

BJCP Mead Judge Question Pool

Section 1

Section 1 is worth 10 points.

Question 1: Mead Judge program

Question 1 is worth 5 points total; each question is worth one-half of a point.

1. What is the **Mead Judge** designation called for a person who has previously taken the BJCP Beer Judge Exam? _____
2. What is the **Mead Judge** designation called for a person who hasn't previously taken the BJCP Beer Judge Exam? _____
3. Is a person passing the Mead Judge Exam a full BJCP member? Y N
4. What are the requirements for becoming a BJCP **Mead Judge**?
5. Minimum exam score _____
6. Experience points _____
7. Can an existing BJCP member increase in rank using the score from a BJCP Mead Judge Exam? Y N
8. What type of credit does an existing BJCP member earn by passing the BJCP Mead Judge Exam? _____
9. Can someone who has passed the BJCP Mead Judge Exam advance in rank by earning experience points? Y N
10. How can a person passing the BJCP Mead Judge Exam identify themselves at a BJCP-sanctioned competition?

Question 2

Question 2 is worth 5 points total; each question is worth one-third of a point. There are fifteen true/false questions on the exam, drawn from the following pool:

1. A competition organizer may serve as the judge director and may also serve as a judge, provided this person has no knowledge of entries and entrants.
2. A judge director may serve as a judge, provided this person has no knowledge of entries and entrants.
3. A competition organizer may serve as the judge director, provided this person has no knowledge of the association between entries and entrants.
4. A judge may not serve as a judge director, even if this person has no knowledge of entries and entrants.
5. A judge may not serve as a competition organizer, even if this person has no knowledge of entries and entrants.
6. A judge director may serve as the competition organizer and may also serve as a judge, provided this person has no knowledge of entries and entrants.
7. A judge director may not serve as a judge, even if this person has no knowledge of entries and entrants.
8. If an individual has knowledge of entries and entrants they may not serve as a judge.
9. A competition organizer may serve as a judge, provided this person does not divulge information about entries and entrants to other judges.
10. The “head” judge at a table should try to tutor apprentice or lower-rank judges if time permits.
11. The steward at the table has sole responsibility for completing the Cover Sheets for meads in each flight.
12. The head judge at the table has sole responsibility for completing the Cover Sheets for meads in each flight.
13. The “head” judge at a table should fill out Cover Sheets for meads in his or her flight as directed by the competition management.
14. The “head” judge at a table has no responsibility for filling out Cover Sheets for meads in his or her flight as directed by the competition management.
15. There is no need for the head judge to complete the Flight Summary Sheet – the competition organizer can obtain all that information from the cover sheets.
16. If possible, there should be at least one BJCP Mead Judge in every flight.
17. When novice judges judge entries in a competition, each novice should be paired with a BJCP Mead Judge.
18. To reduce stray odors and flavors present, beverages and foods other than water, bread or crackers should not be brought to the judging table.

19. It is acceptable to bring food items other than bread, crackers, and water to the judging table.
20. You must filter out strong scents from fellow judges or the environment from your mind rather than discussing the problem with the competition organizer.
21. Strong scents from the environment or other judges or stewards should be brought to the attention of the competition organizer.
22. Because entries cannot have any identifying marks, it is OK for a judge to judge meads in a category he or she has entered.
23. If a judge is assigned to judge a category that he/she has entered, that judge should ask the competition organizer to reassign him/her to another category.
24. If assigned to judge a category that he or she has entered a judge should just judge the category without notifying the judge director or competition organizer.
25. Judges should not review the sub-category being judged from the BJCP Style Guidelines while at the judging table prior to judging that style.
26. Novice judges may only evaluate entries if authorized by the judge director, and novices should be paired with BJCP Mead Judges when possible.
27. Judges may invite stewards to taste the meads in a flight, if there's enough sample to share.
28. It is acceptable to change the order in which you judge the meads on your flight sheet from how it was printed.
29. Meads must be evaluated in the sequence specified on the flight sheet.
30. If you have eaten spicy or greasy food within few hours prior to judging, you should use mouthwash or antiseptic rinse before judging.
31. You should avoid eating spicy or greasy food within few hours prior to judging.
32. Hot and/or spicy foods should be avoided prior to a judging event because they can reduce a judge's sensitivity to the aromas and flavors of mead.
33. Perfumed shampoos and colognes should be avoided prior to a judging event because they can reduce a judge's sensitivity to the aromas of mead.
34. It is a good idea to take a decongestant prior to a judging event to increase your sensitivity to the aromas of mead.
35. Calibration meads are selected to be the standard against which entries should be judged.
36. It is the responsibility of the head judge, in consultation with the other judges in a flight, to assign a consensus score to each entry.
37. It is not necessary for scores produced by the judges on a panel to be within seven points or each other.
38. After discussing the initial scores, judges should adjust their final scores to be within seven points.

39. Judges must adjust their scores to be within seven points of each other as part of developing a consensus score for the mead.
40. The consensus score assigned to the mead is not necessarily an average score.
41. It is important to be quick as well as to write your Scoresheets thoroughly and completely.
42. On average, experienced judges should be able to completely evaluate a mead, including arriving at a consensus, in 10 minutes.
43. When there is a discrepancy in the scores for a given mead, a judge who has not taken the BJCP Mead Judge exam should yield to the opinion of any BJCP Mead Judges at the table.
44. It is acceptable to remove offensive smelling entries from the judging table after they have been evaluated.
45. A judge must disqualify an entry if it has raised lettering or the cap has identifying marks.
46. A judge may disqualify an entry if it has an improper bottle or cap.
47. Only the judge director or competition organizer can disqualify an entry.
48. The results of the bottle inspection do not affect the scoring.
49. Snide or rude comments are unacceptable on Scoresheets.
50. Pour each entry in a manner that gives it its optimum appearance, keeping in mind that some entries may be over- or under-carbonated.
51. When you suspect an entry has been placed in the wrong flight based on the style being judged, you should request that it be judged in a different flight instead.
52. When you suspect an entry has been placed in the wrong flight based on the style being judged, you should consult with the judge director or competition organizer.
53. Sniff the entry immediately after pouring to ensure proper evaluation of volatile aromatics.
54. There is no need to sniff the aroma immediately after pouring the entry into the glass.
55. Complete judging of one entry before moving on to the next entry.
56. It is not necessary to offer any feedback for improvement if you score a mead above 40.
57. It is common practice to refrain from sharing your thoughts while judging a mead until the other judges have completed their Scoresheet.
58. If you are very familiar with a mead style, it is preferable to disregard the BJCP Style Guidelines and rely on your personal expertise instead.
59. If rushed, it's OK to write only comments and an overall score on a Scoresheet, leaving the scores for the subsections blank.
60. If rushed, it's OK to write only 1-2 comments on a Scoresheet as long as the numeric score is filled out.

61. If a mead is a “gusher” or has an unpleasant aroma upon opening, a judge may assign a courtesy score of 13 without tasting and commenting on the characteristics of the mead.
62. All meads should be tasted and scored, even if they are “gushers” or have an unpleasant aroma upon opening.
63. It is appropriate to penalize the entrant if the mead is not served at the proper temperature.
64. If the meads are not served at the proper temperature work with the competition staff to resolve the problem.
65. In each section of a Scoresheet, you should only comment upon the most prominent features of each entry, not subtle characteristics.
66. Judges’ comments must not include derogatory, rude, and/or snide comments.
67. Judges’ comments must not make assumptions without qualifying statements such as “if you used...” or “Did you...”
68. Judges’ comments must include a complete evaluation of the sensory aspects of the entry and how those aspects relate to the BJCP Style Guidelines.
69. Judges’ comments should be constructive and reflect knowledge of the mead-making, fermentation, bottling, and handling process.
70. Judges’ comments need to provide information on how to improve the entry as warranted.
71. Scores should not be assigned to the aroma section immediately because the entry’s aroma profile may change over time.
72. Each section must be scored with a number prior to writing any comments, to best capture your first impressions.
73. To assure objectivity, you should never write your full name or put contact information on the Scoresheet.
74. You should write your full name, judging rank, and whether you have received the BJCP Mead Judge endorsement on each Scoresheet.
75. You should always fill out the “Style Grid” on the Scoresheet, as a good check against your scores.
76. You should use the “Overall Impression” section of the Scoresheet to refer to how the entry compares to other entries in the flight.
77. You should use the “Overall Impression” section of the Scoresheet to comment on how much you enjoyed the entry or provide suggestions for how to improve the mead.
78. A score in the “Outstanding” range is reserved for meads that not only lack flaws but also have the hard-to-define “extraordinary” character that great meads have.
79. The courteous lower limit for scores assigned to “Problematic” meads is 6 points-one point for each section of the Scoresheet.
80. The courteous lower limit for scores assigned to “Problematic” meads is 13 points.

81. If judges require more “samples” than one bottle to judge a flight, the “head” judge should ask the steward to request a second bottle from the cellar master.
82. It is preferable to use ink on Scoresheets so that your scores and comments cannot be altered by contest personnel.
83. It is preferable to use mechanical pencils, rather than wooden pencils, on Scoresheets so that wood odors do not interfere with mead aromas.
84. It is acceptable to request a second bottle to give the entry a fair chance at an accurate judging if a mead is a “gusher” or tastes infected.
85. Entrants may contact the judge, the competition director, or their BJCP Regional Representative if they are dissatisfied with any aspect of their Scoresheets.
86. When your flight has finished, you should avoid having conversations that might distract other judges who have not yet finished their flights.
87. When your flight has finished, it is OK to visit other flights still in progress to see how your entries are faring.
88. Because it may have been entered by a person in the room, it is polite to refrain from publicly deriding a “problem” mead that you have scored during a competition.
89. Judges from outside the table should not be consulted on a mead unless the judges at the table cannot reach a consensus score, and then only if they all agree to the consultation.

Section 2

Section 2 is worth 90 points.

Question 1: Balance and Style Attributes

Question 1 is worth 15 points. One question is taken from the following pool of questions. The point breakdown of the 15 points is given after each question in the pool.

1. Identify at least three major components that contribute to a properly balanced mead. Discuss how the components of balance are controlled and adjusted in both the fermentation process and the aging process.
Scoring: identify components (3 points), discuss control/adjustment in fermentation (6 points), discuss control/adjustment in aging (6 points).
2. Identify and define the three alcohol strength categories for mead as defined by the BJCP. Describe how honey character, sweetness, alcohol and overall balance vary in meads of these three strength categories.
Scoring: identify categories (3 points), define categories (3 points), discuss how balance varies in each category (9 points)
3. Identify and define the three sweetness levels for traditional mead styles as defined by the BJCP. How are the differences perceived? How does this perception change with strength, carbonation, and honey variety?
Scoring: identify levels (3 points), define levels (3 points), discuss how balance varies in each category (9 points)
4. Describe the key differences between hydromel, standard and sack meads. How are the differences perceived? How does this perception change with sweetness and carbonation?
Scoring: identify differences (3 points), describe differences (6 points), discuss balance (6 points)
5. Identify the three fruit mead styles as defined by the BJCP. Discuss how the use of fruit can affect sweetness, acidity and tannin levels in these styles. Provide examples using three distinctly different types of fruit (one from each BJCP fruit mead style).
Scoring: identify styles (3 points), discuss impact of fruit usage (9 points), discuss examples (3 points)
6. Describe how [select one: tannin, acidity, sweetness, alcohol] is perceived in mead. How is it adjusted? How does [tannin, acidity, sweetness, alcohol] enhance, complement or contrast with other basic components in the overall balance in a mead?
Scoring: describe perception (6 points), describe adjustment (3 points), discuss balance (6 points)

Question 2: Honey

Question 2 is worth 15 points. One base question is used but varies by randomizing the honey varieties used in the question.

1. Describe the varietal character imparted by the following honey varieties when fermented in a mead: [variations of this question are produced by selecting three from the table below, one from each column]. Consider flavor, aroma, color and mouthfeel contributions, and the degree of distinctiveness, uniqueness or intensity of each honey. In what mead styles might each of these honeys be appropriate or inappropriate, and why?

Common	Frequent	Rare/Obscure
Blackberry Blossom	Basswood	Apple Blossom
Buckwheat	Blueberry Blossom	Alfalfa
Clover	Cotton Blossom	Guajillo
Mesquite	Fireweed	Heather
Orange Blossom	Raspberry Blossom	Mint Blossom
Tupelo	Sage Blossom	Palmetto
Wildflower	Star Thistle	Sourwood

Scoring: Describe honey profile (12 points), discuss styles (3 points)

Question 3: Ingredients

Question 3 is worth 15 points. One question is taken from the following pool of questions. The point breakdown of the 15 points is given after each question in the pool.

1. What term is given to a mead made with apples? In what form are apples commonly used in mead? What character do apples give to mead? How does the use of apples change the balance of the mead? What special challenges exist with using apples in mead?

Scoring: definition and form (3 points), character (6 points), balance (3 points), challenges (3 points)

2. What term is given to a mead made with grapes? In what form are grapes commonly used in mead? What character do grapes give to mead? How does the use of grapes change the balance of the mead? What special challenges exist with using grapes in mead?

Scoring: definition and form (3 points), character (6 points), balance (3 points), challenges (3 points)

3. What term is given to a mead made with fruit? Describe the character imparted by the following fruit when fermented in a mead: [variations of this question are generated by selecting three from the table below, one from each column]. Consider flavor, aroma, color, and mouthfeel contributions, and degree of distinctiveness, uniqueness or prominence of each fruit. Is the fermented fruit flavor different from the raw fruit flavor?

Common	Frequent	Rare/Obscure
Blackberry	Apricot	Boysenberry
Blueberry	Banana	Cranberry
Cherry	Black Currant	Elderberry
Plum	Black Raspberry	Huckleberry
Raspberry	Lemon	Key Lime
Strawberry	Lime	Mango
	Orange	Marionberry
	Peach	Mulberry
	Pear	Passion Fruit
	Pineapple	Pomegranate
	Prickly Pear	
	Red Currant	

Scoring: profile (12 points), fermentation discussion (3 points)

4. What term is given to a mead made with grapes? Describe the character imparted by the following grape varieties when fermented in a mead: [variations of this question are produced by selecting three from the table below, one from each column]. Consider flavor, aroma, color, and mouthfeel contributions, and degree of distinctiveness, uniqueness or prominence of each grape variety. Are the grapes commonly associated with certain wines, regions, or products?

Common	Frequent	Rare/Obscure
Concord	Gerwurztraminer	Cabernet Sauvignon

Merlot	Pinot Noir	Chardonnay
Muscat	Sangiovese	Chenin Blanc
Riesling	Shiraz	Tempranillo
	Zinfandel	Vidal

Scoring: profile (12 points), association (3 points)

5. What term is given to a mead that contains herbs or spices? Describe the character imparted by the following herbs, spices or other adjuncts when used in mead: [variations of this question are produced by selecting three from the table below, one from each column]. Consider flavor, aroma, color, and mouthfeel contributions, and degree of distinctiveness, uniqueness or prominence of each ingredient. Are the ingredients commonly associated with any certain foods or products?

Common	Frequent	Rare/Obscure
Cardamom	Allspice	Agave Nectar
Chipotle	Chamomile	Black Pepper
Chocolate	Clove	Black Tea
Cinnamon	Coffee	Chai Tea
Ginger	Coriander	Heather Tips
Nutmeg	Hazelnut	Lemongrass
Vanilla	Lavender	Mint
	Maple Syrup	Rosemary
	Orange Peel	Saffron
	Poblano	Spruce Tips
	Rose Petals	
	Star Anise	

Scoring: profile (12 points), association (3 points)

6. What term is given to a mead made with malt? How does this type of mead differ from a beer made with honey? Describe the flavor, aroma and visual contributions of malt in mead. Discuss and suggest three appealing malt and honey combinations. Briefly discuss the use of hops in a mead made with malt.

Scoring: definition/beer comparison (3 points), profile (6 points), combinations (3 points), hops (3 points)

7. Identify and describe three mead styles that use a significant percentage of non-honey fermentables. Identify the fermentables and the character they provide to the finished product.

Scoring: identify styles (3 points), describe styles (6 points), identify fermentables (3 points), identify character (3 points)

Question 4: Identifying and Troubleshooting Mead Characteristics and Faults

Question 4 is worth 15 points.

1. Describe and discuss the following mead characteristics: [variations of this question are produced by selecting three from the table below]. How are they perceived? What causes them and how are they controlled or avoided? Are they ever appropriate?

Acetic (VA)	Moldy/Corked (TCA)
Acidic	Phenolic
Alcoholic/Hot	Sherry
Cardboard	Solvent
Chemical	Sulfury
Cloudy	Tannic
Cloying	Thin
Floral	Waxy
Fruity/Estery	Yeasty

Scoring: identify/define (3 points), describe perception (3 points), cause/control (6 points), appropriate (3 points)

Question 5: Process Control

Question 5 is worth 15 points. One question is taken from the following pool of questions. The point breakdown of the 15 points is given after each question in the pool.

1. Describe the effect of using oak during the mead making process. How does it change the character of the mead, and how are the changes perceived? Discuss the choices a mead-maker must make when using oak, and how these choices affect the final product.

Scoring: usage (5 points), character changes (5 points), choices/controls (5 points)

2. What does the term 'flabby' imply in a mead and how is it perceived? How might it be corrected? How does one differentiate a sweet mead from a semi-sweet mead with a strong varietal honey character?

Scoring: definition/perception (5 points), adjustment (5 points), differentiation (5 points)

2. Discuss the process or procedural issues in maintaining a proper balance in both a dry and a sweet mead. How does the strength of mead complement or detract from the balance and what can a mead-maker do to maintain a proper balance?

Scoring: process/dry (5 points), process/sweet (5 points), balance discussion (5 points)

3. How does the perceived character of mead change over time? How does a mead-maker reduce the impact of changes over time? Discuss the concept of "mead stabilization," its pros and cons, and its effect on the final product.

Scoring: perception (5 points), adjustment (5 points), stabilization (5 points)

4. Describe positive and negative consequences of aging mead. How are these results perceived? What external influences on the aging process can affect the final product?

Scoring: consequences (5 points), perceptions (5 points), external influences (5 points)

5. How is a "stuck fermentation" perceived in a mead? What are three likely causes, and what can a mead maker do to avoid them? Compare and contrast the qualities of a "stuck fermentation" with a sweet mead.

Scoring: perception (3 points), causes (3 points), controls (6 points), comparison (3 points)

6. List and briefly discuss techniques a mead maker can employ to achieve the following objectives: (a) a healthy fermentation, (b) proper clarity, (c) mead stability. For full credit, identify three techniques for each of the three listed objectives.

Scoring: each section is worth five points; within each section, identifying three techniques (2 points), describing the techniques (3 points)

Question 6: Scenario-based Troubleshooting

Question 6 is worth 15 points. Each of the scenarios would be followed with the following question:

What is your assessment of this mead, and what feedback would you give in a competition setting? Support your position by discussing your reasoning.

One question is taken from the following pool of questions:

1. You are presented a standard-strength, semi-sweet, still traditional mead. It is moderately cloudy and has a taste of raw honey. It seems semi-sweet, although the body and finish are quite heavy. The acidity and alcohol level seem appropriate. There are no other noticeable flaws.
2. You are presented a standard-strength, semi-sweet, still traditional mead. It is moderately cloudy, and has a taste of raw honey. It seems sweet and has a low alcohol level for style. There are no other noticeable flaws.
3. You are presented a standard-strength, semi-sweet, still traditional mead. It is quite dry, has a thin body and the alcohol level seems high. It has a sharp, solventy taste but no other noticeable flaws.
4. You are presented a standard-strength, semi-sweet, still traditional mead. It is semi-sweet and is generally well-balanced but has a hot (but not solventy) alcohol flavor. It is fresh tasting and has no other noticeable flaws.
5. You are presented a standard-strength, sweet, still traditional mead. It is indeed sweet but does not have a raw honey taste. The finish is very sweet and somewhat tongue-coating. The alcohol level is correct, and provides some balance but the acidity seems low. There are no other noticeable flaws.
6. You are presented a standard-strength, sweet, still traditional mead. It is indeed sweet but does not have a raw honey taste. It is quite puckering and has a sharp finish. The alcohol level is correct and there are no other noticeable flaws.
7. You are presented a standard-strength, semi-sweet, still cherry melomel. It is overly sweet and has a very noticeable fresh cherry flavor but no taste of raw honey. The alcohol level seems a little low and it is slightly cloudy. There are no other noticeable flaws.
8. You are presented a standard-strength, sweet, still (red) pinot noir piment. It has proper strength, sweetness and acidity levels. It has a puckering mouthfeel but no chemical flavors. There is a strong toasty vanilla flavor present. There are no other noticeable flaws.
9. You are presented a standard-strength, semi-sweet, still traditional mead. It has proper strength, sweetness and acidity levels. There is a metallic, salty chemical flavor but no other noticeable flaws.
10. You are presented a sack-strength, sweet, still orange blossom mead. It has proper strength, sweetness and acidity levels. It lacks any noticeable floral/variatal character. It is fresh tasting and has no other noticeable flaws.

11. You are presented a standard-strength, sweet, still traditional mead. It has proper strength, sweetness and acidity levels. It has a sherry-like flavor and aroma, and the color appears muted. There are no other noticeable flaws.
12. You are presented a standard-strength, sweet, still raspberry blossom honey varietal mead. It has proper strength and sweetness levels. The acidity is somewhat high and the color is pinkish. It lacks a floral character but has a noticeable tart, fruity flavor. There are no other flaws.
13. You are presented a standard-strength, sweet, still orange blossom varietal mead. It has proper strength, sweetness and acidity levels. It has a strong floral character but lacks any noticeable orange fruit flavor. There are no other noticeable flaws.
14. You are presented with a standard-strength, semi-sweet, still traditional mead. It has proper strength and acidity levels. There is no raw honey flavor but it does have a full body, a strong honey flavor and a sweet finish. There are no other noticeable flaws.
15. You are presented a standard-strength, sweet, still vanilla and cinnamon metheglin. It has proper strength, sweetness and acidity levels. There is a strong tannin component with a harsh finish. The spice flavors are noticeable and have a raw, dusty flavor. There are no other noticeable flaws.

Scoring: identification (5 points), assessment (5 points), reasoning (5 points)