamily@Q.com>

Elke Bruton, Director of Talking Book and Braille Services at the Oregon State  
Library, OBOB Administrative Chair <[oboblsta@gmail.com](mailto:oboblsta@gmail.com)>

### OBOB Program Description:

Oregon Battle of the Books is a statewide reading motivation and comprehension program sponsored by the Oregon Association of School Libraries, now a division of the Oregon Library Association. Students in 3<sup>rd</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade, regardless of ability, are exposed to quality literature representing a variety of literary styles and viewpoints. Students read up to 16 selected titles and answer questions in a quiz-bowl format.

The mission of the program is to encourage and recognize students who enjoy reading, to broaden reading interests, to increase reading comprehension, to promote academic excellence and to foster teamwork among students.

OBOB was honored at the 2013 Oregon Book Awards with the Walt Morey Young Readers Literary Legacy Award.

### History of Battle of the Books:

Oregon's state program evolved from the Battle of the Books radio quiz show in Chicago in the 1930s which featured teams of students from two different Chicago schools each week. It was revived in the 1960s by one of those child contestants Joanne Kelly who grew up to be a school librarian in Illinois.

Battle of the Books was brought out to Oregon by school librarian and author Sybilla Cook in the late 1970's when she moved to southern Oregon from Illinois. Word spread about the program through various library conferences and word of mouth. Billy and a series of co-authors have written several "how-to-do-this" books—starting with Books, Battles, and Bees in 1993.

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. Teachers and librarians find children read more books, parents are enthusiastic, and children also learn the pleasures of teamwork and academic competition.

### Background of Battle of the Books

Salem school librarians invited Oregon State Librarian Jim Scheppke to volunteer at a Salem district tournament and he was so impressed with what he saw that he suggested to OASL that this program needed to go statewide and that school librarians were the ones who could make it happen. The first planning meeting occurred in the fall of 2006 and by the spring of 2008 the first regional and state tournaments occurred.

As state librarian Jim encouraged school librarians to apply for funding from the Library Services and Technology Act. In 2007 the first LSTA planning grant of \$35,000. was awarded and school librarians from around the state began to plan how to bring these disparate programs together into one cohesive state-wide effort and the Oregon Battle of the Books was born. Jim's passion for what this program does for kids and reading was the driving force behind OBOB.

The 2008 and 2009 LSTA grants were increased to \$75,000. Each year competitive book grants were awarded to 50 schools and 100 schools respectively which helped "seed" the program. Providing grant funded books helped to level the playing field for economically disadvantaged schools which might otherwise not participate initially.

OBOB continues to be supported by LSTA with \$10,000. annual continuing grants. To supplement the grant funds, several years ago OBOB instituted a participation fee which has provided sufficient operating funds.

### Program Features of Battle of the Books

Basic OBOB infrastructure involved developing criteria for book selection and question writing, agreeing on rules of play, developing a policy handbook, and creating a structure for regional competitions that lead to an annual state tournament. A high standard of quality in title selection and question writing and consistent rules of play are important elements in maintaining wide school involvement. For example, in selecting titles committee members must weigh a balance of genres, appeal to both boys and girls, Level of difficulty, and availability in paperback.

Our participants for 2012-2013 in OBOB count 431 registered schools and 540 teams at various levels which represents an increase over 383 schools and 467 teams registered in the previous year. Total numbers of registered participating

school teams for this year's competition are: 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> : 293; 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>: 193; and 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>: 54.

The 4-5 member teams that make it to the regional and state competitions are only the tip of the iceberg. They represent a large group of students who have read a wide variety of stories. In many schools the final matches to choose the school team are held in the library or gym with an audience of the entire student body. Team participants model for their peers a love of reading that is fun and exciting.

As one principal wrote:

Much of the benefits of this program are not directly observed during the competitions, but occur in every child who decides they want to be a part of the program. Students who have struggled in reading, students who have not previously enjoyed reading, or those who have a need to feel a part of something, now have a reason to read and be a part of a team. This is truly what the program is about.