1st Black American Bee Champion
Zaila Avant-garde

How the Bee Shaped Me
An Interview with Vanya Shivashankar

“inspires students’ love of reading”
Courtney Sutton
3rd grade teacher

New!
A-Z to Simplify Your Bee
Page 3

HOW TO GET BUZZING
A GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS AND SCHOOLS
Ready to get buzzing?
Click here to enroll your school today!

Scripps National Spelling Bee Finals live on broadcast TV

In classrooms across America

Regional champions compete near Washington, D.C.

Developing resilience & growth mindset in our future leaders

Diverse schools & spellers of all backgrounds

Millions of Students

Grades 1 Through 8

#spellingbee

Enroll today at spellingbee.com!
HOW THE BEE SHAPED ME
An Interview with Vanya Shivashankar, 2015 Champion

Q: How has the Bee impacted your life?
A: My 10-year spelling competition journey has really made an everlasting impact on my life and I've made so many amazing friends and memories along the way. It's really shaped who I am today, and where my interests lie. Competing in the Bee has fostered my curiosity for the world, helped me discover a passion for language and etymology and given me a platform to express myself.

Q: What if someone is hesitant to sign up?
A: I would say why not? It's a great way to make incredible memories, lifelong friends, and develop crucial life skills. Success in the Bee is not when you win, success is when you know you tried your best, had fun, and learned something new. Have fun with every moment, every word, and every opportunity. It's yours for the taking.

Q: What does your life look like post-Bee?
A: Currently, I'm a rising Junior at Yale University, studying cognitive science and global health and on the track to medical studies. So I've been having a lot of fun with that. My success in the Bee has very much paved the path for me to be able to put my all into where I'm at now. I still love being involved with Scripps and the spelling bees.
What do Olympians and honeybees have in common?
Both work relentlessly to achieve their goals! Like Olympians, honeybees are hyper-focused on the job at hand to keep their hive buzzing.
Teacher's Beehive

Crafted with teachers in mind, this newsletter contains information regarding the Scripps National Spelling Bee along with educational content from our partners like Merriam-Webster and the News Literacy Project.

"The Bee supports my goal to inspire students’ love of reading. There might be a child who doesn't want to pick up a book, but they'll dig into a list of words and a dictionary to figure out what they really mean."

- Courtney Sutton, 3rd grade teacher

Check out the rest of our Educator Resources

The Bee's Bookshelf: the official book club of the Bee.


Online Testing Platform: a tool for conducting a spelling bee via an online test.

Great Words, Great Works: a reading list.

Words of the Champions: a study list.
Meet Zaila Avant-garde

Zaila’s Spellebrity Bio

- From Harvey, LA
- Won the Bee in 2021 at age 14
- Last name is a tribute to jazz musician John Coltrane
- First Black American winner in the Bee’s 96-year history

Where is Zaila now?

- Received 5 full-ride scholarship offers from Tulane University, University of Maryland, Louisiana State University, Southern University and Sewanee.
- Tweeted by President Joe Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris, NASA, Oprah and more!
- Featured on Jimmy Kimmel Live! in a joint interview with Bill Murray.
- Invited by Anthony Mackie to the ESPY Awards where she walked the red carpet and met track star Sha’Carri Richardson.

Zaila holds three Guinness World Records for basketball!

- Most bounce juggles in one minute with four basketballs.
- Most basketball bounces in 30 seconds with four basketballs.
- Most basketballs dribbled at once (tie).

Enroll today at spellingbee.com!
“a dream come true.”

Zaila Avant-garde upon winning the Scripps National Spelling Bee
The Bee That Started It All

Nine spellers competed in the first Bee, held in Washington, D.C., in 1925. Frank Neuhauser from Louisville, Kentucky, won by correctly spelling the word gladiolus.

Did you know?

In the Bee’s second year, we declared our first female winner, Pauline Bell, who won by correctly spelling the color cerise. We’ve had 52 female champions and 54 male champions in our history.

The Youngest Spellebrity

In 2017, at just six years old, Edith Fuller became the youngest speller to secure a spot in the Scripps National Spelling Bee. To qualify, she outspelled 52 other children at the regional Bee, spelling such challenging words as jnana, sarsaparilla and Baedeker.

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