

Lone Star Challenge Competition Manual

An elementary school program to
enhance the STAAR testing program

Revised 9/1/2026



Lone Star Challenge

Sponsored by Texas Academic Decathlon

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Introduction – Lone Star Challenge (LSC)

The LSC is an academic competition for elementary students in grades 4-6. The competition is patterned after the premier academic competition in the nation, the Texas Academic Decathlon, with curriculum based mainly on the fundamentals of the STAAR testing program.

A team will consist of nine students—three students from the fourth grade, three from the fifth grade, and three from the sixth grade. The team may include three fifth grade students and three fifth-grade advanced students if the sixth-grade campuses are located separately. Each team may have one alternate per grade level.

Students may compete up but not move down. In other words, sixth-grade students may not be substituted for fifth-grade students.

Two written exams will be given. Questions will be taken from the study guide provided by the Texas Academic Decathlon/Lone Star Challenge test writers. The focus will be on reading, writing, math, social studies, and science.

The Super Quiz will be the highlight of the event. The three fourth-grade students move to the front of the room and answer five questions each, then the fifth-, and sixth-grade students do the same – all performed in a game show-style atmosphere.

On each testing date, or a date no earlier than a week prior to the competition, the students will be given three essay prompts based on the assigned novel.

Coach Selection

Each elementary campus must provide a coach for the team. It is encouraged to recruit the assistance of other teachers who are specialists in one of the test areas.

The coach is encouraged to develop a strong relationship with the students as well as the parents of students at the campus. The ideal coach should have the following qualities –

- ☐ Enjoys challenging students up to and beyond their ability levels
- ☐ Enjoys enriching his own mind with new material on a regular basis
- ☐ Has a sense of humor that is engaging to the students
- ☐ Is eager to take ownership for their program and build it successfully
- ☐ Is willing to put in extra hours to establish the program on a strong footing
- ☐ Enjoys competition and can effectively relay a love of competition to students
- ☐ Is creative/positive enough to come up with a way around each potential concern

- Is a willing ambassador for STARR improvement for the district and understands LSC's place in that district goal
- Is the type of teacher who always puts the development of the child first and foremost in all that he does (Students can sense when this is not the case.)

How will the tests be given to the competitors?

For integrity purposes, the test will be sent electronically to the principal of the campus or the district LSC coordinator. The test must be given by a designated administrator of the elementary school/district. Coaches will not be in the testing room.

The practice test, Resource Guide, and the Super Quiz guide will be sent directly to the coach or district coordinator.

How will essays be given to the competitors?

Essays should be written by students at their individual campuses during the designated timeline. Essay writing is done on paper or in a blue book. The completed essay should be graded by a minimum of two readers.

A grading rubric is in the essay section of this competition manual.

Sample essay prompts will be included in the study packet provided by the Texas Academic Decathlon.

Essay graders will need to be recruited. Elementary, middle, and high school English/language arts teachers are excellent graders!

Two essay graders grade each essay, and if the point spread is more than 100, then the essay is given to a third grader. See essay section in this competition manual for further details.

How will the Super Quiz competition be set up?

Super Quiz can be held at an individual school or can be at a common site for the entire district to witness.

The Super Quiz can be held on a Saturday for the entire district to witness or it can be held any time that the school day schedule permits if it is to be done at the individual school.

Proctors and set up/take down workers need to be recruited for the event.

The date for LSC competition is the last Saturday of April, or the week before or the week after.

National Honor Society, cheerleaders, and/or drill team members are ideal students to recruit for proctors. PTA members, Octathletes, and Decathletes could also be called upon to volunteer.

Where do the study materials come from? Who pays for them?

The Texas Academic Decathlon develops study materials for the LSC. The packet will include a Resource Guide and a Super Quiz Guide. These materials are available for purchase through the LSC Study Materials Order Form available online.

Team registration will cover your practice and competition tests, medals, and plaques. In December/January a practice test will be sent directly to the coach.

Competition tests will be sent to the designated principal of the campus or district coordinator at least a month before the competition date.

Will the tests for LSC really enhance the STAAR performance?

The test writers use critical-level thinking questions designed to improve performance on the STARR testing. Application and analysis, as well as problem-solving questions, are also included. LSC tests are not rote memorization tests.

Should we recruit GT students only?

The LSC should be open to every student in school. The purpose of the LSC is to raise STAAR performance percentages at elementary schools in Texas. The more intellectually diverse the participants, the more effective this goal becomes.

Events of the LSC

1. Math and Science – 25 questions on each subject – 1,000 points (each question worth 20 points)
2. Language Arts and Social Studies – 25 questions on each subject – 1,000 points (each question worth 20 points)
3. Essay – Students choose one of three prompts based on the assigned novel and write an essay in 50 minutes. (Essay worth 1,000 points)
4. Super Quiz – relay event in which students from each team answer questions based on content from the Super Quiz Study Guide. Each team member answers 5 (five) questions. The Super

Quiz is the final event of the competition and takes place before an audience of friends, administrators, and family members.

Eligibility

The nine-member team is composed of students grouped in three divisions—

Red team – 4th grade students

White team – 5th grade students

Blue team – 6th grade students

Students may compete in a higher category. No student, however, may “compete down.”

Awards

Individual medals will be awarded for essay, math/science, and language arts/social studies in the Red, White, and Blue categories.

Team plaques and medals for the winning teams in Super Quiz (both Relay and Team) and Overall Team are also awarded.

Awards Program – Sample Script

Awards Program

Revised 9/01/2026

Welcome by _____

Thank you _____. We have now arrived at the event that culminates the day's activities – the Awards Presentations. My name is

_____, and I will be conducting this exciting program.

Assisting me with this presentation of awards are: _____ and

_____.

I would like to review for you the procedures that we will be following as we present the awards today.

We will present individual awards in the following categories at each grade level first: Essay, language arts/social studies, math/science, Super Quiz, and lastly, the individual awards. Gold, silver, and bronze medals will be awarded to individual winners in each division and each event and to the overall individual winners.

For the areas of essay, math/science, language arts/social studies, and Super Quiz, we will present individual 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place medals to the Red, White, and Blue team members.

We will also do this for students with the highest overall scores in 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of the red, white, and blue team members.

All winners should stay on the risers until the audience is instructed to applaud.

We are ready to begin.

First Category – Essay

The Essay event requires students to choose one of three prompts provided and write an essay based on the novel, *The Wednesday Wars*, by Gary D. Schmidt. Essay prompts were consistent with those on the STAAR assessments. The topic for 2026-2027 was “1960s.”

Third Place Winners are: (Actually read from computer generated report.)

Red _____ of _____

White _____ of _____

Blue _____ of _____

Second Place Winners are:

Red _____ of _____

White _____ of _____

Blue _____ of _____

First Place Winners are:

Red _____ of _____

White _____ of _____

Blue _____ of _____

After all pictures are finished ...

CONGRATULATIONS!

YOU MAY RETURN TO YOUR SEATS.

Second Category – Mathematics/Science

The second category is Mathematics and Science. The Math/Science test contained fifty questions developed from STAAR-based skills. The twenty-five math questions covered basic math skills as well as the STAAR math format. Science questions required basic science knowledge and the application of content presented in *1960s Resource Guide*.

Third Place Winners are: (Actually read from computer generated report.)

Red _____ of _____

White _____ of _____

Blue _____ of _____

Second Place Winners are:

Red _____ of _____

White _____ of _____

Blue _____ of _____

First Place Winners are:

Red _____ of _____

White _____ of _____

Blue _____ of _____

After all pictures are finished ...

CONGRATULATIONS!

YOU MAY RETURN TO YOUR SEATS.

Language Arts/Social Studies

The third category is Language Arts/Social Studies. The twenty-five Language questions required a student to read and answer questions based on an original reading passage. The Social Science questions addressed concepts based on the STAAR reporting categories and content from the *1960s Resource Guide*.

Third Place Winners are: (Actually read from computer generated report.)

Red _____ of _____

White _____ of _____

Blue _____ of _____

Second Place Winners are:

Red _____ of _____

White _____ of _____

Blue _____ of _____

First Place Winners are:

Red _____ of _____

White _____ of _____

Blue _____ of _____

After all pictures are finished ...

CONGRATULATIONS!

YOU MAY RETURN TO YOUR SEATS.

Super Quiz Team winners

The Super Quiz topic was “*Popular Culture of the 1960s.*”

Third Place Winners are: (Actually read from computer generated report.)

Red _____ of _____

White _____ of _____

Blue _____ of _____

Second Place Winners are:

Red _____ of _____

White _____ of _____

Blue _____ of _____

First Place Winners are:

Red _____ of _____

White _____ of _____

Blue _____ of _____

After all pictures are finished ...

CONGRATULATIONS!

YOU MAY RETURN TO YOUR SEATS.

Super Quiz Team relay winners

The Super Quiz topic was “*Popular Culture of the 1960s.*”

Third Place Winners are: (Actually read from computer generated report.)

Red _____ of _____

White _____ of _____

Blue _____ of _____

Second Place Winners are:

Red _____ of _____

White _____ of _____

Blue _____ of _____

First Place Winners are:

Red _____ of _____

White _____ of _____

Blue _____ of _____

After all pictures are finished ...

CONGRATULATIONS!

YOU MAY RETURN TO YOUR SEATS.

Overall Individual winners

Students who have the highest combined score for all events in each division will now be recognized. Please come forward as I call your name. (Computer program should generate the report below.)

3rd Place Red _____ of _____ school

3rd Place White _____ of _____ school

3rd Place Blue _____ of _____ school

2nd Place Red _____ of _____ school

2nd Place White _____ of _____ school

2nd Place Blue _____ of _____ school

1st Place Red _____ of _____ school

1st Place White _____ of _____ school

1st Place Blue _____ of _____ school

After all pictures are finished ...

CONGRATULATIONS

YOU MAY RETURN TO YOUR SEATS.

COACHES: Please award gold medals to your highest scoring Red, White, and Blue team members at this time.

PAUSE

The winning team's score and the individual team members' scores will be sent to the Texas Academic Decathlon state office. They will be ranked statewide.

On behalf of the Texas Academic Decathlon and _____ Elementary School/District,
you are all winners by virtue of your dedication to education and the spirit of competition.

Parents and guests, thank you for coming to cheer on these academic competitors.

Calculators

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No calculators
will be used
in the
LSC competition.

Coordinator's Responsibilities

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1. Study the “***Competition Manual***” and become familiar with all aspects of the Lone Star Challenge competition.

2. Prepare a budget

Register your team and receive your study materials’ packet and medals.

3. Appoint committee chairpersons and work with them in areas of responsibility in setting dates, arranging facilities, purchasing materials and supplies, selecting committee members, judges, proctors, etc. Below are possible committees. In some cases one or more may be combined or not even used.

Site Selection Computer Scoring

Essay Facilities/Security

Awards Program Test Distribution

Academic Testing Identification Badges

Registration Food Service (meals and snacks)

Super Quiz Printed Programs

Nurse

4. The school administrator will communicate with all competing schools providing meet information, dates, deadlines, forms to be returned, etc.

5. The personnel needed below – based on a meet of 20 teams and is **strictly an estimate**.

2-4 Essay tabulators (depending on manual tabulation or computer)

7-9 essay graders

1 Nurse

1 Essay chairperson

1 Security person

9-12 Proctors for academic tests

1 Custodian

9 Runners for academic tests

1 Building facilities person

1 Proctor/runner chairperson

1 Sign preparation

1-2 Computer scoring personnel

2 Test distribution center

1-20 Super Quiz proctors (one proctor is needed for each team)

3 Awards program /stage decoration

2 Greeters/building hosts

2 Registration

Email final team scores to the state office -

Rick Hopkins, director@txacadec.org

Much of the personnel you will need will depend on whether or not you will host a district-wide competition.

State Office gets --

- ☐ Team totals: name and score in rank order
- ☐ Super Quiz: name and score in rank order
- ☐ Red, white, blue first-, second-, and third-place team members
- ☐ Copy of the awards program script with all student winners]

Also, unused medals must be RETAINED by school or district coordinator.

Essay

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1. The essay is a 50-minute writing event. Students select one of three prompts provided by the state office. The prompts are based on the LSC assigned novel. Essays are written at the school in a testing environment the week prior to competition.
2. The graders should be familiar with elementary age-appropriate writing ability. The graders should be trained to use the rubric and be flexible in their grading. They must be able to view the essay as a rough draft and not a finished product remembering that even a 1,000-point essay (highest possible score) paper need not be perfect.
3. All papers should be graded by two graders. A third grader is used if the point spread is more than 100 points.
4. Plan on an orientation just prior to the actual grading. Note on the rubric that a minimal score of 300 will be given provided the essay is legible, is not a blank paper, and if the ***prompt is sufficiently addressed.***
5. One-third of the judges will grade only 4th grade papers, one-third will grade only 5th grade team papers, and one-third will grade only 6th team papers. One or two judges may need to be designated as a “third reader” judge, or you may choose to use one of the regular graders who was not one of the two original graders of a particular paper.
6. Once essays have been graded and entered into the computer, they will be returned to the coaches (either at the end of the meet or mailed the following week). This allows the coach to work with the students for future competitions.
7. The room chosen for essay grading should be a large area preferably with tables and chairs as opposed to chair-desks. It should be a quiet place away from other activities. The library is a good place.
8. Students may use either pen or pencil.
9. Basically, two graders grade a paper and record independent scores. If the point difference is 100 or less, the scores are simply averaged for the final score. If the difference is over 100 points, a third person must grade the essay without knowing the other two scores. The three scores are now compared, and the average is taken of the two scores that are closest to each other. If the comparison of the three scores results in the difference between the two sets being the same, the average of the higher two scores becomes the final score:
Such as 3 scores of 400, 600 and 800.
The difference between 400 and 800 is 400.
The difference between 400 and 600 is 200.
The difference between 600 and 800 is 200.
The final score would be 700 (the average of the two higher scores)

10. On the next page is a form that can be used both as the grader's place to record his/her score and as the tabulation form. If 8 ½ x 11 papers are too cumbersome, you may choose to use 3x5 cards. In either case, the paper or the cards will need to be attached to the essay (with matching ID#s) between the essay being completed and given to the graders.

Pre-printed label with student ID#
(not name) and place for student to
indicate prompt # written about.

ESSAY GRADER SCORING AND TABULATION FORM

Grader # _____ Essay Score _____

Tabulations (transfer scores from all graders to one page)

1. First grader _____

2. Second grader _____

Difference _____

Average (if difference is 100 or less. Round up if fraction) _____

Final Score

3. Third grader _____ *(if difference between 1 and 2 is more than 100)*

Average of two scores closest to each other _____

(use highest average if difference between two sets **Final Score**

is the same.)

1. Staple this form and other graders' forms to outside of bluebook.
2. Arrange bluebooks in numerical order (1101, 1102, 1103, etc).
3. Deliver to scoring room to be entered in computer.
4. When entered, another committee will sort bluebooks by schools to be returned to coaches.

Lone Star Challenge

ESSAY RUBRIC

(Judges score essays from 300 – 1000 points in intervals of 25)

Outstanding (900-1000) Essays in this range will reflect most of the following characteristics:

- **Focus / Scope** The essay completely and specifically addresses *all* aspects of the prompt with conviction, insight, enthusiasm, and perceptiveness.
- **Organization** The essay demonstrates a *masterful* development of ideas, an exceptional command of traditional essay construction (an introduction with an interesting opening statement, a powerful and controlled thesis, well-developed body paragraphs, and an effective conclusion), and coherence achieved through the use of subtle and powerful transitional expressions.
- **Content / Development** The essay reflects a *sophisticated* and/or *imaginative* presentation of specific and powerful details, examples, and elaborative content that effectively develop the ideas presented in the thesis and contribute significantly to the author's purpose and tone.
- **Language / Style** The essay demonstrates a sophistication of sentence structure and stylistic variety, an authorial voice that invigorates the prose, sophisticated and appropriate vocabulary, and a flair for written expression that distinguishes the essay as being superbly written in a way that justifies the writer's authorial choices.
- **Writing Conventions** The essay demonstrates a *mastery* of grammar, punctuation, usage and mechanics.

Excellent (775-875) Essays in this range will reflect most of the following characteristics:

- **Focus / Scope** The essay completely and specifically addresses *all* aspects of the prompt with authority and enthusiasm.
- **Organization** The essay demonstrates a *very effective* development of ideas and a command of traditional essay construction (an introduction with an opening statement, a controlled thesis, well-developed body paragraphs, and a conclusion), and coherence based on the use of transitional expressions.
- **Content / Development** The essay reflects a *very effective* presentation of specific details, examples, and elaborative content that effectively develop the ideas presented in the thesis and contribute to the author's purpose and tone.
- **Language / Style** The essay demonstrates the effective use of sentence structure, a strong authorial voice, appropriate vocabulary, and an overall competence in written expression that distinguishes the essay as being well-written and appropriate to the author's purpose.
- **Writing Conventions** The essay demonstrates the *effective* use of grammar, punctuation, usage and mechanics, with no errors that impede meaning.

Good (650-750) Essays in this range will reflect most of the following characteristics:

- **Focus / Scope** The essay completely and specifically address *all* aspects of the prompt.
- **Organization** The essay demonstrates a *competent* development of ideas and an understanding of the traditional elements of essay construction (introduction, thesis, developed body paragraphs, and conclusion), and the use of transitional expressions.
- **Content / Development** The essay reflects a *competent* presentation of specific details, examples, and elaborative content that develop the ideas presented in the thesis.
- **Language / Style** The essay demonstrates the effective use of sentence structure and voice, appropriate vocabulary, and an overall competence in written expression.
- **Writing Conventions** The essay demonstrates the *effective* use of grammar, punctuation, usage and mechanics, with *few* errors that interfere with the effectiveness of the content or tone.

Average/Fair (525-625) Essays in this range will reflect most of the following characteristics:

- **Focus / Scope** The essay addresses the most important aspects of the prompt.
- **Organization** The essay demonstrates an *adequate* understanding of the traditional elements of essay construction (introduction, thesis, body paragraphs and conclusion) and the use of transitional expressions, but may have serious lapses in the sequential or logical progression of ideas.
- **Content / Development** The essay reflects an *adequate*, but sometimes repetitive or undeveloped presentation of specific details and examples.
- **Language / Style** The essay demonstrates a simplistic use of sentence structure, elementary vocabulary, little authorial voice, breaks in coherence, and tonal inconsistency.

□ **Writing Conventions** The essay demonstrates an *adequate*, but sometimes inconsistent use of grammar, punctuation, usage and mechanics, with some errors that impede effectiveness.

Weak (325-500) Essays in this range will reflect most of the following characteristics:

□ **Focus / Scope** The essay addresses some aspects of the prompt, but may ignore others.

□ **Organization** The essay demonstrates an *inadequate* understanding of the traditional elements of essay construction (introduction, thesis, body paragraphs and conclusion) and may have serious lapses in the sequential progression of ideas.

□ **Content / Development** The essay reflects an *inadequate* or *superficial* presentation of specific details and examples and only marginally develops the ideas presented in the thesis.

□ **Language / Style** The essay demonstrates a simplistic or flawed use of sentence structure and vocabulary, little authorial voice, and a lack of clarity.

□ **Writing Conventions** The essay demonstrates *significant weaknesses* in the use of grammar, punctuation, usage and mechanics that may compromise meaning.

Minimal Score (300) Essays in this range reflect some reliance on or a misreading of the prompt, but only minimal organization, content development, and minimal control of language, style, and writing conventions.

No Score (0) Non-responsive, completely off-prompt, illegible, or totally inappropriate

Facilities/Security Chairperson

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1. Assist administrator in determining building site and rooms needed. Prepare map showing utilization of rooms.
2. Appoint committee to make needed building signs.
3. Arrange for a phone receptionist, nurse, custodian, and security personnel to be on duty during the meet. Assign security to circulate in designated areas.
4. Appoint a committee to receive student name/ID labels and tape to desks in testing rooms.
5. Assist Super Quiz committee in providing seating and equipment for Super Quiz.
6. Provide a schedule to custodians to make sure rooms are unlocked at required times.
7. Be available throughout meet for needs that arise.
8. Assist with equipment needed for awards program.

Facility Needs

1 Meet office	It may or may not be the school office. It needs to be where the phone number is that has been given in advance for calls from parents, schools, etc. It should be manned at all hours during meet. It is the information desk.
1 Appeals office	Will probably be meet office
1 Scoring room	Ideally, near the test distribution room
1 Test distribution room	Locate, if possible, near the test scoring room as well as to the testing rooms
1 Team room per team	Large enough for 11 people per team
1 Essay grading area	Library is a good place
1 Spectator gym	For Super Quiz
1 Auditorium for meet assembly	Optional
1 Facility for awards program	Probably auditorium
1 School nurse's office	
1 Area for registration	
1 Hospitality room for coaches	Optional if goodies are provided to teams and coaches through the team rooms or a central "goodie" place.

Rooms for essays and written tests	A 20-school meet could put one student from each team in nine rooms for testing. This is not a requirement. If short of testing rooms, the number of students per room may be increased to 30, thus requiring only 6 rooms.
1 Area for meals	Some schools allow meals to be eaten in team rooms.

Food Service

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(Most of the following will depend on whether you are hosting a district-wide meet or a single-campus meet.)

1. Make available to teams a breakfast meal and a lunch meal. The cost of these two will be paid by the home school or individual student. Teams may choose to eat elsewhere or bring food in. Let teams know in advance what will be served and what the cost will be. Survey schools in advance to know how much food to prepare. Ask schools to pay in advance or bring a check with them. Prepare meal tickets as needed.
2. Morning and afternoon snacks may be provided by the school if budgeting permits. If preferred, add a designated amount to the breakfast/lunch check to provide snacks. Snacks may be delivered to team rooms or may be set up at designated places where the students will come to get them (cafeteria, foyer, etc.)

Medals and Plaques

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1. Each participant at the meet will receive a participation certificate.
2. Medals are given to Red, White, and Blue team members in first, second, and third places.
3. The team coach receives the same medal as do students for team winners.
4. Individual event medals (for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places, respectively in Red, White, and Blue in –

Essay

Mathematics/Science

Language Arts/Social Studies

Super Quiz

5. Highest Red, White, and Blue student on each team receives a gold medal. Medals are usually given in advance to each coach who awards them after he receives his team scores and determines who these three high scoring students are.
6. Individual overall top-scoring students for all events combined to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places in Red, White, and Blue.
7. Super Quiz Team and Relay winners and coaches receive individual medals and a plaque.
8. Team overall winners and coaches receive individual medals and a plaque in first, second, and third in Red, White, and Blue divisions.
9. Medals are ordered from and shipped by Monarch Trophy in San Antonio, Texas, by each elementary school administrator/district coordinator in advance of the meet (billed to TAD). Order forms will be sent in March to all participating schools. Unused medals are to be retained by the competition host.
10. Final team scores MUST be sent to the state office to be ranked statewide.

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Recruiting a Team and Study Strategies

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Recruiting Your Team

Each school needs to devise its own strategy for team selection and study format. Following are possible procedures you could use:

Team Selection Process – “A”

Teacher recommendations, preliminary testing in each area, achievement by test scores, cognitive abilities scores, and grade-point averages were reviewed by the academic coaches. After narrowing the number of potential participants to twenty, an informal discussion and interview with each student should be held.

Hold a night orientation meeting for parents and students. All students and parents were in attendance. An overview of the Lone Star Challenge program and discussion of commitment necessary for participation was presented.

During the following week, three of the students decided they would not be able to devote the appropriate amount of time to preparing for the LSC competition. These students were replaced by those earlier identified as potential participants.

Team Selection Process – “B”

Public address system announcements were made regarding LSC orientation. Meetings were held with approximately forty interested students. Each student was requested to complete a self-report sheet which required such information as: 1) estimated grade-point average; 2) strengths and weaknesses in subject areas; 3) task commitment; 4) teacher names for reference purposes.

The academic coaches and the principal utilize student self-report information, achievement test scores, cognitive abilities scores, grade point averages, types of courses taken, and teacher/counselor recommendations to make the team selection.

Letters of appreciation were sent to all students who had indicated an interest in participating. The students not selected were encouraged to consider applying for next year's team. A night meeting for parent/student orientation was held. A great deal of enthusiasm for the program was expressed.

Team Selection Process – “C”

Public address system announcements were made regarding the LSC program. Orientation meetings were held. There was substantial self-elimination due to students' commitments in other areas. Grade-point averages were reviewed. Student interest was the major criteria. Twenty-one students began the study process.

Team Selection Process – “D”

The principal sends notices to teachers, asking for names of students who would be suitable for meeting the criteria of commitment and the ability to follow through. Teachers returned the list. Also, the principal recruits teachers who would be interested in coaching. Counselors were also asked for recommendations. A master list was compiled and if a student's name was recommended by several teachers, they were considered to be a good candidate. Notices were sent to the students indicating they had been recommended for the LSC competition. A meeting with 100 students during lunch asked the major question, are you interested? Interviews were set up and a core of dedicated, interested, and capable students drilled for the event.

Study Strategies

Study Strategies will evolve from within the makeup of the students, coaches, resources, and facilities available. The following are procedures that could be utilized –

Study Strategy – “A”

A study center is set up in the library. Resources are available for independent research. Students and coaches meet four afternoons each week. Each weekend students do research, devise test questions, and make outlines on assigned topics. Each student, in the afternoon sessions, presents information to the other students. The coaches compile the student-generated test items. These practice tests are administered to the students. Teachers meet with the students during the afternoon sessions to provide lectures on materials on the specified subject area topics.

Study Strategy – “B”

Students have access to a study center in the library. Resources are available for independent research. Students and coaches meet four mornings a week from 7:30 a.m.-8:30 a.m. There is concentration on one subject area per week. One section of each subject area outline is assigned to each student. The students do independent research, devise ten test questions, and prepare a presentation on the material. Each student presents the information to the other students. The coaches compile sixty questions into a test. This test is answered over the weekend and then graded by the coaches. This feedback gives the students information as to additional study needs. Teachers of specific subject areas meet with the students during morning sessions to provide lectures and materials. Plans have been made to hold study sessions on Saturday mornings and during breaks.

Lone Star Challenge

Registration Form

2026-2027 Competition Year

School _____

District _____

Street Address _____

City / Zip _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

Coaches _____

Email address _____

School Principal _____ Principal's Email _____

Teams consist of a combination of three 4th grade, three 5th grade, and three 6th grade students. Students can "compete up" grade levels, but not down. Up to 2 teams per school may participate: **\$200 fee per team**

Please register _____ team(s) @ \$200 per team. They will be designated as Team A and Team B from _____
(school name) for competition purposes.

Important Dates

Team Registration Deadline	January
Coaches' Clinic	Coordinator's Discretion
Order Medals	March
Student Registration Deadline	April
Tentative Competition Day	End of April/First of May

Please duplicate this form to enroll other schools in your district. Checks should be made payable to the **TEXAS ACADEMIC DECATHLON** and may be sent later, but the **Registration Form** should be sent as soon as possible:

Texas Academic Decathlon
1141 North Loop 1604 E, #105, PMB 479
San Antonio, TX 78232

For additional information, please contact the State Office
Rick Hopkins, Executive Director
Phone: 210-632-8796
Email: director@txacadec.org

(COMPLETE FORM IN ITS ENTIRETY)

Competition Day

Suggested Schedule

Revised 9/01/2026

- 7:30** Arrive at Competition Site
- Turn in Essay Packets
- Retrieve competition materials from coordinator
- No essay packet will be accepted after 7:45
- 8:00** **Essay graders** report for training and grading
- 8:15** Mathematics/Science Test Instructions
- 8:20-9:05** Mathematics/Science Test
- 8:30-9:15** **Super Quiz proctors** need to report to the large gym for proctor training
- 9:10** Language Arts/Social Studies Test Instructions
- 9:15-10:00** Language Arts/Social Studies Test
- 10:00-10:15** Snack break
- 10:15-10:30** Super Quiz Line-up/Parade of Schools
- 10:30-11:30** Super Quiz
- 11:30-11:50 (or 20 minutes after the completion time):** Super Quiz Appeals
- 12:00-2:15** Lunch
- 2:30-3:30:** Awards ceremony

Scoring

Revised 9/01/2026

1. The school administrator will appoint a scoring chairperson as early as possible. The scoring chairperson hopefully will attend a meeting in January to review all aspects of scoring.
2. The chairperson will select a scoring committee to verify accuracy. Suggestions -
 - 1 chairperson
 - 2 persons entering scores (1 calls; 1 enters)
 - 2 additional persons to do the same as the 1st pair, as a double check
 - 1 person to compare the two scores above and to look for “zero” scores and confirm that there are not missing scores.
 - 1 person to place reports of scores in envelopes to be given to coaches at end of awards
3. Practice scoring at a practice meet or with fictitious data to be able to produce all needed documents at the final meet.
4. The committee should be in place at the time that the first event is completed and ready to enter these scores. No scores will be posted during the day. Coaches will receive at the end of the meet a scoring report of all test results.

It is allowable to have one observer at a time in the scoring room to view its operation. This may be a coach or it may be a technology person from a school district that may be hosting a meet the following year.

5. Once all awards' lists have been generated, these can be inserted into the emcee's script for the awards program.
6. A list of all teams and their final team scores should be emailed to the state office (can be generated by scoring program.)

Lone Star Challenge Sample Scores

NBR	1 Math/Science	2 Language Arts/ Social Studies	3 Essay	4 Super Quiz	Student Total
4 th - Red					
1	740	680	750	800	2970
2	320	540	550	1000	2410
3	220	620	500	600	1940
5 th - White					
4	780	800	900	800	3280
5	520	660	600	1000	2780
6	540	660	700	600	2500
6 th - Blue					
7	620	640	900	800	2960
8	420	680	925	1000	3025
9	580	600	925	600	2705
Team Total:	17,430				
Super Quiz:	7,200				

1. Total the scores for each competitor over each of the four events.
2. Use the top two total scores from each category (Red, White, and Blue students) to determine the team total.
3. ALL nine scores count toward Super Quiz team total.



Lone Star Challenge Study Materials 2026-2027

Super Quiz Resource Guides are written and designed specifically for Lone Star Challenge students. All practice and competition questions will come from this source and this source only – no need for other materials and no need for any research. This source is all Lone Star Challenge teams and coaches will need to compete.

Super Quiz and Resource Guides are ordered from the Texas Academic Decathlon Office.

- Super Quiz Guides \$200
- Resource Guides \$200 – you will be given download access.

LSC Super Quiz & Resource Guide Order Form

School _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Contact Name _____ Phone _____

_____ LSC Super Quiz Guides \$200 = _____

_____ LSC Resource Guides \$200 = _____

Total: \$ _____

Please Remit Payment to:

**Texas Academic Decathlon
Rick Hopkins, Executive Director
1141 North Loop 1604 E, #105, PMB 479
San Antonio, TX 78232
Phone: 210-632-8796
director@txacadec.org**

SUPER QUIZ

Revised 9/01/2026

Overview

1. The Super Quiz resembles a game show and takes place in a large area (gymnasium or civic center) before an audience who cheers for its team just as it would at an athletic event. It often begins with a formal march-in. Music is played and teams are individually announced over the microphone as well as by a banner identifying each school. When the quiz begins, absolute quiet must exist during the question-and-answer period. When the correct answer is given, the audience may cheer for its team but return again to complete silence when the emcee announces the next question number.
2. The 1000-point maximum score per student comes from five questions each worth 200 points. Medals and plaques are given to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place team members in the Red, White, and Blue categories.
3. Teams sit apart from the audience for convenience in each student's getting quickly to his/her testing station during the nine rounds of five questions each per student. The first round features all Red team members – Red 1 student at testing stations as they have come from being seated on row 1. The next eight rounds feature the following students –

Red - 2 then Red - 3
White 4, 5, 6,
Blue 7, 8, 9.
4. After the march-in, there are usually welcoming remarks, an invitation to the audience to answer the test questions on an Audience Participation Answer Sheet (SUPER QUIZ-6, handed to them as they entered the room), reference to this year's Super Quiz topic, and instructions to the team members and proctors.
5. Coaches are seated with their teams. Students are not to have any materials of any kind with them during the quiz.

Testing Procedure

1. All questions are multiple choice. A question is shown on the projection screen while the emcee reads the question aloud, and the student reads the question that has been placed in front of him or her face down. It is the student's responsibility to turn the question over when the emcee begins reading it.
2. Once the last word of the last multiple-choice answer is read, the student has seven seconds to mark his/her answer; then a buzzer sounds to indicate time is up. When the student marks the answer, he/she holds the pencil in the air until the answer sheet is scored by the proctor. The

correct answer is revealed on the screen at the same time the emcee announces the correct answer.

3. The student marks his answer by circling one choice from A, B, C, or D. If the student marks his/her answer after the buzzer, no credit is given. If he/she marks his answer in any manner other than circling, credit may be given if intent is clear in the eyes of the proctor. If a student changes an answer, it must be done before the 7-second buzzer and still be clear to the proctor what his/her intent was. If the answer for question # 2 is marked on the space for question # 3, the answer will be counted as incorrect. The answer will be erased, and student can answer the # 3 question.

4. If an answer, right or wrong, is called out by the audience and is heard by the emcee, the question will be eliminated and an alternate question will be substituted. However, once the limited number of alternate questions have been exhausted, the voided questions will be eliminated, and the total value of the relay Super Quiz will be reduced by 200 points for each voided question.

5. If a student at his/her testing station feels that anything is not as it should be, the student should raise his/her hand immediately and his/her proctor or a Super Quiz monitor will address the issue. Hopefully, students have been trained to recognize procedural errors.

6. While there is a fifteen-minute time at the end of Super Quiz to submit appeals (especially on correctness of answers), a school administrator may invite coaches to submit these even during the quiz to give the appeals committee time to rule on them.

7. Each school should develop a system of signaling to its visitors in the audience so they know if the student's answer was correct.

8. After the Red-1 student has answered five questions and has initialed the score sheet indicating he/she agrees with the proctor's total score, the student returns to his/her seat and the Red-2 students go through the same procedure. This continues with all remaining students from Red-3 through Blue-9.

9. After round 9, there will be at least a fifteen-minute break:

- a. to allow proctors and Super Quiz officials time to verify the totals and
- b. to allow appeals to be submitted and ruled upon.

Proctors are to remain at their stations until final scores have been certified.

PowerPoint and Student Test Questions

TAD will send the school administrator a PowerPoint file. This file will be used to produce the questions to be given to the students at their stations. It is recommended that these be color coded according to each of the nine ID labels, namely R-1,R-2,R-3, W-4, etc.

Suggested Super Quiz Relay Script Outline

1. Students are in designated seating ten minutes before the beginning or are in the designated area for formal march-in.
2. Proctors are at their stations.
3. Appeals committee is at the assigned table.
4. Opening comments, welcome, recognition of dignitaries, comment of SQ topic.
5. Items under “Testing Procedure” are given for benefit of students as well as audience
6. Audience is encouraged to participate using the special form
7. Explain the requirement of absolute quiet during the question-and-answer period but cheers when answer is announced.
8. The normal pattern for reading and answering questions will be:

Proctors, place the next question face down

Question 1 (student turns paper over as question is read)

(7-second time limit and whistle/bell FOLLOWING answer option D)

Time: Pencils up.

The correct answer is _____.

Proctors, score the question.

Students, add one to your scoreboard if correct

Proctors, place the next question face down

Question 2, same routine

9. After Blue-9 students, announce a 15-minute break while proctors double check scores and appeals are submitted. Audience will be dismissed and an announcement made that relay awards will be presented at the awards program.)

Scoring Report

On page SUPER QUIZ-7 you will find the scoring report for each team. Student name and number will be printed in advance. Students mark their answers on this form. Proctor marks each as correct or incorrect. Proctor places total correct in appropriate place and student initials the report indicating he/she agrees with the number correct posted. The proctor also records each student's number correct on the “Super Quiz Team Report” form found at the back of this section. The student also initials this form.

At the end of rounds 3, 6 and 9, the proctor will add the top two scores in each division (Red, White, and Blue) and record in the rectangles as indicated. When round 9 is over, the 3 boxed scores will be added for a Grand Total. This number is multiplied by 200 points for the team total score. The score on the floor chart, if one is used, will be adjusted only after rounds 3 and 6. The Scoring Report and Team Report are sent to the scoring room to be verified and entered into the computer.

Super Quiz Layout

1. The most desirable physical arrangement is one where the audience and the team (in its holding area) can face the projection screen(s) and see all scoreboards (example with 13 teams on SUPER QUIZ-8).
2. Rather than teams being seated in team order (01, 02, 03, etc.), they are seated in a way that places them closest to their testing station. Thus, a team seated to the extreme right does not have to walk to a station to the extreme left of the gym.
3. The example with 30 teams is less preferred as it causes the audience not to be able to view all scoreboards and thus not be able to compare scores of their team with other teams. (SUPER QUIZ-9)
4. While the school gymnasium is used often with a smaller number of teams, it may be necessary at larger meets to consider a university gymnasium or facility, or a civic center facility. Many sites require a protective covering to be used on the floor.
5. If a very large screen cannot be obtained, use 2-3 smaller screens so that all of the audience can see.
6. Team stations need to be labeled with school names or numbers and identified on the Audience Participation Sheet so that the audience can locate where every team is testing.
7. Check in advance the facility lighting so that questions on the screens can be read, as some lights are too bright.
8. Some meets have one proctor per team while most use one proctor monitoring two teams; either choice is sufficient.
9. Rather than the proctor laying the question open in front of the student, it is recommended that it be placed face down at the time instructed and allow the student to pick it up and open it for him/herself.

Relay Chairperson

1. Familiarize yourself with the Super Quiz Relay and secure the following personnel (some individuals may serve in dual roles).
 - a. Supervisor to train proctors at testing stations. This will take place 1-1 ½ hours before the Super Quiz
 - b. Proctors to grade answer sheets (1 for each school)
 - c. Monitors stationed among the teams and audience to give crowd control and require quiet time
 - d. Person to distribute Audience Participation Sheets and pencils
 - e. Projectionist/PowerPoint operator

- f. Emcee (one who can guarantee the integrity of the test since he/she will need to have the questions 3-4 days in advance to learn the correct pronunciation of names and difficult words.)
- g. Timer – will work a stopwatch and ring bell or sound whistle
- h. Appeals committee (will probably be selected by meet coordinator)
- i. Person to organize the formal march-in, if this is done

2. Materials needed for relay

- a. Pencils for each testing station plus audience
- b. Red markers for proctors
- c. Team banners for march-in (optional)
- d. Projection screen(s), projector, and extra bulb(s)
- e. Sound system
- f. Whistle, bell, or another item to be a 7-second signal
- g. Stopwatch
- h. Script for emcee
- i. Podium
- j. PowerPoint (or Transparencies with test questions and answers (covered)
- k. Set of questions (color-coded) for students at each testing station
- l. Scoring report for each team with student names and IDs already coded
- m. Name tags for all persons with duties in Super Quiz
- n. Audience Participation forms
- o. Chairs and tables or chairs and chair-desks at testing stations
- p. Extension cords

3. At the coaches' meeting or general assembly on Saturday morning, go over all the plans for the Super Quiz that teams need to know. For meets that have a formal march-in, instructions may be given in the holding area prior to march-in.

SUPER QUIZ

Audience Participation Sheet

1. A B C D
2. A B C D
3. A B C D
4. A B C D
5. A B C D
6. A B C D
7. A B C D
8. A B C D
9. A B C D
10. A B C D
11. A B C D
12. A B C D
13. A B C D
14. A B C D
15. A B C D
16. A B C D
17. A B C D
18. A B C D
19. A B C D
20. A B C D
21. A B C D
22. A B C D
23. A B C D
24. A B C D
25. A B C D

26. A B C D
27. A B C D
28. A B C D
29. A B C D
30. A B C D
31. A B C D
32. A B C D
33. A B C D
34. A B C D
35. A B C D
36. A B C D
37. A B C D
38. A B C D
39. A B C D
40. A B C D
41. A B C D
42. A B C D
43. A B C D
44. A B C D
45. A B C D

<u>TEAM #</u>	<u>TEAM NAME</u>
1	_____
2	_____
3	_____
4	_____
5	_____
6	_____
so on... continue your own list on the back...	

Lone Star Challenge Super Quiz Scoring Report

School # _____ Elementary School

ID# Student Name _____ 1. A B C D 2. A B C D 3. A B C D 4. A B C D 5. A B C D Total Correct: Student Initials:	ID# Student Name _____ 6. A B C D 7. A B C D 8. A B C D 9. A B C D 10. A B C D Total Correct: Student Initials:	ID# Student Name _____ 11. A B C D 12. A B C D 13. A B C D 14. A B C D 15. A B C D Total Correct: Student Initials:
--	---	---

ID# Student Name _____ 16. A B C D 17. A B C D 18. A B C D 19. A B C D 20. A B C D Total Correct: Student Initials:	ID# Student Name _____ 21. A B C D 22. A B C D 23. A B C D 24. A B C D 25. A B C D Total Correct: Student Initials:	ID# Student Name _____ 26. A B C D 27. A B C D 28. A B C D 29. A B C D 30. A B C D Total Correct: Student Initials:
---	---	---

ID# Student Name _____ 31. A B C D 32. A B C D 33. A B C D 34. A B C D 35. A B C D Total Correct: Student Initials:	ID# Student Name _____ 36. A B C D 37. A B C D 38. A B C D 39. A B C D 40. A B C D Total Correct: Student Initials:	ID# Student Name _____ 41. A B C D 42. A B C D 43. A B C D 44. A B C D 45. A B C D Total Correct: Student Initials:
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Alternate – Red

Alternate – White

Alternate – Blue

Q#1 A B C D

Q#2 A B C D

Q#3 A B C D

Super Quiz Relay

Projection Screen

Timer

Reader

Projector

TEAM
1

TEAM
2

TEAM
3

TEAM
4

TEAM
5

TEAM
6

TEAM
7

TEAM
8

TEAM
9

TEAM
10

TEAM
11

TEAM
12

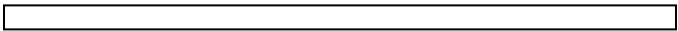
TEAM
13

Appeals

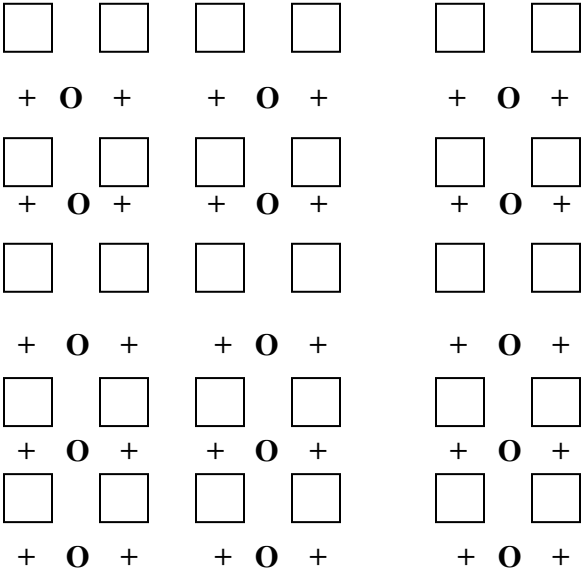
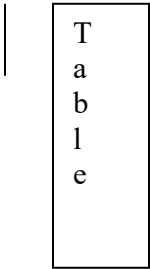
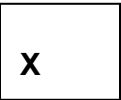
Students

0101	0601	1001	0201	0701	1101	0301	0801	1201	0401	0901	1301	0501
0102	0602	1002	0202	0702	1102	0302	0802	1202	0402	0902	1302	0502
0103	0603	1003	0203	0703	1103	0303	0803	1203	0403	0903	1303	0503
0104	0604	1004	0204	0704	1104	0304	0804	1204	0404	0904	1304	0504
0105	0605	1005	0205	0705	1105	0305	0805	1205	0405	0905	1305	0505
0106	0606	1006	0206	0706	1106	0306	0806	1206	0406	0906	1306	0506
0107	0607	1007	0207	0707	1107	0307	0807	1207	0407	0907	1307	0507
0108	0608	1008	0208	0708	1108	0308	0808	1208	0408	0908	1308	0508
0109	0609	1009	0209	0709	1109	0309	0809	1209	0409	0909	1309	0509
Monitors				Monitors				Monitors				
COACHES				COACHES				COACHES				
					Audience							

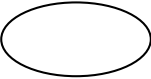
Super Quiz Relay



E



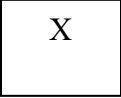
LEGEND



Timer



Screen



Projector



Student Desk
Or Table



Chair

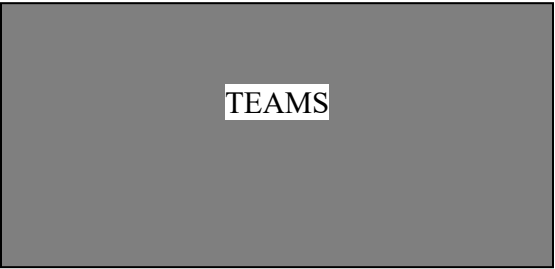
+

Score Stand

E

Emcee

 Proctor Chair



- Red -1
- Red -2
- Red -3
- White -4
- White -5
- White -6
- Blue -7
- Blue -8
- Blue -9

Super Quiz Team Report

School # _____ School Grade _____

School Name _____

	Student ID#	Individual Score	Total Team Score	Student Initials
Red-1				
Red-2				
Red-3				

Total – Red Scores

White-4				
White-5				
White-6				

Total – White Scores

Blue-7				
Blue-8				
Blue-9				

Total – Blue Scores

Grand Total – Sum of three rectangles above

_____ x 200 points = _____
total score final score

Proctor's Signature

Return Directly to Super Quiz Chairperson

TIES

Revised 9/01/2026

If individuals tie for any award, they will each receive the same award.

Example: Mathematics/Science Scores in Varsity Division

Emily Jones	920	-	Receives 1 st place medal
Mary Adams	920	-	Receives 1 st place medal
Ernie Vallejo	880	-	Receives 2 nd place medal
Juan Perez	840	-	Receives 3 rd place medal

Timing Devices

Revised 9/01/2026

Cell phones, pagers, any devices capable of two-way communications, and mp3 devices are not allowed in the testing rooms. Watches are allowed only if they are silent. No alarms or beepers of any kind are allowed in the testing room. Unacceptable items will cause the student's paper to be collected, and the student will receive a zero for that test.

Testing Proctor Instructions

Revised 9/01/2026

Cafeteria: Meet outside the cafeteria at 7:45 a.m. Directions will be given for administering the two tests. When directed, please stand up while I call out your group. **Double check** to make sure you have the right students. The high school student volunteers will remain in the hall by the testing room during the test. If you have any questions during the testing period, please see the coordinator who will be stationed at the end of the hallway.

Testing Room: Have students take a seat – if you wish to put them in the order listed on your room list, that's fine. Place the scantrons on their desks and make sure that the ID number on the scantron matches the ID number on the student's nametag. Students may write on the actual test to work math problems or use scratch paper but not the Scantrons.

Both the Math/Science and Language Arts/Social Studies tests are in your envelopes along with Scantron answer sheets. You will be administering the Math/Science test first.

Tell students to turn off cell phones if they have them. If any phone or other electronic device goes off during a test, take up that student's test and Scantron and escort them to the door for one of the high school students to bring them to the competition coordinator. They will be disqualified if an electronic device goes off during the test or Super Quiz.

Math/Science Test Script

Pass out the Math/Science test and give the following instructions:

Please listen carefully to the instructions as I will be giving them only once. How well you do on the test will depend partly on how well you listen to and follow directions. The next two tests you will take are multiple choice. You will record your answers on the Scantron answer sheet provided. Before beginning the test, please make sure that you have the correct Scantron answer sheet for that test. Please do not fold, bend, or damage the answer sheet in any way. It is your responsibility to ensure your pencil marks are dark, neat, and fill the bubble completely. If you want to change an answer, erase the first mark completely and then mark your new answer. Check periodically to make sure that you are working on the corresponding numbers on both the test and the answer sheet.

You will be taking the Math/Science test first this morning. There are 50 questions. You may write on the test to solve the problems or use the provided scratch paper. Remember that all answers must be marked on your Scantron answer sheet. There will be no talking during the test. If you have a question, raise your hand, and I will come to you. You will have 45 minutes to complete the test. I will give you a 10-minute warning after 35 minutes. If you finish early, check over your work and sit quietly. Are there any questions? You may begin.

Mark starting time here: _____

Mark ending time on the board. When 45 minutes are up, please say:

“Time is up.”

Collect the tests and Scantrons for the Math/Science test. Return tests to the envelope. Put Scantron answer sheets in numerical order by ID#, paper clip together and give to a high school volunteer in the hall. If your group needs a brief break, let them stand up and stretch. Please try not to take more than 5 minutes.

Language Arts/Social Studies Test Script

When all your students take their seats, pass out the Language Arts/Social Studies test and Scantron sheets.

You will now be taking the Language Arts/Social Studies tests. There are 50 questions. The first 25 refer to a reading passage. Please read the passage carefully. The last 25 questions refer to the resource guide you have been using during your team practices. Once again, you will mark your answers on the Scantron answer sheet, marking darkly and completely. There will be no talking during the test. If you have a question, raise your hand and I will come to you. You will have 45 minutes to complete the test. I will give you a 10-minute warning after 35 minutes.

Mark starting time here: _____

Mark ending time on the board. When 45 minutes are up, please say:

“Time is up.” Put down your pencil and stay seated until I dismiss you.

Collect the tests and Scantrons for the Language Arts/Social Studies test. Return tests to the envelope. Put Scantron answer sheets in numerical order by ID#, paper clip together and give both tests and the Language Arts/SS Scantrons to a high school volunteer in the hall. The volunteers will direct your group back to the cafeteria where the coaches will be waiting for the team members for a break and snacks.

*****Both tests need to be finished by 10:00/10:10.**

Thanks so much for your assistance today!