



**SOUTH TEXAS ACADEMICS
& LITERACY LEAGUE**

Rules for Competition
2020-2021

A+ Calculator Applications

80 questions

30 minutes

+5 points correct

-4 points incorrect answers, problems skipped, illegible answer

Grades 6-8

The calculator applications contest is designed to simulate the development of mathematical and calculator skills for students in grade 6, 7, and 8. Goals are both intellectual and practical: developing mathematical reasoning and knowledge and requiring the application of problem-solving skills toward realistic problems. Students will take a test containing 80 problems in 30 minutes. The contest consists of problems which may include calculations involving addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, roots, and powers. It also includes straight-forward calculation problems, and simple geometric and stated problems similar to those found in recently adopted textbooks.

Students may use any silent, hand-held calculator that does not require auxiliary electric power. The calculator data and program memory should be cleared prior to contest; students may not use pre-recorded programs during the contest.

Reminders:

Students are to bring their own pencils and calculators to event.

Smart watches are not allowed.

Disqualified if cell phone goes off.

Check the battery status before each meet. Extra batteries are not provided by event director.

A+ Dictionary Skills

40 questions

20 minutes

+3 points correct

-2 points incorrect

no deduction for unanswered questions

Grades 6-8

Thorough knowledge of the dictionary is a way to increase a student's ability to find the information that is needed for classwork as well as everyday living. Each Dictionary Skills test consists of 40 objective and short answer questions to be completed in 20 minutes. Contestants use dictionaries during the competition, which may be tabbed. Contest questions cover word origins and histories, parts of speech, pronunciation, variant spellings, plurals, alphabetizing and other such elements. Test questions are also taken from charts, tables and lists contained in the dictionary.

The subject matter of all tests is taken from the Merriam Webster's Intermediate Dictionary, 2004 and subsequent editions. Contestants may use other dictionaries in the contest, but the contest subject matter will be found in Webster's Intermediate.

Practice tests are included in the A+ Elementary and Junior High Study Materials booklets, which are available for purchase using the A+ Academic Study Materials Order Form, or through the UIL Online Store. Other practice materials are available from independent vendors.

Reminders:

Students are to bring their own pencils and dictionary to event.

Smart watches are not allowed.

Disqualified if cell phone goes off.

A+ Maps, Graphs & Charts

45 questions

30 minutes

+3 points correct

-2 points incorrect

fill-in-the-blank questions

no deductions for unanswered questions

Grades 6-8

The maps, graphs & charts contest is designed to help students learn to get information from a variety of maps, graphs and charts including world maps, pie charts, bar charts and local area maps. The objective test will measure skills such as using a reference book to locate information, making comparisons, estimating and approximating, using local scale and interpreting grid systems, legends and keys.

There will be one additional transition year for atlases in 2008-09, so test writers will check all atlas questions against both the new 2008 edition and the previous 2003-05 edition of the Nystrom Desk Atlas. Beginning in 2009-10, only the 2008 edition will be used in test preparation. Students may also use any other atlas they choose, but the test questions are written using this source.

Reminders:

Students are to bring their own pencils, rulers, and atlas to event.

Smart watches are not allowed.

Disqualified if cell phone goes off.

Students need to print legibly because tests are hand graded.

A+ Mathematics

50 questions

40 minutes

+5 points correct

-2 points incorrect

no deduction for unanswered questions

use calculator

students can use scratch paper

Grades 6-8

Students begin taking math in elementary school and continue taking it in high school. Learning to complete math problems quickly is a valuable skill in all facets of life including engineering, accounting, completing a tax return and even grocery shopping. This contest includes problems covering, but not limited to: numeration systems, arithmetic operations involving whole numbers, integers, fractions, decimals, exponents, order of operations, probability, statistics, number theory, simple interest, measurements and conversions. Geometry and algebra problems may be included as appropriate for the grade level.

The contest, designed for students in grade 6, 7, and 8, consists of 50 multiple choice problems to be complete in 40 minutes. Students can use a calculator.

Reminders:

Students are to bring their own pencils and calculators to event.

Smart watches are not allowed.

Disqualified if cell phone goes off.

Check the battery status before each meet. Extra batteries are not provided by event director.

A+ Number Sense

80 questions

10 minutes

+5 points correct

-4 points incorrect, problems skipped, or illegible answer

write in pen

Grades 6-8

Individuals are called upon every day to use their ability to make quick mental calculations to make decisions. The development of such abilities should be an integral part of the math curriculum. Concepts covered include, but are not limited to: addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, proportions, and use of mathematical notation.

Students will be given a 10-minute, fill-in-the-blank test which they must complete without doing calculations on paper or on a calculator. Erasures and mark-outs are not permitted.

The handbook, *Developing Middle School Number Sense Skills*, is available. It is the same edition first published in 1996.

Students are not allowed to use a calculator. Students must use a pen for answers and are not allowed to erase or cross out or write over answers.

Reminders:

Students are to bring their own pens to event.

Smart watches are not allowed.

Disqualified if cell phone goes off.

A+ Social Studies

40 questions

30 minutes

+3 points correct

-2 points incorrect

no deduction for unanswered questions

Grades 6-8

General Contest Description

- * Two divisions: grades 5-6, grades 7-8
- * Test topics defined by a study outline, to be updated yearly (see links below)
- * Test content taken from state adopted textbooks and identified primary sources

Study Outlines (including primary sources)

<http://www.uiltexas.org/aplus/events/aplus-social-studies>

Scoring

- * 0 points for skipped or unanswered questions
- * +3 for correct answers
- * -2 for incorrect answers

Reminders:

Students are to bring their own pencils to event.

Smart watches are not allowed.

Disqualified if cell phone goes off.

A+ Spelling

50 words
10 tiebreakers
pen or pencil
write legible

Grades 6-8

The spelling contest is designed to give students in grades 6, 7, and 8 exposure to a wide variety of vocabulary words. It is not a contest of memorization. For the most educational value, preparation for this contest should include instruction in the rules of English language, meanings and definitions, and root words. In addition to learning to spell proficiently, contestants will learn to write clearly and to capitalize words properly.

Students will write down words given by the pronouncer on their paper at a rate of approximately five words per minute. Grades 6, 7, and 8 have 50 words and 10 tiebreakers. The tiebreakers are given to all contestants immediately following the initial test.

Tests will be fully compatible with the Merriam Webster's Intermediate Dictionary 2004 and subsequent editions.

Words will come from approved UIL Spelling list. However, approximately 20% of the test words will come from sources other than the UIL official list.

Reminders:

Students are to bring their own pens to event.
Smart watches are not allowed.
Disqualified if cell phone goes off.
Write legible because tests are hand graded.

A+ Science

35 questions

45 minutes

+5 points correct

-2 points incorrect

no deduction for unanswered questions

Grades 6-8

Emphasis for the Science contest, for students in seventh and eighth grades, will be placed on knowledge of scientific fact, understanding of scientific principles and the ability to think through scientific problems. The contest was designed to test not only memory but the ability to critically think about science and scientific processes and concepts. Such concepts include, but are not limited to: matter and energy, equilibrium, force and motion, physical and chemical properties, the relationship between organisms and the environment, the components of our solar system, the composition of matter and genetics. The contest will build upon the vast body of changing and increasing knowledge described by physical, mathematical, and conceptual models.

Each test will consist of approximately 35 multiple choice questions which will be taken from current state-adopted science textbooks and the curriculum.

Reminders:

Students are to bring their own pens to event.

Smart watches are not allowed.

Disqualified if cell phone goes off.

A+ Ready Writing

Select Local, State, or National Prompt

1 hour

write in pen

school code in right hand corner

lined paper

write on front side only

student may bring a dictionary to use

Grades 6-8

Contestants in this event will have 1 hour to write an expository composition. The writing will be judged on conciseness and quality. Compositions must be written in ink. Contestants must write on only one side of the paper. Contestants must use blue or black ink. Each invitational meet will formulate three topics, from which, the contestants may choose one. The topics are to be local, state, or national current events. The contestant will use the topic number chosen as the TITLE ON THE PAPER. For example: Local. The first writing contest will be held prior to the first meet. The writing for the next two meets and the Tournament of Champions will be held at the three regular tournaments. Only designated contestants are to write during the respective 1 hour contest. Contestants are to write their contestant number on their paper prior to writing on the selected topic. The host school is responsible for making copies of the first paper for all schools. Contestants MUST be identified prior to writing. The event director must provide white, wide-ruled paper for the contestants.

Disqualifications are limited to: using unlined paper, ink that is not black or blue, or using more than one side of the paper, listing school name or personal name in paper, smart watch or cell phone goes off.

Only the tournament director may disqualify the paper. Disqualification should be made prior to delivery of contest papers to the judge.

Reminders:

Students are to bring their own pens and dictionary to event. Paper is provided.

Smart watches are not allowed.

Disqualified if cell phone goes off.

Duet Acting (serious or humorous) : 11 minute time limit

(Two teams per grade; two contestants per team: NO COSTUMES)

This event allows the students the opportunity to work closely with each other in an attempt to develop character relationships and a clear sequential plot within a scene of a full play. Movements of the body, gestures, voice, and facial expressions should establish each character and convey the story. Students must memorize their character's lines. The acting scene's piece must be from a published or adapted play.

Limit of presentation: 11 minutes, with a caution at 30 seconds. Red STOP sign will go up at 11 minutes.

One student must state the title and playwright and introduce the piece before the presentation. The stating of the title, playwright and introduction is INCLUDED in the 1 minute allotment. **STUDENTS DO NOT STATE THEIR NAMES OR SCHOOLS.**

Teams may consist of 2 boys, 2 girls, or 1 boy and 1 girl of the same grade level.

In acting, props are defined as anything that is not part of the human body. Therefore, clothing cannot be used in any way.

Teams have the option of using a maximum of 3 pieces of classroom furniture during the presentation. A table, three student desks, and three student chairs (no rolling chairs) that will be available in the classroom.

Only disqualifications: exceeds time limit, using more than 3 pieces of furniture, introducing student name or school, wearing costume or school shirt, using props, and watch or cell phone goes off.

Any disqualifications should be put in writing and not addressed to the students. Students should be allowed to finish their presentations.

Students are not required to say "Scene" when finished.

Reminders:

Smart watches are not allowed.

Disqualified if cell phone goes off.

Students are not allowed to wear costumes, school shirts, or use props.

Duet Pantomime: 5 minute time limit

(Two teams per grade; 2 contestants per team)

Team must match in all black or all white

This event allows students the opportunity to work closely with each other in an attempt to develop character relationships and a clear plot within a pantomime situation in which there are no verbalization or speech. Movements of the body, gestures, and facial expressions should establish each character and convey the story. No vocalization is allowed. No mouthing of words is allowed. **TOUCHING WILL BE ALLOWED, BUT THE TOUCH SHOULD NOT RESULT IN A NOISE. THE INTENT OF PANTOMIME IS THE CONVEY AN IDEA WITHOUT THE VOCAL OR NOISE ASPECT.** The pantomime may be either original (made up by the couple) or adapted from an existing script.

Limit if presentation is 5 minutes. One contestant may state the title of the pantomime before its presentation. Stating the title is included in the 5 minute time limit.

Any VERBAL NOISE, including a “gasp” or other non-word noise, will cause a team to be disqualified. **Also mouthing of words will be an immediate disqualification.**

Teams may consist of 2 boys, 2 girls, or 1 boy and 1 girl of the same grade level.

Teams have the option of using a maximum of 3 pieces of classroom furniture during the presentation. A table, three student desks, and three student chairs (no rolling chairs) that will be available in the classroom.

Disqualifications should only be on paper and teams should be allowed to finish their presentation. Do not discuss the disqualification with the teams.

Reminders:

Smart watches are not allowed.

Disqualified if cell phone goes off.

Students are not allowed to wear costumes, school shirts, or use props.

ACTORS CANNOT TOUCH OR MAKE A SOUND!

Clothes must be black, no gray clothing.

Oration: 3 to 6 minute speech, 7 minute time limit

(2 contestants per grade level)

In Oration, the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade contestants will select their own topic, determine the critical issues in the topic, and acknowledge both pro and con points citing support discovered in their research. Students will choose a side they will defend and support that side with additional evidence. Along with the skills analysis, research, note-taking, documentation, evaluation, and decision-making come those of delivery and the skill of memorization.

Students will choose any topic of their choosing. They must research and give true representation of both sides of the issue as a start and then continue to pursue their “persuasive” part of the argument.

Students will deliver a three to six minute speech. Students may use four 3 x 5 index cards to help with their delivery of the speech. In the process of preparing for the contest, the student will need to:

- i. define the problem;
- ii. determine the pro and con issues;
- iii. research the issue;
- iv. look at both sides of an issue;
- v. reach a conclusion; and
- vi. support that conclusion with documentation.

To achieve and maintain the educational goals of the contest activity, the teacher and/or parent may guide the development of the research and writing of the speech, but shall not be permitted to write the speech for the student.

Reminders:

Smart watches are not allowed.

Disqualified if cell phone goes off.

Students are not allowed to wear costumes, school shirts, or use props.

Poetry Reading: 5 minute time limit

(2 contestants per grade level)

The purpose of this event is to train the student to ascertain the meaning of poetry selection and to communicate that meaning to the listeners. It might also be defined as creative reading. Contestants should use vocal and facial expressions to convey the meaning of the selection, but the use of hand gestures is not allowed and will result in disqualification. The same will be true of taking steps. Students must remain in one spot while reading the selection. Manuscripts must be held with TWO hand during the presentation and judges will judge on the READING of the selection NOT THE MEMORIZATION. Contestants are encouraged to be as animated as possible within these restrictions. The contestants may prepare one poem, a cutting of a poem, or a combination of several poems that have a theme. An introduction to the selection is required and must be done within the 5 minute time limit.

Only allowable disqualifications: Exceeds the time limit, using hand gestures, taking steps, not holding manuscript within two hands, appearing to have memorized instead of reading the selection, wearing a costume or school shirt, watch or cell phone goes off.

Documentation of poems must be documented on poetry form and turned into the head director.

Reminders:

Smart watches are not allowed.

Disqualified if cell phone goes off.

Students are not allowed to wear costumes or school shirts.

Poem must be a published poem.

Prose Reading: 7 minute time limit

(2 contestants per grade level)

The purpose of this event is to train the student to ascertain the meaning of printed prose selection and to communicate that meaning to the listeners. **SELECTION MUST BE PROSE, IT SHOULD NOT RHYME.** It might also be defined as creative writing. Contestants should use vocal and facial expressions to convey the meaning of the selection, but the use of hand gestures is not allowed and will result in disqualifications. The same will be true of taking steps. Students must remain in one spot while reading the selection. Manuscripts must be held with **TWO** hands during the presentation and judges will judge on the **READING** of the selection **NOT THE MEMORIZATION.** Contestants are encouraged to be as animated as possible within these restrictions. The contestants may prepare a prose selection from a literacy reading, written commentary, or public address. Literacy reading encompasses short stories, informal essays, biographies, autobiographies, historical narratives, and public fiction. Public addresses include serious public speeches advocating policies regarding significant issues or problems either contemporary or historical. Written commentary includes magazine editorials, syndicated columns, and formal essays which include logical appeals, and radio and television commentary of the same type. Cuttings from plays or other dramatic materials should **NOT BE USED.**

An introduction to the selection is required and must be done within the 7 minute time limit.

Only allowable disqualifications: exceeds the time limit, using hand gestures, taking steps, not holding manuscript with two hands, appearing to have memorized instead of reading the selection, wearing a costume or school shirt, watch or cell phone goes off.

Documentation of prose selection must be documented on prose form and turned into the head director.

Students are not allowed to use the same monologue in Prose and an acting event.

Reminders:

Smart watches are not allowed.

Disqualified if cell phone goes off.

Students are not allowed to wear costumes or school shirts.

Solo Acting (serious or humorous): 7 minute time limit

(2 contestants per grade level: NO COSTUMES)

Limit of presentation: 7 minutes, with a caution at 1 minute and again at 30 seconds.

Contestants must memorize a cutting from a play which is serious or humorous in nature, from which they assume one or more definite characters and acts out the situation. NO PROPS or set pieces.

In acting, props are defined as anything that is not part of the human body. Therefore, clothing cannot be used in any way.

Teams have the option of using a maximum of 3 pieces of classroom furniture during the presentation. A table, three student desks, and three student chairs (no rolling chairs) that will be available in the classroom.

All contestants must have an introduction which must be included in the 7 minute time limit.

Only disqualifications: exceeds time limit, using more than 3 pieces of furniture, introducing student name or school, and cell phone or watch goes off.

Any disqualifications should be put in writing and not addressed to the students. Students should be allowed to finish their presentations.

Students are not allowed to use the same monologue in Prose and an acting event.

Reminders:

Smart watches are not allowed.

Disqualified if cell phone goes off.

Students are not allowed to wear costumes, school shirts, or use props.