

OJCL State Certamen Rules and Guidelines

- Certamen is a team sport that is similar to Academic Challenge. Three teams compete against each other striving to be the first team to respond to the questions on numerous subjects (the Latin language, History, Life/Culture, Geography, etc). Certamen at the State Convention is a major activity: 3 preliminary rounds and the semi-finals are on Saturday morning, depending on level, and the Finals are held in the General Assembly space on Saturday Night.
- The Certamen Chairs are Mr. Dean and Mr. Cowett. The Certamen Coordinator is Mrs. Siklosi-Raraigh.

Certamen Format

- Questions for Levels 1 & 2 will follow the guidelines of the NLE syllabi for Levels 1 & 2. The breakdown of questions will be approximately: 50% language, 25% history & culture, 25% mythology. There will be some overlap in question categories, so these percentages are approximate.
- In the Upper Level, the syllabi for Levels 1-6 will be used (which means ‘anything is fair game’), and literature questions will be included. The breakdown of questions will be approximately: 40% language, 20% history & culture, 20% mythology, and 20% literature. There will be some overlap in question categories, so these percentages are approximate.
- In all levels of competition, each team will play three preliminary rounds in a non-seeded round robin format. There will be 15 toss-up questions without bonuses in each of these first two rounds, and 12 toss-up questions with one bonus in Round Three. 3 teams will play at a time.
- The nine teams with the highest point totals after the preliminary rounds will move on to the semi-finals. In the semi-finals, the nine teams will be seeded and matched into three games of three teams each, according to the following pattern: 1 v 5 v 9; 2 v 6 v 7; 3 v 4 v 8. Ties for seeding will be broken according to the high score in Round Three; if there is still a tie, there will be a coin flip. There will be twelve toss-up questions, with two bonus questions each. The three winning teams from the semi-finals will compete in the finals, which will have the same format as the semi-finals.
- On toss-up questions, you may “buzz in” at any time, even before the question is finished, but you must wait to give your answer until you have been acknowledged (the person running the buzzer machine will say ‘A4’ or ‘C2’). If you buzz in before the question is finished, **be aware that the buzzer person will loudly say ‘stop,’** possibly preventing you from hearing the final few syllables the reader might say before halting.
- If no one buzzes in during the reading of a toss-up question, **then you have ten (10) seconds to buzz in from the time the question is finished.**
- You have **five (5) seconds to begin your answer** once you have been acknowledged. Your **first answer** is the one the reader will accept. Saying “um” or “uh” does not constitute beginning your answer, and your time will continue to run down. Do not elaborate. Give the concise answer only. Always be prepared to spell your answer if asked. **THERE WILL BE NO PROMPT FOR AN ANSWER ON THE TOSS-UP QUESTIONS.** The timer will begin a silent 5-second count and will loudly say ‘time’ after 5 seconds. The moderator & judge will be the sole arbiters of whether a student began an answer before ‘time’ was called.
- If another team buzzes in and gives an incorrect answer, you may ask to have the question read again for your team, provided that no one from your team has buzzed in yet.
- Do not confer with your teammates on toss-up questions. Your opportunity to respond may be revoked if the reader or judge determines a violation of this rule.
- Teammates may confer on bonus questions during Round Three, semi-finals and finals. **The team captain must give the answer within ten seconds from the time the bonus question is finished.** In cases where the team captain is concerned about mispronouncing the answer, he/she may address the reader and request to defer to another team member. **THERE WILL BE A PROMPT FOR THE BONUS ANSWERS AFTER 10 SECONDS.**
- Vocabulary questions require the following format, unless otherwise directed by the question:
 - Verbs: First or second principal part
 - Nouns: Nominative singular
 - Adjectives: Masculine nominative singular

- If a mythology question mentions Greek figures, it must be answered with the relevant Greek name; if it mentions Roman figures, it must be answered with the relevant Roman name. Example: “What god of war was the son of Zeus and Hera?” The acceptable answer is Ares, not Mars, which will be counted wrong. It DOES NOT MATTER whether a player has hyper-buzzed before such signifying information is read.
- **If the moderator is unsure of a player's answer, the moderator or judge may ask for it to be spelled. A good rule of thumb for mythological names: all the syllables should be present; so, “Nemosyne” would likely be accepted, but “Mosyne” would likely not. Latin words, of course, must be spelled 100% correctly. The moderator and judge, however, are the SOLE ARBITERS of whether a player's answer is “close enough” to the standard spelling to be counted.**
- If you would like to challenge an answer in the preliminary rounds, please **hold the challenge until the end of the round**. Direct your challenge respectfully to the moderator and judge, and check in later to see what the result is. In semifinals and finals, all challenges to the first 11 questions must be lodged BEFORE the beginning of the 12th question. Again, be respectful at all times.
- For passage questions, the moderators will read the passage twice before the toss-up question is read, and once more before the first bonus. **No further requests for repetition will be entertained.**
- The certamen rules for the NJCL will be used to resolve disputes: <http://njcl.org/pages/Certamen>

Eligibility and Registration of Teams

- ALL Certamen teams shall be PRE-REGISTERED via the web site. A Club may pre-register 6 individuals for Level 1, 6 for Level 2, and 6 for Upper Level, but only 4 players are permitted to play in each round. Substitutions are not permitted during a round, but different combinations of players can play in different rounds.
- A student who has stopped taking Latin at a lower level may not continue to compete on that level for the additional years when he/she would have moved to a higher level if Latin study had continued. Questions and requests for valid exceptions should be directed to the State Chairs prior to Pre-registration. NB: this rule is in effect for Certamen only; it does not affect other contests unless indicated elsewhere.
- Delegates must compete at their current Latin Level or may compete on higher-level teams. A Delegate shall not compete on a team lower than their current Latin Level. Competing on a higher-level team will not disqualify a Delegate from participating at that higher level at the next State Convention.

Certamen Competition and Observation Policies

- ❖ Each team member MUST display his or her nametag plainly at all times. If a team member does not have his or her nametag, he or she is ineligible to play that or any subsequent matches until they are wearing their nametag. If a competitor does not have his or her nametag, they must leave the competition area immediately. Matches will not be delayed to enable a competitor to retrieve his or her nametag, nor for a team substitution to be performed. No team member may join his or her team during a match already in progress. No exceptions.
- ❖ No students are permitted to observe a Certamen match without their name tag plainly displayed.
- ❖ There shall be no loitering or talking in the corridor or room adjacent to Certamen match locations.
- ❖ If you are scheduled to compete in a Creative Arts contest, and your level is still in rounds at your performance time, visit the Certamen Chairs/Coordinator (Mrs. Siklosi-Raraigh or Mr. Cowett or Mr. Dean) to make arrangements to change your performance time.
- ❖ At any time, any Adult supervising, administrating, or observing may ask any student or adult to leave if they are being disruptive or unfairly influencing the competition or do not observe the rules herein. If so instructed, the individual MUST leave the area immediately. Objecting or resisting will be possible grounds for disqualification from competition or participation in the Convention if deemed necessary by a State Chair.
- ❖ Unsportsmanlike or disrespectful conduct toward Judges, Moderators, Administrators, Supervisors, other competitors on one's team or other teams, or in general will not be tolerated and will result in disqualification of an individual or Team if deemed necessary. OJCL reserves the right to assess penalty points for inappropriate behavior on Team scores.