



ESBEE 2026 RULES AND REGULATIONS

The **ESBee Vocabulary & Spelling Competition 2026** (“ESBee 2026”) is organized by **Caya Academy Sdn Bhd**, the owner and organizer of ESBee, with the aim of promoting strong English language proficiency through the development of vocabulary knowledge, spelling accuracy, and effective word usage.

ESBee 2026 is designed to challenge and motivate students learning English as a first or additional language, providing them with a structured platform to expand their lexical range, strengthen spelling skills, and develop confidence in using English accurately and meaningfully. In line with ESBee’s educational philosophy, the competition encourages students to read widely, apply word-learning strategies, and deepen their understanding of English language patterns.

Beyond academic achievement, ESBee fosters critical soft skills such as focus, composure, and communication under timed and competitive conditions. The competition also provides students with exposure at school, national, and international levels, recognizing excellence and effort in English language learning.

ESBee 2026 further aims to support schools and educators by highlighting the importance of vocabulary development and literacy, while promoting collaboration and positive engagement among students from both public and private schools across different regions and countries. Ultimately, ESBee seeks to build meaningful connections among young learners who share an interest in the English language, contributing to mutual understanding and educational growth on a global scale.

Eligibility

The competition is open to students currently enrolled in **Grades/Year 1 to 12** from participating countries worldwide.

The competition consists of **two categories**, **Regular Category** and **Special Category**, and **six (6) levels**, namely **Bee 1 to Bee 6**, aligned with the **CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)**.

Regular Category

The **Regular Category** is open **only to students studying English as a second or foreign language** and who are enrolled in **public (state) or private national schools**.

Students who study in schools where English is the major language of instruction for most subjects, or who use English as their first language, are not eligible for the Regular Category.

Special Category

The Special Category is open to students who study in schools where **English is the primary language of instruction** for the majority of subjects; or **English as their first language**.

Students may only participate in **one category**, and category placement is subject to verification by the Organizer. The Organizer reserves the right to **reassign or disqualify** participants if category eligibility is not met.



Registration Period

Registration for the competition opens on **1 January 2026**.

The registration closing date will be announced by the **National Coordinator** and shall be at least **ten (10) days prior to the Preliminary Round**.

The Organizer shall not be held responsible for any technical failures, system errors, delays, or data loss resulting from server, platform, or connectivity issues during registration.

Competition Rounds and Format

The competition will be conducted in **three (3) rounds**:

1. Preliminary Round
2. Semi-Final Round
3. Grand Final Round

Round	Date	Mode	Venue
Preliminary	Mar/Apr 2026 (please refer to the National coordinator for the country hosting dates)	Online/paper-based	Country
Semi-final	May/Jun 2026 (please refer to the National coordinator for the country hosting dates)	Online/paper-based + Oral (optional)	Country
Grand Final	1 & 2 Aug 2026	Face to face (paper-based + Oral)	Malaysia

For paper-based examinations:

- All answers for Written and Listening tasks must be transferred onto the official answer sheet provided.
- Scores for the Oral Spelling task will be recorded by the invigilators.
- Each participant will receive an answer sheet at the start of the examination.

Advancement to Subsequent Rounds

- The **top 15%** of participants from each participating country will qualify for the Semi-Final Round.
- If total registrations reach **20,000 participants**, a minimum of **150 students** will be invited to the Grand Finals. ESBee reserves the right to increase the number of finalists if the number of participants exceeds 20,000.
- The number of semi-finalists and finalists may vary depending on total participation, score distribution, or tied results.
- The **allocation of finalist places** for each participating country shall be **proportionate to the number of eligible participants who participated in the Preliminary Round**,



subject to overall competition thresholds and minimum requirements set by the Organizer.

- Finalists shall be selected strictly based on **Semi-Final Round scores**.
- All Semi-Finalists will be invited to participate in the Asian Spelling Bee to be held in China in July 2026, which includes a spelling camp, educational tour, and spelling competition. Participation in this program is optional, and subject to a separate fee. The program is subject to final confirmation and approval by the Asian Spelling Bee Committee Board.

Grand Final Round

- **Competition:**
 - 1 August 2026: 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. depending on schedule
 - 2 August 2026: 9:00 a.m. –11:00 a.m. depending on schedule
- **Awards Ceremony:**
 - 2 August 2026, 12:00 p.m. – 1.00 p.m.
 - All final results will be announced during this event.
- **Venue:** British International School Kuala Lumpur
- The Organizer reserves the right to amend the date and/or venue of the Grand Final if deemed necessary. Any such changes shall be communicated to all participants and relevant parties, and the revised arrangements shall be binding.

Competition Categories (Regular and Special)

Bee Level	For Regular Category	For Special Category	CEFR Level (preliminary round)	CEFR Level (semi-final & final round)
Bee 1	Primary 1 & 2	Year 1 & 2	Pre-A1	A1
Bee 2	Primary 3 & 4	Year 3 & 4	A1	A2
Bee 3	Primary 5 & 6	Year 5 & 6	A2	B1
Bee 4	Secondary 1 & 2	Year 7 & 8	B1	B2
Bee 5	Secondary 3 & 4	Year 9 & 10	B2	C1
Bee 6	Secondary 5 & 6	Year 11 & 12	C1	C2

Participants may compete at a higher level than their eligible level; however, competing at a lower level is not permitted.

Participant Registration

Participants may register **individually or through schools** via the National Coordinator. All participant details must be entered **accurately using Latin (Roman) characters only**. Incorrect or incomplete information may result in errors in certification.



Competition Tasks and Time Allowed

Round	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4	Remarks
Preliminary Round	<p>Participants will read a short article and identify and correct ten (10) misspelled or grammatically incorrect words.</p> <p>Each correctly corrected word carries two (2) marks.</p>	<p>Bee 1 & 2 Participants will identify and correctly spell ten (10) words based on a picture and a set of jumbled letters.</p> <p>Bee 3 to 6 Participants will identify and correctly spell ten (10) words based on a definition and a set of jumbled letters.</p> <p>Each correctly spelled word carries two (2) marks.</p>	<p>Participants will listen to a short recording, read the accompanying text, and complete ten (10) gaps by writing the correct spelling of the missing words.</p> <p>Each correctly spelled word carries two (2) marks.</p>	<p>Participants will complete five (5) words using the first letter provided. Each word must fit the number of boxes given; and match the definition provided.</p> <p>Each correctly completed word carries four (4) marks.</p>	<p>Total of 80 marks for the 4 tasks.</p> <p>To be completed with 45 minutes.</p>
Semi-final Round	<p>Same with Preliminary Round but one CEFR level higher</p>	<p>Same with Preliminary Round but one CEFR level higher</p>	<p>Same with Preliminary Round but one CEFR level higher</p>	<p>The national coordinator can select either one task below for the entire country.</p> <p>Option 1: Same with Preliminary Round but one CEFR level higher,</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Option 2 (Oral Spelling): Participants will orally spell five (5) words.</p> <p>Each correctly spelled word carries four (4) marks.</p>	<p>Total of 80 marks for the 4 tasks.</p> <p>To be completed with 35 minutes for Task 1 to 3, or 45 minutes if option 1 selected.</p>
Grand Final Round	<p>Same with Semi-final Round</p>	<p>Same with Semi-final Round</p>	<p>Same with Semi-final Round</p>	<p>(Oral Spelling) Participants will orally spell five (5) words.</p> <p>Each correctly spelled word carries four (4) marks.</p>	<p>Total of 80 marks for the 4 tasks.</p> <p>To be completed with 35 minutes for Task 1 to 3</p>
<p>A Tiebreaker Section shall be included in the paper-based test, requiring participants to complete a task similar in format to Task 4 in the Preliminary Round but one CEFR level higher. The score obtained in this section shall be recorded separately as the Tiebreaker Mark.</p> <p>Where two or more participants obtain equal total scores for Tasks 1 to 4, the Tiebreaker Mark shall be used to determine the ranking. The participant with the higher Tiebreaker Mark shall be ranked higher and declared the winner.</p> <p>If a tie remains after considering the Tiebreaker Mark, a Special Tiebreaker Oral Spelling Round shall be conducted to determine the final ranking. The format and procedures of this round shall be determined by the Organizer, and the Organizer's decision shall be final.</p>					



Oral Spelling Rules

- **Applicability**

The Oral Spelling component shall be conducted **only in the Semi-Final (Optional) and Final Rounds**, unless otherwise specified by the Organizer.
- **Number of Words**

Each participant shall be required to **orally spell five (5) words** during the Oral Spelling component.
- **Word Selection**

Words shall be selected by the Organizer in accordance with the participant's assigned competition level. There is no word bank provided prior to the competition.
- **Procedure**
 - Each word shall be pronounced clearly by the official pronouncer.
 - The pronouncer may provide the **word definition, part of speech, and an example sentence**, upon request.
 - The word shall be pronounced again upon request before participant start the spelling process.
- **Time Allocation**
 - Participants shall be given one (1) minute per word, commencing once the word has been pronounced. Within this time, participants may request the definition, sample sentence, and part of speech, and must complete the spelling of the word.
 - A participant who fails to provide a **complete spelling before the expiration of time (0 seconds)** shall be marked incorrect.
 - The time clock may be paused only if the judges and pronouncer need to confer on a competition-related matter. The participant shall be informed when the clock is paused and resumed.
- **Spelling Rules**
 - Participants must spell the word **letter by letter in English**.
 - Only **complete and correct spellings** shall be awarded marks.
 - Once a participant begins spelling a word, any change, alteration, or restart is strictly prohibited. The spelling shall be deemed final upon the participant's last stated letter.
 - Hyphenated words, capital letters, accents, or special characters shall be treated in accordance with the instructions given by the pronouncer.
- **Scoring**

Each correctly spelled word shall carry **four (4) marks**. No partial marks shall be awarded.
- **Accepted Spelling Variants (British and American English)**

Both British English and American English spellings are accepted, provided the spelling used is a recognized standard form and is applied consistently and correctly for the given word.
- **Finality of Scores and Appeals**

Once the score is announced and acknowledged by the participant on stage, it shall be deemed final. No appeals, objections, or challenges will be accepted thereafter.
- **Tiebreaker Application**

The Oral Spelling component may also be used as a **Special Tiebreaker Round** in the Grand Final round where ties remain after all written and tiebreaker scores have been considered. The format and word selection for such tiebreaker rounds shall be determined by the Organizer.
- **Final Authority**



All decisions made by the judges and the Organizer regarding the Oral Spelling component, including pronunciation, timing, scoring, and outcomes, shall be **final and binding**.

Prizes

- All participants in the Preliminary and Semi-Final Rounds shall receive a Certificate of Participation.
- All participants in the Grand Final Round shall receive a Certificate of Achievement, a medal, and official ESBee merchandise. Additional prizes, if any, will be announced closer to the Grand Final date.

Conditions For Participation

By applying for the Competition, the participants accept the rules and regulations of the Competition as detailed in this document.

Amendments to Rules and Regulations

The Organizer reserves the right to amend, revise, or update the rules and regulations contained in this document at any time, as deemed necessary. Any such amendments shall take effect immediately upon announcement and shall be binding on all participants, schools, coordinators, and related parties.