

WordMasters

A student representing Discovery School recently won highest honors in this year's WordMasters Challenge—a national language arts competition entered by over 230,000 students annually, which consists of three separate meets held at intervals during the school year.

Competing in the difficult Blue Division of the Challenge, fifth grader Jesse Amdahl earned a perfect score in the year's first meet, held in December. In the entire country only 189 fifth graders earned perfect scores. Also achieving outstanding results in the meet was a fifth grader Elijah Zahn. The school's students were coached in preparation for the Challenge by Marilyn Stanley.

The WordMasters Challenge is an exercise in critical thinking, which first encourages students to become familiar with a set of interesting new words (considerably harder than grade level), and then challenges them to use those words to complete analogies expressing various kinds of logical relationships. Working to solve the Challenge analogies helps students learn to think both analytically and metaphorically. Though most vocabulary-boosting and analogy-solving activities have been created for high school students, the WordMasters materials have been specifically designed for younger students, in grades three through eight. They are particularly well suited for able and interested children, who rise to the challenge of learning new words and enjoy the logical puzzles posed by analogies.

The WordMasters Challenge has been administered for the past 21 years by a company based in Allendale, New Jersey, which is dedicated to inspiring high achievement in American schools. The students will participate in two more meets in the coming months, and medals and certificates will be awarded in June to those who achieved and/or improved the most in the course of the year.