



*Friends of the  
Joshua Tree  
Library*



## **RULES FOR THE SPELL-A-THON**

### **Team Communications:**

The team's contact person is responsible for communicating information about the event to team members. The contact person is free to copy and share event information with the team.

### **Spell-A-Thon Words:**

Words used in the contest are selected from a list prepared by event organizers. Words and their pronunciation are taken from *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language*. Any spellings or pronunciations found in other dictionaries or on the internet will not be accepted.

No words will be used that have capitals, hyphens, apostrophes, or question marks. Words with alternate spellings will be avoided. No homonyms (i.e., pear, pair and pare) will be used.

### **Competition Rules:**

The pronouncer will say the word, use it in a sentence and repeat the word. The speller may only ask for one more pronunciation of the word.

Spellers will be timed. The speller must begin spelling within 40 seconds of being given the word and complete the spelling within 90 seconds. A speller will be warned by the timer when 30 seconds remain.

Team members will be given pencil and paper so they can write down the words. Team members are allowed to confer on a word's spelling. Only one team member will spell the word aloud. Team members will spell in rotation.

A speller who has started a word may stop and start over. However, the speller may not change the original letters initially spelled. If the speller changes the letters or sequence of letters in the respelling, the team will be eliminated.

If the team member spelling the word aloud misspells the word, the team is eliminated. The next team will be given a new word to spell, not the misspelled word.

If no teams are eliminated after three rounds, the pronouncer will increase the difficulty of the words to be spelled until the killer word list is employed.

(over)

Any questions or challenges will be decided by the event judges. Their decisions are final.

**Practice Round:**

The event will begin with a practice round. No teams will be eliminated during this round.

**Free Pass:**

Each team will be given one free pass to avoid spelling a word. The pass must be used before a word is spelled. If the team uses the pass, the team then will have to spell the next word on the list. Free passes cannot be used once there are only two teams competing.

**Final Rounds:**

When only two teams are competing, the rules are modified. If one team misspells a word, the other team must correctly spell that word as well as the next word on the pronouncer's list to win.

If the other team misspells the word originally missed or the new word, the original team has the opportunity to correctly spell the misspelled new word as well as the next word on the pronouncer's list. If both words are correctly spelled, it is the winner.

If neither team is successful, the pronouncer will give each team the last misspelled word and a new word until one team successfully spells both words. That team will be the winner.