

2025-2026 Competitive Events Guidelines

Journalism



Journalism challenges members to demonstrate their knowledge of journalistic principles, media ethics, and the business of news through an objective test. This event encourages exploration of topics such as news writing, reporting, editing, and the evolving role of journalism in a digital economy.

Event Overview

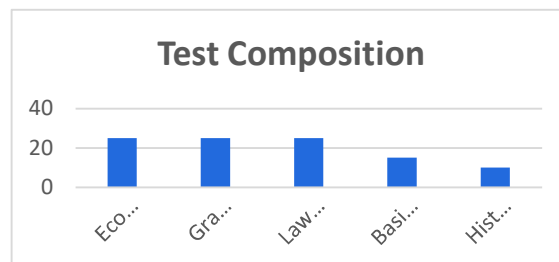
Division	High School
Event Type	Individual
Event Category	Objective Test
Event Elements	50-minute test, 100-multiple choice questions

Educational Alignments

Career Cluster Framework Connection	Arts, Entertainment, & Design
NACE Competency Alignment	Career & Self-Development, Communication, Critical Thinking

Knowledge Areas

- Economics & Business of Journalism
- Grammar & Format
- Law & Ethics
- Basic Journalism Principles
- History of Journalism



Test questions are based on the knowledge areas and objectives outlined for this event. Detailed objectives can be found in the study guide included in these guidelines.

Region

Each chapter may enter two students in this event. Testing is school-site and proctored with careful monitoring to ensure the integrity of the test.

State

Top three (3) qualifiers of each region are eligible to compete at the State Leadership Conference.

National

Required Competition Items

Items Competitor Must Provide	Items FBLA Provides On-site
• Sharpened pencil • Fully powered device for online testing • Conference-provided nametag • Photo identification • Attire that meets the FBLA Dress Code	• One piece of scratch paper per competitor • Internet access • Test login information (link & password provided at test check-in)

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Important FBLA Documents

- Competitors should be familiar with the Competitive Events [Policy & Procedures Manual](#), [Honor Code](#), [Code of Conduct](#), and [Dress Code](#).

Eligibility Requirements

To participate in FBLA competitive events at the National Leadership Conference (NLC), the following criteria must be met:

- **Membership Deadline:** FBLA national membership dues must be paid to the specific division by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on March 1 of the current school year.
- **Repeat Competitors:** Members may only compete in an event at the NLC more than once if they have not previously placed in the top 10 of that event at the NLC. If a member places in the top 10 of an event at the NLC, they are no longer eligible to compete in that event at future NLCs, unless the event has been modified beyond a name change. Chapter events are exempt from this procedure.
- **Conference Registration:** Members must be officially registered for the NLC and must pay the national conference registration fee to participate.
- **Official Hotel Requirement:** To be eligible to compete, competitors must stay within the official FBLA housing block.
- **State Entry Limits:** Each state may submit up to four entries per event.
- **Event Participation Limits:** Each member may participate in:
 - One individual or team event, and
 - One chapter event (e.g., *Community Service Project* or *Local Chapter Annual Business Report*).
- **Participation Requirement:** To be eligible for an award, each competitor must complete all components of the event at the National Leadership Conference.
- **Identification at Check-in:** Competitors must present valid photo identification (physical or digital) that matches the name on their conference name badge. Acceptable forms include a driver's license, passport, state-issued ID, or school ID.
- **Late Arrivals:** Competitors will be allowed to compete until such time that the results are finalized, or participation would impact the fairness and integrity of the event, as determined by Competitive Events staff. Five penalty points will be assessed for late arrivals in any competitive event.
- **Event Schedule Notes:**
 - Some events may begin before the Opening Session.
 - All schedules are posted in local time for the NLC host city.
 - Schedule changes are not permitted.

Event Administration

- **Test Duration:** 50 minutes
- **Format:** This event consists of an online objective test that is proctored and completed on-site at the National Leadership Conference (NLC).
- **Materials:** Reference or study materials are not permitted at the testing site.

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- **Calculators:** Personal calculators are not allowed; an online calculator will be available within the testing platform.
- **Question Review:** Competitors may flag questions within the testing platform for review prior to the finalization of results at the NLC.

Scoring

- Each correct answer is worth one point.
- No points are deducted for incorrect answers.
- Tiebreakers are determined as follows: (1) The number of correct responses to 10 pre-selected tiebreaker questions will be compared. (2) If a tie remains, the number of correct responses to 20 pre-selected questions will be reviewed. (3) If a tie still remains, the competitor who completed the test in the shortest amount of time will be ranked higher.
- Results announced at the National Leadership Conference are considered official and will not be changed after the conclusion of the National Leadership Conference.

Penalty Points

- Competitors may be disqualified if they violate the Code of Conduct or the Honor Code.
- Five points are deducted if competitors do not follow the Dress Code or are late to the testing site.

Recognition

- A maximum of 10 entries (individuals or teams) may be recognized per event.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- FBLA complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by providing reasonable accommodations for competitors. Accommodation requests must be submitted through the conference registration system by the official registration deadline. All requests will be reviewed, and additional documentation may be required to determine eligibility and appropriate support.

Electronic Devices

- Unless approved as part of a documented accommodation, all cell phones, smartwatches, electronic devices, and headphones must be turned off and stored away before the competition begins. Visible devices during the event will be considered a violation of the FBLA Honor Code.

Sample Preparation Resources

- Official sample test items can be found in [FBLA Connect](#). These sample items showcase the types of questions that may be asked on the test and familiarize competitors with the multiple-choice item options.

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Study Guide: Knowledge Areas and Objectives

A. Economics and Business of Journalism

1. Identify the major funding sources that impact journalism, journalists, and publications.
2. Examine the economic impacts of social media on the journalism industry.
3. Identify the funding sources that allow for publications and news reporting.
4. Identify the education needed for different careers in journalism.
5. Understand the ranking structure and hierarchy of a journalistic environment.
6. Identify the potential salary opportunities for careers in journalism.
7. Identify the major funding sources for journalism.
8. Identify the major expenses for journalism.
9. Examine the economic impacts of digital and social media on the journalism industry.

B. Grammar & Format

1. Identify perspectives and how they are used in journalism.
2. Understand different types of abbreviations and how they are used correctly.
3. Understand what type of formats are used in different media sources.
4. Understand media terminology such as alliteration, onomatopoeia, simile, metaphor.

C. Law and Ethics

1. Identify major laws that impact journalism.
2. Understand the ethical boundaries most important to journalists, specifically when it relates to sources and sharing of information.
3. Understand the impacts of ethical decisions made by journalists on society and the individuals involved.
4. Identify major historical events related to journalism ethics.

D. Basic Journalism Principles

1. Define journalism.
2. Understand common principles that determine newsworthiness of an item.
3. Explain how news values remain true year over year, regardless of societal changes.
4. Explain the basic questions used in news gathering.
5. Define the role of sources in journalism.
6. Understand how strong leads define a story.

E. History of Journalism

1. Explain the constitutional amendments as they relate to the practice of journalism.
2. Identify the major players in the history of journalism and what role they played in the industry.
3. Explain the role of journalists in war and battle.
4. Understand the history of the major players in the journalism industry and the impacts they have had.
5. Understand timelines and transitions in style, medium, and circulation of different types of publications.
6. Identify and understand different awards presented in journalism, including major recipients and milestones in the industry related to these awards.