

Opening

An Answer Judge is one of three official table staff positions. The individual must know the rules and text well so they can be effective and help the Quiz Master determine fair rulings. An Answer Judge should be a good listener in order to hold this position at a tournament. This page details skills an Answer Judge must have and the process to fulfilling their job.

Honestly, most of these rules are in the **Rulebook**. Details and clarifications to rules are on this page, but please also get the rules straight from the source. The rulebook itself states that each Scorekeeper, Answer Judge and Quiz Master, as well as coaches, captains and co-captains should read it prior to each tournament. Please do read it! We want to ensure we can keep things fair for the youth: they put tons of work in to memorizing all the material they do, it is only fair that table staff do all they can to keep things fair and run everything according to the rules that have been laid out.

Pre-question

There are a few things an Answer Judge will need to do prior to the question, to be ready for each question. First, they need to look at the reference of the current question and find the proper verse using either computer software or a hard copy of the text. Many Quiz Masters unknowingly cover the reference with their hand; if they do, just remind them that you need to see it. Mark the verse with your finger on the page to help you quickly locate what the quizzer is saying and to help the Quiz Master know where to look.

If possible, before the Quiz Master starts the question, read the question over once to check it for validity. Some Answer Judges will also read over the whole quiz before the quiz starts, to catch any bad questions before they are read. Both steps will help save time by eliminating the need to throw out and redo any bad or illegal questions that were read by mistake. Check twice, read once.

Fouls can be called by any table staff member. Please see the section on the Scorekeeping page about fouls for more information.

During Answer

During the quizzer's answer, actually, during the whole quiz and tournament, you will need to be paying attention. On long answers, such as Quotes, Finishes and the quotation part of Situations, the Quiz Master should look to the Answer Judge for confirmation that it was quoted satisfactorily. You may give a slight nod or shake your head if needed. Subtly pointing to the section that needs work or to be quoted again is also acceptable. Notify the Quiz Master if you think they missed something and are about to make a hasty ruling. Many quizzers speak very quickly and catching each word is very important.

Other than the previously mentioned subtle signs, it is important that all table staff limit their body language. Many Answer Judges use their finger to follow along in the book, then stop moving their finger when the quizzer makes an error. As a former quizzer, I used this many times to figure out where my error was. Because it is giving information to the quizzer, even without noticing, it isn't fair and we urge you to not give any signs away.

Scanning For Context

Many times, the quizzer won't give the correct answer right off. Remember that for Interrogatives, Multiple Answers and Situations, context is five verses on either side of the proper verse. However, context on Quotes, References and Finishes are only those one or two verses. When an Answer Judge suspects a quizzer is out of context, there are three options:

1. Scan five verses on either side to see if what the quizzer is saying appears in one of them. Answer Judges most commonly use this method to decide if the quizzer is out of context. However, it presents a problem: the Answer Judge and the Quiz Master don't know if the quizzer is actually somewhere else, or just saying information that sounds right. This is partly why it is important that AJs are familiar with the text.
2. Do nothing. Let the quizzer keep talking, the QM can give them appropriate prompts and see if they get the answer right. Once they do, hold off on the ruling: you will likely need to look up the information they originally said to know if they were out of context. Sometimes it isn't worth it to start looking up the information when there are only a few seconds on the clock.
3. Use the concordance, keyword list, key phrase list or other resources to look up information that the quizzer has said to see if they are actually quoting from somewhere or not. Sometimes the quizzer will try to work the answer by saying information that sounds right, to try and jog their memory as to what the correct answer is. They may not actually be saying anything that appears in the text and therefore will not be out of context. Using the concordance or lists are preferred methods. Sometimes the Answer Judge will need to wait until the timer has rung before they can focus on finding out if the quizzer was within context or was out of context. Also note that the Answer Judge should avoid frantically looking information up: this gives the quizzer a sign they may be out of context.

Context rules also cause some issues as many table staff are not sure how much information is required to place the quizzer out of context.

Closing

Hopefully this information will help you learn more about Quizzing. It was designed and carefully crafted to clarify rules, help educate people and, in particular, to equip Answer Judges to work effectively to help Quiz Masters. Rules sometimes change, so be sure to check back often, read the most recent version of the **Rulebook** before each tournament, learn from others and share your knowledge with them as well.

Reading the Rulebook to understand Quizzing and the rules is essential for all positions. However, there are also many nuances to the rules that are only learned through experience. You will always learn new things, enjoy it!