



Program Overview

Welcome to the *You Be The Chemist Challenge*®!

In 2004, the Chemical Educational Foundation® (CEF) launched an exciting new program, the *You Be The Chemist Challenge*® (Challenge), designed to educate youth about chemistry through collaborative community events. The Challenge evolved into an interactive question-and-answer competition, similar in format and setting to spelling bees and quiz bowls, that engages grade 5-8 students in learning with their peers (and their community!) about important chemistry concepts, historical discoveries, and laboratory safety.

Initial competitions were held in Illinois, Texas, and Kentucky and have since been duplicated throughout the country, bringing together industry members, science organizations, schools, educators, and students in their local communities. The culmination of each Challenge cycle is a national championship event organized by CEF and supported by corporate sponsorships.

How the Challenge Works

CEF develops questions for Challenge competitions and creates study materials to invite students to explore the fascinating world of chemistry and prepare for the competitive events. Study materials are available to all on CEF's website, www.chemed.org. Questions are distributed by CEF to Local and State Challenge Organizers for use in competitions.

There are three levels of competition in the Challenge: local, state, and national. Local Challenge competitions are held in communities across the country. Local Challenge winners advance to a State Challenge, and state winners advance to the National Challenge organized by CEF. Local and state competitions take place throughout the academic year, and the cycle ends annually with the national competition in June.

A Local Challenge Organizer may be an industry member, a school district representative, or a community member who has agreed to organize a competition site or sites in his/her community. Organizers work with both local schools and corporate sponsors, specifically chemical industry members, to implement the program.

Educational Merit

Based on the Benchmarks for Science Literacy and the National Science Education Standards, the Challenge provides a tool for educators to introduce essential science concepts, including ones that commonly appear in state assessments. The Challenge offers an exciting opportunity to enhance Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) learning in the classroom. Challenge competitions and the associated study materials also integrate language arts and history into the science curriculum and present unfamiliar chemistry concepts in a format that both tests and entertains.

The Challenge study materials and questions are reviewed yearly by a panel of chemists, chemical engineers, educators, and curriculum consultants.

Where the Challenge Is Today

The Challenge has grown tremendously since its inception! With each year, the list of participating companies, schools, and organizations increases. The CEF staff is dedicated to expanding the Challenge across the nation. We are on our way!

Currently participating states include California, Connecticut, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Washington, D.C.

Is your state listed? If so, find out how to join the growing list of companies, schools, and communities participating in your state by visiting the Local Challenge page of CEF's website at www.chemed.org/ybtc/challenge/local.aspx. If your state isn't listed, be the first to join this popular program!

Contact us at 703/527-6223 or challenge@chemed.org to find out how you can get involved.