

# **Texas Academic Pentathlon Competition Manual For Coaches, Coordinators and Hosts**



## **Region Competition**

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# **Texas Academic Pentathlon**

## **Competition Manual**

**For Coaches, Coordinators and Hosts**



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# **Introduction to the Texas Academic Pentathlon**

*Revised 8/01/2022*

## ***History***

After the Orange County (California) Department of Education inaugurated the Academic Decathlon competition for high schools in 1968, it proceeded in 1984-85 to experiment with a similar program for lower grades. The Pentathlon came to Texas in 1985. A Pentathlon committee formed by TAD initiated plans to have competitions in 1986 at three sites. The Pentathlon competition for seventh grade was held in 1986 and expanded to include the eighth grade in 1987. Today both grade competitions are conducted at six locations in the state.

## ***Philosophy***

It is the intent of the Academic Pentathlon Committee that this competition be scaled to the interests, needs, and philosophy common to Texas seventh- and eighth-grade students and programs. Therefore, contests will only take place at region sites; thus eliminating advanced levels of competition, excessive travel, overnight stays, and loss of school time. The State Board of Education rules regarding extracurricular activities apply to Academic Pentathlon participation.

## ***Concept***

A unique aspect of the Pentathlon format is that it is designed to include students from all academic backgrounds. Each nine-member team may have three students whose grade point average falls in the “C” or Varsity category, three students in the “B” or Scholastic category, and three students in the “A” or Honor category. While nine students may compete, the final team score comes from the sum of the scores of the top two Varsity, the top two Scholastic, and the top two Honor students. A perfect team score is 30,000 points (6 students x 5 events x 1000 points possible per event). Thus a team could be a complete team with only 2 students in each division.

## ***Five Events of the Pentathlon***

1. Math: 35 problems with a value of 28.57 points each
2. Science: 50 questions with a value of 20 points each
3. Social Studies: 50 questions with a value of 20 points each
4. Language Arts: Essay – 30-minute paper on a prompt from a designated selection from literature for a total of 400 points; a written Literature test of 30 questions with a value of 20 points each (20-minute time limit). Highest score is 1000 points.
5. Fine Arts: Combined Art and Music – 50 Questions with a value of 20 points each

Super Quiz: A collaborative format where varsity, scholastic, and honor students compete as a group. Three rounds of ten questions. Score does NOT count towards team scores.

A student's maximum possible score is 5000 points (5 events x 1000 points)

## ***Competition***

1. Separate competitions are held for seventh and eighth graders
2. A team consists of nine students from the same grade level and the same school
3. A school may enter as many as two teams per grade level (based on space availability as determined by region coordinator).
4. The three divisions of students are determined by the grade points indicated:
  - Honor: 3.8 – 4.00 (may compete only at Honor level)
  - Scholastic: 3.20 – 3.79 (may compete at Scholastic or Honor level)
  - Varsity: 0.00 – 3.19 (may compete at all levels)

Refer to the "Validation" section for the conversion chart of grades to grade points.

5. When computing the GPA, there is no rounding up. Thus, a 3.1974 is a 3.199, or Varsity.
6. GPA averages are based on the fall and spring semester grades of the previous year plus any summer school grades from the session preceding the current grade.
7. The courses to be used to determine GPA are: Language Arts (English and Reading), Mathematics, Science, Foreign Languages, and Social Studies. If Language Arts consists of just English, only use this grade.
8. Bonus grade points for honor classes, perfect attendance, or other reasons cannot be used in determining GPA.
9. Failing grades are counted in determining GPA.
10. An "incomplete" is not counted.
11. A grade given in a summer school class taken as a repeat course is used in computing GPA. The makeup class grade is counted in whatever year the class was originally taken. If the summer class is not a repeat class, it is included in the GPA for the following year. Use the last three full semesters. If a student failed seventh grade, then repeated and passed, use the repeat grades.

# Appeals

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An appeal regarding any test items (question or answer) can be made by contestant through his/her appropriate coach. Such an appeal must be presenting in writing to the Academic Pentathlon Coordinator at the earliest break after a test has been completed. Submit such an appeal to the secretary in the competition office for submission to the State Appeals Committee. The time each appeal is submitted will be recorded on the paper by the secretary. No appeals may be made after this break. The decision of the Appeals Committee is final. The decision of the Appeals Committee will be recorded on the appeals form and made available to the coach involved. Questions on any test which have a wrong answer or poor wording may result in all students receiving credit.

## *Appeal Information*

\_\_\_\_\_ Coach \_\_\_\_\_ Team Room \_\_\_\_\_ Event  
\_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_ Student Name/No. (if needed)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Region

Reason for Appeal:

Decision:

Time Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Decision \_\_\_\_\_ Appeal Chairperson Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Print this form on two-part carbonless: 1 copy to coach; 1 copy for meet coordinator

# Awards Program – Sample Script

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Welcome by \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you \_\_\_\_\_. We have now arrived at the event that culminates the day's activities – the Awards Presentations. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I will be conducting this exciting program.

Assisting me with this presentation of awards are: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

I would like to review for you the procedures that we will be following as we present the awards today.

Since there are seventh- and eighth-grade teams participating in the Pentathlon, we will present all of the awards for the seventh grade first and then all of the awards for the eighth grade.

(It is permissible to intermix 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade awards in this order)

7<sup>th</sup> Math

8<sup>th</sup> Math

7<sup>th</sup> Science

8<sup>th</sup> Science

7<sup>th</sup> Social Studies

8<sup>th</sup> Social Studies

7<sup>th</sup> Fine Arts

8<sup>th</sup> Fine Arts

7<sup>th</sup> Language Arts

8<sup>th</sup> Language Arts

7<sup>th</sup> SQ Team

8<sup>th</sup> SQ Team

7<sup>th</sup> Individual Overall

8<sup>th</sup> Individual Overall

7<sup>th</sup> Team Overall

8<sup>th</sup> Team Overall

Gold, silver, and bronze medals will be awarded to individual winners in each division and each event, and to the overall individual winners. The top three winning teams will receive a team plaque and individual medals for all nine team members and two coaches. The top three Super Quiz winning teams will receive a team plaque and individual medals for all nine team members and two coaches.

For the areas of language arts, math, science, fine arts, and social studies we will present individual 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place medals in Varsity, Scholastic and Honor. We will also do this for students with the highest overall scores in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup>. Team medals for the coaches and team members plus plaques will be awarded for Super Quiz and Team Overall. Students whose names are called should proceed to the awards table. As soon as you receive your medal, please take a place on the riser. All winners should stay on the risers until the audience is instructed to applaud.

Each team will receive three gold medals (to be given later to the top scoring Varsity, Scholastic, and Honor student on the team). These will be in the coaches' packets at the end of this program. We are ready to begin.

## Language Arts

The Language Arts competition consisted of a thirty-minute essay based on a novel read by all students. Contestants wrote an appropriate response to one of three questions, supporting their point of view in at least three well developed paragraphs that included specific examples from their reading experience. Additionally, students took a thirty-question exam. The scores were compiled for a maximum of 1,000 points. (The narrative will be different for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades – the names of the different novels may be added.)

***Third Place Winners are: (Actually read from computer generated report.)***

Varsity \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

Scholastic \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

Honor \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

***Second Place Winners are:***

Varsity \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

Scholastic \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

Honor \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

***First Place Winners are:***

Varsity \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

Scholastic \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

Honor \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

**CONGRATULATIONS**

YOU MAY RETURN TO YOUR SEATS.



## MATHEMATICS

The second category is Mathematics. Students were tested over concepts emphasized in general mathematics, pre-algebra, and life skills.

***Third Place Winners are: (Actually read from computer generated report.)***

VARSIITY \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOLASTIC \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

HONOR \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

***Second Place Winners are:***

VARSIITY \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOLASTIC \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

HONOR \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

***First Place Winners are:***

VARSIITY \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOLASTIC \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

HONOR \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

## CONGRATULATIONS

YOU MAY RETURN TO YOUR SEATS.

**SCIENCE**

*Third Place Winners are: (Actually read from computer generated report.)*

VARSITY \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOLASTIC \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

HONOR \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

*Second Place Winners are:*

VARSITY \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOLASTIC \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

HONOR \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

*First Place Winners are:*

VARSITY \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOLASTIC \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

HONOR \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

**CONGRATULATIONS**

YOU MAY RETURN TO YOUR SEATS.

**SOCIAL STUDIES**

*Third Place Winners are: (Actually read from computer generated report.)*

VARSIITY \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOLASTIC \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

HONOR \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

*Second Place Winners are:*

VARSIITY \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOLASTIC \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

HONOR \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

*First Place Winners are:*

VARSIITY \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOLASTIC \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

HONOR \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_

**CONGRATULATIONS**

YOU MAY RETURN TO YOUR SEATS.

## SUPER QUIZ

And now we present Super Quiz Team winners. The topic was \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. The top three Super Quiz teams will receive a team plaque and individual medals for the nine team members and the two coaches.

3<sup>rd</sup> Place: \_\_\_\_\_ school

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: \_\_\_\_\_ school

1<sup>st</sup> Place: \_\_\_\_\_ school

## OVERALL INDIVIDUAL

Students who have the highest combined score for all five events in each division will now be recognized. Please come forward as I call your name. (Computer program should generate the report below.)

3<sup>rd</sup> Place Varsity \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ school

3<sup>rd</sup> Place Scholastic \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ school

3<sup>rd</sup> Place Honor \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ school

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Varsity \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ school

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Scholastic \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ school

2<sup>nd</sup> Place Honor \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ school

1<sup>st</sup> Place Varsity \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ school

1<sup>st</sup> Place Scholastic \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ school

1<sup>st</sup> Place Honor \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ school

## OVERALL TEAM

We will now proceed to the overall team winners. Individual medals will go to the nine team members and two coaches of the first-, second- and third-place teams. The two students in each division with the highest combined scores for all five events will count toward team totals. The winning teams will also receive a team plaque. As each team is called, please step to the awards table and then to the riser.

### ***OVERALL TEAM WINNERS ARE:***

THIRD PLACE TEAM \_\_\_\_\_ school

SECOND PLACE TEAM \_\_\_\_\_ school

FIRST PLACE TEAM \_\_\_\_\_ school

# Calculators

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Graphing calculators  
may not be used.

Any four-function or  
scientific calculator  
is acceptable.

# Coordinator's Responsibilities

*Revised 8/01/2022*

1. Study the Competition Manual and become familiar with all aspects of the Academic Pentathlon.
2. Prepare a budget:
  - Region Meet: \$1,000 given to coordinator in the spring semester  
\$75/team at region will be sent after all reports have been received by the state office.  
Coordinator will receive \$1,000 personally for coordinating the meet.
3. Appoint committee chairpersons and work with them in areas of responsibility in setting dates, arranging for facilities, purchasing materials and supplies, selecting committee members, judges, proctors, etc. Below are possible committees needed. In some cases, one or more may be combined or not even used.

Site Selection	Computer Scoring
Essay	Facilities/Security
Awards Program	Proctors/Runners/Test Distribution
Academic Testing	Identification Badges
Student Validation	Registration
Super Quiz	Food Service (meals and snacks)
Appeals	Printed Programs
Nurse	Student Certificates
4. The coordinator in the spring will communicate with all competing schools providing meet information, dates, deadlines, forms to be returned, etc.
5. The personnel needed below is based on a meet of 20 teams and is **strictly an estimate**.

2-4 Essay tabulators (depending on manual tabulation or computer)

7-9 Essay graders (each paid \$50)

1 Nurse

1 Essay chairperson

1 Security person

9 Proctors for academic tests

1 Custodian

9 Runners for academic tests

1 Building facilities person

1 Proctor/runner chairperson

6 Copying and proofing academic tests

8 Computer scoring personnel

2 Name badge preparers

Super Quiz proctors (one per team)

3 Awards program and stage decoration

2 Validation of transcripts

2 Greeters/building hosts

2 Registration

1 Signs preparation

2 Appeals (These can perform other duties)

2 Test distribution center

1 Phone receptionist



6. Send final team scores to the state office in rank order from highest to lowest.
7. The coordinator will receive his/her final payment from the state once the Team totals including team name and score in rank order are received by the state office.

# Essay

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## ESSAY OVERVIEW (the following excerpts are from the Essay Resource Guide which may be purchased in full from USAD®)

The essay is 60 percent of the Language Arts event of the U.S. Academic Pentathlon's® five events.

The essay addresses written communication, and speech and interview address oral communication. The focus of this resource guide is the essay event.

While we have come to accept that an “essay” is a prescriptive writing form, more formally *essay* as a noun means “an attempt or effort,” and the word can also be used as a verb meaning “try or attempt.” This is interesting as it applies to writing essays as well because drafting an essay is also truly an “attempt” or “try” at articulating one’s thoughts about a subject in writing.

## GUIDELINES FOR THE ESSAY EVENT

- \* In the essay portion of the U.S. Academic Pentathlon® competition, students have fifty minutes to pre-write, plan, organize, draft, and write a final version of an essay in response to a specific prompt.
- \* At most levels of competition today, students complete the essay portion of the competition on a computer. All students competing at the national level must write their essay online. Students will be allowed a blank sheet of paper and a pen to jot down ideas, but only what is typed and submitted at the end of the fifty minutes will be scored. If a competition coordinator chooses to have students use pen and paper to write their essays, students are still allotted fifty minutes, and after time has elapsed, the essays

## SCORING THE ESSAY

- \* The judges will score each essay in accordance with the assigned U.S. Academic Pentathlon essay scoring form.
- \* Each essay will be read independently by two trained essay judges, and the average of the two scores will be the final score for that essay.
- \* Essay judges will score each essay independently and will not discuss their scores.
- \* If there is a divergence of 200 or more points in the two judges’ scores, the essay will be read and scored by a third judge. The third score then replaces the divergent score.
- \* Scoring procedures may vary at the local, regional, and state levels of competition. Coaches should contact their State Director with any questions about the essay scoring procedures within their state.

# Scoring

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## THE NEW ESSAY SCORING FORM

As with any written essay assignment, always start with the scoring expectations.

Why?

Understanding how, exactly, the essay will be scored will help you address any writing assignment with these expectations in mind. In this section, we will examine the scoring form closely by deconstructing its various components.

### *Some Important Aspects of the Essay Scoring Form*

- \* The essay event is worth 1,000 points, total. The score earned will be multiplied by .6 and the literature exam will be multiplied by .4 to get a combined score of 100 percent.
- \* The essay scoring form has ten components, and each component is worth up to 4 points. The total points earned (maximum of 40) is then multiplied by 25 for the essay score.

Analysis of the Scoring Form Components

Let's begin by defining and clarifying each of the ten components:

**Components 1–7 of the Scoring Form address the content/development of the essay.**

Point value	Component with description
0–4	<b>Introduction / Thesis</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Original, insightful, and/or interesting <input type="checkbox"/> Not merely restating the prompt
0–4	<b>Response To Prompt*</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Conveys understanding of the prompt and tasks <input type="checkbox"/> Clearly addresses all aspects of prompt
0–4	<b>Evidence*</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Specific and accurate examples <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence supports thesis and main ideas

0–4	<b>Analysis / Commentary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ideas explained thoroughly</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Points argued effectively</li> </ul>
0–4	<b>Cohesion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Articulate and clearly focused</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assertions equivalently developed</li> </ul>
0–4	<b>Organization</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Paragraphs have topic sentences</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transitions are thoughtful</li> </ul>
0–4	<b>Closing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Intentional finish</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Not repetitive or merely summarizing</li> </ul>

*\* USAD publishes essay scoring guidelines for essay readers/judges, which include details student writers may include in response to each prompt*

**Components 8–10 of the Scoring Form address writing skills applied to the essay.**

Point value	Component with description
1–4	<b>Word Choice / Diction / Voice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Diction appropriate to topic</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Writer knows/owns the words used</li> </ul>
1–4	<b>Spelling / Punctuation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Accurate spelling</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Proper punctuation</li> </ul>
1–4	<b>Grammar / Sentence Structure</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Subject/verb agreement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Varied sentence structure</li> </ul>

## Further details about scoring form

- \* Some components have a scale of 0-4 and others 1-4. This is intentional. A writer could receive a “zero” for Introduction/Thesis, for instance, for having no visible or articulated introduction and/or thesis, but a writer could not receive a “zero” for “Spelling/Punctuation, as at least some of the words must be spelled correctly and some appropriate punctuation used, warranting a “one” to be the lowest possible score in that category.
- \* Consider these point descriptors:
  - 4 = excellent, superior; 3 = acceptable, effective; 2 = attempted, fair; 1 = barely, minimal; 0 = insufficient
- \* Essay judges are directed to give a clear and complete “zero” score to any essay that is “off prompt” or “non-scoreable.”
  - \* An “off-prompt” essay does not respond to the prompt selected.
  - \* A “non-scoreable” essay is either insufficient or illegible (typically true only of handwritten essays) or too brief.

## DISCUSSION OF THE TEN SCORING COMPONENTS

**Introduction/Thesis** – Most writers know that a good introduction is necessary for a great essay. The introduction creates for the reader the important first impression of its author and what to expect of the essay that follows. Whatever you decide to do at the start of your essay to engage your audience right away—create an insightful comparison, highlight interesting details, ask a question, or something else—do not merely parrot the prompt. Be original. And also, be certain that your essay includes—very near its start—a clear thesis in which you state your essay’s primary assertion, the essence of your essay’s primary point and purpose, what you will “prove” with the rest of your essay.

**Response to Prompt** – It is very important that you respond specifically and completely to the prompt. One of the biggest challenges students encounter with essay writing deals with response to the prompt. Be certain, first, that you completely understand what the prompt is asking you to do, and second, that you completely answer the question(s) asked by the prompt. This may sound ridiculous, but without first reading the prompt very carefully and looking for keywords, there is great risk in writing an essay that does not meet the requirements of the prompt.

**Evidence** – Providing evidence is your opportunity to show how well you have prepared for the competition by reading and studying the USAD materials. Develop the assertions that support your thesis by providing specific examples—evidence from the U.S. Academic Pentathlon® resource guides or the literary work—as the prompt directs. Your essay’s readers/judges will know which details to expect you to include, and your essay will score very low in this component if you either do not include evidence or include evidence that is either not supported by or contradictory to the USAD resources. Seize this opportunity to synthesize what you have learned from your studies into your own written ideas; transfer that understanding into your confident voice in the essay.

**Analysis/Commentary** – For each piece of evidence you use to support your main ideas, you will need to analyze and then explain and provide commentary on how it provides support for your thoughtful response. This typically takes two to three sentences per idea, following and supporting a topic sentence; it should not merely state the evidence but provide support for why and how this evidence is the most valuable to include in your essay.

**Cohesion** – Cohesion is the flow of the essay or how the words, sentences, and paragraphs—as well as the individual ideas—“cohere” or fit and stick together. Consider the shift from one sentence to the

next and the transitional words used between paragraphs. (There are examples of transitional words and phrases for improving cohesion in the Appendix at the end of this guide.) Purposefully construct each of your assertions—each one related to and developing your thesis—to be equivalently and valuably developed.

**Organization** – Every essay you write should be constructed in a manner that aids its reader in following your thinking. The best essays proceed logically, are organized into paragraphs, and include transitions that also provide a sensible chronology for the essay as a response to the prompt or task. It makes great sense for each body paragraph’s topic sentence to be an assertion that “proves” as well as supports the essay’s thesis. (There are some resources in the Appendix of this resource guide to help you improve your organization. Also, in the next section of this guide, we will explore structure and how to develop an outline. These activities will help you stay organized as you write.)

**Closing** – Consider the closing paragraph your last chance to make a favorable impression on the reader. Do not simply summarize what you have already written. Consider how you can leave the reader pondering an aspect of the essay that was not absolutely resolved, questioning something that could be an inference from something in the essay or feeling the need to look into the topic further. Whatever you do, bring your essay to an intentional finish with your closing statements.

**Word Choice/Diction/Voice** – Selecting your words carefully and using a vocabulary most appropriate for the subject is a skill used by proficient writers. Get to know the vocabulary for the content you are studying. It can be difficult to use the “right” or “best” words for a particular discussion if those words are not your own and your use of them is “clunky” at best. However, word choice is one aspect of your voice in writing and how confidently you “speak” about any subject. (There is an activity coming up to help you build your vocabulary.)

**Spelling/Punctuation** – While we know this particular type of essay—especially due to its being timed—can feel more like a “rough” than “final” draft, it still needs to be your “best” draft, and spelling and punctuation errors should not distract the reader from the details of the essay. The best advice is this: leave yourself at least a few minutes to review what you have written. You will be surprised what mistakes may be caught and fixed when you reread your own work.

**Grammar/Sentence Structure** – This category examines how well you put your sentences together and that you have mastered subject/verb agreement. It improves your essay to understand how to vary sentence structure to aid your argument, at times building your point through an intricate weaving of ideas, and at other times poetically dropping the mic with a very simple statement. In other words, this is where your essay can lose points if something in your writing does not follow the accepted rules of English or you submit a very choppy essay full, solely, of simple sentences.

## USING THE SCORING FORM TO GUIDE YOUR WRITING

The first thing to consider is that even if you are not an eloquent writer, you can still score well overall if you know your content and how to organize it. Remember that the first seven scoring components have to do primarily with the composition of your ideas AND the degree to which they are supported with evidence from the text being addressed. Communicating clearly is definitely important, as well, if you want a score that will win you a medal in this event.

All student writers should consider working through some of the activities in this resource guide. Are you ready to begin with the end in mind?

# Activities to Strengthen Writing Skills

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## ACTIVITY 1: Deconstruct Sample Essays

For this activity, please refer to the ten components of the essay evaluation form. What follows are four essays. Let's look at how well these essays would score in the ten components following this procedure:

1. Read the prompt and determine what it is asking of the writer.
2. Read the essay all the way through without marking it.
3. Reread the essay and circle, underline, and take notes using the information from the rubric as your guide.
4. Mark each of the ten scoring components with the number (0/1-4) you feel is appropriate for that the component, considering these descriptors (4 = superior, 3 = adequate, 2 = fair, 1 = minimal, 0 = insufficient)
5. Add up your score for the ten components and multiply that sum by 25.
6. Read the commentary that follows to see how you did!

**Sample Prompt:** In the novel, Victor Frankenstein wanted to create life with the goal of helping the human race. Describe the specific factors that contribute to his failure to attain this goal. Be sure to use details from the novel to support your essay.

### **STOP: TAKE APART THE PROMPT!**

Ask yourself: What is the subject of this prompt? Did you say, “the novel *Frankenstein* and Frankenstein’s ‘failure’ at creating life to help humanity?” Think of this as the focus area for each of the essays that follow.

Next question: What does the writer need to address? (Hint, look at the verb first and then what follows it). Ok, the verb is “describe.” So, this is probably an expository essay because the writer will “investigate an idea.” (Now read the directions after the verb). The essay must “describe specific factors that contribute to his (Frankenstein’s) failure to attain this goal,” that is (from earlier in the prompt) that he “wanted to create life with the goal of helping the human race.” So, as you read these essays, you are looking for descriptions of the failures Frankenstein encountered in his aim to create life.

Finally, the last sentence of the prompt directs writers to “Be sure to use details from the novel to support your essay.” This is addressed in the Response to Prompt, Evidence, and Analysis/Commentary components of the

scoring form, as all three components require the student writer to convey they really know the topic. Evidence should be specific and detailed. And the analysis/commentary element seeks connection between understanding the evidence and linking it to the thesis.

As you read the first essay, look over the annotations as your guide to scoring. By the way, the mistakes are a part of the original writing. Remember, this is being typed in fifty minutes on a computer, and fortunately typing skills are not a part of the essay rubric. But spelling and punctuation are. While the essay is essentially a first draft, saving a few minutes at the end to read through the draft a second time to address those elements one last time is wise.

### **Essay #1**

in the novel frankenstein, dr. frankenstein creates a monster in order to create life and help the human race it ends up going sour when the monster escapes. the way that he managed to fail is by attempting to meddle with biology and our understanding of life.

### ***Essay# 1 – Commentary***

This is very unfortunate. This essay is extremely brief; mostly it restates the prompt but provides very little beyond that. There definitely is not a complete essay here with evidence of “description” or multiple examples of “failure” beyond the mention of “attempting to meddle with biology,” and with no detailed evidence at all for that assertion.

The judges would have had no choice but to determine that Essay #1 is a non-scoreable essay receiving a zero score for being both “insufficient” and “too brief,” as noted at the bottom of the scoring form.

Students: DO NOT throw away your shot! You have 50 minutes to compose your response to the prompt you select. Use all of the time allotted to you and use it wisely!

Practice timed essay writing, practice outlining responses to hypothetical prompts, and read/study your resource guides and the novel! Know your content so that you are able to articulate an insightful and well-organized— even well-written—response when it is time.



## Essay #2

Victor Frankenstein wanted to perfect the human race, by doing this he created what he thought would be the perfect being. Creature, however Creature would go on to cause problem after problem making Victor's life a living hell. Creature turned out to be more than he had hoped, and he would lose loved ones, be tried for a murder, and so much more. All of this happened because of a one poorly thought out idea that he thought would perfect the human race.

Victor Frankenstein wanted to create a life with one goal, help the human race. There was so much wrong in the world, all Victor wanted was to create something that could possibly make some of that wrong fade away. But as he would go on to find out, Victor would go on to learn that he bit off more than he could chew. All that is creature would go on to do would be causing problem after problem after problem. However at first creature was kind and everything seemed as if it was going to be perfect, Victor thought he had hit the jackpot with his creation, but as time would go on creature started to take on a life of his own. A life that was the farthest thing that Victor had wanted for his creation. Creature would go on to murder a man named Henry, who had been one of Victor's only friend. Even though Victor and Henry had clashing personalities they still seemed to somehow get along, well most of the time at least. Creature would never be caught or tried for the murdered instead a young girl would be. A young quiet girl who had ways to prove her innocence, even with that she was still met with a cold jury, and she would go on to be tried, and executed for a crime she never committed. Victor would be the only person to ever know who really killed Henry, by the mark around his neck that Creature had created when he had strangled him. That was two lives that were taken by creature, one first hand, and one that had fallen into the wake on mistake. Victor had started to realize that monster he had created, something that he thought was going to help the world, was starting to make it worse. Creature had started to make demands of his own, Creature wanted someone that was ugly as him, at first Victor refused, but then he remembered his friends and his family that would be put in danger if he didn't so he agreed. He went off to a remote island to creature creature's new lover. One night he saw creature in the window, who had given me a creepy smile and look in his eye. Victor trashed his work and took a boat out to the middle of the ocean to dispose of the body parts. When he tried to return to land he was caught in a storm, he would go on to wash up and a strange island that he didn't recognize. Upon arrival he was arrested for a murder, that was once again done by creature as pay back for not creating his lover and throwing her body in the ocean. He would be proven innocent and would be set as a free man. When he would go on to get married creature threatened that he would be at the wedding and that he would be ready to hurt Victor's wife. Creature never brought the help that Victor had hoped for and he had been torn up for it for the time that creature had walked that Earth, Victor would go on to become violently ill and eventually die, after his creator died creature would disappear off to the North ice to die himself. Ending all the pain that he had brought onto the world.

Even from just these examples you can see that creature was causing anything but help to the human race, instead all that was happening was trauma, hurt, and anything but peace. And that it would take yet another death of Victor himself for creature to finally stop causing hell and for him to go die himself. Victor started with a small simple plan that he thought was going to help the human race, but that was the farthest thing from the truth. All that creature brought with him was hurt and pain, he did the opposite of what Victor wanted. Creature brought no peace or help to the human race, all he brought was hurt, and that's it.

### Essay #3

Victor Frankenstein had the goal of helping humanity and making life and nature better and in doing so, he failed to make anything better and consequently made some things a lot worse. Frankenstein had to have had a weird and twisted understanding of how life and death worked if he thought that this would better humanity. A lot of arguments is that Frankenstein is trying to play God or is trying to disturb the natural order of things. In reality, he was only doing what he thought would be beneficial. Looking at the other side of the argument, if Frankenstein was trying to play God, then how many other people can we blame for trying to act like God? Doctors that save people before they die? Paramedics that bring back patients who coded? If blame is put on Frankenstein, then blame can be unfurled on many many doctors and medical technicians. Frankenstein was only trying to create something that no one else had ever done, and he did. He was a genius and an amazing inventor, but he let that get to his head. When Frankenstein created the monster that is one thing, but leaving it there to revolt is another. What should of happened was he destroys the monster and nothing that happened would have taken place. But, it doesn't work like that. Frankenstein left the monster and endangered a lot of people, subsequently making him the bad guy; the guy that should not have a medical degree, and really should not be trusted in the public eye.

By now the monster has sworn to seek revenge on his creator, for making him extremely ugly and then leaving him to fend for himself. This was mistake number one, leaving a very new, very sensitive monster by itself and hoping that nothing will go wrong. The monster goes on a journey to get revenge on Frankenstein, which leaves him holed up in a small shed, learning english and human mannerisms from a crack in the wall. In doing so, he finds papers in the robe he's wearing; they just happen to be the plans for his creation. Finding out why Frankenstein made him and how selfish the reason was, only makes him more mad. Eventually, that doesn't work out for him so he continues his journey and finds himself at Frankensteins family home. He hears the name Frankenstein and ends up killing Frankensteins little brother and pins it on the maid, who ends up getting executed. Frankenstein has a feeling that it's the monster and runs away to escape his inevitable death. This was mistake number two, fleeing for your own selfish reasons and leaving other unsuspecting people in harms way making you not only look like the bad guy but also actually making you the bad guy. The two chase each other for a while until they end up together, and the monster demands a wife. Frankenstein agrees and makes him a bride, only to be disgusted by it and destroys his new creation. Mistake number three, he has a giant angry monster demanding that you do something, so you do it and then destroy it; probably the worst idea he's had yet. That makes the monster enraged once again and he kills Frankensteins wife. They go on another epic chase, which leads to the death of Frankenstein's best friend and then ultimately Frankensteins own death as well.

With the events that unfolded in the book, so much could have been done to prevent the death and madness that happened to both Frankenstein and the monster. If Frankenstein had destroyed the monster after laying eyes on it, everything would have turned out fine. Later on when he destroys the bride-to-be of the monster, he knows what he is doing and he knows that it will only enrage the monster further. Why go through with demands made by a non-human creature in the first place though? Why not refuse and destroy it? Why would anyone agree and then later only mess it up further? All of these failures only help prove the fact that Victor Frankenstein made too many mistakes and caused too much harm to innocent people, which included his own family and then himself. Playing God, sounds nice. You create creatures and new life, however you want to. You have complete control over everything and anything that is your creation. After a while,

things start to backfire. There could be an uprising and you get overthrown as ruler. Or they find out why you made them, only to see the selfish intentions of their creator. All-in-all, Frankenstein meant well and only wanted to be remembered as a genius creator and a brilliant mind. However, in his quest to better humamity all he did was put his loved ones and himself in the path of a deranged and cold-blooded killer. Victor Frankenstein had the goal of helping humanity and making life and nature better and in doing so, he failed to make anything better and consequently made some things a lot worse.

#### **Essay #4**

Think about a possible ideas that could help the human race. Victor Frankenstein from the novel “Frakenstein” wanted to aid the human race by developing a way to bring affected body parts back to life, and eventually even bring the deceased alive again. It seems that Victor and another doctor had a very illaborate idea to provide assistance to all humans alike, and it was unlike anyone elses. Throughout the novel Victor Frakenstein attempted to help the human race, but came upon many failures. These failures include Disease, isolation of himself and frankenstein, and lastly he didn’t have a detailed plan. To dig further into these errors we must go further into the novel and explain each.

First, when Frankenstein was brought to life everything seemed to go well. This was until the doctors including Victor Frankeinstein noticed his tissue becoming blackened. It started in small areas, and spread over time. Almost as cancer does when it metastasis occurs. His tissue started to deteriorate and his appearance changed tremendously. This was caused by some typw of malfuntion associated with bring this man back to life again. Although the doctors had no idea what caused this it was a major problem when time passed, and more of the tissue was affected. This also affected the difference between Frankenstein and a “normal” human being. Characters in the story started to notice his appearance and question him. This affected the study becuae something was going wrong from the start. This also caused panic among the doctors becuae they couldn’t pinpoint what was specifically going wrong, and there was probably no cure for the ailment producing in Frankensteins body. Although Victor Frankenstein wanted to help the human race it was very unlikely from the start due to this problem that continued to worsen.

Another major issue with his goal of helping the human race lay among the isolation throughout the story. Isolation is a major point throughout the plot becuae first the doctors isolated themselves. They became trapped in their groundbreaking work more and more each day. Once they started reaching success the issue of isolation became even more apparent. Victor isolating himself led to questions from the public wondering just what they were up to. Questioning that whatever they were up to must have been something tremendously important or compelling. In fact the other people in his life were right Victor was up to something and that “something” was isolating himself from the world. Victor began to lose concept of the real world, and that in this world we must not bring the dead alive becuae there will be terrifying consequenses. Throughout the “Frakenstein” there is also isolation among the newly brought to life Frankenstein. Victor keeps him locked away and away from society, and this results in a mistake from the start. Frankenstein first must learn the human ways, but beign locked away only made him more compelled to want to leave and rebut against Victor. Although isolation does not have an imediate affect it resluts in lots of problems later on, and eventually the failure of helping the world by bringing the dead alive once again. Isolation eventually ruins Frankenstein and causes his

problem with society, and eventually kills him.

Lastly, Victor Frankenstein didn't have a detailed plan in the first place. There was no plan that stated what to do in case the experiment actually worked. Turns out the impossible happened and Frankenstein was brought to life. Victor had no plan. Without a plan he had no idea what to do next, and what to do in an emergency. Since he had no plan, Frankenstein remained an uncharted experiment. Frankenstein started to rule Victor's life, and eventually he got out of hand. When things started to go wrong an issue arised that Victror had never planned for. This resulting in the downfall of Victor's goal of creating life and helping the human race.

All in all, the plan to create life failed when it comes to the technical details. Disease stuck frankenstein and continued to deteriorate him, isolation caused the ultimate problem for Victor and Frankenstein, and finally no detailed plan led to a chaos of problems without planned solutions. Although all of these things could have possibly be changed they led to the failure to create life and resulted in only hurting the human race. Victor Frankenstein however did not reach his goal but he learned from mutple failures that caused it all in the first place. Without these failures it is possible that Victor's world could be very much different, but would it really be for the better?

## *Essay Commentary and Scoring*

### Essay #2

In the introduction, the writer attempts to entice the reader with the contradiction of an altruistic motive turned bad, but it is poorly written, such that the enticement is not effective. The thesis, however, is clear. While the writer states multiple times that Victor fails in his mission, specific factors are not consistently addressed. Specific evidence to support the factors is not included, and there are “off book” ideas included that are not accurate—numerous ideas that are not “true” to the text. There is no analysis, and the writer focuses the entire, singular body paragraph on an inaccurate summary of the plot. There is an attempt at organization with three paragraphs, but it is very weak; there is no solid development within the middle paragraph in which a big idea is processed and broken down into or built from elements of evidence. The use of clichés is distracting. There are numerous careless spelling errors, most noticeably the inconsistent spelling of “Victor.” Finally, there are many poorly constructed sentences from which some sense can be inferred but which are not constructed in the ways of “good writing” or do not demonstrate an understanding of well-constructed sentences.

If your score for this essay, Essay #2, fell in the mid-300s range, that matches our overall scoring assessment.

### Essay #3

The introduction is interesting and original, and the thesis is clear. This essay starts the set-up for quality organization and transitions, using the phrases “mistake number one,” then “mistake number two,” and “mistake number three.” The first body paragraph encompasses three factors with evidence. The first two factors are better developed than the third; this is a place where the writer could have supplied additional support. In this essay, the writer chose to separate the analysis from the evidence in a different paragraph, and it works. The use of questions to prompt the reader to second guess the actions of Victor Frankenstein is effective in guiding the analysis. The conclusion is simple and complete, but it could have been better developed by connecting back to the originality in the introduction. The voice of the writer is strong. The reader can almost hear the writer reading it aloud.

If your score for this essay, Essay #3, landed in the mid-700s range, that matches our overall scoring assessment.

#### Essay #4

This essay includes a well-structured and original introduction. However, it also includes “off book” ideas that are not “true” to the text of the novel. Some of the factors of the essay’s response are stated clearly and supported, and this essay starts the set-up for quality organization and transitions when it uses the words, “first,” then “another,” and “finally.” But again, there are “off book” ideas included that are not “true” to the text of the novel. The misuse of the name “Frankenstein” makes it unclear whether the writer is talking about the creature or the doctor. Overall, this essay is well-organized, and its grammar and sentence structure are exceptional. It does, however, lack the content to merit a higher score.

If your score for this essay, Essay #4, landed in the low 700s range, then that matches our overall scoring assessment.

Likely you saw in looking at each of these sample essays, ways in which you could...or would...have “done better.” Wonderful! Apply all you have learned to your own essay writing as soon as you are able!

# Facilities/Security Chairperson

*Revised 8/01/2022*

1. Assist administrator in determining building site and rooms needed. Prepare map showing utilization of rooms.
2. Appoint committee to make needed building signs.
3. Arrange for a phone receptionist, nurse, custodian, and security personnel to be on duty during the meet. Assign security to circulate in designated areas.
4. Appoint a committee to receive student name/ID labels and tape to desks in testing rooms.
5. Assist Super Quiz committee in providing seating and equipment for Super Quiz.
6. Provide schedule to custodians to make sure rooms are unlocked at required times.
7. Be available throughout meet for needs that arise.
8. Assist in equipment needed for awards program.

## Facility Needs

1 Meet office	It may or may not be the school office. It needs to be where the phone number is that has been given in advance for calls from parents, schools, etc. It should be manned at all hours during meet. It is the information desk.
1 Appeals office	Will probably be meet office.
1 Scoring room	Ideally, near the test distribution room.
1 Test distribution room	Locate, if possible, near the test scoring room as well as to the testing rooms.
1 Team room per team	Since only 11 people in room, a regular size classroom is not necessary. Room may be smaller.
1 Essay grading area	Library is a good place.
1 Spectator gym	For Super Quiz
1 Auditorium for meet assembly	Optional
1 Facility for awards program	Probably auditorium
1 School nurse's office	
1 Area for registration	

1 Hospitality room for coaches	Optional if goodies are provided to teams and coaches through the team rooms or a central “goodie” place.
Rooms for essays and written tests	A 20-school meet could put one student from each team in nine rooms for testing. This is not a requirement. If short of testing rooms, the number of students per room may be increased to 30, thus requiring only 6 rooms.
1 Area for meals	Some schools allow meals to be eaten in team rooms.

# Food Service

*Revised 8/01/2022*

(Most of the following will depend largely on whether or not you are hosting a district-wide meet or just a single-campus meet.)

1. Make available to teams a breakfast meal and a lunch meal. The cost of these two will be paid by the home school or individual student. Teams may choose to eat elsewhere or bring food in. Let teams know in advance what will be served and what the cost will be. Survey schools in advance to know how much food to prepare. Ask schools to pay in advance or bring a check with them. Prepare meal tickets as needed.
2. Morning and afternoon snacks may be provided by the school if budgeting permits. Or add a designated amount to the breakfast/lunch check to provide snacks. Snacks may be delivered to team rooms or may be set up at designated places where the students will come to get them (cafeteria, foyer, etc.)





# USAD® Pentathlon GPA Calculation Worksheet

<b>School</b>			<b>Grade</b>		
<b>Student's Name</b>					TOTAL POINTS = Points x Credit Hours
	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>			
<b>COURSES</b>		<b>GRADE</b>	<b>POINTS*</b>	<b>CREDIT HOURS</b>	<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>
<b>FALL</b> <b>Year:</b>					
					0.00
					0.00
					0.00
					0.00
					0.00
					0.00
					0.00
<b>SPRING</b> <b>Year:</b>					
					0.00
					0.00
					0.00
					0.00
					0.00
					0.00
					0.00
<b>SUMMER</b> <b>Year:</b>					
					0.00
					0.00
<b>TOTALS =</b>			<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Calculated GPA =</b>				<b>#DIV/0!</b>	

	HONOR	#DIV/0!	<b>CALCULATED GPA = Total Points/Total Hours</b>
USAD® Pentathlon Level =	SCHOLASTIC	#DIV/0!	
	VARSITY	#DIV/0!	

\*POINTS:    A+, A, A- = 4.00    B+, B, B- = 3.00    C+, C, C- = 2.00    D+, D, D- = 1.00    F = 0.00  
*Courses graded numerically, should be converted to alpha grades based on the school's official conversion policy.*

# Medals and Plaques

*Revised 8/01/2022*

1. Each participant at the meet will receive a participation certificate.
2. Medals are given to Varsity, Scholastic, and Honors team members in first, second, and third places.
3. The team coach receives the same medal as do students for team winners.
4. Individual event medals (for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> places, respectively in Varsity, Scholastic, and Honors) in –  
  
Math  
Science  
Social Science  
Language Arts  
Fine Arts
5. Highest Varsity, Scholastic, and Honors student on each team receives a gold medal. Medals are usually given in advance to each coach who awards them after he receives his team scores and determines who these three high scoring students are.
6. Individual overall top-scoring students for all events combined to 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> places in Varsity, Scholastic, and Honors.
7. Super Quiz Team and Relay winners and coaches receive individual medals and a plaque.
8. Team overall winners and coaches receive individual medals and a plaque in first, second, and third in Varsity, Scholastic, and Honors divisions.
9. Medals are ordered from and shipped by Monarch Trophy in San Antonio, Texas, by each elementary school administrator/district coordinator in advance of the meet (billed to TAD). Order forms will be sent in March to all participating schools. Unused medals are to be retained by the competition host.
10. Final team scores MUST be sent to the state office to be ranked statewide –  
[director@txacadec.org](mailto:director@txacadec.org)

# Name Identification Badges for Students

Revised 8/01/2022

1. Each student will have an ID badge to be worn to all Pentathlon functions. It will be prepared by the meet coordinator and given to the students upon arrival. The four-digit ID number will appear on test booklets, answer sheets, testing room desks, and other places as needed.
2. We recommend the use of the badges that have a cord that goes around the neck instead of those that pin or stick on.
3. The first two digits of the ID are the school number that was drawn in advance of the meet. The last two digits represent the division of competition for that student. If, for example, Jefferson's school number is 13, the nine team member's ID numbers will be:

Varsity 7: 1307

Scholastic 4: 1304

Honor 1: 1301

Varsity 8: 1308

Scholastic 5: 1305

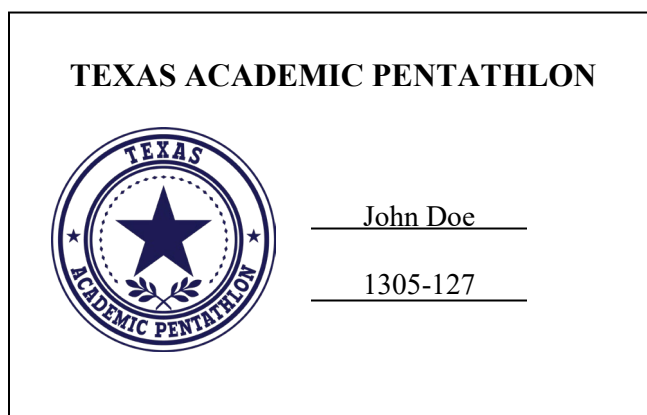
Honor 2: 1302

Varsity 9: 1309

Scholastic 6: 1306

Honor 3: 1303

4. Also on the badge you may find another number that will be the student's testing room for all seven academic tests and the writing of the essay. The badge might look like this



5. Names and the four-digit ID can be programmed into a computer file so that name labels can be printed for numerous documents needed for the competition.
6. Competitions using the USAD Scoring Software can use the name badge feature.



# Recruiting a Team and Study Strategies

Revised 8/01/2022

## ***Recruiting Your Team***

Each school needs to devise its own strategy for team selection and study format. Following are possible procedures you could use:

### ***Team Selection Process – “A”***

Teacher recommendations, preliminary testing in each area, achievement by test scores, cognitive abilities scores, and grade-point averages were reviewed by the academic coaches. After narrowing the field of potential participants to twenty, an informal discussion and interview with each student should be held.

Hold a night orientation meeting for parents and students. An overview of the Texas Academic Pentathlon program and discussion of commitment necessary for participation should be presented.

### ***Team Selection Process – “B”***

Public address system announcements regarding Pentathlon orientation. Request each student to complete a self-report sheet requesting such information as: 1) estimated grade-point average; 2) strengths and weaknesses in subject areas; 3) task commitment; 4) teacher names for reference purposes.

The academic coaches and the principal utilize student self-report information, achievement test scores, cognitive abilities scores, grade point averages, types of courses taken, and teacher/counselor recommendations to make the team selection.

Send letters of appreciation to all students who indicated an interest in participating. Hold a night meeting for parent/student orientation.

### ***Team Selection Process – “C”***

The principal sends notices to teachers asking for names of students who would be suitable for meeting the criteria of commitment and the ability to follow through. Teachers should return the list ASAP. The principal recruits teachers who would be interested in coaching. Counselors are also asked for recommendations. A master list is compiled. If a student's name is recommended by several teachers, they are considered to be a good candidate. Send notices to the students indicating they had been recommended for the Pentathlon competition. Hold a meeting with students during lunch and ask the major question, “Are you interested?” Interviews are set up seeking a core of dedicated, interested, and capable students drilled for the event.

## ***Study Strategies***

Study Strategies will evolve from within the makeup of the students, coaches, resources, and facilities available. The following are procedures that could be utilized –

### ***Study Strategy – “A”***

A study center is set up in the library. Resources are available for independent research. Students and coaches meet four afternoons each week. Each weekend students do research, devise test questions, and make outlines on assigned topics. Each student, in the afternoon sessions, presents information to the other students. The coaches compile the student-generated test items. These practice tests are administered to the students. Teachers meet with the students during the afternoon sessions to provide lectures on materials on the specified subject area topics.

### ***Study Strategy – “B”***

Students have access to a study center in the library. Resources are available for independent research. Students and coaches meet four mornings a week from 7:30 a.m.-8:30 a.m. There is concentration on one subject area per week. One section of each subject area outline is assigned to each student. The students do independent research, devise ten test questions, and prepare a presentation on the material. Each student presents the information to the other students. The coaches compile the sixty questions into a test. This test is answered over the weekend and then graded by the coaches. This feedback gives the students information as to additional study needs. Teachers of specific subject areas meet with the students during morning sessions to provide lectures and materials. Plans have been made to hold study sessions on Saturday mornings and during breaks.

# Texas Academic Pentathlon

Registration Form      Competition Year – 2022-2023

**Seventh    Eighth**

(circle grade)

School \_\_\_\_\_

District \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City / Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Coaches \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

School Principal \_\_\_\_\_

Please register \_\_\_\_\_ team(s) @ \$500 per team. The school colors which will be used to designate the team names for two team entries are

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Important Dates***

Team Registration Deadline	January
Coaches' Clinic	Coordinator's Discretion
Student Registration Deadline	April 1
Essay Writing	April 5
Competition Day	April 15
Entry Fee Refund Deadline	Two weeks prior to competition

Please duplicate this form to enroll other schools in your district. Checks should be made payable to the **TEXAS ACADEMIC DECATHLON** and may be sent later, but the **Registration Form** should be sent as soon as possible:

**Texas Academic Decathlon**  
4301 Broadway, CPO 479  
San Antonio, TX 78209

For additional information please contact the State Office:  
Rick Hopkins, Executive Director  
Telephone: 210-241-8856  
Email: [director@txacadec.org](mailto:director@txacadec.org)

# Scoring

*Revised 8/01/2022*

1. The school administrator will appoint a scoring chairperson as early as possible. The scoring chairperson hopefully will attend a meeting in January to review all aspects of scoring.
2. The chairperson will select a scoring committee to verify accuracy. Suggestions -
  - 1 chairperson
  - 2 persons entering scores (1 calls, 1 enters)
  - 2 additional persons to do the same as the 1<sup>st</sup> pair, as a double check
  - 1 person to compare the two scores above and to look for “zero” scores and confirm that there are not missing scores.
  - 1 person to place reports of scores in envelopes to be given to coaches at end of awards
3. Practice scoring at a practice meet or with fictitious data to be able to produce all needed documents at the final meet.
4. The committee should be in place at the time that the first event is completed and ready to enter these scores. No scores will be posted during the day. Coaches will receive at the end of the meet a scoring report of all test results.

It is allowable to have one observer at a time in the scoring room to view its operation. This may be a coach or it may be a technology person from a school district that may be hosting a meet the following year.

5. Once all awards' lists have been generated, these can be inserted into the emcee's script for the awards program.
6. A list of all teams and their final team scores should be emailed to the state office (can be generated by scoring program.)
7. Ideally, you should secure the USAD Scoring software in order to make this task easier.



## Texas Academic Pentathlon Sample Scores

NBR	1	2	3	4	5	Student Total
	Math	Science	Soc. Studies	Lang. Arts	Fine Arts	
Honors						
1	740	680	750	800	750	<b>3720</b>
2	320	540	560	1000	800	<b>3220</b>
3	220	620	500	600	680	2620
Scholastic						
4	780	800	900	800	900	<b>4180</b>
5	520	660	600	1000	700	<b>3480</b>
6	540	660	700	600	600	3100
Varsity						
7	620	640	900	800	620	<b>3580</b>
8	420	680	920	1000	580	<b>3600</b>
9	580	600	930	600	780	3490

Team Total: 17,430  
Super Quiz: 5,400

1. Total the scores for each competitor over each of the five events.
2. Use the top two total scores from each category (Honors, Scholastic, and Varsity students) to determine the team total.



# Pentathlon Study Materials

## Competition 2022-2023 Year Order Form

When we receive your registration, Study Guides written and designed specifically for pentathlon students are available. All practice and competition questions will come from these guides. No need for other materials and no need for any research. This source is all academic pentathlon coaches and students will need to compete in the Texas Academic Pentathlon competition.

NOVEL – An essay will be written over the novel – *Chains* by Laurie Halse Anderson ISBN-10 1416905863.

2022-2023 Study Guides      \$400

(literature guide; science guide; social science guide; fine arts guide; art and music selections for fine arts guide – sent AFTER October 15)

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### Study Guides Order Form (Covers 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Material)

School \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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# SUPER QUIZ

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## *Overview*

1. The Super Quiz Relay is the Pentathlon's final event, and is a **team event only**. It resembles a game show and takes place in a large arena (gymnasium or civic center) before an audience that cheers for its team just as it would at an athletic event. It often begins with a formal processional. Music is played and teams are individually announced over the microphone as well as by a banner identifying each school. When the quiz begins, absolute quiet must exist during the question and answer period. When the correct answer is given, the audience may cheer for its team but return again to complete silence when the emcee announces the next question number.
2. The Super Quiz Relay will consist of 13 questions for each of the three competition levels. Each question will have a value of 1 point. The 39-point maximum team score will come from the scores of each competition level being summed and will determine the Super Quiz Team awards. SQ points will not be used to determine the overall individual or team awards.
3. Two questions for the Super Quiz will be taken from the USAD study materials for Art, Economics, Literature, Music, Science, and Social Science. One question per round will cover math. There will be no listening question from the music section.
4. Teams sit apart from the audience for convenience in each competition level getting quickly to the testing station during the three rounds of ten questions each per level. The first round features all Varsity students at testing stations as they have come from being seated on row 1. Following is the order of contestants for the nine rounds:  
:  
*Round 1* Varsity 7-9  
*Round 2* Scholastic 4-6  
*Round 3* Honor 1-3
5. After the processional, there are usually welcoming remarks, an invitation to the audience to answer the test questions on an Audience Participation Answer Sheet (SUPER QUIZ-7 handed to them as they entered the room), reference to this year's Super Quiz topic, as well as to the last three or four topics, and instructions to the team members and proctors.
6. Coaches are not seated with their teams but usually in a reserved section apart from the teams. Students are not to have any materials of any kind with them during the quiz. Proctors are assigned throughout the student seating area for supervision and for the purpose of escorting students to restrooms in emergencies.

## ***Testing Procedure***

1. All questions are multiple-choice. A question is shown on the projection screen while the emcee reads the question aloud, and the students read the question that has been placed in front of them face down. It is the students' responsibility to turn the question over when the emcee begins reading it. The questions may be typed on index cards, but it is easier to prepare them on 8 ½ x 11 paper from the 8 ½ x 11 original sent to the meet coordinator.
2. Teams **MUST** select a lead student for each academic level to select/mark their group answer.
3. During the time the emcee is reading the question, the students are allowed non-verbal communication.
4. Once the last word of the last multiple-choice answer is read aloud, the students have ten (10) seconds to orally discuss and select/mark their answer; then a buzzer sounds to indicate time is up (20 seconds for the math question). When the lead student marks the answer, he/she holds the pencil in the air until the answer sheet is scored by the proctor. The correct answer is revealed on the projection screen at the same time the emcee announces the correct answer.
5. The student marks his answer by circling one choice from A, B, C, D, or E. If the student marks his/her answer after the buzzer, no credit is given. If he/she marks his answer in any manner other than circling, credit may be given if intent is clear in the eyes of the proctor. If a student changes an answer, it must be done before the buzzer and still be clear to the proctor what his/her intent was. If the answer for a question is marked on the space for another question, the answer will be counted as incorrect. The answer will be erased and the student can answer the next question.
6. If an answer, right or wrong, is called out by the audience and is heard by the emcee, the question will be eliminated and an alternate question may be substituted. However, once the limited number of alternate questions has been exhausted, the voided questions will be eliminated and the total value of the relay Super Quiz will be reduced by 1 point for each voided question. If TAD does not send alternate questions, each meet coordinator will prepare one varsity alternate, one scholastic alternate, and one honor alternate question (contact the state office for assistance).
7. While there is a fifteen-minute time at the end of Super Quiz to submit appeals (especially on correctness of answers), a coordinator may invite coaches to submit these during the quiz in order to give the appeals committee time to rule on them.

8. After the proctors score the answer sheets, it is time for the score to be reflected on the score stand. This score is a cumulative score for all correct answers of all competition levels. It is an unofficial score until all scores have been verified and totaled after round three. While it is acceptable for proctors to flip the charts, it is more exciting (and recommended) for the student to do this. We also recommend flipping the chart after each question rather than after each round. If cards are not flipped after each question, each school should develop a system of signaling to its visitors in the audience so they know if the students' answer was correct. *(It is possible to run Super Quiz without score stands, but we recommend that some form of running display of scores be implemented in order to keep the excitement going for students and audience alike.)*
9. After the Varsity students have answered thirteen (13) questions and the "lead" student has initialed the score sheet indicating he/she agrees with the proctor's total score, the students return to their seats and the scholastic students go through the same procedure. This continues with the Honor students.
10. After round 3, there will be at least a fifteen-minute break:
  - a. to allow proctors and Super Quiz officials time to verify the team totals and
  - b. to allow appeals to be submitted and ruled upon.Proctors are to remain at their stations until final scores have been certified.

### ***Scoring Stands and Flip Chart***

Each region may choose to display correct answers in a method convenient for the region. If scores are displayed, the following are two methods:

1. The most economical scoring stand is the music stand used by your band or orchestra director. Simply borrow one per team.
2. Use lightweight poster board and cut in sizes of 8 ½" x 11". Number on one side in large numbers 0 through 39 horizontally. Have a backing piece made from heavy matte board. Bind the top of these 40 numbers plus the matte board with plastic binding combs or metal rings. Place one set on each music stand with the zero showing from the front. (Or a set of such numbers may be used without binding them.)

## ***PowerPoint and Student Test Questions***

1. TAD will send coordinators a PowerPoint presentation which can be used to project the questions/answers.
2. TAD will also send one set of 8 ½" x 11" *questions without answers* (one question & answer stem per page). These originals will be used to produce the questions to be given to the students at their stations. It is recommended that these be color coded according to each of the three ID labels, namely Varsity, Scholastic, and Honor.

## ***Suggested Super Quiz Relay Script Outline***

1. Students are in designated seating ten minutes before the beginning or are in designated area for processional.
2. Proctors are at their stations.
3. Appeals committee is at assigned table.
4. Opening comments, welcome, recognition of dignitaries, comment of SQ topic, etc.
5. Items under "Testing Procedure" are given for benefit of students as well as audience.
6. Audience is encouraged to participate using the special form.
7. Explain the requirement of absolute quiet during the question and answer period, but cheers when answer is announced.
8. The normal pattern for reading and answering questions will be:  
**Proctors, place the next question face down.**  
**Question 1 (lead student turns paper over as question is read – students use non-verbal communication to discuss answer; once last answer choice is read, students QUIETLY discuss answer choice and mark/make selection).**  
**(10 {or 20}-second time limit and whistle/bell)**  
**Time: Pencils up.**  
**The correct answer is \_\_\_\_\_.**  
**Proctors, score the question.**  
**Students, add one to your scoreboard if correct.**  
**Proctors, place the next question face down**  
**Question 2 – same routine.**
9. After Honor students, announce a 15-minute break while proctors double check scores and appeals are submitted. The audience will be dismissed and an announcement made that Super Quiz awards will be presented at the awards program (or immediately following the Appeals time.) Scores on each stand are UNOFFICIAL pending appeals and verification.

## ***Scoring Report***

Page SUPER QUIZ-8 is a model of the team answer sheet. One must be prepared for each team. Team name and number should be printed in advance. Students will mark their answers on this form. A proctor will mark each as correct or draw a line through the question number. A proctor will place total correct in the appropriate place and the student will initial the report indicating he/she agrees with the posted number of correct answers. At the end of round 3, the team answer sheets for all teams will be sent to the scoring room. NOTE: USAD National Finals includes ONE math question per round.

## ***Super Quiz Layout***

1. The most desirable physical arrangement is one where the audience and the team (in its holding area) can face the projection screen(s) and see all scoreboards (example with 13 teams on SUPER QUIZ- 9).
2. Rather than teams being seated in team order (01, 02, 03, etc.), they are seated in a way that places them closest to their testing station. Thus, a team seated to the extreme right does not have to walk each round to a station to the extreme left of the gym.
1. The example with 30 teams is less preferred, as it causes the audience not to be able to view all scoreboards and thus not be able to compare scores of their team with other teams. (SUPER QUIZ-10)
2. While the school gymnasium is used often with a smaller number of teams, it may be necessary at larger meets to consider a university gymnasium or a civic center. Many sites require a protective covering to be used on the floor.
3. If a very large screen cannot be obtained, use 2-3 smaller screens so that all of the audience can see.
4. Team stations need to be labeled with school names or numbers and identified on the Audience Participation Sheet so that the audience can locate where every team is testing.
5. Check in advance the facility lighting so that questions on the screen(s) can be read as some lights are too bright.
6. Some meets have one proctor per team while most use one proctor monitoring two teams; either choice is sufficient.
7. Rather than the proctor laying the question open in front of the student, it is recommended that it be placed face down at the time instructed and allow the student to pick it up and flip it over for viewing.

## ***Relay Chairperson***

1. Familiarize yourself with the Pentathlon and Super Quiz Relay and secure the following personnel (some individuals may serve in dual roles).
  - a. Supervisor to train proctors at testing stations. This will take place 1-1½ hours before the Super Quiz
  - b. Proctors to score answer sheets (1 for every 2 schools or one for each school) and hand out questions at testing stations
  - c. Monitors stationed among the teams and audience to give crowd control and require quiet time
  - d. Person to distribute Audience Participation Sheets and pencils
  - e. PowerPoint operator
  - f. Emcee (one who can guarantee to integrity of the test since he/she will need to have the questions 3-4 days in advance to learn the correct pronunciation of names and difficult words)
  - g. Timer – will work a stopwatch and ring bell or sound whistle
  - h. Appeals committee (will probably be selected by meet coordinator)
  - i. Person to organize the processional, if this is done
  
2. Materials needed for relay
  - a. Pencils for each testing station plus audience
  - b. Red markers for proctors
  - c. Team banners for march-in (optional)
  - d. Computer with PowerPoint installed, thumb drive with Super Quiz Relay file, projection screen(s), projector, and extra bulb(s)
  - e. Sound system
  - f. Whistle, bell, or other item to be a “time’s up” signal
  - g. Stopwatch
  - h. Script for emcee
  - i. Podium
  - j. Flip charts (scores)
  - k. Music stands for flip charts
  - l. Set of questions (color-coded) for students at each testing station
  - m. Scoring report for each team with team names and numbers already coded
  - n. Name tags for all persons with duties in Super Quiz
  - o. Audience Participation forms
  - p. Chairs and tables or chairs and chair-desks at testing stations
  - q. Extension cords
  
3. At the coaches’ meeting on Friday afternoon or Saturday morning, go over all plans about the Super Quiz that teams need to know. If a meet has an assembly for all teams, this can also be discussed here. For meets that have a processional, instructions may be given in the holding area prior to march-in.



# SUPER QUIZ

## Audience Participation Sheet

- |     |   |   |   |   |   |     |   |   |   |   |   |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|-----|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1.  | A | B | C | D | E | 28. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 2.  | A | B | C | D | E | 29. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 3.  | A | B | C | D | E | 30. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 4.  | A | B | C | D | E | 31. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 5.  | A | B | C | D | E | 32. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 6.  | A | B | C | D | E | 33. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 7.  | A | B | C | D | E | 34. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 8.  | A | B | C | D | E | 35. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 9.  | A | B | C | D | E | 36. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 10. | A | B | C | D | E | 37. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 11. | A | B | C | D | E | 38. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 12. | A | B | C | D | E | 39. | A | B | C | D | E |
| 13. | A | B | C | D | E |     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 14. | A | B | C | D | E |     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 15. | A | B | C | D | E |     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 16. | A | B | C | D | E |     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 17. | A | B | C | D | E |     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 18. | A | B | C | D | E |     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 19. | A | B | C | D | E |     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 20. | A | B | C | D | E |     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 21. | A | B | C | D | E |     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 22. | A | B | C | D | E |     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 23. | A | B | C | D | E |     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 24. | A | B | C | D | E |     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 25. | A | B | C | D | E |     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 26. | A | B | C | D | E |     |   |   |   |   |   |
| 27. | A | B | C | D | E |     |   |   |   |   |   |

Texas Academic Pentathlon®

**I. VARSITY ROUND**

(student numbers ending in 7, 8, & 9)

Team number/name \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

1.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
2.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
3.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
4.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
5.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
6.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
7.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
8.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
9.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
10.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
11.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
12.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
13.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	

Varsity Total: \_\_\_\_\_/13

**II. SCHOLASTIC ROUND**

(student numbers ending in 4, 5, & 6)

1.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
2.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
3.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
4.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
5.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
6.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
7.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
8.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
9.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
10.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
11.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
12.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
13.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	

Scholastic Total: \_\_\_\_\_/13

**III. HONORS ROUND**

(student numbers ending in 1, 2, & 3)

1.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
2.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
3.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
4.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
5.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
6.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
7.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
8.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
9.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
10.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
11.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
12.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	
13.	A	B	C	D	E	Correct	

Honor Total: \_\_\_\_\_/13

Division: Large Medium Small

Students

1. Each question will be read out loud and projected onto the screen.
2. After the question is read, the emcee will say "begin," which begins the 10-second timer and begins the time the team members can verbally communicate with each other (only non-verbal communication is allowed before the reader says "begin"). (For the 13<sup>th</sup> question, there will be a 20-second answer period)
3. During the answer period, one team member must mark the team answer sheet by circling a letter A – E.
4. The answer will be revealed on the screen, read out loud, and a proctor will score the team's answer.

Proctors

1. For each correct answer, circle "Correct" to the right of the question number.
2. For each incorrect answer, draw a line through the question number.
3. Please count the number of "Correct" circles and place that number at the bottom for each round (Varsity, Scholastic, Honors)
4. At the end of all rounds, please count the number correct and enter into the square below.

Total correct answers  
(Maximum Score = 39)

Verification Initials: Proctor \_\_\_\_\_ Student \_\_\_\_\_

# Super Quiz Relay (Setup Example 1)

Projection Screen

Timer

Reader

Projector

TEAM  
1

TEAM  
2

TEAM  
3

TEAM  
4

TEAM  
5

TEAM  
6

TEAM  
7

TEAM  
8

TEAM  
9

TEAM  
10

TEAM  
11

TEAM  
12

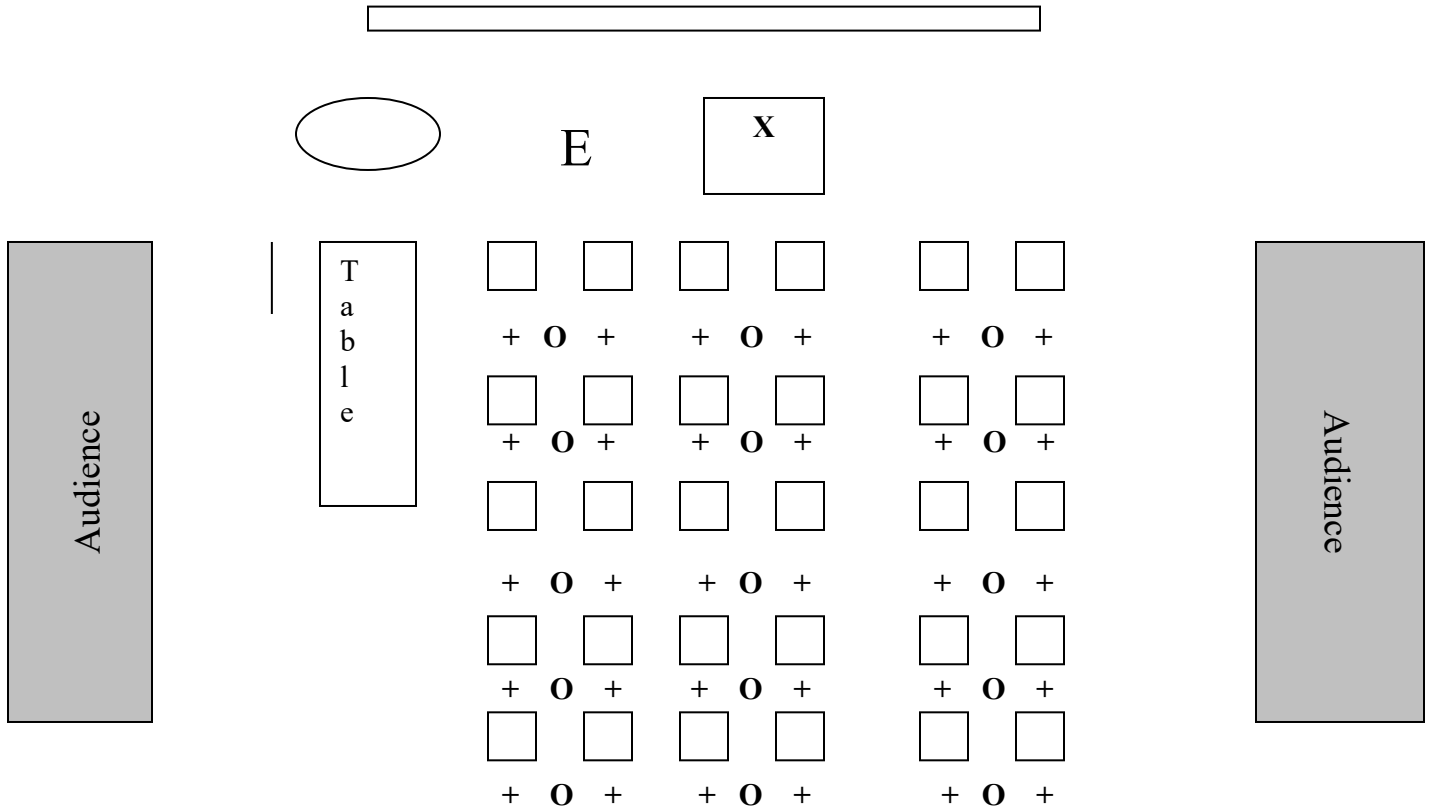
TEAM  
13

Appeals

## Students

0101	0601	1001	0201	0701	1101	0301	0801	1201	0401	0901	1301	0501
0102	0602	1002	0202	0702	1102	0302	0802	1202	0402	0902	1302	0502
0103	0603	1003	0203	0703	1103	0303	0803	1203	0403	0903	1303	0503
0104	0604	1004	0204	0704	1104	0304	0804	1204	0404	0904	1304	0504
0105	0605	1005	0205	0705	1105	0305	0805	1205	0405	0905	1305	0505
0106	0606	1006	0206	0706	1106	0306	0806	1206	0406	0906	1306	0506
0107	0607	1007	0207	0707	1107	0307	0807	1207	0407	0907	1307	0507
0108	0608	1008	0208	0708	1108	0308	0808	1208	0408	0908	1308	0508
0109	0609	1009	0209	0709	1109	0309	0809	1209	0409	0909	1309	0509
Monitors				Monitors				Monitors				
COACHES			COACHES			COACHES			COACHES			
					Audience							

# Super Quiz Relay (Setup Example 2)



**LEGEND**

*Timer*

*Screen*

*Overhead*

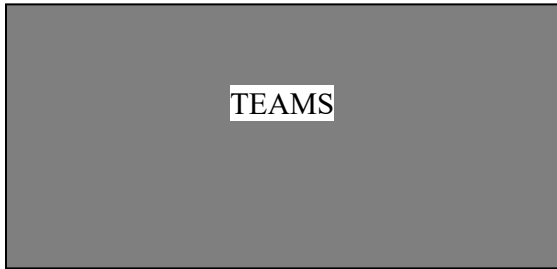
*Student Desk Or Table*

*Chair*

*Score Stand*

*Emcee*

*Proctor Chair*



- Honor - 1
- Honor - 2
- Honor - 3
- Scholastic - 4
- Scholastic - 5
- Scholastic - 6
- Varsity - 7
- Varsity - 8
- Varsity - 9

# TIES

*Revised 8/01/2022*

If individuals tie for any award, they will each receive the same award.

Example: Science Scores in Varsity Division

Emily Jones	920	-	Receives 1 <sup>st</sup> place medal
Mary Adams	920	-	Receives 1 <sup>st</sup> place medal
Ernie Vallejo	880	-	Receives 2 <sup>nd</sup> place medal
Juan Perez	840	-	Receives 3 <sup>rd</sup> place medal

# **Timing Devices**

*Revised 8/01/2022*

Cell phones, pagers, any devices capable of two-way communications, and mp3 devices are not allowed in the testing rooms. Watches are allowed only if they are silent. No alarms or beepers of any kind are allowed in a testing room. Unacceptable items will cause the student's paper to be collected, and the student will receive a zero for that test.

