

The 2025 Battle of the Books

Parent Guide

What is it?

Battle of the Books is a reading competition for all 5th grade students with a Rochester Hills Public Library card. Students read 12 titles and compete in a “battle” (trivia contest) consisting of 50 questions.

What does my 5th grader need to do?

- ☐ Form a team of three to five 5th graders.
 - They **do not** have to be from the same school. They **do not** have to be enrolled in the RCS district. However, at least one team member must have a valid RHPL library card.
 - There must be no fewer than three and no more than five. If you are having trouble finding a team by the end of January, and you have exhausted all resources, email the Head of Youth Services at wendy.lehman@rhpl.org.

- ☐ Find a coach.
 - The coach **MUST** be an adult. It **cannot** be your child’s teacher, a teacher in their school, or librarian. Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, and babysitters are the best coaches.

- ☐ Register (Beginning Wednesday, November 13 at 6:00pm).
 - **Register once you have a team and a coach.** We need the name of a coach that we will contact if/when we need more information.
 - Register over the phone (248-650-7140) or in person at the Youth Reference Desk.
 - **You have until Saturday, February 8, 2025 to register. There is no cap on registration.** Everyone gets to participate.

- ☐ Create a team name and a team costume.
 - The team name is how we will identify your 5th graders as a group. The costume is not required, but is fun to create. We give three awards each for best team name and best costume.
 - Please make sure the team name and the team costume do not display any of the book titles or authors.

- ☐ **READ!**
 - There are 12 titles, and four months in which to read them.
 - We have 20 copies of each title available to check out to Battle participants only.
 - Coaches may check the books out if there are several available – please allow 5th graders to check them out first
 - You may check out two at a time for two weeks each. You may purchase titles if you wish, but it is not required.

- ☐ Prepare.
 - Teams should come up with their own reading and studying strategy. The coach is there for general guidance.

- 📖 Have Fun!
 - o This is a competition, but it is really just for fun. Our biggest goal for this experience is that you and your child read books.

What do I need to do?

- 📖 Ensure that your 5th grader's library card is up-to-date.
- 📖 Make sure they are registered with their team. Call or visit the Youth Reference Desk to do this.
 - o Registration begins on Wednesday, November 13 and runs through Saturday, February 8. There is no limit as to how many teams can participate.
- 📖 If you are the coach: provide guidance.
 - o Attend the coach meeting on Saturday, December 14 at 11 am.
 - o Supervise your battle team. 5th graders should come up with their own strategy and study technique, you are just there to provide assistance.
- 📖 READ!
 - o Read the books with your 5th grader. Discuss. Laugh. Cry. Enjoy!
- 📖 Volunteer!
 - o If you are able, volunteer to supervise and collect answer sheets on Battle Day (more information coming soon).
- 📖 Have fun!
 - o This is a competition, but our aim is fun. Our biggest goal for this experience is that you and your child read books.
 - o Support your 5th grader. Make signs for the battle, cheer, take pictures, and celebrate small victories.
 - o The books are selected by all seven professional librarians. We base our choices on content, awards received, professional peer reviews, and overall quality. If you disagree with any titles, please remember this is not a compulsory competition and we are not requiring you to read every book.

What can I expect on battle day?

- 📖 The battle takes place on Saturday, March 8, 2025 from 2:00pm-4:00pm at the Hart Middle School Gymnasium.
- 📖 Teams should arrive beginning at 1:30. **You will not be admitted prior to 1:30.** You will need to give yourself plenty of time to get settled, so please plan on arriving by 1:45 at the latest.
- 📖 Your team will have a designated spot on the floor. Feel free to bring blankets or pillows to sit on. **Only battle teams may sit on the floor.** All others will sit in the bleachers. We will be asking coaches to volunteer to help collect answer sheets and supervise 5th graders.
- 📖 Your team **may not bring: Battle books, papers, phones, bags, pencils, food, distracting props, or anything with the battle titles or author names.** In short, just bring yourself. If we see anything that appears to give you an unfair advantage, you will be asked to put it away off the floor.

- 📄 The battle will begin promptly at 2:00pm. Please encourage your 5th grader to settle quickly and listen closely.
- 📄 Each team will receive a clipboard with a numbered answer sheet and a handful of pencils.
- 📄 After we ask and repeat the question once, teams will have 30 seconds to quietly discuss and write down the answer. The answer to every single question will be:
 - 1. Title of the book
 - 2. Author of the book.
 - o Jeopardy spelling rules apply (It needs to be close enough to make sense). You will not be punished for incorrect capitalization.
 - o Each answer is worth 2 points. 1 point for correct title, 1 point for correct author.
- 📄 We will ask 25 questions, take a 10 minute break, and then ask 25 more. During the break you may leave the gym for a snack or drink. Snacks and drinks must be taken in the hallway per RCS rules.
- 📄 The questions will only be referencing the 12 battle titles and will consist of one of three formats: 1. “In which book will you find the following quote:” (dialogue from a character) 2. “In which book will you find the following passage:” (a narrative portion of a book) 3. “Which book shows/demonstrates (major theme or lesson learned)”
- 📄 When the battle is over, librarians will take all answers back to the library for scoring. We will not be reviewing any questions at the event. We score all teams that day. Winners will be announced and scores will be revealed at the awards ceremony.

What can I expect at the awards ceremony?

- 📄 The awards ceremony will take place at the Hart Middle School Gym on Monday, March 10, 2025 at 6:00 pm.
 - o Teams are encouraged to come in costume. Due to space constraints teams will be seated alone on the gym floor by volunteers, parents and coaches will be seated in the bleachers. Thank you for your assistance in following these guidelines.
- 📄 Each team will be called up alphabetically. They will pose at the front of the gym (now is your chance for a photo), receive their certificate, and get a prize for participating.
- 📄 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners will be announced and receive a small prize. 1st place winners receive a plaque with their team name to be placed in the library.
- 📄 Awards are also given to teams for best team name, best costume, and those good sports whose actions stuck with us.
- 📄 At the end of the ceremony, we will email coaches an alphabetical listing of all teams and their scores. The competition isn't really about the score, it's about the fact that you read books that you maybe would have never encountered otherwise, you had quality discussions about quality books, you made friends, and you had FUN!

Ok, but I still have questions.

- 📄 Attend the Battle of the Books kickoff event on Wednesday, November 13 at 6:00 pm.

- o We'll be announcing all 12 titles and will give a little information about the battle.
- ☒ If you are the coach, there is a coach meeting on Saturday, December 14 at 11:00 am. Learn more information about the battle and tips to help your teams.
- ☒ Talk to a Youth Services Librarian at 248-650-7140 or youthreference@rhpl.org or stop by the reference desk to chat.