

## Woodlin Geography Bee Overview



The Woodlin Geography Bee (Geo Bee) is a 16 year PTA-teacher partnership supporting geography education and friendly competition for third, fourth, and fifth graders at Woodlin Elementary School.

### Concept

Classroom teams, consisting of four students, compete in one-hour long grade-level Geo Bees held in the multipurpose room each Spring. Each classroom team works together to answer questions about geography and history for the regions studied, including basic landforms, bodies of water, and some cultural information. Question types include straight answer, “find it on a map,” and navigation- and direction-based questions.

### Content

The PTA developed study packets for each grade level. Packets include regional maps, information about history, culture, and geography. The packets range in size from 40-60 pages. Only content from the packets is used in the preliminary and final grade-level bees, so students do not need additional books, maps, or globes to participate.

### Content:

- **Third Grade** – Geography of the United States
- **Fourth Grade** – Refresher of United States’ geography + Canada, Latin America, Australia, and Antarctica
- **Fifth Grade** – A sample of the rest of the world including Europe, Africa, and Asia

### 2018 Process and Timing:

- January 22: Kick off and give out packets (all grades)
- February 28: Packets due (all grades)
- March 16: Preliminary bee (all grades)
- April 6: 5<sup>h</sup> grade final bee
- April 13: 4<sup>th</sup> grade final bee
- April 20: 3<sup>rd</sup> grade final bee

### Participation

Every student in the third, fourth and fifth grade can participate on some level in the Geo Bee. Each student receives a packet and can work on the packet at home and during in-school free time. They have approximately 8 weeks to complete their packet, check their work, and study for their

classroom “preliminary bee.” Teachers receive “answer key” packets. If a student completes the packet within the allotted time frame and turns it in to their teacher, they receive the Geo Bee incentive. Completion of the packets is voluntary.

The PTA Geo Bee Team visits each classroom to conduct the “preliminary bee.” The “preliminary bee” takes about 30 minutes. The preliminary bee will be done online this year. Those who get the highest scores on the test will proceed to the 2<sup>nd</sup> level of the preliminary bee with some additional questions. The top 4 will be selected for the team, with the next 2 as alternates.

### **The Final Geo Bee (one per grade)**

Classroom teams work together to answer the questions posed by the master of ceremonies, with final answers provided by the team captains. Families and friends are welcome to attend and second grade students attend the third grade bee to get a sense of the event. During the Geo Bee, each classroom performs a cheer for their team and has the opportunity to participate by answering questions. The Geo Bee has several parent volunteers who serve as the master of ceremonies, timekeeper, and scorekeeper; two staff members serve as judges. The principal or assistant principal closes the event with a few short remarks and words of thanks.

### **Incentives & Prizes**

The PTA provides incentives to students who complete their packets in the designated time frame. These incentives have included water bottles, string backpacks, and souvenir cups. The PTA provides Woodlin Geo Bee Logo T-shirts to each team member and alternate. The students on the winning teams have their names engraved on a plaque that hangs in the front hallway of the school.

### **Funding**

The PTA spends about \$600 annually which covers pocket folders for each student in the three grades, incentives, t-shirts, and engraving the plaque. Woodlin Elementary School covers the cost of copying the packets.