



## Poetry Out Loud encourages the nation's youth to learn about great poetry through performance and recitation.

The inspiration for this program is to promote poetry in both the classroom and the community. Poetry Out Loud provides an entry point for many students to learn to love poetry and own their favorite poems for a lifetime.

The National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation joined together to create Poetry Out Loud in 2004 and now, in partnership with state arts agencies, dynamic poetry recitation competitions are taking place in classrooms across the country. Poetry Out Loud gives teachers the tools to introduce their students to a broad spectrum of poetry, so students may explore their literary heritage.

Poetry Out Loud has grown from a pilot project in Washington, DC, and Chicago to involve hundreds of thousands of students across the country. Champions from 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands compete at the National Finals in Washington, DC. Prizes totaling more than \$100,000 are awarded at the state and national competitions each year.

## How To Be Part of Poetry Out Loud

To participate in official state and national competitions, schools must register with their State Coordinator. Click on "State Contacts" at the Poetry Out Loud website to identify your State Coordinator. Participating teachers will receive everything they need to run a successful competition including a teacher's guide, copies of the Poetry Out Loud anthology, an audio guide to poetry recitation, a DVD with model recitations by state champions, and posters for the classroom. Additional resources available on the Poetry Out Loud website include videos, a guide for judges, a searchable anthology of more than 600 poems, downloadable score sheets and a tallying system, and much more.

[www.poetryoutloud.org](http://www.poetryoutloud.org)

Photos by James Kegley

Poetry Out Loud is a partnership of the National Endowment for the Arts, the Poetry Foundation, and the state arts agencies of the United States.

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NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS  
and  
POETRY FOUNDATION  
present



## Poetry Out Loud in the Classroom

The curriculum for Poetry Out Loud has been designed to fit into a teacher's busy schedule. The program usually takes place over the span of two to three weeks, according to each teacher's interest and agenda, and it will not require full class periods during that time. Teachers may also work Poetry Out Loud into existing poetry units.

To accommodate schools' testing demands and vacation calendars, Poetry Out Loud can be implemented at the school level any time during the fall and through early winter, with slight variations by state. Please check with your State Coordinator for your state's specific calendar. Coordinators are listed in the State Contacts section of the Poetry Out Loud website.

Poetry Out Loud satisfies most of the NCTE English Language Arts Standards. In addition to memorizing and performing great poems, students will have the opportunity to discuss poetry and—if the teacher wishes to use the supplemental lesson plans—to write poetry of their own.



*Poems are the most beautiful and useful language.... By learning poems you really are keeping the very best of English expression and you have it to pull out when you need it.*

— U.S. Poet Laureate Kay Ryan on the Poetry Out Loud audio guide

## Competition Structure and Prizes

Poetry Out Loud starts in the classroom, with participating educators using the Poetry Out Loud teacher toolkit to teach poetry recitation and run classroom competitions. Following a pyramid structure, classroom winners advance to a school-wide competition, then to a regional and/or state competition, and ultimately to the National Finals. State competitions take place by mid-March; the National Finals follow later in the spring.

### State Finals Prizes

**Winner:** \$200 and all-expenses-paid trip (with an adult chaperone) to Washington, DC, to compete at the National Finals. Winner's school library will receive \$500 for purchase of poetry books.

**Runner-up:** \$100, plus \$200 to school library for purchase of poetry books

### National Finals Prizes

**National Champion:** \$20,000

**Second Place:** \$10,000

**Third Place:** \$5,000

**Fourth-Twelfth Place:** \$1,000

**Schools of Top Twelve:** \$500

Awards will be made in the form of lump sum cash payouts, reportable to the IRS. Tax liabilities are the sole responsibility of the winners and their families.



*This was easily one of the greatest experiences of my teaching career.... It was the level of intellectual confidence and enthusiasm that we as teachers usually only fantasize about.*

—Poetry Out Loud Teacher

