

Future Problem Solving of Virginia Rules of the Competition

Practice Problems GIPS Teams

The first two problems (called Practice Problem 1 and Practice Problem 2) give teams an opportunity to informally compete with other teams throughout Virginia. Each booklet is scored and ranked by an official state evaluator. Coaches are encouraged to follow qualifying problem conditions but may suspend rules at their own discretion. Results of the practice problems are returned electronically to students and published on the Future Problem Solving Program of Virginia website (www.vafps.org). Although they play no part in selecting teams for participation in the State Bowl, they provide valuable feedback. Only booklets of registered teams and individuals will be scored.

On practice problem one, the workload requirements are reduced. Teams should submit booklets with eight challenges, one underlying problem, eight solution ideas, three criteria for evaluation, five solutions on the grid, and an action plan. If more is written in the booklet, only the components noted above will be evaluated. New teams are encouraged to focus on the completion of steps 1 – 3. Teams are encouraged to submit practice problem 1 booklets even if not completed so they may gain insights into their strengths and weaknesses.

For Practice Problem 2 and the Qualifying Problem competitors generate sixteen challenges and solutions, five criteria and evaluate eight solutions in step 5.

GIPS Individuals

Practice Problem 1 is an abbreviated booklet that requires only four challenges, one underlying problem, four solution ideas, three criteria for evaluation, three solutions on the grid, and an action plan. If more is written in the booklet, only the components noted above will be evaluated.

For Practice Problem 2 and the Qualifying Problem competitors generate eight challenges in step one and eight solution ideas in step three. In step five, the individual applies criteria to four solution ideas to determine the best solution for his/her action plan.

Practice Problems and Qualifying Problem team and individual work must be completed using the FPSOnline GIPS booklets (team and individual).

Qualifying Problem Protocols

Booklets must be completed in one carefully-timed session lasting no more than two hours through the FPSOnline platform. The online platform will open for eight hours in order for teams and individuals to complete the 2-hour timed Qualifying Problem. Specific directions for using the online platform for the Qualifying Problem will be emailed to coaches at least two weeks prior to the deadline for the QP submission.

Only four students may participate on a team submitting a booklet for competitive consideration on the Qualifying Problem. No substitutions may occur after the two-hour competition has begun. The grade level of the team member in the highest grade determines the competitive division of the booklet. Divisions are as follows:

Junior: grades 4 - 6
Middle: grades 7 - 9
Senior: grades 10 -12
Adult: post high school

The Qualifying Problem future scenes are inaccessible prior to the problem solving session, either by team members or coaches. The future scene becomes accessible once one member of the team logs into the system, and begins the timed two hour session. Coaches are encouraged to provide reminders of this as they schedule their QP session. Accounts will not be reset without the coach providing written notice to the Rules Committee at which time the level of penalty will be determined.

Timing of the problem solving session will begin when the first student logs in to his/her FPSOnline account and opens the “Go to Virtual Booklet.” Reading of the future scene must be included in the two-hour time limit.

No written or electronic materials relating to the topic or the Future Problem Solving process may be used by students, displayed in the room or online where booklets are being prepared. All reference materials, except dictionaries and thesauruses, are also prohibited.

Participants may not use electronic devices (including calculators, spell checkers, electronic thesauruses, dictionaries). Additionally, participants using the FPSOnline system must not have more than four tabs/apps (FPSOnline booklet, the future scene, dictionary/thesaurus tool and a communication app) open on any combination of electronic devices, including but not limited to computer, laptop, phone, tablet, etc., for use in the competition. Students are permitted to use their phone for additional communication (talking to specific teammates, sharing photos of ideas noted on Post-It notes or scratch paper) only when not competing in-person. Exceptions for special circumstances must be requested in a written request to the Affiliate Director in advance.

Coaches may not be present in the same room as or in online meeting platforms with their team during the problem solving session. Other adults may supervise students in the room as long as interaction is limited to issues of supervision and security. Coaches whose teams are working totally virtually may receive email or school division platform (Schoology, Canvas, Google Classroom, etc.) messages from teams experiencing technical issues with the FPSOnline platform, so that coaches can either troubleshoot for the team or pass their concern to the Affiliate Director. Communication with the Affiliate Director during competition completion must be through text messaging and come directly from the coach. The coach should encourage the team to keep working recording ideas on paper, in the FPSOnline or virtual meeting platform chat so they can be later recorded in the team’s booklet. The need for an extension of time for a given team will be determined by the Affiliate Director with advice from the FPSPI Technical Support Team.

If teams are competing face-to-face, coaches may monitor student behavior from outside problem solving rooms, in hallways, or adjoining rooms. If a coach must enter the room to attend to an emergency or disruption, extra care must be taken to avoid any discussion of Future Problem Solving. Should an emergency occur causing an interruption in the problem solving session, additional time corresponding to the length of the interruption should be extended to affected teams. If the disruption impacts the entire team and warrants an extension of time be granted on the online system, a text should be made immediately to the Affiliate Director via text message.

Coaches are responsible for ensuring that all team participants are familiar with the rules of the competition. The coach and each student must also sign the statement affirming adherence to the rules through the Qualifying Problem Honor Code document emailed to vafpsforms@gmail.com no later than 24 hours after the completion of the timed QP session before an entry can be certified for competitive ranking.

If a team member violates a rule of the Qualifying Problem, the coach must inform the state director before submitting the booklet. The Rules Committee will handle all charges of rules violations and interpret the rules of

the competition. This committee may assess penalties, up to and including disqualification, as they deem appropriate. Coaches may disqualify one of their own teams for any behavior he/she considers inappropriate.

All entries must be submitted no later than 8:00 AM on Saturday deadline indicated on the VAFPS competition calendar. Entries are defined as the GIPS online booklet and completed Honor Code and signed Publication Release forms. Forms should be emailed to vafpsforms@gmail.com.

Qualifying for the State Bowl

State Bowl bids are based solely on results of Qualifying Problem booklets.

All booklets are evaluated and rank ordered in the first round. Booklets receiving a rank of one or two are re-evaluated in the second round. Each Round Two booklet is assigned a TRS (total rank sum) which is the sum of a team's ranks after successive rounds of evaluation. The TRS range is 2-8 (for example: $1+1=2$, $2+1=3$, $2+6=8$).

District bids are filled first, with the best team(s) in each geographic district invited, up to the guaranteed allocation per grade level division.

If a clear winner cannot be determined after round two, booklets go to a third round of head-to-head competition among teams within a particular district. After district bids are determined, all remaining second round teams are placed in the at-large pool.

Each division's allocation of at-large bids will be filled according to the second round TRS. At-large slots are filled according to quality regardless of district. Some situations may require an additional third round run-off. After each division's at-large bid allocations are filled, stand-by teams may be selected from the highest-ranking teams remaining in the at-large pools.

At-large bid opportunities for yearlong individual competitors will be determined by the number of entries submitted in each division, and the quality of the submissions as determined by the Evaluation Director. Coaches may purchase memberships until the January date indicated on the year's competition calendar. Teams or yearlong individuals registering after the registration deadline will be assessed a late fee.

Each evaluator is responsible for extrapolating and adding sub-scores, total scores, and ranks. All qualifying problem scoresheets will be re-checked for ranking accuracy. Any error in ranking which could affect a team's qualification for the State Bowl should be immediately reported to the State Director. Future Problem Solving of Virginia reserves the right to adjust the number of State Bowl teams to include teams who did not receive a bid due to an error.

A team must be in good standing with the Virginia program to participate in the VAFPS State Bowl.

Team Qualifying Problem Terms

At-large bids—State Bowl invitations to the best teams that did not qualify for a district bid, based on a predetermined allocation of at-large bids. The at-large pool is composed only of second round teams who did not win district bids.

Bid—an invitation to the State Bowl.

Geographic district—area in which all teams participating in Future Problem Solving, representing either public or independent schools or composed or sponsored in any other way, are assigned for the purpose of

competing for district bids. Geographic districts are determined by the public school boundary of the locality.

District bid—State Bowl invitation that is automatically extended to the highest-ranking team(s) in a particular geographic district, based on an established allocation policy. The formula is one bid for each geographic district in each grade-level division in which the geographic district participates and one bid for each additional ten registered teams.

TRS (total rank sum)—sum of a team’s ranks after successive evaluation rounds.

Stand-by team—selected teams remaining in the at-large pools after bid allocation are filled. Selection will be based solely on booklet quality. If a division’s at-large pool is empty, stand-by status will be awarded to the highest-ranking teams regardless of division. When a bid receiving team is unable to accept a State Bowl bid, an invitation to participate in the competition will be extended to the highest- ranking stand-by team.

Division—competitive level of a team, based on grade level. (Junior: grades 4-6, Middle: grades 7-9, Senior: grades 10-12, Adult: post high school) The division of a team is based on the level of the student in the highest grade.

Host bid—additional bid extended to State Bowl host school. The host bid will be selected based on booklet quality after the district’s bid allocation is filled.

The Individual Competition

Individuals follow team competition rules in the booklet preparation and competition for a State Bowl invitation. An Individual completes all six steps when preparing a booklet.

The number of State Bowl invitations will be determined by division registrations and the quality of submissions. Slots are filled according to quality regardless of district.

During the State Bowl competition, each individual will prepare a booklet using the official State Bowl future scene. Individuals will complete all steps. The only difference between team and individual booklets will be the required number of challenges and solution ideas. (Individuals only write eight challenges, eight solution ideas, and apply criteria to four solution ideas.)

Ties, after two rounds of competition, will be broken through paired-comparison evaluation.

Individuals must take part in the presentation competition with participants* from their geographic district in the appropriate age division to be eligible for individual competition awards.

Presentation of the Action Plan Competition

Guidelines and rules for the Presentation of the Action Plan and scoring guidelines for Virginia participants will be posted on the program website in advance of the Virginia State Bowl

State Bowl Protocols

Virtual State Bowl

Competitors will have access to the future scene through the online system at the time of their login. **Each team will set its 2-hour competition with teammates between 8 AM and 5 PM on the identified State Bowl date.** Once the team’s booklet has been logged into by one team member, the online system begins counting down the team’s 2-hours, so it is very important that coaches set an agreed upon time to complete their competition

booklet with all team members. Team members are cautioned not to enter the competition until the predetermined time. Competition time will not be reset if a member accidentally logs in in advance of the rest of the team.

Each competitor must have a designated monitor present throughout the two-hour competition. A monitor is defined as an adult (18+) who will oversee the competitor's participation in the virtual competition and be the point of contact should an emergency arise. Coaches must register monitors as part of the State Bowl registration.

The monitor may assist participants in finding the best place in which to work and should check that no written materials or electronic materials relating to the State Bowl topic or the Future Problem Solving process are present since they may not be used during the competitive session. All reference materials, except dictionaries and thesauruses, are also prohibited.

Only four students may participate on a team submitting a booklet for competitive consideration. No substitutions may occur after April 4. The grade level of the team member in the highest grade determines the competitive division of the booklet. Grade level divisions are as follows:

- Junior: grades 4 - 6
- Middle: grades 7 - 9
- Senior: grades 10 -12
- Adult: post high school

Coaches are responsible for ensuring that all team participants are familiar with the rules of the competition. If a team member is found violating a rule of the State Bowl, the matter will be adjudicated by the State Bowl Rules Committee.

Students should have a supply of scrap paper and/or Post-It notes and writing utensils in their work space. Teams may share snapshots of their notes or may use the chat feature in the online system to share ideas about the topic, future scene or the FPS process once the electronic booklet is opened. Any exchange of information prior to the team logging in is considered a violation.

Participants may use more than one device to access their FPSOnline account so that the future scene can be viewed on one device and the booklet on another. A maximum of four (4) tabs may be open on any combination of devices, FPSOnline booklet, FPSOnline future scene copy, online dictionary and one video meeting app (FaceTime, Google Hangout, Skype, etc.). Teams should not use other shared apps or programs for sharing ideas that can be copied and pasted into the FPSOnline platform. The platform does not accept the formatting code from other programs and the ability for the platform to function correctly requires that all work be keyed into the FPSOnline booklet. Participants should have no access to materials relating to the FPS process, the topic or research notes created prior to the start of the 2-hour timed competition session.

The coach, each student and proctor must also sign the statement affirming adherence to the rules through the State Bowl Honor Code included in coach and proctor information before an entry can be certified for competitive ranking.

The Evaluation Director will supervise State Bowl evaluation.

The State Bowl Certification Committee will monitor State Bowl evaluation procedures. Prior to announcement of results at the awards ceremony, the committee will certify that all established procedures were followed. The certified decision of the evaluators, announced at the State Bowl, is final. First place GIPS teams and individuals meeting an eighty percent Virginia evaluation and guidelines set forth by the rules governing the international program in each division win the right to represent Virginia at the FPSP International Conference. Additionally, bonus IC bids are awarded based on the quality of second place booklets in each division.

If an error is discovered that would have affected the first and second place rankings, the Executive Board may submit the names of affected competitors as alternates to the International Conference.

A team must be in good standing with the Virginia program to participate in the International Conference.

Community Problem Solving (CmPS)

Virginia follows international evaluation guidelines to select CmPS project winners prior to the State Bowl competition. For rules governing student projects eligible for international competition, refer to guidelines sent to each participating coach.

CmPS teams will submit their project components (report, addendum, PSA) through the FPSOnline platform.

All teams and individuals that submit projects for the competition are invited to share their PSA and any photos they have taken during work on their project (can include screenshots of Zoom or Google Meets, students working on various aspects of the team's work on the FPS process or on the implementation of their plan). Awards are presented for winning projects. CmPS team participation at the bowl is limited to fifteen students and five adults. Additionally, first place CmPS projects meeting an eighty percent Virginia evaluation and guidelines set forth by the rules governing the international program in each division win the right to represent Virginia at the FPSP International Conference.

Scenario Writing

In order to comply with the International calendar, Virginia's winners in each division are declared and submitted for International consideration in February. For rules governing scenario entries, refer to guidelines sent to each registered coach.

The Virginia Affiliate program pays for the submission of the first place scenario in each division. Second and third place writers, based on the quality of their scenario, are invited to submit their scenario to the international program at their own registration cost.

All place winners are recognized and receive awards. First place winners in each division are encouraged to read their winning scenario at the State Bowl. Additionally, writers of first place scenarios in each division win the right to represent Virginia at the FPSP International Conference.

Scenario Performance

Scenario Performance is a year-long storytelling program. Storytellers select one topic from the year's practice problem topics that interests them and crafts a story that is not written in full but told in a spontaneous manner. Entries are submitted following guidelines provided in materials provided to registered coaches. Scenario Performance participants are required to submit their Qualifying Performance for the Qualifying Problem topic following the submission guidelines provided in the coaching materials.

The number of State Bowl invitations will be determined by division registrations and the quality of submissions. Slots are filled according to quality regardless of district. Invited Scenario Performance competitors will research the State Bowl topic and prepare a 4 - 5 minute story to entertain an audience. The performance will include voice and hand movements only; props and physical "acting" and/or background and special effects are not permitted. Additionally, first place Scenario Performance submissions in each competitive division meeting the eighty percent point threshold set forth in the Virginia evaluation guidelines in order to win the right to represent Virginia at the FPSPI International Conference.

Electronic Sharing

Coaches and teams are cautioned not to share, in any electronic form, information regarding the future scenes or completed booklets during the competition year since Affiliate Programs do not all share the same competition dates. All materials produced by Future Problem Solving Program International contain publication warnings.

These warnings are to be taken very seriously. Teams, individuals or coaches publicly posting (websites, Facebook, Instagram, etc.) will be responsible for paying the penalty assigned by Future Problem Solving Program International for this publication violation.

Additionally, coaches are responsible for advising parents and guardians not to publicly post videos they may take of teams competing in Presentation of Action Plan. Similarly, teams with Presentation of Action Plan posted skits, in part or whole, will incur a financial penalty.

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