



POETRY OUT LOUD—FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Poetry Out Loud: National Poetry Recitation Contest?

Poetry Out Loud is a national arts education program that encourages the study of great poetry by offering free educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition to high schools across the country. Schools that choose to participate in Poetry Out Loud start the program in the classroom, where participating teachers may use the Poetry Out Loud toolkit to teach poetry recitation and run classroom competitions. Students select, memorize, and recite poems from an anthology of more than 1,000 classic and contemporary poems. Beginning at the classroom level, winners will advance to the school-wide competition, then to the state competition, and ultimately to the national finals in Washington, DC. Since the program began in 2005, more than 3.8 million students and 60,000 teachers from 16,000 schools across the country have participated in Poetry Out Loud.

Where and where does Poetry Out Loud take place?

Poetry Out Loud takes place in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. High schools that choose to participate in the official competition conducted their classroom and school-level programs and contests between September 2018 and February 2019. State contests were held by early March 2019; for more information on state finals, visit poetryoutloud.org/competition/state-finals. The national finals will take place April 30-May 1, 2019 in Washington, DC.

Who created Poetry Out Loud?

The National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation created Poetry Out Loud. At the state level, each state arts agency receives a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts of \$17,500 to assist with expenses of program coordination and the state final event.

Who can participate in the official Poetry Out Loud contest?

The official Poetry Out Loud contest is administered at the state level by state arts agencies in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. All types of high schools are welcome to participate, including public, private, parochial, independent, charter, etc. Only schools registered with their state Poetry Out Loud coordinator are eligible for the competition; if you would like to get involved, contact your [state arts agency](#).

No student may be excluded from participating in Poetry Out Loud on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin. More information on Poetry Out Loud rules and eligibility may be found at poetryoutloud.org.

Are schools that are not part of the official contest welcome to participate in other ways?

All schools nationwide may visit poetryoutloud.org for free program materials. Using these online materials, they are welcome to conduct their own “unofficial” poetry recitation competitions and introduce their students to classic and contemporary poetry.



Are program materials available?

Poetry Out Loud offers educators free standards-based curriculum materials, which include an online poetry anthology with more than 1,000 classic and contemporary poems, a teacher's guide, lesson plans, and video and audio on the art of recitation. These free resources are available at poetryoutloud.org.

What awards are available as part of Poetry Out Loud?

Each state final competition will award \$1,000 in cash and school stipends. Each champion at the state level will receive \$200 and an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, DC to compete for the national championship. The state champion's school will receive a \$500 stipend for the purchase of poetry materials. The first runner-up in each state will receive \$100, with \$200 for his or her school library.

Poetry Out Loud will award a total of \$50,000 in awards and school stipends at the national finals, including \$20,000 for the Poetry Out Loud National Champion, and \$10,000 and \$5,000 for the second- and third-place finalists. The fourth- to ninth-place finalists will each receive \$1,000. The schools of the top nine finalists will each receive \$500 for the purchase of poetry materials. There will be one honorable mention in each of the three semifinals competitions. Those students will not advance to the finals, but will receive a \$1,000 cash award and a \$500 school stipend.

The Poetry Foundation provides and administers all aspects of the monetary prizes awarded and travel arrangements for Poetry Out Loud. Visit poetryoutloud.org for more details on rules and eligibility.

What is the structure of the National Finals?

On Tuesday, April 30, 2019, from 9:00 am to 8:00 pm, all 53 champions compete in three regional semifinals (17-18 students each compete in Eastern, Central, and Western/Pacific regional rounds). The top three contestants from each semifinal will advance to the national finals on Wednesday, May 1. At the finals, all nine will compete in two rounds of recitations. The top three advance to recite a third poem, and the contestant with the highest scores from all three rounds will be named Poetry Out Loud National Champion.

What are the judging criteria?

All contestants are evaluated on: physical presence, voice and articulation, evidence of understanding, dramatic appropriateness, accuracy, and overall performance.

How can I get more information?

Visit poetryoutloud.org for more information on this program. The website features educational resources for teachers and students, including standards-based educational materials, tips on hosting a school contest, and videos of outstanding performances.