

38th Scripps National Spelling Bee

The **38th Scripps National Spelling Bee** was held in Washington, D.C. on June 9–10, 1965, sponsored by the E.W. Scripps Company.

70 contestants^[1] participated in the competition. 7th grader 12-year old Michael Kerpan, Jr., from Tulsa, Oklahoma, sponsored by the *Tulsa Tribune*, won the competition by correctly spelling the word "eczema" (also the winning word in 1936) after 17 rounds.^[2] Judy Guarr of Topeka, Kansas took second place after misspelling "largetto" in a long duel.^[3] As of 2015, Kerpan is the last of two winners from Oklahoma, the first being John Capehart in the 1961 bee.^{[3][4]}

Third place was taken by 13-year-old Ralph Moore of Ohio.^{[4][5]}

There were 70 contestants this year, ranging from 11 to 15 years old, evenly split with 35 boys and 35 girls, from 32 states, the District of Columbia, and Guam.^[6] Three finalists returned from the prior year's bee.^[7]

Future Federal Reserve Board Chairman Ben Bernanke was eliminated on the word *edelweiss*, finishing 26th.^[8]

The first place prize was \$1,000 (along with a trip to New York City to appear on *The Ed Sullivan Show* and \$100 in spending money). A total of \$5,700 in prizes were awarded to all spellers.^[6]

38th Scripps National Spelling Bee	
Date	June 9–10, 1965
Winner	Michael Kerpan, Jr.
Age	12
Residence	Tulsa, Oklahoma
Sponsor	<i>Tulsa Tribune</i>
Sponsor location	Tulsa, Oklahoma
Winning word	eczema
No. of contestants	70
Pronouncer	Richard R. Baker
Preceded by	37th Scripps National Spelling Bee
Followed by	39th Scripps National Spelling Bee

References

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