NACLO
as an
Introduction to Linguistics

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NACLO

The North American Computational Linguistics Olympiad is an NSF-sponsored contest for US and Canadian students.

Started in 2007, so we have had 10 Olympiads so far.

2018 Contest Dates (USA)*
Open Round: January 25, 2018
Invitational Round: March 8, 2018
Site registration deadline: January 14, 2018
Student registration deadline: January 24, 2018 (noon PST, if space available)
Walk-ins are allowed with advance permission of the local site host

* The dates for the 2018 contest IN CANADA (both anglophone and francophone) will be announced later. Check the OLC-CLO site.
The Olympiad consists of challenging and fun series of puzzles which students have to solve.

No previous knowledge of linguistics or computing is required since the puzzles can be solved with analytic reasoning, logic, and problem-solving skills.
While there are many science and math competitions to challenge and encourage high school students to pursue further study in these fields, there is very little available in other areas, and only ONE available in linguistics.
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The test lasts for 3 hours, and consists of 5-8 problems. Last year there were more than 1000 participants at 100 test sites, and participation is growing.

Winners of the Open Round are invited to the Invitational Round where the problems are harder.

The winners of the second Round are eligible to participate in the international competition, the International Linguistics Olympiad (ILO), one of 12 international high school science Olympiads.
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TYPES OF QUESTIONS:

~ puzzles about English and languages other than English, including constructed languages, and made-up words in natural languages
~ systematicity of language
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TYPES OF QUESTIONS:

~ puzzles about number systems, writing systems, calendars, kinship systems
~ logic, pattern recognition

2018 Student Handbook
Version 1.00, October 1, 2017
Check the web site for updates

The Twelfth Annual
North American Computational Linguistics Olympiad
2018
www.nacloweb.org

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NACLO 2013 Phoenician Fun: The Phoenician script can be dated at around 1050 BCE, and from it the Arabic, Hebrew and by extension Greek, Roman, and Cyrillic scripts evolved. The Phoenician civilization was centered along the Mediterranean coast in an area known as Cana'an. The map below shows a number of Phoenician cities and nearby cities that were important trading partners. The spellings reflect their pronunciation in Phoenician.

Fill in the number of the word written in Phoenician script that corresponds to the following four cities.

Beritos _______ Halab _______
Riblah _______ Tsarephath _______

This is a simplified version of the original problem. The original problem included 10 words written in Phoenician script, but two of them do not correspond to two of the cities on the map.

NACLO 2008:

NACLO 2007:

A Fish Story

Rewrite me badd

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Stony Brook University has been a test site since 2012 and has been very successful in attracting many excellent students to participate in NACLO. We have had 3 students invited to the semi-final round, and 1 made it all the way to the finals in Beijing. A couple of years ago, SBU ranked 4th in the nation for number of students participating.
We run a practice sessions in the weeks leading up to the Olympiad, but we are experimenting with hosting practice sessions locally at the high schools, rather than having the students come to SBU.
What’s in it for the students?

Students participating in this Olympiad learn about a new field of study, participate in fun games, partake in an enriching experience, and add an item to their resume which will help in the college admission process.
What’s in it for us?

This is a way to introduce high school students to the field of linguistics. Many high school students do not know about this growing field of study.