



## ALABAMA RULES AND FAQ's

### **Minimum participation for eligibility:**

Schools may participate in the program if they have at least two students compete against each other to identify a school champion. However, only schools who have 5 classes or more participating will receive the \$75.00 grant to support a school competition. It is our hope that if only two students begin the program, that it will grow to include more in subsequent years.

### **Poem number requirement:**

At regional and state competitions the number of poems required is three (3) for the National Program and two (2) for the Original Poetry Competition. Students are expected to memorize all poems. Any student who has not memorized all poems required and is unable to complete at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of each poem selected will not be advanced to the next level or receive any awards.

### **Poem Requirements:**

At the regional and state Original Poetry Competition, students must recite two original poems. There is no time limit on either poem, but one poem must be 25 lines or less.

There is no change in the requirements for the selection of poems in the National Program. One selected poem must pre-date the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and one must be 25 lines or less. Please consider these criteria as you select poems so you are not asked to switch poems at the last minute.

### **Poem Selections:**

The National program removes poems for eligibility by September 1 each year. If students select poems prior to September 1<sup>st</sup>, and a chosen poem is added to the ineligible list, the student may still recite that poem at the class and school level. However, an ineligible poem must be replaced in time for regional and state competitions. Please check the website after September 1<sup>st</sup>. We do not recommend that students select poems that have been performed by previous champions as those are often removed from the eligible list, and even if not, may put them at a disadvantage being compared to another extremely successful performance.

**Poem Selections:** Due to much controversy, the Level of Complexity has been removed as a separate criteria in the Poetry Out Loud competition at all levels. Students should select poems that are appropriately challenging and diverse in content and style to optimize overall performance scores.

## FAQ's

### ***I am a high school student and want to participate, but my school is not participating. May I still compete?***

We would like you to help us recruit your school into the program. If we are unsuccessful after trying to recruit your school, we may look for another school that is willing to include you in their competition. If you should be the highest scorer in that competition you would move forward to the regional competition, but so would the next highest scorer at that school as you would not be representing that school as their champion.

### ***I am homeschooled. May I participate in Poetry Out Loud?***

Yes, you may. The umbrella organization of your homeschool would be the organization that applies to participate as a school in Poetry Out Loud. There must be at least two students to compete within your homeschool organization in order to identify a champion and move forward to a regional competition.

### ***I am a member of an after school Poetry Club. All of us would like to participate in Poetry Out Loud. Is that possible?***

Again, we would love for your whole school to participate. However, if that is not possible and you can persuade the adult sponsor of your club to sponsor your participation, then you may represent your school by competing against each other in your poetry club and identifying one school champion for each competition to move forward to the regional competition.

### ***We are a library and would love to organize a competition for the students in our community. Would we be eligible to send a student to the regional competition?***

Currently Poetry Out Loud is restricted to school participation. If you would like to support a specific school by hosting a competition for their students, and the school is agreeable, that would be wonderful. The school must complete the application form and commit to the program, even though you would be running it for them.

### ***We are a middle school and would love to participate in this program. Is there nothing at our level available to us?***

If you have any accelerated 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes that are doing 9<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum, those classes would be eligible to compete in Poetry Out Loud. Otherwise, the regional, state and national competitions are restricted to students in grades 9-12. However, the Poetry Out Loud website holds all the information and resources you would need to hold your own school Poetry Out Loud competition. We encourage you to do this for your students, and will advise you as much as possible, in order to allow you to prepare your students for participation once they enter the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. You may wish to solicit donations for prizes from community businesses or your PTO.

### ***My school has students with special needs. May we participate?***

The Alabama State Council on the Arts does not exclude anyone from any of our programs. Poetry Out Loud has Guidelines specifically for ASL presentations and is ready to include ASL students in the program. Although formal guidelines are still in progress that would be universal in design, we are ready to adapt our program to fit the needs of any and all students in grades 9 through 12 as requested. Students would participate through their academic school. We encourage these schools to contact us to determine needs and methods of adaptations required.