



Dictionary Skills

2026-2027
Qual ♦ Dist ♦ State

GRADES: 4-5 & 6-8 | ENTRIES: 3 PER SECTION | TIME: 30 MIN

SECTIONS. Grades 4-5 compete together. Grades 6-8 compete together.

ENTRIES. As many as **THREE** students from **combined** grade levels (grades 4 & 5) and **THREE** students from combined grade levels (6, 7 and 8) may be entered in the Dictionary Skills District Contest from each school. Grade levels **MAY** be judged separately and additional entries may be allowed up to 3 per grade level at District, **BUT** only the top 2 places in combined grades 4-5 and 6-8 will advance to State.

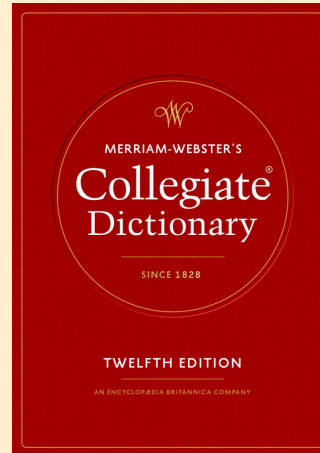
ADVANCING TO STATE. First and second place winners will advance from the grades 4-5 contest and from the grades 6-8 contest. Third place winners will be alternates.

NATURE OF THE CONTEST. The Dictionary Skills contest tests the contestant's ability to find information quickly in resource literature, specifically a dictionary. For grades 4 & 5, contestants use only **ONE** dictionary to answer 30 multiple choice test questions in a 30 minute time period. **For grades 6-8, additional resource pages are provided and contestants answer 40 multiple choice test questions (same 30 as for grades 4 & 5, plus 10 additional questions using a combination of the dictionary and resource pages).** Although any dictionary may be used in contest, the adopted dictionary is the *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary, 12th edition, 2026* or newer printing. Answers on the test can only be verified with the adopted dictionaries. Dictionaries may be tabbed and written in, as desired, but other than the provided resource page, no other printed material may be used in the contest. A magnifying device may also be used, as needed, in competition. All contest materials (pencils, pen, eraser, dictionary), other than the test itself, must be supplied by the contestant.

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE CONTEST. The contest director will announce the time and place that contestants and one adult should report for verification of the scoring of tests. (Substitutes taking the place of absent registered contestants should let the contest director know as they enter the room to save time at roll call.)

NEW EDITION

The official dictionary is the new 12th Edition of *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*.



For the 2026–2027 and 2027–2028 years, PSIA tests will be written so that answers can be found in both the 11th and 12th editions. This two-year transition period will allow schools time to update their resources while minimizing the impact on school budgets.

Answer sheets will be distributed to contestants first, followed by contestant ID-labeled tests distributed by student name. Contestants will be instructed to write their grade levels and their contestant ID numbers in the spaces provided on the answer sheet. Contestants must not open the test until the start signal is given. No alarm watches or other devices that emit sound are allowed in the contest room. Disqualification will result if such device makes a sound while placed in any portion of the room.

TIME ALLOTTED. Contestants will have 30 minutes beginning at the start signal to write their **PRINTED CAPITAL** letter answers in the spaces provided on the answer sheet. A 5-minute warning will be given by the contest director when five minutes remain in the contest. Contestants will remain quietly in their seats until the time has expired.

MARKING ANSWERS. Contestants may write on the test paper, but only the **PRINTED CAPITAL** letter answer should be written in the answer space on the answer sheet. Any marking in the answer space will constitute an attempt.

SCORING. Add 5 points for each correct answer. Subtract 2 points for each incorrect answer, or for each

answer that was attempted, marked through or erased, and did not result in a correct answer. No points are added or deducted for skipped or unanswered test items. Mark-outs are acceptable, as long as a correct answer is written beside the mark-out. If an answer is marked out and no correct answer is written in the answer space, 2 points deducted. Erasures are permitted. Any erased correct answer that can still be seen is counted correct. An erased answer that is not correct and does not have a correct answer written over or beside it constitutes an incorrect answer, whereby 2 points are deducted.

VERIFICATION PERIOD. See page 16.

MATERIALS. Previous PSIA Dictionary Skills tests are available at the PSIA Store online.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Who would most likely use a **fescue**?
A. waitress B. doctor
C. policeman D. teacher
2. What letter should be added to the end of **morceau** to make it plural?
A. x B. s
C. n D. t
3. What year was the term **obscurantism** coined?
A. 1815 B. 1829
C. 1834 D. 1846
4. The combining forms *my-* and *myo-* are used when describing what body parts?
A. legs B. muscles
C. ears D. eyes
5. Which parts of speech is the word **astraddle**?
A. adjective and pronoun
B. noun and interjection
C. verb and conjunction
D. adverb and preposition

Shall and Must List

Contestants **shall** use PRINTED (no cursive) CAPITAL (not lowercase) LETTERS for Part 1 of this contest.

Result: Count the question incorrect if the wrong type of response is given.

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Contestants **shall** write their Contestant ID on the Answer Sheets and not their name or their school name.

Result: Contest director should remedy the answer sheet by erasing or covering up the identifying information.

♦ ♦ ♦

Contestants **shall** write only their contestant ID and their answers on the answer sheet.

Result: Extraneous marks in answer blanks result in incorrect response for that answer. Extraneous marks outside the answer blanks should receive a warning to the contestant, but not a disqualification.