Battle of the Books
The Battle of the Books is a Kamloops Reading Motivation Program. The goals of the program are to encourage and to recognize students who enjoy reading and to broaden reading interests.

A list of books is chosen for grades three and four, grade five and grades six and seven. Students read the books, discuss them, quiz each other on the contents, and compete in teams of three to correctly answer the questions based on the books. The questions used all begin with “In what book...” so that the answer will always be the title of a book.

New lists of books for each level are compiled each year by a committee of the teacher-librarians based on the Criteria of Book Selection (contained in this handbook).

An attempt is made to vary the titles chosen as to genre and difficulty so that readers may encounter a broad range of books. The district wide program involves a cooperative effort by many teacher librarians. It is popular with students and has provided new opportunities for academic competition. Battle of the Books proves to be effective in its specified purpose – to stimulate an interest in reading!

In the spring of 1987, Faith Bailey introduced the Alaskan Reading Motivation Program to the teacher/librarians with the idea of adapting it to meet their needs.

In the fall of 1987 a group of teacher-librarians reorganized the program to incorporate Canadian content and developed a district model.

The first official district battle was held at Parkcrest Elementary School on April 13th, 1988. Eighteen elementary schools from the district participated. The Kamloops Battle of the Books has grown to have as many as thirty elementary schools in the program.
Organization
Who Organizes Battle Of The Books?

The Battle of the Books is sponsored by the Kamloops School District Teacher–Librarians Association. At the present time this program is organized by the Battle of the Books Chairperson, Faith Bailey. The organization model that is used by the Alaskan Reading Motivational Program is based on the following.

The committee structure is as follows:

**The Battle of the Books Committee shall:**
- promote and organize a district wide Battle of the Books Reading Incentive Program.

**The Battle of the Books Committee Chair shall:**
- apply each year for funding from local School Board
- schedule periodic planning meetings for schools that plan to participate in the program
- email pertinent information to each participating school
- prepare book lists for approval
- appoint and coordinate the distribution of questions
- set up battle schedules for Zone and District
- secure and distribute prizes and awards
- collect photos and articles from participating sites
- determine the 4 zones once schools have registered and distribute such information
- ensure that one of the Zone winners hosts the District Battle and subsequently inform all participating schools of the site location
- conduct an evaluation of the program and make recommendations for improvement or change for the following year

**The sub committee for the BOOKLISTS shall:**
- determine the number of the books for each level
- collect suggested titles from interested persons
- schedule a meeting for those interested in compiling the title lists
- check availability of the paperback format
- determine the book titles for each level
- distribute recommended lists before year end
- send lists to local bookstores and public libraries

**The Chairperson for QUESTIONS shall:**
- assign books to readers to make questions
- establish format for submitting questions
- establish date for the distribution of questions
- maintain a Master File
- assign Question chairs for each grade level at the Zone and District competitions
- send out Zone and District questions to each designated Question Chairperson
The sub committee for Registration and Fees shall:
• pay the expenses (certificates, medallions, trophies)
• send a copy of the registration schools to the Chair
• distribute a yearly accounting of expenses to the KTLA present

The sub committee for AWARDS shall:
• determine prizes and awards for the zone and district winners
• arrange for return of the travelling trophies
• notify sites of the procedures for receiving awards and travelling trophies

BATTLE HOSTS shall:
• invite each participating school to their zone and remind them of the time and materials to bring
• call newspapers
• invite trustees and school board administration to either Zone or District Battle
• obtain music and opening for ceremonies from Chair
• be in contact with Awards Sub committee to obtain medallions and ribbons for the Zone Battle and travelling trophies for District Battle
• delegate tasks such as: readers, timekeepers, score keepers, and crowd controllers
• ask winning schools if they will host District Battle and/or will select questions for District Battle and then email information to the Chair
• email results of the Zone and District Battle to Chair
• collect photos and newspapers clippings and send to Chair
Criteria For Selecting Titles For
The Official Book List

• Number of Books:
  3/4  12 titles
  5    12 titles
  6/7  12 titles

• Grade level / Reading level:
  It has been the practise of the Committee to select books that are either grade level
  or above grade level.

• Interest Level:
  • Consider a variety of subject areas, plots, settings and styles
  • Attempt to have equal number of books that interest both genders
  • Consider adventure books, animal stories, realistic fiction, fantasy, science fiction,
    fantasy, science fiction, biography, historical fiction, folk literature, classics
  • Attempt to have 50 % Canadian content

• Quality of Books
  • Select quality, well reviewed titles that are popular and will “stand the test of time”
  • Award winners – Newbery, Young Reader’s Choice, Canadian Council, Ruth Swartz,
    Canada Library Association Book of the Year Award for Children, Canadian Library
    Association and Young Adult Book Award
  • Books recommended to the committee must previously have been read by the
    teacher-librarian

• Books on previous lists:
  • 50 % of the titles from previous years
  • 50 % new titles ( dependant upon number of librarians willing to make up questions for
    new books)

• Availability of books
  • books should currently be available in paperback format
  • select 15 titles in the event that some are not available
What To Know About Questions

After the book list is finalized, questions are assigned to the individuals to prepare. Questions must be typed on the template provided which is then emailed to Craig MacAlister (cmacalister@sd73.bc.ca). Questions are to be submitted by the deadline. All questions should meet the following list requirements.

1. Each question will begin with “In what book....”
2. Use the present tense and correct grammar.
3. Try to incorporate quotes into the questions whenever possible.

Omit:
1. using the names of characters
2. using words from the title
3. avoid obvious questions
4. eliminate, if possible, questions that can be answered by more than one title

Number of questions
You will make a minimum of 52 questions from each novel.

- Practice – 16 questions
- School – 16 questions
- Zone – 10 questions
- District – 10 questions

Selection of questions for categories
The degree of difficulty should increase from the practice level to the district level. After composing the 52 questions select the hardest questions for the district and end with the easiest for practice.

Proofing
When you finish the question look them over for correctness and clarity. Please do a spell check and have a second person read the questions before submitting.

Distribution of Questions: Battle questions can be downloaded from the website once they have all been compiled. Passwords will be provided by the Battle Chairperson.
TEACHER/LIBRARIAN  Faith Bailey
NOVEL TITLE   Sign of the Beaver

Category:
Practice____ School____ x______ Zone__________District_______(tick one)

1. In what book does this quotation come from “He was alone, with miles of wilderness stretching on either side.”

   The Sign of the Beaver/Elizabeth Speare/Page 1

2. In what book does a character state - “I got away from the town just in time. Warn’t nothing they could prove but they sure had it in for me.”

   The Sign of the Beaver/Elizabeth Speare/Page 14

3. In what book does a character think to himself that “he will have a month with nothing but fish.”

   The Sign of the Beaver/Elizabeth Speare/Page 18

4. In what book does a character say that “he could see now that the man had his mind set on that gun the moment he laid eyes on it.”

   The Sign of the Beaver/ Elizabeth Speare/Page 18

5. In what book does a character say that “The other book was his own, the only one he had ever possessed. Robinson Crusoe.”

   The sign of the Beaver/Elizabeth Speare/Page 30

6. In what book does it state that the “door was swinging open at a crazy angle, one hinge broken. Across the door sill some white stuff dribbled like spilled flour.”

   The Sign of the Beaver/Elizabeth Speare/Page 20

7. In what book does it note that “there were no bees at all in America till the colonists brought them from England.”

   The Sign of the Beaver/Elizabeth Speare/Page 22
Battle of the Books Time Line

SEPTEMBER
Welcome to new participants
Review of rules
Confirmation of new titles’ list
Changes to be given to local bookstores and public libraries
Send out dates to school contacts (avoid planning these dates when planning field trips)
Prepare questions for new titles
Register with Chairperson to receive Battle news by email

OCTOBER
Read!
Discuss promotional ideas
Battle of the Books posters available for display
Staff and student orientation
Publicity begins
Distribution of bookmarks, book check lists and display titles
Give book talks to promote the program

NOVEMBER
Read!
Students begin to read Battle of the Books

DECEMBER
Read!

JANUARY
Read!
Questions available to participating schools
Students practise with questions
Discuss concerns, problems
Discuss motivational activities and share new ideas

FEBRUARY
More Reading!
Students continue to practise with questions
Register with Chairperson
Confirm participation with Chairperson
Offer to host a Zone Battle
MARCH
Practise battles
Teams identified
Teams practise
School competitions to determine school champions
Identify Zone hosts
Send out Zone list of participants
Letter sent to SBO to inform them of our
Battle of the Books participants, our schedule of events for the
Zone and District Battles and to invite SBO trustees and administration
Order prizes for the Battles
Return Battle of the Books trophies to the Henry Grube Education Center

APRIL
Zone and District Battles
Zone hosts to contact media (newspaper)
District host to contact media
Announcement of winners
Suggestion of book titles for next year to be sent to Chairperson
Student evaluation of this year's titles sent to Chairperson

MAY
Meeting of those interested in choosing titles for next year's lists
Lists to be sent to schools, local bookstores and public libraries
Assignment of questions for new titles to teacher - librarians
Order new titles

JUNE
Take home books for your summer reading to get ahead of the game
Prepare questions if you have been assigned a book
Procedures

How To Be Kept Informed

To facilitate a flow of information, each school participating in Battle of the Books should select a contact, specifically if it is not a teacher-librarian. This contact will receive emails keeping schools up to date on Battle news.

Most information regarding Battle of the Books is shared at the monthly teacher-librarian meetings. It is important for the schools where the teacher-librarian is NOT involved to submit a contact name along with their email address to the Battle Chairperson. This is very important to facilitate a flow of information.

How To Order Books

In May of the preceding year, the official book list for the district will be set. Participants can purchase paperbacks through Chapters Bookstore (www.chapters.indigo.ca) at a discount of 30%. Chapters Bookstore keeps a supply of the titles throughout the year. You can also order directly from the paperback publishers or from jobbers. Chapters Bookstore contributes 9 gift certificates to District winners along with prizes at the school level so please try to support them.

How To Process and Circulate Books

If you will be using multiple copies of newly received paperbacks, or even if you will be using already processed library materials, you will want to decide how to prepare them, flag them and mark them as a Battle Books.

Here are some ideas:

- BB 15 (where 15 indicates the year the book was used)
- Put colour coded tags on spines using different colours for each grade level
- Set aside a special shelf for Battle of the Books’ material
- If participants have a difficult time getting a hold of the books as you near School and Zone battles, you may wish to limit books to Battle participants only or set up a hold system if needed.
How to organize your program

There are many ways to organize a Battle of the Books Program and each is valid and appropriate if it works for you. Throughout the district there are programs that operate:

- during lunch hour
- as an after school activity
- as part of your school day
- during designated reading classes (USSR)
- via weekly meetings during library time

There is no right way or only way to operate your school program.

HOW TO PRACTICE BATTLE at the school level

1. Once questions are available on line download them and begin practices. Organize practices at lunch, after school, during silent reading time – whatever works. You may wish to choose your team before spring break so they can prepare accordingly by rereading certain titles, etc.

2. Once the winning school team has been determined the school questions could be used in preparation for the Zone Battle

3. At NO time can zone or district questions be given to any students.

How to configure your teams

Once again, there is no right way to determine which group of three students will represent your school. Students are very conscious of what is fair though, so please think through your procedures carefully.

Here are some possibilities:
- Select the top three students based on some type of competition (hold a spelling bee type battle with the last three contestants remaining being designated champions, or give a test of 24 questions (2 questions per a book) and take the top 3 scores.
- Make all teams randomly, pulling names from a hat
- Have students select their own teams – many testimonials stated that student selected teams work the best and are the most motivated
USE YOUR IMAGINATION AND BE FAIR!

Awards at the School Level
A variety of possibilities exist for rewarding participation and achievement in the program. These possibilities will be limited only by your budget and imagination. You should plan ahead as to what rewards you will provide to winners and readers. You may wish to display the prizes or certificates you will be awarding. If you have a year end Book Fair perhaps award team members a gift certificate to spend at the fair.

As students complete the reading of individual titles you may wish to give them a voucher that can be submitted for a book prize draw. Perhaps a book or poster taken from a previous Book Fair could be used as a prize. Official certificates for the school team can be obtained from the Battle chairperson for the year end school assembly.
Battles
What To Prepare For Your Zone/District Battles

1. Have a banner with the school name boldly printed to cover the front of the table.

2. Make a set of title cards (7.5 cm x 30cm) using a BLACK FELT MARKER. (These are the answer cards that the participating teams will be using). You may abbreviate the Battle titles in order to fit them on the answer cards.

3. Practise with your teams

School team shirts should be made available for use at the Zone and District Battles. Have students wear their medallions to the District Battle.

Holding A Zone Or District Battle

For the battle you should have on hand the following:

- packet of questions, which will be provided by each teacher-librarian who is choosing the questions at each level
- a copy of the OFFICIAL BOOKLIST
- a copy of the RULES (memorize these)
- a score sheet (an example is inserted)
- a time clock or stop watch
- teacher-librarian helpers

Teams should be arranged in the gym in alphabetical order.

You should allow 30 minutes for a battle. If possible read through the questions that you will be using PRIOR TO BATTLES, as the extra time that you take can prevent problems.

You should make certain that all judges, scorekeepers, timekeepers, and question readers have a good understanding of the procedures so that no unfortunate errors are made during the competition. Have a minimum of 4 scorekeepers, of which one, will keep score on the overhead. If there is a discrepancy in the score there must be a consensus before winners are announced.

The following are examples that you may wish to use when hosting a ZONE or DISTRICT BATTLE:

- march all teams into gym while playing Opening Ceremony Music
  (music can be obtained from the Battle Chairperson and must be returned)
- have participants stand at their tables until Battle Music is finished
- school introductions follow
Procedures To Receive Awards

Once a winner has been determined all participants remain at their tables while the winning team comes to the front to receive the awards. The remaining participants shall remain seated until ALL participation ribbons have been distributed to the contestants.

Awards & Prizes

Zone Level
At the Zone level, individual medallions are awarded to the winning team members of each grade level. Participation ribbons are given to all remaining members of the other participating teams. These awards are funded by School District No. 73.

District Level
School District No. 73 also funds the trophies at the District level. Small keeper trophies are presented to each member of the winning team at each grade level. A large trophy is also awarded to each of these teams. This trophy is kept by the winning schools for one year. It is the responsibility of winning teams to return the trophy to the Henry Grube for the District battles for the following year. The winning teams are also presented with a ten dollar gift certificate from Chapters Bookstore.
1. Each team will consist of 3 players. The same players will begin and end the battle with no substitutions at any time. Spares are only used as a replacement due to illness.

2. All teams will answer the same 30 questions.

3. Teams will have 25 seconds to answer a question. After 25 seconds the teams will be asked to hold up their cards. One point will be awarded to each team for the correct answer.

4. During battles the timing will begin as soon as the question has been asked for the first time.

5. The question is repeated within the 25 second time allotment.

6. The timekeeper will announce when there is 5 seconds remaining.

7. Each team will select a member to hold up the answer card for the team. Team members confer before the spokesperson responds, but only the spokesperson will hold up the answer. Once 25 seconds are up the timekeeper will say “Answers, please.” Once the spokesperson holds up the title card it is that title card which will be accepted. The title cards must remain up until all points are awarded. A “thank you” may be given once points have been awarded to indicate to teams that title cards may be returned to the table.

8. A half time score will be announced after 15 questions have been given to the teams. After 30 questions, the final score will be announced and a winner declared. Scorekeepers must agree on the tally of points. It is suggested that the overhead be turned off at half time and at the end of the game while points are being added.

9. In the event of a tie 5 more questions will be given to the tied teams. Teams must respond within 15 seconds to tie breaker questions. If, after the round of 5 questions, a winner is NOT determined, SUDDEN DEATH questions will be presented to the whole team.
Promotional Ideas
How To Promote Battle Of The Books

A wide variety of ideas have been submitted for promoting the program and motivating students to read.

These are suggestions to get started:

- show a video or film version of one of the books
- do group orientations for students, staff, and parents
- do book talks using Battle books
- provide bookmarks for each levels' official book list
- have bookmark contests with the students
- make visible displays or bulletin boards publicizing the program
- include Battle of the Books information in school newsletters and bulletin boards
- encourage teachers to read books or portions of books aloud to students
- hold contests to redesign book covers, design a school logo for Battle of the Books, prepare the most difficult questions, etc.
- have students create large posters of book covers to display
- create a large display including title/author lists, participants' names and places to chart each child's progress
- if available show a video recording of a Battle held in the district

This list is only limited by your own creativity and time. Students who participate in the Battle of the Books are easy to motivate and are enthusiastic.

Do not forget to save a copy of everything you do for next year.

How The Public Library Can Help

Students can use the services and materials of the public library in their Battle of the Books preparations.

The public libraries can help in several ways:

- make books available
- display Battle of the Books information (rules, promotional material, prizes)
- help advertise the program
Public Relations
How To Manage Public Relations

The key to a publicity campaign is planning. Keep a schedule or time line for yourself as a reminder of when to submit articles in school newsletters, when to notify the parents of impending competitions, when to call the media, when to bring in your camera to record momentous events, etc. Please include in publicity items that the Battle of the Books is sponsored by Kamloops Thompson District Teacher-librarians. Local newspapers, local radio and television stations, as well as district wide publications, are anxious to read/hear about what is occurring in the schools. If you have to take the pictures and write the articles yourself, or if you have to record the interviews, or set up the video gear yourself, it will be worth the effort to expose more people to the Battle of the Books program. Communicating with the parents and the community about this popular school program will also open up channels that can be later utilized when vital support may be needed.

The Battle Chairperson will be keeping historical data. Please send all photographs as well as local news reports to the Battle Chairperson for use in all publicity. Just to remember to COMMUNICATE often with those around you who might otherwise miss out on important Battle events. Next, SAVE EVERYTHING YOU DO, every invitation you send, every letter home, every news item, every photo you take, every time line that you prepare for yourself. You may wish to re-use items or remind yourself about ideas from year to year!

In Conclusion

Participants around the district have given the Battle of the Books program good reviews. Students do return year after year to participate. Students persevere from the outset until April reading good books. Most conclusively, teachers and teacher-librarians around the district, take on the responsibility year after year of implementing the program. Give Battle of the Books a try in your school.