

Gavel Games Parliamentary Procedure Contest Rules

Gavel Games is an annual parliamentary procedure contest conducted in February as part of 4-H Showcase. This event is a team contest, typically held at Riley County High School near Riley.

- The contest has three age divisions:
Junior – 7-10 years
Intermediate – 11-13 years
Senior – 14-19 years
- A team can be created with mixed ages, however, the team must be judged in the age category of the oldest team member.
- Teams have the option of choosing a theme for their meeting and may dress up according to their theme. This is all optional.
- Teams can have 4 or 5 members. Required team offices include President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. If a fifth team member is present that team member takes on the role of Alternate. The “Alternate” should only participate in roll call, voting and discussion portions of the team’s presentation.
- Junior division team members designate all offices prior to the contest. Intermediate division team members will draw for their offices 5 minutes before beginning their presentation. Intermediate teams must designate their President and Alternate before drawing for the remaining three offices. Senior division team members will draw for all five offices, 5 minutes before beginning their presentation.
- Members may participate on more than one team, to achieve the required team number. Clubs are also invited to form teams with members from other Riley County 4-H clubs.
- A model business meeting is presented by each team. An Order of Business is included with these contest rules. Teams must follow this Order of Business. They may hold this in their hand. It does not have to be taped to the table
- Minutes shall not be read at the meeting. The secretary should state that are no minutes due to the fact that this is a special parliamentary procedure presentation
- Each team receives a score on the oral presentation. The oral presentation will be conference judged. Teams will receive a written score sheet, in club boxes. Each team is allowed a maximum of 20 minutes for their oral presentation.
- Officers will be seated at a table during the oral presentation. The President will be seated at the center. The Vice President will be seated to the President’s immediate right. The Secretary will be seated to the President’s immediate left. The Treasurer will be seated to the Secretary’s immediate left. If an Alternate is present, the Alternate will be seated to the Vice President’s immediate right.

- Junior teams are required to do the first three parliamentary procedure problems; Intermediates, the first six and Seniors are required to do the first six plus three additional problems – one of which will be drawn the day of the contest.
- The gavel is a symbol of authority. The presiding officer should grasp the handle of the gavel firmly and rap the table or gavel block authoritatively with well-spaced raps. The gavel is used to:
 - 1 – Call the meeting to order (two raps) (three raps signal members to stand in unison)
 - 2 – Maintain order (series of sharp raps)
 - 3 – Adjourn the meeting (one gavel rap)
 - 4 – Signify that motions have either passed or failed (one gavel rap)
- The Order of Business for the oral presentation is as follows:
 - 1) Call to Order
 - 2) Opening Exercise
 - a) Pledge or Motto
 - 3) Roll Call
 - 4) Reading of Minutes, the secretary should state that there are no minutes due to the fact that this is a special parliamentary procedure presentation
 - 5) Communications – not requiring action – letters of appreciation, etc.
 - a) One letter of communication is to be read
 - 6) Reports of Officers
 - a) Treasurer’s report is the only officer’s report that is to be given
 - 7) Reports of Standing or Special Committees
 - a) Only one Standing or Special Committee report is to be given
 - 8) Unfinished Business
 - a) Motions postponed at the last meeting and motions laid on the table at the last meeting
 - b) The President should ask for unfinished business
 - 9) New Business as introduced
 - a) Refer to “Approved list of Parliamentary Procedure Problems for the Gavel Games Contest”
 - 10) Program
 - a) The Vice President should announce that there is no program due to the fact that this is a special parliamentary procedure presentation
 - 11) Announcements
 - a) One announcement is to be given
 - 12) Adjournment
- The following information sheets are the only notes that can be used during the Oral Presentation:
 - 1 – Sheet entitled – Order of Business (taped to presentation table)
 - 2 – Sheet entitled – Approved List of Parliamentary Procedure Problems for the Gavel Games Contest (taped to presentation table)
 - 3 – Secretary’s letter of communication
 - 4 – Treasurer’s written report of the club’s financial state
 - 5 – Sheet pertaining to the standing or special committee report