Battle Toolkit

For Thompson School District, Loveland Public Library, Charter and Private Schools, as well as Homeschool Families in Loveland, CO

2021-2022 Committee
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1. **What is the Battle of the Books?**
The Loveland, CO Battle of the Books is a book trivia program coordinated by this committee for students in grades 3-6. Book Battle programs are competitions similar to Jeopardy or whiz quiz games but questions come from a controlled list of books that participants read in preparation for the matches.

2. **What’s my role?**
Here’s a quick breakdown of the roles:
**Battle Coordinator:** The Battle Coordinator organizes and promotes the local battle, registers teams, and serves as the primary point of contact. This is usually a school staff member. Acts as liaison between the Battle of the Books Committee and the team coaches.
**Team Coach:** An adult or high school student helps prepare a team for the local battles. Team Coach and Battle Coordinator may be the same person.
**Scorekeeper:** Volunteer who keeps score at the Battles.
**Timekeeper:** Keeps track of time for each question and gives a “10 seconds remaining” warning when time is about to run out.

3. **Who can be on a team?**
Teams are made up of 5-7 students from the same grade. All team members should be active participants and be aware that they are signed up on a team. Once a team has been formed and registered changes cannot be made. 5 students will participate at a time in a battle.

4. **Who is responsible for the team?**
The Team Coach is responsible for helping the team prepare for the battle. The Team Coach also serves as a contact person for the team and will receive all relevant program information from the Battle Coordinator. A coaching guide is included in this toolkit. A parent, other adult or high school student can serve as team coach, but it is up to the students to make sure that they read the books on the list. A team captain is also necessary for each team, since only one student can give the answers during the actual match.

5. **When should I start planning?**
A general timeline is included in this toolkit. Typically, promotion begins in the spring, is intensified during the fall, and the battles take place in the winter.

6. **How are books selected for the book list?**
Books are chosen by the committee members in the spring, prior to the end of the school year. Considerations when selecting titles for the list include reading level, popularity/appeal, diversity, awards received, promotion of excellent titles that may not be well known, the number of available copies of each title in the Loveland Public Library catalog, and availability of paperback, e-book, or audio copies.
7. **Will there be enough copies of the titles to go around?**  
Public and school libraries are encouraged to add the books on the list to their collections. The Loveland Public Library has made multiple copies of each book available. There is a Battle of the Books section in the children’s section at LPL. Locally, you can purchase used books at Book Haven, Salt and Light Learning, and thrift stores.

8. **How are local battles structured?**  
- Each match lasts approximately 20 minutes and contains 20 questions (10 per team, alternating).  
- A coin toss determines which team goes first. The team that wins the coin toss will sit so that they are at the question reader’s left. (This makes for easier scorekeeping.)  
- Each team has 30 seconds to answer questions directed to them.  
- Questions are all in the same format – “In what book...?”  
- Answers are always in the form of the title and author of the book. The correct title is worth 5 points, and the author’s name is worth 2 points for a maximum of 7 points per question.  
- If an answer or partial answer cannot be given by a team, the other team has 30 seconds to answer and get the remaining points for that question. For more information on the way battles are structured, see the Rules of Play.

9. **What will I need on the day of the battle?**  
Come prepared to play! Students should have read all the books on their list. Please bring a parent volunteer or high school students who would be willing to be a timekeeper or a scorekeeper if need be.

10. **What about prizes?**  
Prizes will be awarded to every student who participates in Battle of the Books at every level. Prizes are provided by Thompson School District. The grand prize for each grade level will be a trophy with your school name and year engraved on it!
Timeline

April
Booklist finalized by the Battle of the Books Committee. Order additional copies of Book Battle titles as needed.

May
Booklist released publicly. Promote program and book lists to schools and homeschooling groups so students can begin reading. The Battle Coordinator needs to notify the Battle of the Books Committee of intention to participate.

October
Teams are finalized. Battle coordinators will need to provide the names of the students on your team, and adult coach with contact information.

November
Schedules released for the Battles.

January/February
Battles will be held at the Loveland Public Library.
Team Rules

1. 5-7 students may form a team. 5 students will play at a time. As we grow, special considerations will be individually addressed.

2. Students may choose a name for their team. Names cannot include Battle titles or corresponding author names.

3. Each team competing at the Battles are invited to bring a poster to represent their team. It may be helpful to create a poster as they choose their team name. Libraries can display these as they compete at their local battles!
   a. Poster Rules:
      i. Teams must put their team name somewhere on the poster.
      ii. Teams may not include any titles, authors, pictures of book covers, or any other important title information.

4. No substitutions or additions can be made to a team once it has been officially registered.

5. Students may not be on more than one team.

6. Each team must have an adult coach. This may be a parent, teacher, or another adult that is able to coordinate between the team and the Battle Coordinator. For more information about coaching, visit the Role of the Coach section in this toolkit. The coach may also be the Battle Coordinator.

7. One team member must be appointed the captain/spokesperson. The captain is the one who will speak the team’s answers in each match. The team can confer with each other, but it is the captain that gives the answer. Teams may decide to split up the reading lists instead of everyone reading all the titles. It will be very important that all team members show up for all the matches if they choose to do this. Team captains may change at each battle.

8. Teams must register for their local battle by October to participate in the Battle of the Books.
Rules of Play

1. There will be twenty (20) questions per game. Each question will be read through before timing begins and an answer is given. The team may ask for the question to be repeated one time.

2. A correct response is composed of two parts, the title and author of the work as written on the official list.

3. Each team has thirty (30) seconds to give the correct book title and author. A warning will be given when ten (10) seconds remains.

4. The team receives five (5) points for each correct title and two (2) points if they can correctly give the last name of the author, for a possible total of seven (7) points per question. If insignificant words are left out or words are mixed up when giving the title it is up to the discretion of the judge whether or not the team knows the correct book when awarding points. A team cannot earn author points if the correct title has not yet been accepted.

5. Judges will accept the first answer from the team captain. Answers from other team members or a second, changed answer from the team captain will not be accepted.

6. Stealing of questions will be allowed. Title of book will not be given on an author steal.

7. If, at the end of thirty seconds, and the team is unable to answer the question, the opposing team has thirty seconds to give the correct answer. They are allowed only one answer. The team captain (spoke person) may request the question to be repeated. After the question is repeated, the time starts again. Question read no more that three times.

8. Only team members may challenge whether a question might apply to more than one book. If there is a challenge, the judges will consult the page numbers referenced for the question. Team members have until the next question is asked to challenge a question. No challenges will be accepted after that time.

9. At the end of the battle, the challenging team will be given 5 minutes to find their answer. If the challenge is accepted, the team will be awarded the points for the the answer in question.

10. The pronunciation of the title and author shall be deemed acceptable if it is understood by the Questioner. There may not be a challenge on pronunciation.

11. If a team member is absent the remaining players may choose to either play with the members available or forfeit the game. No additional players may be added.
12. Scores are cumulative and the 4 teams in each grade division with the highest overall scores will be invited to the Grand Battle in February for the trophy. In the case of ties, these will be broken at a competition the first week in February.

13. The intention of the TSD Battle of the Books program is to, as much as is possible, provide an environment where competitors may enjoy a spirit of competition and fair play. A supportive and attentive audience enhances this experience for book battle teams. Audience members choosing to interfere with this intention, however, may be asked to leave a match, their team may be disqualified for the day and may be prohibited from participating in future battles. Disqualifying behavior during a match may include, but is not limited to:
• keeping score
• any form of coaching
• any signaling to team members
• any recording of questions and/or answers

Out of respect for competitors and their judging teams, additional spectators will not be allowed to enter a competition room after the doors are closed.
Role of the Coach

The coach has many different jobs throughout the entire Battle of the Books season. The coach will be responsible for checking their email/voicemail regularly for important scheduling reminders and then reporting the reminders to the rest of the team. In the event of schedule changes, the library will Battle Coordinator immediately, and it is their responsibility to relay this information to their team.

Other roles that a coach will fulfill:

- Discussion leader—make sure that each team member understands which books on the list he or she is expected to read. Coaches are encouraged to read the books too! Talk about the books with team members—what did they like or dislike about each book? Why?
- Meeting facilitator—meet with the team regularly to offer encouragement, check on reading progress, foster team cohesiveness, and help team members learn author’s names and facts from the books.
- Main contact point—act as the communicating link between team members, and parents with all information regarding the Battle of the Books. Please keep your Battle Coordinator informed of any problems or changes.
- Team supervisor on battle days—ensure that your team members and their families understand the rules and expectations, and make sure your team demonstrates sportsmanlike behavior during the battles. We request that coaches be present during battle days to help the library contain the noise level while teams are waiting to compete. If you are unable to attend, please send a substitute in your place.

Coaches can also help their team foster and maintain team spirit throughout the battle season. We want this to be a friendly and exciting competition for all involved!

Methods of building team spirit may include:

- Decorating team t-shirts
- Wear the same color or item of clothing to battles
- Make a poster to display at your table during the battles

Some ways to encourage and reward your team are:

- Give praise and words of encouragement
- Serve snacks at meetings
- Play a board game before you begin battle meetings
- Have a pizza party or an ice cream outing at the completion of the battles
- Keep it fun and make happy memories!