

STRUCTURING A ROUND OF WORLD GEOGRAPHY BOWL QUESTIONS  
(Use the following format for your round of questions.)

WORLD GEOGRAPHY BOWL: 2004 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

ROUND \_\_\_\_ (Centered)

Signature Round by  
Joe Blow (name), Greenleaf University

**A. TOSS-UPS:**

(A round's toss-up questions must **not** be on a single topic or region of the world, but should include a variety of topics including physical, human, regional, economic, urban and political geography, plus a current events and a technique question or two. Each **question must have a place name** either in the question or the answer. **See the example at the end of this document for the construction of toss-up questions.**)

1. Economic Geography, 10 points:
2. Human Geography, 10 points:
3. Urban Geography, 10 points:
4. Techniques, 10 points:
5. etc.
6. etc.
7. etc.
8. etc.
9. etc.
10. etc.
11. etc.
12. etc.

**B. TEAM QUESTIONS:**

(Team questions should have 4, 5, or 6 answers, for a total of 20, 25, or 30 points (5 points per answer). The answers should not be in some numerical order, which makes it

very difficult to score, if a team answers, say 2 of 6 correct answers. Be sure that the two team questions in each half are "paired," or are of equal difficulty.)

1. 30 points:

2. 30 points:

Extra Questions:

(It always helps to have a couple of surplus toss-up and team questions as extras in case we find duplications between different authors. Additionally, the Moderator may make a mistake in reading a question and may need a substitute immediately. Please attach a few extra questions.)

Extra Toss-Up Questions:

1.

2.

3.

Extra Team Questions:

1.

2.

## HOW TO WRITE A ROUND OF QUESTIONS

Tom Deaton, Dalton State College

Above all, remember: THIS IS A GAME, NOT A TEST. Anyone can write a question nobody can answer; what's really difficult is writing a question that a good team can answer early, but most teams can readily answer at the question's end.

Try to be challenging without being impossibly tough, not obscure for obscurity's sake.

As for originality and level of difficulty: Don't take your questions from rounds used in other tournaments: Trivial Pursuit, Global Pursuit, books of lists, of books of questions. A lot of other people have the same sources; it's like playing Trivial Pursuit after you've heard all the questions. But you can use those questions for ideas about subjects, format, and the level of difficulty that students will find enjoyable and challenging. Then create your own questions.

A good idea isn't always enough to make a good question. A little research, a quick trip to almost any reference source, can give you an extra bit of information that can make almost any questions more interesting, challenging, or fresh. Anyway, be sure to check all the information in the question, not just the answer. Trusting your trusty memory, or even one source, can be treacherous.

### **Toss-up Questions:**

Each round begins with 12 toss-up questions, which contestants respond to by signaling with a buzzer as soon as they have the answer. Each toss-up question should be written in decreasing stages of difficulty. For the most part, questions should be constructed to go from the specific to the general, i.e., from the difficult/obscure to the easy/well-known.

A question should never be written such that someone who is very familiar with the subject should have to wait until the end to discover exactly what is being asked. By the time the question is concluded, most players should be able to answer it. For example: "At 4,015 square miles, it is smaller than Connecticut. The Litani River runs through its largest valley and empties into the Mediterranean Sea. Formed in 1920, for ten points, name the country known to its natives as al-Jumhuriya al-Lubnaniya, whose capital is Beirut."

Toss up questions should generally be no more than 2 to 3 sentences long. The first pronoun should refer to the answer you're looking for. It's very disconcerting when questions begin: "His life is associated with three islands, one where he was born, and two where he was exiled...", and after someone buzzes in and answers "Napoleon," the questions continues, "For ten points, name any two islands Napoleon lived on."

Generally, ask questions that will have one or two word answers. Immediately following each question, write the correct answer(s) and any alternative answers that are acceptable. Underline essential answers (**President Kenneth Kunda or Western Australia**). Always include the phrase "for ten points" just preceding the last clue in the toss up question. It helps players isolate what they are looking for and it usually signals that the question is about to conclude.

Don't write questions that ask for state capitals, the longest rivers, or the highest mountains. Do a little research and make the questions more interesting. Be careful that your initial information relates to the answer you seek. In other words, NO FALSE LEADS, such as: "The Atlantic Zoo has been breeding gorillas, for ten points, name the tallest building in downtown Atlanta."

### **Team Questions:**

In each half of the competition, the 12 toss-up questions are followed by two team questions, each worth 20, 25, or 30 points.

Team questions are different from toss-ups in that you are not leading from more difficult to easy, but you are trying to give the team the necessary information clearly so they can answer it to the best of their ability.

NOTE THE TOTAL NUMBER OF POINTS AT THE VERY BEGINNING OF EACH TEAM QUESTION, i.e., 1. (30 points) For five points each, name the largest river by volume on each of the six continents with rivers. You can use a variety of formats, such

as two 10-point questions and two 5-point questions, or one 10-point question and four 5-point questions. Generally, a one-answer question for 30 points is not a good idea.

#### General Guidelines:

Try to make sure that questions valued at one level are equal to other questions at that value. For example, do not pair the following:

“For ten points each, name the largest and smallest ocean. And for an additional ten points each, name the two homes of the largest number of lemurs.”

Every question must contain at least one place name (location). If your question or answer includes foreign, scientific or unfamiliar words or unusual proper names, please indicate pronunciation. Assume that the Readers (Moderators) will know no foreign languages, and that they are unlikely to have great familiarity with technical details or terminology. Help them wherever you can. Don't ask a questions which must be answered by explaining or defining some concept. Be sure of the wording of a question. (Edison did not discover the electric light, nor did Columbus discover America).

Remember that the material for the questions should, for the most part, be taught in our college and university geography courses. Please put toss-up and team questions on separate pages when you write your round.

Below are some good sample questions from the 1999 SEDAAG World Geography Bowl:

**SEDAAG WORLD GEOGRAPHY BOWL, 1999**

**Round \_\_\_**

**Signature Round by  
Dorothy S. Mason  
North Carolina A&T**

**Toss-Ups**

1. The olive tree is well-adapted to the Mediterranean or dry-summer subtropical climate, and world olive production is so concentrated in areas with this climate that only one of the top ten olive producing countries does not border the Mediterranean Sea. For 10 points, name this European country.

**PORTUGAL**

2. There was a 1838-1839 border war between Maine and New Brunswick that was fought over this territory. It is so big and so remote that Mainers simply call it “the country.” For ten points, name it.

**AROOSTOOK**

3. Altitudinal zonation of climate causes distinct habitat changes and different agricultural potential within relatively short distances in the Andes of western South America. For 10 points, give the Spanish name that identifies the zone at low elevation which is good for the production of bananas and cacao.

**TIERRA CALIENTE**

4. Aerial views of rural areas of the eastern seaboard and Appalachian regions of the United States reveal a random or crazy-quilt pattern of fields, woodlands and roads. This apparently irrational cadastral pattern is a result of the English survey system used at the time of initial settlement by Europeans. For 10 points, what is the name given to this survey system?

**METES AND BOUNDS**

5. The Iron Gorge of the Danube River forms the border between two southeast European countries. One of these is Yugoslavia. For 10 points, name the other.

**ROMANIA**

6. Ethnic Russian minorities in the independent states that were formerly republics of the USSR have felt increasingly isolated from their Russian “homeland.” For 10 points, what is the name given to the pressure from governments for political linkages with such ethnic cohorts in nearby states?

## **IRREDENTISM**

Then on to QUESTIONS 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12

### **TEAM QUESTIONS (20 POINTS)**

1. . For 5 points each, name the river on which each of the following cities is located: Manaus, Brazil, Denver, USA, Sevilla, Spain, and Nanjing, China.

Manaus, Brazil	<b>(RIO) NEGRO</b>
Denver, USA	<b>SOUTH PLATTE</b>
Sevilla, Spain	<b>GUADALQUIVIR</b>
Nanjing, China	<b>YANGTZE OR CHANG JIANG</b>

2. For 5 points each, name the river on which each of the following cities is located: Barranquilla, Colombia, Warsaw, Poland, Mandalay, Myanmar and Dallas, USA.

Barranquilla, Colombia	<b>MAGDALENA</b>
Warsaw, Poland	<b>WISLA (or Vistula)</b>
Mandalay, Myanmar	<b>IRRAWADDY</b>
Dallas, USA	<b>TRINITY</b>