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Students spell their way to the top in national competition

Four pupils win places in national spelling bee finals after emerging zonal champions in round of 104

By Serene Luo and Ang Yiyong

Never had a 'didgeridoo' - an Australian aboriginal instrument - been so important to this Bukit View Primary 6 pupil.

Successfully spelling the word meant Nandana Jayachandran, 11, had out-spelled her 34 opponents to take the west zone title in the RHB-The Straits Times National Spelling Championship on Saturday morning.

This segment at Millennia Institute was one of the most closely watched, with the highest number of competitors coming from schools such as Nanyang Primary and Henry Park Primary.

Saturday's round, which divided schools into the north, south, east and west regions, pitted 104 spellers, selected from the biggest-ever pool of 1,200 entrants, against one another.



The zonal round was stressful for many pupils, such as this boy at the Ngee Ann Secondary venue. Some, like De La Salle's Shanna Kaur (in red), Fuhua Primary's Melvin Chin, both 12, and Nanyang Primary's Samuel Tan, 10, from Nanyang Primary, practised with one another. -- ST PHOTOS: ANG YIYING, RAJ NADARAJAN

Background story

TRICKY WORDS

Here are some words that the competitors tripped over:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indict | <input type="checkbox"/> Guillotine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facsimile | <input type="checkbox"/> Wunderkind |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indestructible | <input type="checkbox"/> Paella |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Abhorrent | <input type="checkbox"/> Circuitous |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crevasse | <input type="checkbox"/> Dilettante |