

IMPORTANT ACADEMIC COMPETITION INFORMATION. PLEASE FORWARD TO SCHOOL'S ACADEMIC TEAM COACH OR ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR.

KEYSTONE SCHOLAR

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What is PSACA?

PSACA, the Pennsylvania State Academic Coaches Association, is a newly founded non-profit group with a mission to promote academic competition by providing assistance to all academic coaches. The primary focus is to promote new and existing opportunities for students in the state of Pennsylvania to experience academic competitions. PSACA believes that every school in Pennsylvania should have an academic team and opportunities should be provided for those teams to compete throughout the year at quizbowl tournaments and events using fair questions and formats to showcase the scholars of our state. PSACA will look to aid coaches and promote networking to help grow a circuit of competitions across the commonwealth.

The temporary board consists of Peter Schmidt (Lehigh Valley Academy), Shan Hogan (Philadelphia's Carver High School E&S), Andrew Gianelli (Camp Hill High School), and Bern McCauley (Great Valley High School)

What is Quizbowl?

Quizbowl is an academic competition between two or more teams that features a variety of academic questions. The most common format features two teams competing over the course of a match that features tossups on the buzzer, with the team winning the tossup getting additional bonus questions (please see below for more information). Other formats include speed rounds and other forms of team questions. For more information on Quizbowl, please check out the short article "What is Quizbowl" by our good friends at Greater Pennsylvania Quizbowl. The link is available on our website or at gpqb.wordpress.com/what-is-quiz-bowl/.

PSACA Info:

To [sign up](#) as a member of PSACA or for more information about upcoming events and opportunities, please check [our website](#) or email [the board](#)

What sort of events does PSACA support?

PSACA will cover a wide range of academic competition events, but encourages *pyramidal*, *quizbowl* format of academic competition. In a standard quizbowl match, two teams compete to answer questions from history, literature, both physical and social sciences, fine arts, current events, sports, and popular culture. Organized quiz bowl tournaments, during which individual teams will typically play eight-to-ten matches, are available in most states at most grade levels.

While a *tossup* question is being read, one player from either team may interrupt by pressing a buzzer and providing an answer. If the player is correct, her team gets the opportunity to answer multiple *bonus* questions. If the player is incorrect, the other team has a chance to answer the tossup question and, if correct, get the bonus questions. Teams may collaborate on bonus questions, but not on tossups.

Questions are called *pyramidal* because they begin with relatively obscure and difficult hints, but gradually wind their way towards more obvious clues. Here is a typical pyramidal tossup question:

Question: A group of texts found in these buildings at Saqqara describe a king hunting and eating the gods. Graduating sizes of mastabas were used by Imhotep to create Djoser's (*) "stepped" one of these buildings, and three of these structures belonging to Menkaure, Khafre, and Khufu were built near Giza. For ten points, name these enormous structures used to bury Egyptian Pharaohs.

ANSWER: Egyptian pyramids

PSACA certainly welcomes coaches of all academic competitions, regardless of format, but will encourage pyramidal academic competitions in which luck and buzzer speed are minimized, while deep knowledge of academic subjects is rewarded. The National History Bee and Bowl, Geography Olympiad, and International Geography Bee share a reliance on pyramidal questions, so we will be including schedule information for these events, as well.

Delaware Valley HS at 2017 HSNCT



Winchester Thurston HS at 2017 HSNCT



How can I join PSACA?
Eventually, PSACA will have nominal membership fees but for 2017-18, membership is free! To join just click on this [link](#).

PSACA website

Please click on the [PSACA website](#) for more information about us. You will also find many resources helpful to coaches and players there.

Coaches' Corner

The Coaches' Corner will be a regular section, penned by coaches, focused on team-building and player improvement, along with Q&A sessions with coaches from around the state.

For this issue, a few suggestions to both new and experienced coaches:

Have fun: Academic competition is a chance for our students to showcase their knowledge in a competitive but fun environment. When you take students to events, let them enjoy themselves.

Encourage opportunities for practices and matches: Academic competition students like to learn new things. Use that curiosity to your advantage and let them coordinate practices, matches, and other events. Be sure that you and some local parents are available to accompany them to nearby events. Many schools offer tournament discounts to new schools at events!

Ask questions: Coaches around the state—including those in this group—want to help you build a club or grow your already established team. There are college players, former high school players, and other people in the community that will come out to help you get started or build off your already established program!

For more information on any of this, please contact psacainfo@gmail.com



Wallenpaupack HS in their local Scholastic Scrimmage TV Show during the 2017 season



Great Valley HS in their local academic league during the 2017 season

2017-18 Tournament Schedule

Here is an event schedule for Pennsylvania and neighboring states for the 2017-18 academic year. Will update this schedule regularly, but you can click [here](#) to find out more details about each of these tournaments.

[NOTE: The letters and numbers in parentheses indicate the type and difficulty level of the questions:

IS-A = NAQT Introductory HS Level set

IS = NAQT Regular HS Level set

Letters/Word = "housewritten" set

September

September 30 – Princeton, NJ PHSAT (IS-168)

October

October 7 - Nittany Lion Novice at Penn State (DEFT)

October 14 - Tri-State Tussle III at Delaware Valley HS (IS-168)

October 28 - Lehigh Valley Academy Tournament (IS169A)

October 28 - Mellon Bowl XV at Carnegie Mellon (IS-170)

November

November 11 –Friends Select (HFT) and Carver Novice (Tressler housewrite) Combined Tournament

November 11 - Brainbusters Tournament, in Ithaca, NY (IS-170)

November 18 – West Chester Henderson Tournament (IS-170)

November 18 - SAGACITY Tournament at the University of Pittsburgh (TBA IS-A Set)

December

December 2 - University of Pennsylvania HS Tournament (EFT/WHAQ)

December 9 - Great Valley Middle School Tournament (MS-23)

December 16 - Manheim Township Academic Challenge (IS-171A)

January

January 6 - Downingtown East Winter Tournament (IS-172)

January 13 - Manheim Township Middle School Academic Challenge (MS-25)

January 13 - Boardman HS Invitational, near Youngstown, OH (IS-171A)

January 20 – National History Bee & Bowl Western PA regional (C set)

February

February 3 - Big Lake Brawl II at Wallenpaupack [Tentative] (IS-173A)

February 10 - Carnegie Quiz Invitational at Carnegie Mellon (IS-172)

February 24 - Great Valley Tournament [Tentative] (Housewrite TBD)

March

March 3 - Downingtown East Early Spring Tournament (IS-172)

March 10 - Great Valley Middle School Ichabod Invitational [Tentative] (SCOP Middle School Set)

March 17 - Philadelphia Championship (IS-175A)