



2009 Missouri Poetry Out Loud

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and Missouri Arts Council invite you to participate in the fourth annual Missouri Poetry Out Loud.

"I strongly encourage Missouri students interested in improving their communication skills and learning more about our nation's rich cultural heritage to take part in the Poetry Out Loud program. Education is my highest priority and I believe contests like this bring out the best in everyone and can help students better prepare for college and other opportunities."

– Governor Matt Blunt

"By memorizing a poem, a student gets a profound and intimate understanding of that work of literature. Furthermore, the experience of reciting a poem before their peers and the public will strengthen skills that students will use every day in the workplace and in the community."

– Dana Gioia, Chair, National Endowment for the Arts

"I am thrilled to have this accessible to me as a teacher. The online anthology is wonderful, the teacher resources are easy to adapt and use, and the audio/video elements are outstanding. Students will respond positively to the project and regard poetry in a different way as a result of their experience with Poetry Out Loud."

– Lora Ackerman, Park Hills South High School
Teacher of the 2008 Missouri State Champion

How do I teach it?

National Endowment for the Arts and The Poetry Foundation have created standards-based curriculum materials for teachers or speech coaches to use. Each participating teacher will receive a free toolkit, which includes a program guide to help teach recitation and performance, an audio guide with selected poems recited by distinguished actors and writers, and 2 print anthologies for students to select their poems. Additional resources for teachers are available at www.poetryoutloud.org.

What is the timeline?

Teachers may begin working with their high school students as soon as they submit their registration form (November 30, 2008 deadline). Teachers may run the program over 2-3 weeks with partial class periods or as an after-school program.

School winners must be identified by January 31, 2009. Regional competitions will be held in February in Cape Girardeau, Columbia, Hannibal, Kansas City, Park Hills, Parkville, St. Charles, St. Joseph, St. Louis, and Springfield. The state competition will be held March 3, 2009 in Jefferson City. One champion from each state will compete at the national finals April 26-28 in Washington, D.C.

State and National Prizes

The state champion will receive a plaque, traveling trophy, and all-expense-paid trip (with two parents or chaperones) to Washington, D. C. for the national finals. The state champion's school will keep the traveling trophy until the 2010 competition and will receive \$500 for the purchase of poetry books for their school's library. Similarly, the second place school will receive \$200 to purchase poetry books for their school's library. All the finalists will receive award certificates.

A total of \$50,000 in scholarships and school stipends will be awarded at the national finals. The national champion will receive a \$20,000 college scholarship.

How do I get my school involved?

Send your name and mailing address to virginia.sanders@ded.mo.gov for additional information about Poetry Out Loud. Upon registration the following information packet will be sent to you--CD of poetry, program guide with lesson plans, 2 poetry anthologies, and registration form. Registration deadline is November 30.

School coordinators will receive a \$75 stipend along with \$50 to travel with the school winner to the regional competition and \$75 to travel to the state competition.

Poetry Out Loud

Poetry Out Loud is a national arts education program that encourages the study of great poetry by offering educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition to high schools across the country.

Poetry Out Loud...

- Builds on the resurgence of poetry as an oral art form as seen in the slam poetry movement and immense popularity of rap music among youth
- Encourages the nation's youth to learn about great poetry through memorization and performance
- Helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about our rich literary heritage

Teachers love the program because it...

- Fits well into their literature curriculum
- Creates an entry point for students to appreciate poetry
- Strengthens community in the classroom
- Reaches students whom they've never thought would find interest in poetry or the stage.

Poetry Out Loud satisfies most of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) English Language Arts Standards. In addition to memorizing and performing great poems, students have the opportunity to discuss poetry and write poetry of their own.

Missouri Poetry Out Loud Champion

Aryiel T. Everett of Park Hill South High School was the 2008 winner. Ms. Everett recited "Theme for English B" by *Langston Hughes*, "Susie Asado" by Gertrude Stein, and "Annabel Lee", by Edgar Allen Poe at the State finals.

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Missouri Poetry Out Loud is presented by the Missouri Arts Council and Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts, Poetry Foundation, Capital City Council on the Arts, Missouri Association of Community Arts Agencies, Allied Arts Council of St. Joseph, Arts Council of Metropolitan Kansas City, Arts Council of Southeast Missouri, City of Columbia Office of Cultural Affairs, Hannibal Arts Council, Park University, Parkville, The Foundry Arts Centre of St. Charles, Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis, Springfield Regional Arts Council, and English Department at the University of Missouri at Kansas City.