

# US Academic Bowl Rules

Thank you for participating in today's Academic Bowl! This document is intended as an outline of the rules of the competition. If you have specific questions regarding more detailed aspects of the rules, please ask a tournament official. The Academic Bowl is played in two sections – Preliminaries and Playoffs. Academic Bowl games feature two teams of four players in a game consisting of two halves separated by a sixty-second round section.

-Each half consists of 8 tossups and associated 3-part bonuses where each part is worth 10 points. If a tossup is answered correctly, the answering team will control a bonus within the same broad category as the tossup. The other team will have opportunities to answer bonus questions missed by the controlling team. If a tossup is not answered correctly, the corresponding bonus is not read to either team

-Students who buzz in early on tossup questions will receive 20 points for their team. Tossup questions answered correctly towards the end are worth 10 points. Students are not told where the "power mark" is in the question (i.e. the boundary between it being worth 20 or 10 points).

-At no point in the course of the games for the Bowl will you be deducted points for a wrong answer.

-Timing works the same way as in History Bowl matches on tossups and bonuses (i.e. 3 seconds on tossups to give an answer, five seconds on bonus questions – including bouncebacks – and also on 60 second round bouncebacks - then "answer please" from the moderator, then two more seconds to give an answer). If the question goes unanswered for 3 seconds, after it's been read, then it's dead, and the next tossup is read. If someone rings in during these 3 seconds and is incorrect, then the other team gets a fresh 3-count if they haven't yet rung in.

-Students may change their answer before the moderator has ruled correct or incorrect, but the moderator should rule as quickly as possible once an answer has been directed at them. Decisions of timing and whether an answer was directed at the reader are non-protetable.

-Teams may substitute players between the first half and the announcement of the sixty-second rounds, between the end of the lightning rounds and the start of the second half, and/or after regulation, before the overtime tossup(s).

-During any tossup question, you may not confer verbally or in writing with your teammates. You may raise your hand, extend your buzzer, or gesture in ways that indicate you **know the answer, but not what the answer is**. Conferring illegally with your teammates on a tossup will be treated as if you buzzed in an answered the tossup incorrectly.

-On bonuses and in sixty-second rounds, talking to your teammates is permitted and encouraged, though attempts to talk loudly so that the opposing team cannot hear the question will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

-If you wish to protest a question or answer, **you must bring it to the reader's attention before leaving the room at the end of the game**. If the reader botches a question, there are makeup questions with each round that can be used.

-The category distribution of the 14 tossups includes 3 Literature, 3 Science, 3 History, 1 Math, 1 Fine Arts, 1 Religion & Mythology, 1 Social Studies, and 1 Pop Culture. Each bonus matches the category of the tossup, though not necessarily the subcategory (i.e. a Biology tossup may have an Astronomy bonus).

Sixty-second rounds are played at halftime. After a short break to allow substitutions, the three categories and themes will be announced. Substitutions cannot be made once the categories of the sixty-second rounds have been announced. Each game will have one Literature round, one History & Geography round, and one Science round. Each round has 6 short questions, each worth 10 points, on a given theme. **The team that is trailing** will choose one of the three categories and will have sixty seconds to answer as many of the six questions as possible. If you don't know an answer, you may pass, but you will **not** be permitted to return to passed questions; a pass is treated as an incorrect answer. The first answer directed by the team captain to the moderator will be accepted as the answer.

Once the trailing team has finished its round, the round bounces back to the other team, who will be prompted for answers to the missed questions, read in the same manner and with the same timing as bonus parts. After the first sixty-second round is completed by both teams, the team that had been leading after the first half selects one of the two remaining categories and the process repeats.

-If a team begins giving an answer while time expires, that answer will be counted; the decision of whether the answer was begun while time expires is non-protestable moderator judgment.

-If the moderator does not read all six questions during the initial sixty seconds, the unread parts will not bounce back to the other team. If time expires as the moderator is reading a question, the moderator will stop reading immediately; on the bounce back, the moderator will only read that question to the point where time expired.

-If a team correctly answers all six questions in a category, they receive a 20 point bonus for a total of 80 points on their round. No such bonus points are awarded if the two teams combine to correctly answer all six questions between the original sixty seconds and the bouncebacks.

-After the two rounds and bouncebacks have been completed, there will be a short break for substitutions before the second half.

-If the game is tied after the second half, teams will play sudden victory tossups; first correct answer wins the game.

The preliminary rounds will consist of 5 games. At the end of the fifth game, all results will be tabulated and the top teams (**usually ranked by won/loss record, then by points, then by opponents' combined record, then by opponents' points, unless there is an odd number of teams**) will advance to the Playoffs. The Playoffs are a single-elimination competition, and gameplay rules are exactly the same as during the preliminary section **except that the LEADING team picks first in the 60 second rounds. If the teams are tied, then it's the team most recently in the lead.** Check with your director to see how many teams make the Playoffs. Good luck, and have fun!