



TEACHER INFORMATION SHEET

How can I get my class or school involved in Poetry Out Loud?

Poetry Out Loud is being administered by the Ohio Arts Council. Contact Katie Swett at 614/728-4481 or pol.contractor@oac.state.oh.us, for information and a teacher toolkit. The Poetry Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts and the Ohio Arts Council will provide all the necessary materials for sponsoring a *Poetry Out Loud* contest in your school.

Where will the Ohio Arts Council offer Poetry Out Loud?

All schools in Ohio are eligible to participate.

How does the Poetry Out Loud contest work?

Teachers and principals who decide to sponsor a Poetry Out Loud contest in their school must register for the program with the Ohio Arts Council. Students memorize poems and perform them in a competition. The school contest may involve a class, a grade level or an entire school. Judges will pick the winner of the school contest and that school champion is eligible to compete in a regional semi-final contest. Semi-finals winners will advance to the state finals in Columbus in March 2016. Cash and prizes are awarded and the state winner receives an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. to compete in the National Finals. National winners receive cash awards.

How much do the Poetry Out Loud materials cost?

The Poetry Out Loud materials, workshops and contests are free. The *Poetry Out Loud* Teacher Toolkit includes a comprehensive [teacher's guide](#), a [DVD](#) of National Finals performances, [lesson plans](#), and promotional and media guides and is available from the Ohio Arts Council to interested teachers and educators.

How much time will each teacher spend implementing Poetry Out Loud in his or her classroom?

The official *Poetry Out Loud* program will be implemented in schools between September 2015 and early February 2016. School Champions must be selected by **February 8, 2016** to allow enough time to prepare for State Finals in March. There are, however, myriad opportunities to

expand the program in your classroom, making *Poetry Out Loud* part of a larger poetry curriculum.

Can students choose poetry outside of the poems in the anthology?

No. The Poetry Out Loud website includes an online anthology of more than 900 poems that will continue to expand. The students must choose from that selection, or from the hardcopy *Poetry Out Loud Anthology* that will be distributed to schools participating in the official contests.

How should the contest be organized?

A detailed description for how each school's competition should be organized can be found on the [Organizing Contest Events](http://www.poetryoutloud.org/guide) page at www.poetryoutloud.org/guide.

How will the competition be judged?

Official *Poetry Out Loud* competitions will be evaluated on specific criteria, which can be seen at <http://www.poetryoutloud.org/competition/judge-preparation>. It is up to each school as to who should judge the competition. In the past, teachers, poets, and dramatic professionals have been judges in school competitions. Even though the contest is literary in nature, not all judges have to have a literary background. Community leaders and event sponsors could serve as judges. Ultimately, the judges should be whomever the competition's organizers deem appropriate. It is suggested that each competition have an odd number of judges in the case of ties. A separate judge should be evaluating the accuracy of the recitation in regards to the text of the poem. Judges at the state finals will include nationally recognized writers and poets

What are the prize amounts at the state and national levels?

The following prizes are offered for the official contests identified and conducted by the National Endowment for the Arts and the government State Arts Agencies during winter 2015 and spring of 2016. The prizes do not apply to other contests.

As long as your school and district allows students to receive cash prizes, the winner at the state level will receive \$300 and an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, DC, to compete in the National Finals. The state winner's school will receive a \$500 stipend for the purchase of poetry books. The runner-up will receive \$200, with \$200 for his or her school library. The third-place winner's prize is \$100 and \$50 for his or her school library. Additionally, a total of \$50,000 in awards and school stipends will be awarded at the National Finals, including a \$20,000 cash prize for the *Poetry Out Loud* National Champion.