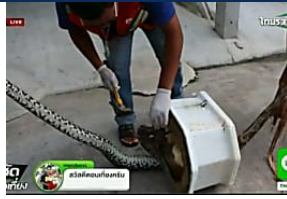




Football:  
'Silly to  
Pep up  
Guardiola



Thai man  
attacked  
by  
python



AirAsia  
chief  
shrugs  
off

Recommended by

## Tension and drama mark Big Spell zonals



Winners from the north zone quiz are (from left): Rivervale Primary's Babu Sanjaay in second place, Catholic High's Ho Wing Yip in first and Rosyth's Ang Ding Jie in third. ST PHOTO: CHEW SENG KIM

🕒 PUBLISHED APR 17, 2016, 5:00 AM SGT

### South zone quiz lasts longest, nearly 3 hours, with an intense face-off between classmates



Ang Yiying (mailto:angyiying@sph.com.sg) | David Tang (mailto:daviddtang@sph.com.sg) | Cheryl Yeo (mailto:cherylyeo@sph.com.sg) | Clementy@sph.com.sg

---

---

Bungles, cheers and tears marked the nationwide battle among primary schoolers yesterday as the zonal round of the RHB-The Straits Times National Spelling Championship 2016 saw four champs being crowned.

The competition is jointly organised by RHB Banking Group and The Straits Times, in partnership with the Ministry of Education. It is supported by Nanyang Polytechnic and the National Library Board, with venue partners Singapore Zoo and Suntec Singapore, and audio and sound partner Philips.

This year, it featured 117 top scorers from the preliminary written round in which 1,805 registrants took on schoolmates, friends and siblings too.

The quiz began simultaneously at four locations around 10am, with the battle in the south lasting the longest - close to three hours.

First to finish was the east zone, with 10-year-old Ng Du Wei from St Hilda's Primary School winning on the word "kitsch". His sister, Ng Jing Wei, 12, from the same school and also competing, revealed before the start of the competition: "He has a 200-word word bank that he refuses to share with me."

## **WINNERS**

### **EAST ZONE**

**1ST:** Ng Du Wei, 10

St Hilda's Primary School (Pri 5)

**Winning word:** kitsch

**2ND:** Amir Izaac, 12

St Hilda's Primary (Pri 6)

**3RD:** Chern Huan Yee, 12

Tao Nan Primary School (Pri 6)

### **NORTH ZONE**

**1ST:** Ho Wing Yip, 11

Catholic High School (Primary) (Pri 6)

**Winning word:** ingratiate

**2ND:** Babu Sanjaay, 11

Rivervale Primary School (Pri 6)

**3RD:** Ang Ding Jie, 11

Rosyth School (Pri 6)

### **WEST ZONE**

**1ST:** Jemimah Lee, 11

Nanyang Primary School (Pri 6)

**Winning word:** presbyopia

**2ND:** Ariel Tear Ying Ting, 11

Nanyang Primary School (Pri 6)

**3RD:** Jerome Thomas Ng Tze Loong, 12

Henry Park Primary School (Pri 6)

### **SOUTH ZONE**

**1ST:** Eashaa Pillai, eight

Raffles Girls' Primary School (Pri 4)

**Winning word:** quagmire

**2ND:** Sam Shreyas Joseph, 10 St Joseph's Institution Junior (Pri 5)

**3RD:** Dilan Tan, 11

St Joseph's Institution Junior (Pri 6)

Afterwards, she said of his win: "I have mixed feelings about this... he is younger, you know. It is a little embarrassing for me."

Top honours in the north zone went to Catholic High School (Primary)'s Ho Wing Yip, 11, who spelt "ingratiante", while Nanyang Primary School's Jemimah Lee, 11, won in the west zone with "presbyopia".

In the south, Eashaa Pillai, eight, from Raffles Girls' Primary School, took the first-place trophy on the word "quagmire". Third-placed Dilan Tan, 11, of St Joseph's Institution (Junior) triumphed over classmate Aloysius Khoo after an intense 15-minute face-off.

Dilan was initially declared the winner after six exchanges, when Aloysius' spelling of "aficionado" was deemed incorrect. But the judges accepted their teacher's protest that "aficionado" could also be spelt with two "f"s, and a 13-word rally ensued before Dilan won on "tabla".

Parents turned up bearing tissue paper and drinks at the Woodlands Regional Library for the north zone, Singapore Press Holdings Media Centre for the south zone, Tampines Regional Library for the east zone and Nanyang Polytechnic for the west zone.

The chief judge in the west zone, Ms Serene Goh, editor of The Straits Times Schools department, which has run the event since 2012, said of this year's competitors: "Spellers had better strategies, and they kept their cool better. The hard work is clear, and they have raised the level of the game."

Each zonal champion won \$500 and is guaranteed a place in the finals. The rest will be nationally ranked, with the top 20 or so, including the zonal champs, entering the final on April 30. The top prize is \$5,000, and a challenge trophy for the winner's school.

**•Those interested in watching the finals live can write to [info@bigspell2016.com](mailto:info@bigspell2016.com) for tickets. For more info, go to [www.straitstimes.com/bigspell](http://www.straitstimes.com/bigspell)**