



2020-2021 Poetry Out Loud Contest Fact Sheet

Poetry Out Loud is a **free** program offered to every high school student in Pennsylvania. It encourages students to learn about great poetry through memorization and recitation. This program helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about literary history and contemporary life.

Contest Structures and Awards

Poetry Out Loud uses a pyramid structure that starts at the school level. Winners advance to a regional then state competition, and ultimately to the **National Finals**. Nearly 4500 high schools across the country and more than 110 high schools in Pennsylvania participate in this annual contest!

View the teachers' guide at:

https://www.poetryoutloud.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/08/POL_TG-2020-2021_4web.pdf

The teachers' guide offers suggestions so that you can **customize** the program to meet your time and schedule constraints.

- The guide suggests ways to teach recitation and performance, links to distinguished actors and writers reciting and talking about poetry, media guides, and promo materials.
- Teachers and students have access to the website and support materials that include nearly 800 poems, media guides and more.

Ideas for Getting Started

- Individual or groups of teachers, a school club, or the entire school may participate.
- Teachers can determine the extent of their participation. For example, incorporate POL into a unit of study, perhaps culminating in recitations by each student in front of the class.

- Offer the program as an extra credit project, after school program's project, or use some or all of the lesson plans offered in the teacher's guide.
- Whatever you plan, the end result should be one winner from your school who will participate in the regional contest. (details below)

Students Prepare

Choose a poem from the POL anthology to memorize and recite. The anthology has a full list of approved poems: <https://www.poetryoutloud.org/poems-and-performance/find-poems>

- Recitations may not include props, costumes, or music. Some gestures and minimal movement may, however, be appropriate to a given poem.

The Winner

Each school's winner will then participate in the regional contest to be scheduled in early 2021.

- Participants will prepare three (3) poems to recite.
- The **regional winner** will participate in the state competition to be held (likely virtually) in the March 2021 time frame.
- The state winner will receive \$200 and the opportunity to compete (virtually) for the national championship in May.
- The state winner's school will receive a \$500 stipend to purchase poetry books. A runner-up in each state will receive \$100 with \$200 for his/her school to purchase poetry books.

Please complete the Intent to Participate form, return it by Friday, October 30, 2020 (sooner is better), to your regional coordinator (Hilary Trout at culturalalliancepol@gmail.com) and we'll keep you informed as plans for the regional contest progress. Questions? Call Hilary at 717-968-6339.

Hope you can join us!