

ALL SINDH YOUTH SPELLING BEE COMPETITION

SEASON 4 — OFFICIAL RULEBOOK

Grades 6–10 | Team Competition (3 Members per Team)

This rulebook explains, in simple language, exactly how Season 4 of the competition works — from the first word spelled in Round 1 to the winning team crowned in the Finale. It is written so that every participant, coach, and institution — whether joining from an urban school or a rural school — can understand the rules equally well. Wherever a rule might be confusing, we have added a real-life SCENARIO box showing exactly how it plays out on stage.

Competition at a Glance

Season 4 has three rounds. Round 1 is unchanged from previous seasons because it already works well. Rounds 2 and 3 are new for Season 4, introducing a points-based “ladder” system that makes the scoring exciting and easy to follow!

Round	Format	Discussion?	How Teams Move Forward
Round 1: Spelling Challenge	Each member spells 2 words alone (6 words per team)	No	Only teams that spell all 6 words correctly qualify
Round 2: Ladder Round	Each member climbs a personal 3-level word ladder alone	No	Top-scoring teams (by total banked points) advance to the Finale
Round 3: Relay Shootout (Finale)	Team rotates through members, words get harder each rotation, 10/20/30 scoring	No	Ranked 1st–3rd by total score; strikes (2 = eliminated) and countback resolve ties

Round 1: Spelling Challenge

This round is unchanged from previous seasons. It tests every participant individually, with no help from teammates.

Rules

- Each participant from a team will be asked to spell TWO WORDS, one by one.
- Altogether, spellings of SIX WORDS will be asked from a team (2 words × 3 members).
- Only the teams spelling all six words correctly will qualify for Round 2.
- There cannot be any discussion amongst the team members.
- If any participant misspells a word, the entire team is disqualified from advancing.
- Maximum time to spell a word is 30 seconds. Failure to answer within the time leads to disqualification.

- g. Participants can ask for the word to be repeated, along with its meaning and usage in a sentence — but only TWICE per word.
- h. **Fallback rule:** If no team achieves a perfect 6/6 score, the qualifying score automatically drops to 5/6, and then to 4/6 if needed, until a workable number of teams (as determined by the jury) qualify for Round 2.

SCENARIO: Round 1 in action

Team Falcons: Member 1 spells “abundant” correctly, Member 2 spells “concise” correctly and “frugal” correctly, Member 3 spells “diligent” correctly and “accurate” correctly, and Member 1 spells one more word “benevolent” correctly.

All 6 words correct → Team Falcons QUALIFIES for Round 2.

Team Eagles: Member 2 misspells their second word “negligent.”

Even though Members 1 and 3 spelled all their words correctly, the WHOLE TEAM is disqualified from advancing, as per Rule (e).

Round 2: Ladder Round

This is new for Season 4. Instead of a simple pass/fail, each team member climbs their own personal “ladder” of three words, getting harder as they go. Every correct word earns points; a wrong word stops that member’s climb, but the team keeps whatever points were already earned. This turns Round 2 into a much more exciting to watch than a simple qualify/disqualify round.

Rules

- a. Each team member climbs their own personal ladder of 3 levels (so 9 words per team in total — 3 members × 3 levels).
- b. Level 1 is Easy-Medium (worth 10 points), Level 2 is Medium (worth 20 points), Level 3 is Hard (worth 30 points).
- c. Every member starts at Level 1. Spelling it correctly moves them up to Level 2, then Level 3.
- d. If a member misspells a word, their climb stops immediately — they keep the points already banked, but do not attempt further levels.
- e. There is no discussion among teammates. Each member climbs their ladder alone.
- f. Maximum 30 seconds per word. One courtesy request (repeat / meaning / sentence) is allowed per word.
- g. The team’s total score is the sum of all three members’ banked points (maximum possible score: 180 points).
- h. The top teams – as determined by the jury (by total score) qualify for the Finale. The exact number of qualifying teams will be announced before the round begins.

Ladder Points Reference

Level	Difficulty	Points if Spelled Correctly
Level 1	Easy-Medium	10 points
Level 2	Medium	20 points
Level 3	Hard	30 points

SCENARIO: Round 2 in action

Team Panthers, Member 1: spells Level 1 word correctly (+10), Level 2 word correctly (+20), Level 3 word WRONG → stops climbing. Member 1's final score: 30 points.

Team Panthers, Member 2: spells Level 1 correctly (+10), Level 2 WRONG → stops. Member 2's final score: 10 points.

Team Panthers, Member 3: spells all three levels correctly (+10, +20, +30). Member 3's final score: 60 points.

TEAM PANTHERS TOTAL SCORE: 30 + 10 + 60 = 100 points.

Team Wolves score a total of 90 points, and Team Cobras score 110 points.

If only the top 2 teams advance to the Finale, Team Cobras (110) and Team Panthers (100) qualify. Team Wolves (90) does not advance.

Round 3: Relay Shootout (Finale)

The Finale is designed so that all three team members participate, the excitement builds with every rotation, and — most importantly — it cannot run on for hours, no matter how strong the competing teams are. It combines a simple “strike” system (two warnings before a team is out) with straightforward 10/20/30 scoring, so that even when several teams survive with a perfect score, the rules already tell you exactly how to rank them into 1st, 2nd, and 3rd — without needing any extra sudden-death round.

Rules

- All 3 team members stand together on stage. Words are given in rotation: Member 1, then Member 2, then Member 3, then back to Member 1, and so on.
- There is no discussion allowed — each member answers their own word alone when it is their turn.
- The Finale has 4 rotations of 3 words each (12 words total per team). Difficulty and points increase with each rotation, as shown in the Points Reference table below.
- Each team shares a pool of 2 strikes. Any member's incorrect spelling costs the team 1 strike (and earns 0 points for that word).
- On the team's 2nd strike, that team is eliminated immediately — they keep all points already banked, but do not attempt any further words.
- Maximum 30 seconds per word. One courtesy request (repeat / meaning / sentence) is allowed per word. The number of courtesy requests used by each team is recorded, as it may be needed for ranking (see below).
- There is a hard cap of 4 rotations (12 words) per team — no team will ever be asked more than 12 words in the Finale, even if they have zero strikes.
- A team's final score is the total points earned from every word spelled correctly before the round ends for them (either by finishing all 12 words, or by reaching their 2nd strike).
- Ranking: All competing teams are ranked from highest total score to lowest. The team with the highest score is the Season 4 Champion; the next-highest is Runner-Up; the next-highest is Third Place.

Points Reference

Rotation	Difficulty	Points per Correct Word
Rotation 1	Medium	10 points
Rotation 2	Hard	20 points
Rotation 3	Championship	30 points
Rotation 4	Championship	30 points

If Two or More Teams Are Tied on Score

Because scoring already tracks which words were correct and at which difficulty, a tie — even between three or more teams with a perfect score — can almost always be resolved using information already recorded during the round, without needing any new words or an extra round. Judges apply the following countback steps, in order, only to the teams that are tied:

- Compare the number of Championship-tier (30-point) words each tied team spelled correctly. The team with more correct Championship-tier words ranks higher.
- If still tied, compare the number of Hard-tier (20-point) words spelled correctly. The team with more correct Hard-tier words ranks higher.
- If still tied, compare the number of courtesy requests (repeat / meaning / sentence) used by each team during Round 3. The team that used fewer courtesy requests ranks higher.
- In the extremely unlikely event that teams remain tied after all three steps, the Head Judge’s decision, based on overall performance in Round 3, is final.

Why This Format Is Fair and Fast

- All 3 members are guaranteed to spell in the Finale — no team wins or loses because of just one “star” speller.
- The 2-strike system means a single mistake does not end a team’s chances — but two mistakes clearly do, keeping tension high.
- The 12-word hard cap guarantees the Finale has a predictable maximum length, so it can never run for hours regardless of how skilled the teams are.
- Ties are resolved using data already collected during the round — no sudden-death round, no new words, no delays in announcing results.

SCENARIO: Round 3 in action — a team gets eliminated

Team Cobras: Rotation 1 — Member 1 correct (+10), Member 2 correct (+10), Member 3 WRONG (Strike 1, +0).

Rotation 2 — Member 1 correct (+20), Member 2 WRONG (Strike 2, +0) → Team Cobras is ELIMINATED immediately, without finishing Rotation 2.

Team Cobras’ final score: $10 + 10 + 20 = 40$ points.

SCENARIO: Round 3 in action — three teams tie with a perfect score

Team Panthers, Team Cobras, and Team Falcons all finish all 12 words correctly with 0 strikes.

Each team's score: $3 \times 10 + 3 \times 20 + 3 \times 30 + 3 \times 30 = 270$ points. All three are tied at 270.

Step 1 (Championship-tier corrects): All three got all 6 Championship-tier words correct — still tied.

Step 2 (Hard-tier corrects): All three got all 3 Hard-tier words correct — still tied.

Step 3 (courtesy requests used): Team Falcons used 0, Team Panthers used 1, Team Cobras used 3.

FINAL RESULT: Team Falcons = CHAMPION | Team Panthers = RUNNER-UP | Team Cobras = THIRD PLACE.

SCENARIO: Round 3 in action — a mixed field with different outcomes

Team B: eliminated after Rotation 2 (2nd strike) — banked 60 points.

Team E: eliminated after Rotation 3 (2nd strike) — banked 120 points.

Team A: finished all 12 words with 1 strike — 240 points.

Team C: finished all 12 words with 0 strikes — 270 points.

FINAL RESULT: Team C = CHAMPION | Team A = RUNNER-UP | Team E = THIRD PLACE | Team B = 4th place.

General Rules & Regulations (All Rounds)

Eligibility

- Open to students of Grades 6–10.
- Each team must have exactly 3 members from the same school or institution.

Word Source

- All words are drawn exclusively from the official word list provided to schools in advance.
- A small reserved pool of championship-level words, not shared in advance, is used only for the Finale's hardest rotations and for tiebreaks.

Pronunciation Authority

- The official pronouncer's pronunciation is final.
- A designated standard dictionary is used as the official reference for correct spelling in case of any dispute.

Speller Courtesies (All Rounds)

- Before spelling, a participant may request: the word repeated, its meaning, and its use in a sentence.
- Round 1 and Round 2 allow up to two such requests per word; Round 3 allows one, to keep the Finale moving quickly.

Time Limits

- 30 seconds per word in all three rounds, starting once the pronouncer finishes reading the word (and any requested repeats/meaning/sentence).
- Failure to begin spelling within the time limit is treated the same as an incorrect answer.

No Outside Help

- Once a participant begins spelling, no one — coach, parent, teammate, or audience member — may prompt, signal, or assist in any way.
- Any team found using unfair means (smuggled word lists, electronic devices, hand signals, or prompting) will be disqualified immediately from the competition.

Judges' Decisions

- A panel of three judges oversees all rounds.
- All decisions are made by majority vote of the judges and are final.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if a participant is absent on competition day?

A team must have all 3 members present to compete. If a team cannot field all 3 members, the organizing committee will decide on a case-by-case basis before the competition begins — this will be communicated to all schools in advance, not decided during the event.

What happens if there is a tie in Round 2 for the last qualifying spot?

If two or more teams are tied for the final qualifying position for the Finale, those teams will be given one additional word each (from the Round 2 word pool) as a mini tiebreak. The team that spells correctly (or comes closest, per judges' decision, if multiple tie again) takes the spot.

Can a team choose which member spells which word in Round 3?

No. The rotation order (Member 1, 2, 3) is fixed for fairness and is announced before the Finale begins. Teams may decide the order of Members 1, 2, and 3 among themselves before the round starts, but cannot change it mid-round.

What counts as a correctly spelled word?

The participant must say each letter of the word clearly and in the correct order, within the time limit. Judges may ask a participant to repeat their spelling if it was unclear, but this does not count as an extra courtesy request.

All Sindh Youth Spelling Bee Competition — Season 4
Good luck to every speller, from every school, across Sindh.