



 NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC | GEOBEE

| 2019-2020 |
School GeoBee

**RULES
AND
INSTRUCTIONS**

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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC GEOBEE

Each year thousands of schools in the United States participate in the National Geographic GeoBee using materials prepared by the National Geographic Society. The contest motivates students to learn about the world and how it works. Students in grades four through eight are eligible for this entertaining and challenging competition. With cash prizes and scholarships available at the state and national levels, the contest is designed to encourage teachers to include geography in their classrooms, spark student interest in the subject, and increase public awareness about geography. Students from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories, and the Department of Defense Dependents Schools are participating in the 2019-2020 National Geographic GeoBee.

There are three levels of competition: school, state, and national. To compete for advancement from the school to the state level, the winning student at each school must take the online qualifying test. As many as 100 of the highest-scoring students in a state or territory advance to the state competition. The state GeoBee champion advances to the national championship in Spring 2020.

SCHOOL GEOBEE RULES

Each school is responsible for conducting its own GeoBee, which must take place by February 7, 2020. The school GeoBee coordinator conducts the school competition, administers the online qualifying test to the school champion, and communicates with National Geographic about the school champion and state GeoBee qualification. The following rules regarding contest procedures and eligibility are required for a student to remain eligible for advancement to the state and national competitions. However, schools have flexibility regarding how they format and conduct their respective school GeoBees.

- The National Geographic GeoBee is an educational competition designed for any public, private, or homeschool in the United States and its territories, as well as Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS), with students in grades four through eight. Registration is not open to individual students.
- A school must be registered by a paid school employee. This can include the school's designated "GeoBee coordinator" or another appropriate school employee, such as a principal, librarian, curriculum coordinator, or administrative support staff. Parents, guardians, or school volunteers may not, under any circumstances, register a school for the National Geographic GeoBee or have access to the account or question material at any time.
- The specified school GeoBee coordinator must also be a paid school employee and will be responsible for downloading official National Geographic GeoBee materials, administering the school-level competition, and effectively communicating with National Geographic about the designated school champion.
- The school GeoBee coordinator cannot be a relative or guardian of a student participating in the National Geographic GeoBee at any school or homeschool.
- The National Geographic Society does not encourage or endorse coaching for hire in connection with the National Geographic GeoBee. The school GeoBee coordinator cannot be a paid GeoBee coach or be affiliated with an organization that collects fees for GeoBee coaching.
- A minimum of six (6) students from any of the eligible grades (4-8) must be

SCHOOL GEOBEE RULES (CONTINUED)

physically present and actively participate in the school level competition in order for the designated school champion to be eligible to take the qualifying test and be considered for possible advancement to the state GeoBee. "Virtual" school GeoBees are not permitted. The entire school competition is intended to be a school-wide program that takes place on school grounds.

- Official National Geographic GeoBee materials are the property of the registered school and may not be transferred or used by another school. School GeoBee materials may not be shared in hard copy or electronic form with anybody who is not an employee of the registered school, either before or after the school GeoBee. **Official school GeoBee questions may not be posted online at any time.**
- State GeoBee qualifiers will be posted on each state GeoBee website at NatGeoBee.org/results by March 2, 2020. Please check the list to see if your student has qualified. State competitions will be held on Friday, March 27, 2020. National Geographic will not directly notify schools or parents about qualification status.
- The champion from each state is invited to compete in the National Geographic GeoBee National Championship in Spring 2020 (exact date TBD).
- Any audio, visual, or written recording of school GeoBees is not permitted. **Posting or sharing of videos of school GeoBees gives an unfair advantage to students at schools that have not yet held their respective GeoBees.** The school GeoBee coordinator must ensure that the school GeoBee is not recorded in any form by participants or event attendees without prior permission from the National Geographic GeoBee director.
- Homeschools must follow all rules listed here, and must allow other homeschool students in their area to participate in their GeoBee.

RULES REGARDING STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

- Previous recipients of National Geographic GeoBee scholarships are ineligible to participate. Children of National Geographic employees may participate in their school GeoBee, but are not permitted to advance beyond the school level competition and are therefore ineligible to take the state GeoBee qualifying test.
- Students must be in grades four through eight (4-8) and must not have reached their 15th birthday on or before September 1, 2019. A student is eligible to participate in the National Geographic GeoBee for no more than five years in total.
- A student must be enrolled in a school that has registered for the National Geographic GeoBee. Students can only participate in one GeoBee per academic year. Students enrolled in conventional public or private schools may not compete in a homeschool GeoBee or at a different school from which they are enrolled.
- A student may not attend a school GeoBee at a different school prior to participating in their own school GeoBee.
- Students in eligible grade levels must follow a school schedule and academic

course load comparable to the majority of the student's peers with respect to both grade and age. A student may not be enrolled in more than three (3) courses at the high school and/or college level that are related to the social studies or sciences during the academic year.

- Students and their parents, guardians, and relatives must not have obtained, have had in their possession, or have seen copies of the school GeoBee question booklet or the qualifying test at any time prior to the competition. Evidence of misconduct will result in disqualification.

GENERAL RULES REGARDING THE STATE QUALIFYING TEST

(For a complete list of qualifying test rules, see page 73)

- The state qualifying test is administered online through the National Geographic GeoBee registration website. The online qualifying test will be open for school GeoBee champions starting November 15, 2019.
- The qualifying test must be administered by the school GeoBee coordinator and taken by the one (1) student who has won the school GeoBee. Please check with your school winner to be sure that if they qualify they will be able to attend the State GeoBee on March 27, 2020. If they cannot, you may administer the qualifying test to the second or third place school GeoBee winner. However, the test can be given to only one student.
- The school GeoBee coordinator must log in to the Registration and Resource Center and complete the "school champion online profile" before the student takes the online qualifying test.
- The test is to be taken in the school building or designated location, and must be proctored by the school GeoBee coordinator for the duration of the test. A relative or guardian of the school champion may not administer the test, nor have had access to the online test.
- The student is to work independently on the test, using no outside help or materials. The school GeoBee coordinator must proctor the test to ensure this rule is met.
- No more than 60 minutes is allowed for the student to complete the online test.
- The school champion must complete the online qualifying test by 11:59 p.m. EST on February 7, 2020. No written test should be taken or mailed to the National Geographic GeoBee office.

National Geographic reserves the right to disqualify a school or student if these rules have not been followed.

SCHOOL GEOBEE INSTRUCTIONS

National Geographic provides schools with these contest materials, and we encourage you to use the materials in a way that is engaging and appropriate for your students' ages and skill levels. The suggested procedures below should work well for most schools and are the same as those used at the state GeoBee. However, schools may adapt the procedures to fit their needs or the needs of their students. For example, a school may want to use fewer preliminary rounds or conduct the preliminary competition as a written test (see page 46 for a sample test).

The school GeoBee coordinator should make every effort to accommodate students who have physical challenges, including medical conditions involving sight, hearing, speech, or movement. The school GeoBee coordinator has discretionary power to amend oral and/or written answer requirements on a case-by-case basis for students with diagnosed medical conditions involving sight, hearing, speech, or movement. Any questions regarding other accommodations for students with physical challenges can be directed to the National Geographic GeoBee office by email at ngbee@ngs.org.

PRELIMINARY COMPETITION

The preliminary competition at the school GeoBee consists of seven preliminary rounds of 35 questions each. The preliminary competition determines which students will advance to the final competition of the school GeoBee. The preliminary competition may be held in individual classrooms. If more than 35 students in a class are participating, the class can be divided into groups and a separate competition can be conducted for each group. Or, again, a written test using the preliminary questions can be given to determine the students (no more than 10) that will advance to the finals (see page 46).

PREPARING STUDENTS: A Study Toolkit is available for download and distribution to participating students at the School Registration and Resource center (geobee-registration.nationalgeographic.com). Teachers can help students prepare for the GeoBee by sending home the Study Toolkit, or by quizzing students for fun using questions from the toolkit. For more ways to get your whole school involved, see the "Create a Buzz" section on page 78. Also, check out our online study corner at nationalgeographic.org/education/student-experiences/geobee/study/ for more free study resources. The actual contest questions should not be discussed with students before the competition.

PREPARING TEACHERS: Print and distribute to each participating teacher the following sections of the school GeoBee contest resources:

- Rules & Instructions ([Pages 3-9](#))
- Choose One:
 1. Preliminary Competition Oral Question Rounds ([Pages 14-45](#))
 2. Preliminary Competition Written Test and Answer Key ([Pages 46-50](#))
- Preliminary Tiebreaker Questions ([Pages 51-53](#))
- Certificate of Participation in grayscale or color (Page [79](#) or [80](#))

Teachers assisting with the preliminary competition should go over the instructions on the following pages. Teachers should also review contest questions before the competition to become familiar with the pronunciation guides provided. Paper and markers should be available in case tiebreaker questions are needed.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEACHERS: PRELIMINARY COMPETITION

ASKING THE QUESTIONS: The teacher should read aloud the Instructions to Contestants and then begin the preliminary competition. The questions should be read slowly and clearly. Don't be afraid to repeat a question if you make a mistake. During the preliminary competition, each student should be asked one question per round. When a student answers correctly, acknowledge the answer and move on to the next contestant. When a student answers incorrectly or does not respond, be sure to give the correct answer, then move on to the next contestant. Each round should begin with the same student. **NOTE:** If you have fewer than 35 students in a group, you will not use every question within a round.

PRONUNCIATIONS: Pronunciation is critical in the oral version of the competition, so please review the questions ahead of time and practice place-names and other words that you're unfamiliar with. Phonetic pronunciation guides have been provided for many words. A list of all words with provided guides in the preliminary competition can be found on page 15. You can use online dictionaries such as *Merriam-Webster* at Merriam-Webster.com to listen to audio pronunciations if necessary. Wherever possible, pronunciations of place-names and other words are based on *Merriam-Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* and indicate how the names are pronounced in English. If you come across a word that you are unfamiliar with, pronounce it how you read it! Most students are reading the place-names when studying, so they may have never heard it pronounced aloud.

JUDGING: Although every effort has been made to ensure that all acceptable answers to a question are listed, teachers may accept other answers if deemed appropriate. This includes variations on the acceptable answers. That is, if the answer is listed as "Rocky Mountains," you should accept just "Rockies" even though it is not listed. Up-to-date resource materials—such as atlases and geographical dictionaries—should be available for consultation. A decision regarding whether a question has been answered correctly or not should be made within a minute or two. This decision is final.

RESPONSE TIME: A student has 15 seconds to answer each question. If a student wants a question repeated or a word spelled, they should ask the teacher immediately and the timer should be stopped. A student may interrupt the preliminary competition only twice to have either a question repeated or a word spelled. Once the question has been repeated or the word spelled, the student should be allowed the remainder of the 15 seconds to answer the question. The student must start to give their answer before the 15-second time limit is up. Only the first answer given will be accepted and judged. If the student does not answer the question within the allotted time, the teacher should say "Time," give the correct answer, and move on to the next student. If the student gives the correct answer, the teacher should acknowledge that the answer is correct and ask the next student the next question in the round. A student may say "Pass" if they do not know the answer and wishes to pass before time is up. Passes count as incorrect answers. If the student passes or answers incorrectly, the teacher should give the correct answer before asking the next student the next question.

SCOREKEEPING: A scorekeeper should be designated to keep a record of each student's score. Each student should receive one point for each correct answer. Scores should be totaled at the end of the last preliminary round.

ADVANCEMENT TO THE FINAL COMPETITION: No more than 10 students should advance to the final competition. Each school may decide how the finalists will be selected. The group of 10 finalists could consist of the top 10 highest scorers in the school. As a second option, it could consist of an equal number of top scorers from each class. A third option

would be to choose the top scorer from each class and the next highest scorers overall if the maximum of 10 is desired for the final competition.

TIEBREAKERS: If there are ties in determining the finalists, ask the preliminary competition tiebreaker questions using a written, single-elimination procedure. If a student answers incorrectly, they are eliminated unless all the students miss the question. The seating arrangement of the students should ensure the confidentiality of their written answers. Each student should be given paper (or white board) and a marker. The teacher should ask all students involved in the tie the same question simultaneously. Each tiebreaker question should be read twice, and students may not ask for another repeat. The students should write their answers on the paper provided. At the end of the 15 seconds, the teacher should call "Time" and tell the students to put down their markers and hold up their answers to the judge. Then each contestant, in turn, should read their answer aloud. (**NOTE:** The correct answer should not be given until all answers have been read.) The contestants should continue to show their written answers until the scorekeeper has recorded the scores. The judge should check to make sure that each contestant's written answer matches their oral answer and that the scores are recorded correctly. A student should not be penalized for inaccurate pronunciations or spellings as long as it can be determined that an answer is correct. Follow this procedure for each question until the tie is broken.

Instructions for the final competition can be found on page 10.

FINAL COMPETITION

The final competition at the school GeoBee consists of a final round and a championship round. The final round questions will reduce the number of contestants from 10 to two. Starting with a clean slate, these two finalists will then compete in the championship round. The championship round determines the one student from the school who will take the online qualifying test to compete for advancement to the state GeoBee.

PREPARATION: Choose a moderator and a judge for the final competition. These positions can be filled by the principal, teachers, local geographers, government officials, or other appropriate individuals. You may also choose to identify a scorekeeper and timekeeper for the final competition. Print and distribute to the moderator and the judge the following sections of the school GeoBee contest resources:

- Rules & Instructions ([Pages 3-13](#))
- Final Competition, Championship Round, and Championship Round Tiebreaker Questions ([Pages 54-70](#))
- Final Competition #11 Common Question/Photo Handout ([Page 71](#))
- Final Competition #22 Common Question/Map Handout ([Page 72](#))

Each of the 10 finalists will also need a copy of the handouts for the two common questions on pages 71 and 72. If you wish, you can also project the handouts for the audience as a digital slide or overhead transparency. Markers and chairs for 10 students will be needed. Paper will be needed for the two students in the championship round. Please also gather the student awards that arrived in the mail (medal and certificates for top three students). If you have not received these items, please email ngbee@ngs.org. If possible, it would be appropriate to give a prize to each of the 10 finalists. Local businesses may be willing to contribute these. You can print the certificate of participation (grayscale or color) on page 79 or 80 for all students. You may also order GeoBee merchandise items at ShopNG.org/geobee (see flyer on pages 88-89). A meeting should be arranged with the moderator and the judge to make sure they understand all the procedures. It is important to have the moderator preview the questions before the competition to become familiar with the pronunciation guides provided.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS: FINAL COMPETITION

JUDGING: The same procedures used in judging the preliminary competition should be followed in the final competition. Although every effort has been made to ensure that all acceptable answers to a question are listed, teachers may accept other answers if deemed appropriate. This includes variations on the acceptable answers. That is, if the answer is listed as "Rocky Mountains," you should accept just "Rockies" even though it is not listed. Up-to-date resource materials—such as atlases and geographical dictionaries—should be available for consultation. A decision regarding whether a question has been answered correctly or not should be made within a minute or two. Decisions of the judge are final.

PRONUNCIATIONS: Pronunciation is critical in the oral version of the competition, so please review the questions ahead of time and practice place-names and other words that you're unfamiliar with. Phonetic pronunciation guides have been provided for many words. A list of all words with provided guides in the final competition can be found on page 55. You can use online dictionaries such as *Merriam-Webster* at Merriam-Webster.com to listen to audio pronunciations if necessary. Wherever possible,

pronunciations of place-names and other words are based on *Merriam-Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* and indicate how the names are pronounced in English. If you come across a word that you are unfamiliar with, pronounce it how you read it! Most students are reading the place-names when studying, so they may have never heard it pronounced aloud.

ASKING THE QUESTIONS, RESPONSE TIME: The school finalists (up to 10 students, only) should be seated on stage, their order determined by a random drawing. (This is the procedure students will encounter at the state and national competitions.) The moderator should read aloud the Instructions to Finalists and then begin asking the final round questions. Each student, in turn, should stand up to receive a question from the moderator and answer it. You may want to practice this with the students prior to starting the final competition to help put students at ease. You may choose to use questions from the Study Toolkit (downloaded from the Registration and Resource Center) for a practice round. The same procedures, described previously, for asking and answering questions in the preliminary competition apply to the final competition, with the following changes:

1. In the final round, a contestant is eliminated after answering two questions incorrectly. Those who give a second incorrect answer should be excused from the stage only after every finalist on stage has received a question in that series. The moderator should begin each new series of questions with the same student. If that student has been eliminated, questioning should begin with the next available student. Final round questions continue until the third-place winner and two finalists are determined. If all the remaining contestants would be eliminated because they each had given a second incorrect answer, all those remaining contestants should continue to receive final round questions until the third-place winner and two finalists have been determined. If, after a series of questions, only one student remains with no incorrect answers or only one incorrect answer (and all the others have missed two), that student automatically becomes one of the two championship round finalists. They should be asked no more questions. Those students who gave their second incorrect answer during that series will continue to receive questions until the third-place winner and the second finalist are determined. The third-place winner should be acknowledged, then asked to leave the stage so that the championship round can begin.

2. Two questions in the final round are called "Common Questions" and are designed to be answered by all the contestants simultaneously. For the first Common Question, question #11, students will need a copy of the photo handout on page 71 and will circle their response on the handout. Students will have 15 seconds to answer. For the second Common Question, question #22, students will need a copy of the map handout on page 72 and will circle their response on the handout. These handouts may be printed or copied in either black and white or color. Students will have 30 seconds to answer. For these questions, the seating arrangement of the students should ensure the confidentiality of their answers. (**NOTE:** The correct answer should not be given until all students have given their answers aloud.)

CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND: The two finalists compete in the championship round to determine the school winner. The two finalists enter this round with a clean slate; previous scores must not be taken into consideration. The questioning procedure changes with the championship round. At this point, the moderator should take time to explain the changes.

The championship round consists of three questions. The student who answers the most questions correctly is the school champion. The moderator will ask both

contestants the same question simultaneously. Each question should be read twice, and students may not ask for another repeat or a spelling. They will have 15 seconds to write their answers on paper provided. When time is up, both contestants will put down their markers and hold up their answers. Each, in turn, will read their answer aloud. (NOTE: The correct answer should not be given until both students have answered aloud.) Follow this procedure for each question. A student should not be penalized for inaccurate pronunciations or spellings as long as the judge can determine that an answer is correct.

TIEBREAKERS: If the championship round does not produce a school winner, begin the championship tiebreaker questions using a written, single-elimination procedure. Both students will write their answers to the same question. Again, the correct answer should not be given until both students have answered aloud. The student who answers correctly when the other one misses becomes the school champion. If necessary, continue this procedure asking unused final round questions until a champion is determined.

AWARDS CEREMONY: The moderator, and other officials as appropriate, should conduct an awards ceremony to distribute the prizes. A medal for the school champion and certificates for the top three students will be sent to paid schools. You may purchase additional prizes from the GeoBee merchandise items at ShopNG.org/geobee (see flyer page 88-89).

QUALIFYING FOR THE STATE GEOBEE

Once the school champion has been identified, the school GeoBee coordinator may administer the online qualifying test for the student to be considered for advancement to the state GeoBee. The online test will be available starting November 15, 2019. The school GeoBee coordinator may choose the day and time to administer the online test to the school champion, but the test must be completed by 11:59 p.m. EST February 7, 2020. We strongly suggest that school GeoBee coordinators **not** wait until the final week to administer the test. We **will not** grant extensions for illness, weather, school closings, technical difficulties, or any other reason.

Prior to administering the online test, the school GeoBee coordinator must ensure that the student meets all eligibility requirements and must gather the necessary information about the school champion for reporting to National Geographic, including student's grade, gender, birth date, parent/guardian name, home address, home phone number, and parent/guardian email address. This information will be needed when reporting the school champion and accessing the online test. The school GeoBee coordinator may submit this information and access the online qualifying test by signing in to the school's account on the GeoBee Registration and Resource Center at geobee-registration.nationalgeographic.com. If your school champion is unavailable to participate in the State GeoBee on March 27, you may allow your school's second or third place winner to take the test. Please check your student's availability **before** accessing the test. You may not change your school champion after the qualifying test has been accessed. If you have already entered your champion profile information and need to change your champion, please contact us at ngbee@ngs.org.

The school GeoBee coordinator must administer the online qualifying test at the school building, or, in the case of homeschools, a predetermined location. The student has 60 minutes to complete the test in one session and must work independently, using no outside help or material. The test consists of 70 multiple-choice questions. The test does not require audio. Please note that we do not allow extra time on the qualifying test for any reason. In preparation for administering the test, please print the State

Qualifying Test Instructions section of the school GeoBee contest resources. The school champion must complete the online qualifying test by 11:59 p.m. EST February 7, 2020.

Students will not be considered for advancement if the school GeoBee coordinator fails to complete the above steps, and we reserve the right to disqualify a student if the above steps are not followed.

As many as 100 of the highest-scoring students will be invited to represent their school at their state GeoBee. School GeoBee Coordinators should check the GeoBee website at [NatGeoBee.org/results](https://www.natgeo.org/geo-bee/results) on March 2 to see whether their school champion has qualified. If the student's name is not listed as a qualifier, this means that the student did not qualify for the State GeoBee.

STATE GEOBEE

State GeoBees will be held in 50 states, the District of Columbia, and participating U.S. territories on Friday, March 27, 2020. Transportation and accommodation expenses for the state competition are the responsibility of each student or school. Details regarding location and time will be sent to those students who qualify. Eligible students must appear in person to compete at the state GeoBee. National Geographic has increased the prize money at the state level this year. The state champion receives a medal, \$1,000 cash award, and other prizes. The second- and third-place students also receive cash awards of \$300 and \$100 respectively. All students participating in the state competition will receive T-shirts. The competition at this level will be managed differently for the Department of Defense Dependents Schools, the Atlantic territories of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, and the Pacific territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands. The top scorers in each of these regions will take a written test to determine their one winner.

NATIONAL GEOBEE

Each state champion will advance to the national championship in Spring 2020 (details will be available at [NatGeoBee.org](https://www.natgeo.org/geo-bee) in mid-November). National Geographic will pay the transportation and accommodation expenses for the state champion and one parent. Students will compete for cash prizes, scholarships, and an all-expenses-paid Lindblad expedition to the Galápagos Islands aboard the National Geographic Endeavour II.