

An Introduction to IN WHAT BOOK?

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In What Book? — A variation of “Battle of the Books” — is an introduction to the game for those who have not yet used that reading motivation in their classroom or school. For those who use the “Battle...” regularly, you may find some new books or new questions to add to the ones you already have. The object of the game is to introduce books to young people in a way that will pique their interest. It is a contest in which everyone wins. It can be played in a single classroom or as a whole school project. This version is set up for use in a classroom. Expanding it for use as a contest between classrooms or the whole school will not be difficult.

How it works —

Materials: (1) A list of ten books; (2) three questions about specifics in each book — 30 questions in all; (3) an answer key which includes the title of the book and the page number on which the specific can be found.

Preparation: The students are to read these ten books in order to participate (it would be unrealistic to expect that all the students will read all the books, so you may wish to set a minimum number of the ten which they should read). Allow enough time for the students to read the books — set a beginning date for the contest that is far enough away that the students won't feel pressured. If you have multiple copies of any or all the books, that's ideal, but if not, enlist the assistance of other teachers, the school librarian or media specialist, and the children's librarian at the public library to obtain as many copies as you can. Give each student the list of the books that will be used. During the weeks in which they are reading the books, set aside some time each week for the students to share their knowledge about the books they are reading with each other. It would probably be a good idea to organize the students into discussion groups

to do so. Each discussion group should have students who are reading different books. This will enable as many students as possible to hear about books they have not yet read and can stimulate their interest in reading them.

Counting down: About two weeks before the contest is set to begin, it will be time to organize teams. Before you do that, however, decide how much time you will allow for the actual contest. Will it take place all in one day? Two? More? For a classroom containing 30 students, two days is a good time frame. That allows you to have two sets of teams. One set plays on the first day, the second set on the second day. For each day, a set of three teams of five students works very well. If your class has more than 30 students — or less — you can adjust the number of students on a team accordingly and/or assign alternates to each team who will serve if a team member is absent on contest days. It will be helpful if the members of a team have read some books different from each other.

If the contest is to be held over several days, two teams on each contest day may work better than three. If you will hold the entire contest in one day, it is a good idea to call a half-time intermission. Once you have your teams, give them the rules of play. You may also want to post them on the board. If the contest is to be held over two days, you will want to divide the questions into two sections — one for the first set of teams, one for the second set of teams. If the contest is to take place over a number of days or weeks, five questions in one session is a reasonable number.

Let the contest begin: Here are some rules of play; adapt them to suit you and your students.

1. A question will be asked of one team at a time. Only one member of a team may attempt to answer a question each round.
2. 30 seconds will be allowed for a team member to raise his/her hand and answer the question. Once a hand is raised, no other team member may answer that question.

3. If the team member does not answer correctly, the same question goes to the next team — 15 seconds are allowed for the answer. If the second team's answer is incorrect, the third team gets the question — with 15 seconds in which to answer.
4. Three points are awarded each correct answer. Two additional points can be given for the name of the author. Any student on the team that answered the question correctly may attempt to earn the extra two points.
5. The next question should be asked of the second team (Team B) first. The same procedure is followed as for the first question. The third question should be asked of the next team first. Then start over with the fourth question going to the first team — and so on.
6. The team with the most points at the end of the contest is the winner. If more than one team comes up with the same number of points, they share in the pride of victory. You may wish to provide a celebration of some kind for the winning team(s) or in their honor for the whole class. In reality, all the students are winners! Congratulations are due them all!