



## National Geography Bowl Official Rules

The National Geography Bowl is a buzzer-based team quiz tournament. For students familiar with the National History Bowl, most of the rules and the structure of the game are the same, with the following exceptions. The standard History Bowl rules that still apply are then listed after the initial section that describes how the Geography Bowl is different.

1. Uniquely, in the Geography Bowl, all teams are teams of one or two students. Teams may carry a 3<sup>rd</sup> player if they wish, who can substitute in and out during the quarter breaks, but teams of more than three students are not permitted. If a game goes to a tiebreak, substitutions are not permitted before the tiebreak question (i.e. teams must play the tiebreak question(s) with the same lineup that they used in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.) For teams of 3 students, there is no limit on how often a student may substitute in or out.
2. If a team reaches 200 points during the round, they are finished for that round, and do not play the remaining questions. However, they receive bonus points based on how quickly they reach 200 as follows:

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter: (note that it is not possible to reach 200 points before Cycle 5)

Cycle 5: 200 bonus points = 400 game points

Cycle 6: 190 bonus points = 390 game points

Cycle 7: 180 bonus points = 380 game points

Cycle 8: 170 bonus points = 370 game points

3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter: Entering the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, the highest possible score is 190 if a team has not yet gone out. Thus if a team's score at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter is...

290 – then they receive 160 bonus points = 360 game points

270 - ... 150 bonus points = 350 game points

260 - ... 140 bonus points = 340 game points

250 - ... 130 bonus points = 330 game points

240 - ... 120 bonus points = 320 game points

230 - ... 110 bonus points = 310 game points

220 - ... 100 bonus points = 300 game points

210 - ... 90 bonus points = 290 game points

200 - ... 80 bonus points = 280 game points

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter: If a team reaches 200 points on a particular question, then they receive this many bonus points. Note that if they receive 30 or 20 points on the question that brings them over 200, so that it would otherwise take them to 220 or 210 points, that is irrelevant; all that matters is which question they reach 200 points on.

Question 1: 70 bonus points = 270 game points

Question 2: 60 bonus points = 260 game points

Question 3: 50 bonus points = 250 game points

Question 4: 40 bonus points = 240 game points

Question 5: 30 bonus points = 230 game points

Question 6: 20 bonus points = 220 game points

Question 7: 10 bonus points = 210 game points

Question 8: 0 bonus points = 200 game points

3. There are no bouncebacks in the 60 second rounds, but there are 4 categories from which to choose. The team in the lead selects first, then the second team, the third team, and the last team. If the teams are tied, then a tiebreak tossup or tossups with no point value is/are played to determine who selects first.
4. Teams receive 4 rank points for winning a match, 3 points for finishing 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2 points for finishing 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 1 point for finishing 4<sup>th</sup>. When ranking teams, teams are ranked first based on rank points, then on game points.
5. The preliminaries (including Rounds 4-6) will feature 4 teams playing in each room. The structure of the playoffs will be determined based on how many teams compete in each age division. The playoffs may consist of 4 team matches, 3 team matches, or 2 team matches.
6. In the playoffs, all teams play all questions: there is no going out once a team hits 200 points.
7. If playoff matches consist of 4 teams, there are no bouncebacks in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter. If there are 3 or 2 teams, then there are 3 category choices.
8. If there are 3 teams, the team in the lead picks first, the second place team gets first try at the bounceback, then the third place team gets the last chance. Then the second place team picks, then the third place team gets first try and then the first place team gets the last chance. Then the third place team gets the remaining category, then the first place team gets the first try, and the second place team gets the last chance. Unlike in the History Bowl, all ties to determine who selects first are determined by tossup.
9. Coaches and parents cannot protest. All protests must come from students.
10. Tiebreaker questions are played to break all ties at the end of the match, including for teams that are tied for second or tied for third. Tiebreakers do not have point value, but the winning team receives the higher rank points.
11. There are 10 questions in the first quarter and 8 questions in the third quarter categories.

**The Remaining rules hold throughout the match.**

12. If you wish to protest a question or answer, you must bring it to the reader's attention before the first question of the next quarter is read, or before you leave the room at the end of the final quarter.

13. During any tossup (i.e. buzzer) question, students may not confer verbally or in writing with your teammates. They may raise their hand, extend their buzzer, or gesture in ways that indicate they know the answer, but not what the answer itself is.

14. On bonuses and the 60 second rounds (i.e. the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of each match), talking to your teammates is permitted and encouraged. Conferring illegally with your teammates, or speaking out of turn on a tossup when it was not your buzzer that was recognized, will be treated as if you buzzed in and answered the tossup incorrectly.

### Additional Rules Summary By Quarter

**The first quarter** consists of ten relatively short buzzer questions worth 10 points each for a correct answer. At no point in any quarter of the Geography Bowl will teams be deducted points for a wrong answer. After the moderator is done, or after a player has rung in, they have 3 seconds to start giving their answer; they cannot stall on answering if they are outside the initial three seconds. If one team rings in and answers incorrectly they do not lose points, but then no one else on that team can ring in again on that question. If one team rings in after the question has been read to completion and is incorrect, the other team then receives 3 seconds after the moderator says “Incorrect” to the first team regardless of how much time the first team took. Moderators do not prompt on buzzer questions at all, and they simply count to themselves; they do not need a timer. All timing decisions throughout the match are at the discretion of the moderator and are not protestable. If a team is incorrect while answering during the question, and the question has not been finished, the moderator does not go back to the start of the question, but picks up from where they had left off. These rules on reading and timing hold for all buzzer questions.

If you reach the end of the question, and no one has rung in, the moderator counts to 3 seconds then calls time and reveals the answer. If one team rings in after the question and gets it wrong, if the other team is still alive (i.e. they haven’t answered incorrectly), then they get 3 seconds to buzz in regardless of how much time the first team took to ring in.

For all questions, regardless of what style, once you begin to speak, players can go back and correct themselves until the moderator indicates you are correct or not, though once the moderator has started ruling (and they should rule quickly), your answer will be taken as the moderator thought you answered; you cannot protest this. They may give extra information if it doesn’t make the answer wrong (e.g. saying “Vienna, Austria” even if “Vienna” would suffice or “Hamlet by Shakespeare”) but you cannot “go fishing” (e.g. “Hapsburg Empire, Maria Theresa, Schloss Schonbrunn, Vienna!”).

**The second quarter** consists of eight buzzer questions worth 10 points each for a correct answer. If your team answers one of these correctly, your team will be entitled to one bonus question, which is also worth 10 points. In this quarter, the other team cannot “steal” or “rebound” your bonus. **The bonuses do not “bounce back”**. On bonus questions and 60 second round questions, the first answer clearly directed at the reader is taken as the team’s response. If there is ambiguity, the reader can ask teams to clarify their answer. On bonus questions, the moderator should prompt for the answer 5 seconds after having finished reading, and then allow an additional 2 seconds for the team captain (or designated person) to start giving an answer. Teams can pause while answering, but not once the reader has prompted after 5 seconds and the additional 2 seconds have been counted off.

**The third quarter** consists of the category rounds. If teams are going to substitute, they must perform substitutions before the categories are announced.

Teams have 60 seconds to answer up to 8 questions on their category. If time runs out, they can finish an answer they have already started speaking, but they cannot begin to speak a new answer. Teams can pass on a question, but they cannot come back to it (a pass indicates a wrong answer). If bouncesbacks are being played (i.e. if there are 3 or 2 teams

contesting the match), then on bounceback questions, the timing rules function as on the bonus questions in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter (5 seconds, then a prompt, then 2 more seconds). If time runs out in the middle of a question and a team hasn't answered correctly, then the reader reads up to precisely that point in the question when reading the bounceback for the other team. If the reader has not read any part of the question, then those questions are not read on the bounceback.

If a team sweeps a category, they get a 20 point bonus, otherwise all questions in this quarter are worth 10 points each.

A team can choose to "kill the category" at any point (which prevents the other team from hearing bouncebacks), but the first question is read by default; the first team cannot prevent the other team from hearing the first bounceback even if they don't want to proceed further. If a team kills the category after they have heard a question, the other team does get a shot at that particular question, though – all questions after that question would not be read.

**The fourth quarter** consists of 8 longer buzzer questions worth 30, **20**, or 10 points each for a correct answer depending at what point in the question the question is answered. On the question sheets, **bold and underlined indicates a point in the question where it is worth 30 points.** **bold only indicates where it is worth 20 points.** Regular text indicates where it is worth 10 points.

At the end of the game, if it is tied, a tiebreak buzzer question is used to break the tie, though it only determines who wins the match, the tiebreaker itself has no point value. If no one gets the tiebreak, additional buzzer questions are used (moderators, ask in the staff room if you need one, do not read the backup bonus question provided as a tiebreak). Tiebreakers are used as needed until one team gets one right.

As in all IAC competitions, the final authority for interpretation of the rules rests with the Tournament Director and their designated protest committee members. IAC reserves the right to make additional rulings and decisions in the best interest of the tournament beyond the rules that are presented here.