

JH UIL Opportunities

Art (6th-8th grades)

This contest involves the study of paintings from the [National Gallery of Art](#) in Washington, D.C. and paintings or pictures from selected Texas museums. The Art Smart Bulletin, published every other year, is the source for study of history and art elements relative to the 40 art selections and is the final authority in the spelling of artists' names and titles of art works. As part of their study, students will demonstrate an understanding of art history and interpret ideas and moods in original artworks while making informed judgments about the artwork.

Calculator (6th-8th grades)

The calculator applications contest is designed to stimulate the development of mathematical and calculator skills for students in grade 6,7 and 8. Goals are both intellectual and practical: developing mathematical reasoning and knowledge and requiring the application of problem-solving skills toward realistic problems. Students will take a test containing 80 problems in 30 minutes. The contest consists of problems which may include calculations involving addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, roots, and powers. It also includes straight-forward calculation problems, and simple geometric and stated problems similar to those found in recently adopted textbooks.

Students may use any silent, hand-held calculator that does not require auxiliary electric power. The calculator data and program memory should be cleared prior to the contest; students may not use pre-recorded programs during the contest.

Chess (6th-8th grades)

Chess puzzle competition is very different from tournament chess play. Contestants in a chess puzzle contest receive a paper-and-pencil test that includes a series of chess boards with pieces in particular positions. Questions are based on analysis of material or possible moves in each given diagram. See links above for sample tests and other resources.

A chess puzzle event provides an avenue for chess participation that does not require the time and resources of actual tournament play. The fixed time limit makes it practical to include in a district meet schedule, and the availability of free resources allows any school (including those that do not currently have chess programs) to include chess puzzle in their slate of A+ events at minimal cost.

Dictionary Skills (6th-8th grades)

Thorough knowledge of the dictionary is a way to increase a student's ability to find the information that is needed for classwork as well as everyday living. Each Dictionary Skills test consists of 40 objective and short answer questions to be completed in 20 minutes. Contestants use dictionaries during the competition, which may be tabbed. Contest questions cover word origins and histories, parts of speech, pronunciation, variant spellings, plurals, alphabetizing and other such elements. Test questions are also taken from charts, tables and lists contained in the dictionary.

Editorial Writing (6th-8th grades)

The Editorial Writing Contest is designed to develop the persuasive writing skills of the participants. Students must advocate a specific point-of-view in response to a prompt. Sixth, seventh and eighth-grade students have 45 minutes in which to complete their editorials.

Impromptu Speaking (6th-8th grades)

This contest provides opportunities for students in grades 6, 7 and 8 to evaluate speeches given by others; to explore the use of the voice and body in speaking situations; to examine the different purposes for speaking; to organize ideas; to prepare and deliver various speeches; and to develop self-confidence. Contestants will draw three topics and have three minutes to prepare a speech, which must be presented without any notes. The contest gives participants experience in thinking, organizing, formulating clear thoughts, and delivering those thoughts to an audience effectively.

Listening Skills (6th-8th grades)

The listening contest is designed to help students in grades 5,6,7 and 8 recognize the importance of effective listening skills and to identify problems they may have in listening effectively. It also provides a challenging format to test the improvement of their listening abilities. Through preparation for the contest, participants will listen actively to a variety of material and learn to analyze and evaluate a speaker's message critically. Tests will include, but not necessarily be limited to, language arts, fine arts, natural sciences and social studies. The objective tests will measure skills such as identifying the main idea and supporting ideas, drawing conclusions, distinguishing fact from opinion, and mastering other listening and thinking skills.

Maps, Graphs, and Charts (6th-8th grades)

The maps, graphs & charts contest is designed to help students learn to get information from a variety of maps, graphs and charts including world maps, pie charts, bar charts and local area maps. The objective test will measure skills such as using a reference book to locate information, making comparisons, estimating and approximating, using scale and interpreting grid systems, legends and keys.

Math (6th-8th grades)

Students begin taking math in elementary school and continue taking it in high school. Learning to complete math problems quickly is a valuable skill in all facets of life including engineering, accounting, completing a tax return and even grocery shopping. This contest includes problems covering, but not limited to: numeration systems, arithmetic operations involving whole numbers, integers, fractions, decimals, exponents, order of operations, probability, statistics, number theory, simple interest, measurements and conversions. Geometry and algebra problems may be included as appropriate for the grade level.

Modern Oratory (6th-8th grades)

In Modern Oratory, the sixth, seventh and eighth grade contestants will select one of the topics, determine the critical issues in the topic, and acknowledge both pro and con points citing support discovered in their research. Students will choose a side they will defend and support that side with additional evidence. Along with the skills of analysis, research, note-taking, documentation, evaluation and decision-making come those of delivery and the skill of memorization.

Music Memory (6th-8th grades)

The focus of the Music Memory contest is an in-depth study of fine pieces of music literature taken from a wide spectrum of music genres to expose students to great composers, their lives and their music. In the course of preparing for the contest, students should be given the opportunity to describe and analyze the music, relate the music to history, to society and to culture, and to evaluate musical performance.

Number Sense (6th-8th grades)

Individuals are called upon every day to use their ability to make quick mental calculations to make decisions. The development of such abilities should be an integral part of the math curriculum. Concepts covered include, but are not limited to: addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, proportions, and use of mathematical notation. Students will be given a 10-minute, fill-in-the-blank test which they must complete without doing calculations on paper or on a calculator. Erasures and mark-outs are not permitted.

One Act Play (6th-8th grades)

Students will have the opportunity to work in all aspects of the production of a 40-minute play. During the production of the play they will be able:

1. to satisfy the competitive, artistic spirit with friendly rivalry among schools, emphasizing high quality performance in this creative art;
2. to foster appreciation of good acting, good directing and good drama;
3. to promote interest in that art form most readily usable in leisure time during adult life;
4. to learn to lose or win graciously, accepting in good sportsmanship the judge's decision and criticism with a view to improve future productions

Oral Reading- Prose and Poetry (6th-8th grades)

Reading literature out loud provides opportunities for students to analyze the text, to grow and to develop as a performer, to communicate a message to an audience and to perform an artistic creation. The oral reading competition should be an extension of the classroom literary and language arts activities in poetry, short stories and children's fiction. See the link below for frequently asked questions about oral reading

Ready Writing (6th-8th grades)

Ready Writing helps students refine their writing abilities. In particular, this contest helps them to learn to write clearly and correctly a paper that is interesting and original. Contestants are given a choice between two prompts which defines the audience, and provides the purpose for writing. Students should be encouraged to analyze the prompts for the purpose of writing, the format, the audience and the point of view. The format may be, for example, a letter, an article for the newspaper or an essay for the principal. Various writing strategies may be stated or implied in the prompt.

Science (7th and 8th grades)

Emphasis for the Science contest, for students in seventh and eighth grades, will be placed on knowledge of scientific fact, understanding of scientific principles and the ability to think through scientific problems. The contest was designed to test not only memory but the ability to critically think about science and scientific processes and concepts. Such concepts include, but are not limited to: matter and energy, equilibrium, force and motion, physical and chemical properties, the relationship between organisms and the environment, the components of our solar system, the composition of matter and genetics. The contest will build upon the vast body of changing and increasing knowledge described by physical, mathematical, and conceptual models.

Social Studies (6th-8th grades)

Test topics defined by a study outline, to be updated yearly. Based on the TEKS for social studies. Test content taken from state adopted textbooks and identified primary sources

Spelling (6th-8th grades)

The spelling contest is designed to give students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 exposure to a wide variety of vocabulary words. It is not a contest of memorization. For the most educational value, preparation for this contest should include instruction in the rules of the English language, meanings and definitions, and root words. In addition to learning to spell proficiently, contestants will learn to write clearly and to capitalize words properly.