

Battle of the Books (Oberstufe)

What is the Battle of the Books?

The Battle of the Books is an English reading competition for German students in the 10th grade and above. The goal of the competition is to help them discover the joy of reading in English and to improve their reading comprehension skills through English literature. Each team reads 10 books in total and competes against other teams (schools) in Bavaria. Students read interesting and challenging English-language books while also learning about not only American culture, but also cultures and history from all over the world!

How does it work?

The competition is organized by the Deutsch-Amerikanisches Institut Nürnberg (DAI) for all students of the Oberstufe (grades 10 and up). The entire competition from start to finish is conducted in English!

In the **first part** of the competition, participating teams meet with a DAI representative either in-person at the DAI, at their school, or virtually and discuss the 10 books together. The writing style, genre, themes, and content of each book will be discussed—in particular the historical background, societal topics, or relation to American culture. These meetings will take place from November through February.

The **second part** is the final, which takes place in Nürnberg and is staged as a game show with buzzers and timed questions. It consists of several rounds in which the students put their acquired knowledge to the test! The final takes place at the end of February or the beginning of March.

What does my school need to know to participate?

- Participation should be voluntary.
- Teams must have at least 10 students and a **maximum** of 15.
- Teams may consist of participants from different grades if they are all in the 10th grade and above.
- Each participant needs to read at least one book – if there are more than 10 team members, two students can be assigned to the same book.
- Each team must have **ONE teacher representative** who will lead the team and is responsible for communication with the DAI.
- Teachers must sign a form acknowledging that photos taken of their students at the Battle final may appear on the DAI's social media or website. Teachers assume responsibility for photo permissions according to their school's policy.
- The DAI can loan one copy of each book to a team (maximum 10 books total).
- The DAI strives to provide 10 T-Shirts for each team for the final, but this will depend on funding capabilities. In case this is not possible, please be prepared

to assume the costs for your team's T-Shirts (around 8€ per shirt). If you have more than 10 team members, the extra shirts must be paid for by the team.

Registration information:

Registration opens in September each year. The exact date is announced via the DAI's Teacher Newsletter (<https://www.dai-nuernberg.de/meta/newsletter.html>) Each school should send an email to programm@dai-nuernberg.de to register their team after the official opening and before the closing date. Registration forms must be completed and turned in before the deadline, or teams forfeit their place in the competition. Places are limited and will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis! **The penalty for dropping out of the competition after the registration deadline is exclusion of your school from the next year's competition.**

The Battle of the Books Final

The final will take place at the end of February or the beginning of March. There will be two sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. In each session, 15 teams will compete against each other. Each session lasts approximately 3.5 hours, with the morning session beginning around 9:30am and the afternoon around 1:30pm. (Final times are subject to change.) Teams will be assigned to morning or afternoon sessions after the registration period closes. We do our best to consider each school's distance from Nürnberg, but we unfortunately cannot take individual requests. Please prepare your team for an early start and a long day!

The final competition consists of Rounds 1 and 2 and the Final Round. Three teams at a time go up to the stage to compete against each other. A maximum of 10 students from each team may go up to the stage in Rounds 1 and 2. Questions about the first 5 books will be asked in Round 1, and the other 5 books in Round 2. The books that will be covered in each round will be announced beforehand, so teams can quickly confer about which 10 students will go to the stage. (See pictures of the setup below.)

The four teams with the most points after Rounds 1 and 2 will go on to the Final Round, where only one team member at a time will go up the stage. Each book will first be announced so that teams can quickly send up one representative and then switch for the next book.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

- **Can my school register more than one team?** Since we want to welcome as many schools to the competition as possible, schools that want to have more than one

team will have their second team placed on a waiting list. We can only determine whether there is space for a second team after the registration deadline.

- **Is there a limit on how many schools can enter?** We currently have the capacity to welcome a maximum of 30 schools to the competition.
- **Will DAI representatives come to our school for the intro meeting?** We try to visit as many schools as possible to provide students with personal interactions with native English speakers. However, in-person visits depend on the distance from the school and availability of our staff and volunteers.
- **Will travel costs to Nürnberg for the final be covered?** The DAI does not provide transportation or accommodation reimbursement.
- **What happens if our team arrives late to the Battle final?** As the schedule with a morning and afternoon session is very tight, we will not be able to wait for any teams that arrive at the venue late. Please plan accordingly!
- **If my team has more than 10 students, can we borrow more books?** Usually, only one copy of each book is available for loan to each school. However, if another school does not need to borrow a book, we may have extras. You can make a request for more books and we will notify you if we have extras.
- **What happens if our team wants to drop out?** Any school that drops out of the competition after the registration deadline will be excluded from next year's Battle.
- **What happens if the books we borrowed get damaged?** Any damaged books (water stains, torn pages, writing marks, highlighted) will require replacement. Specific instructions will be included with the borrowed books.
- **What if team members drop out after the deadline, and we no longer meet the minimum of 10 members?** Teams should seek replacements ASAP and get in touch with Katya Davis to find a solution (contact info below).

Photos of the Battle Final in Nürnberg (pictures from the Heilig-Geist-Saal)

3 teams go up to the front at a time



Each team stands at a table with a buzzer



Final Round – top 4 teams send one representative to the front



For more photos and videos, check out our [Facebook page](#) and [YouTube channel](#)!

If you have any further questions, please contact Katya Davis via programm@dai-nuernberg.de or 0911 230 6912.