

# EA Spelling Bee Participant Roles

## **Pronouncer's role (EA Employee during Round 1):**

The pronouncer strives to pronounce words according to the diacritical markings in *Webster's Third*.

Homonyms: If a word has one or more homonyms, the pronouncer indicates which word is to be spelled by defining the word.

Speller's requests: In oral competition the pronouncer responds to the speller's requests for a definition, sentence, part of speech, language(s) of origin, and alternate pronunciation(s). The pronouncer does not grant requests for alternate definitions. When presented with requests for alternate pronunciations, the pronouncer or associate pronouncer checks for alternate pronunciations in *Webster's Third*. If the speller wishes to ask if the dictionary lists a specific root word as the root of the word to be spelled, the speller must specify a pronunciation of the root (not a spelling), its language, and its definition. The pronouncer will grant all such requests as long as they are in accordance with time constraints.

Pronouncer's sense of helpfulness: The pronouncer may offer word information—without the speller having requested the information—if the pronouncer senses that the information is helpful and the information appears in *Webster's Third*.

## **Judges' role (EA Employees during Round 1):**

The judges uphold the rules and determine whether or not words are spelled correctly. The decisions of the judges are final.

Misunderstandings: The judges participate in the exchange of information between the speller and pronouncer if they feel that clarification is needed. Also, the judges listen carefully to the speller's pronunciation of the word; and, if they sense that the speller has misunderstood the word, the judges work with the speller and pronouncer until they are satisfied that reasonable attempts have been made to assist the speller in understanding the word within the time constraints.

While the judges are responsible for attempting to detect a speller's misunderstanding, it is sometimes impossible to detect a misunderstanding until a spelling error has been made. The judges are not responsible for the speller's misunderstanding.

Pronouncer errors: The judges compare the pronouncer's pronunciation with the diacritical markings in the word list. If the judges feel that the pronouncer's pronunciation does not match

the pronunciation specified in the diacritical markings, the judges direct the pronouncer to correct the error as soon as it is detected.

Disqualifications for reasons other than clear misspelling: The judges will disqualify a speller:

- Who refuses a request to start spelling
- Who does not begin speaking when it is time to receive the word, even if it is due to technical difficulties
- Who does not have an adult present at all times
- Who engages in unsportsmanlike conduct
- Who, in the process of retracing a spelling, alters the letters or sequence of letters from those first uttered
- Who, in the process of spelling, utters unintelligible or nonsense sounds.
- Whose environment is noisy and/or causing distraction for the other participants

Speller activities that do not merit disqualification: The judges may not disqualify a speller:

- For failing to pronounce the word either before or after spelling it
- For asking a question
- For noting or failing to note the capitalization of a word.

#### **Speller's role:**

- The speller must pronounce the word for the judges before spelling it and after spelling it.
- The speller must make an effort to utter each letter distinctly and with sufficient volume to be understood by the judges.
- The speller may ask the pronouncer to say the word again, define it, use it in a sentence, provide the part of speech, provide the language(s) of origin, and/or provide an alternate pronunciation or pronunciations.
  - Only one definition of the word will be provided.

Misunderstandings: The speller is responsible for any misunderstanding of the word unless:

1. The pronouncer never provided a correct pronunciation
2. The pronouncer provided incorrect information regarding the definition, part of speech, or language of origin
3. The speller correctly spelled a homonym of the word and the pronouncer failed to either offer a definition or distinguish the homonyms.