

Role of the Coach

The coach has many different jobs throughout the entire Battle of the Books season. These roles vary from time to time, but the most important stays the same—the coach serves as the main contact point for the library staff. This means that the coach will be responsible for checking their email/voicemail regularly for important scheduling reminders and then reporting the reminders to the rest of the team. In the event of schedule changes, the library will contact the coach immediately, and it is their responsibility to relay this information to their team.

Other roles that a coach will fulfill:

- Discussion leader—make sure that each team member understands which books on the list he or she is expected to read. Coaches are encouraged to read the books too! Talk about the books with team members—what did they like or dislike about each book? Why?
- Meeting facilitator—meet with the team regularly to offer encouragement, check on reading progress, foster team cohesiveness, and help team members learn author's names and facts from the books.
- Main contact point—act as the communicating link between the library, team members, and parents with all information regarding the Battle of the Books. Please keep the library informed of any problems or changes.
- Team supervisor on battle days—ensure that your team members and their families understand the rules and expectations, and make sure your team demonstrates sportsman-like behavior during the battles. We request that coaches be present during battle days to help the library contain the noise level while teams are waiting to compete. If you are unable to attend, please send a substitute in your place.

Coaches can also help their team foster and maintain team spirit throughout the battle season. We want this to be a friendly and exciting competition for all involved! Methods of building team spirit may include:

- Decorating team t-shirts or costumes
- Wear the same color or item of clothing to battles
- Make a poster to display at your table during the battles

Some ways to encourage and reward your team are:

- Give praise and words of encouragement
- Serve snacks at meetings
- Play a board game before you begin battle meetings
- Have a pizza party or an ice cream outing at the completion of the battles
- Keep it fun and make happy memories!

****Please note: Due to the double-elimination structure of the regional battle, there can be a considerable amount of down-time between matches. Coaches are encouraged to bring activities to keep their teams entertained.**