



Going Virtual for 2020-21

Washington State Fact Sheet

Program Overview

Poetry Out Loud builds on the dynamic aspects of slam poetry, spoken word, and theater to engage student with the power of literature in any classroom, including a virtual one. The National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation partner annually with state arts agencies to support **Poetry Out Loud**, a program that encourages high school students to learn about great poetry through memorization and performance. This program helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and explore their literary heritage. The Washington State program is produced by the Washington State Arts Commission (ArtsWA).

Contest Structure and Prizes

Poetry Out Loud uses a spelling-bee type format that begins at the classroom level. Top-scoring students advance from classroom competitions to school-wide, regional, and state level competitions. One student from each state advances to the National Finals; each state champion will receive \$200 and the opportunity to participate in the national championship. The state champion's school will receive a \$500 stipend for the purchase of poetry books. A runner-up in each state will receive \$100, with \$200 for their school library. Additionally, a total of \$50,000 in scholarships and school stipends will be awarded through the National Finals.

School Eligibility, Participation, and Program Materials

- **Poetry Out Loud** is open to any school in Washington State serving students in grades 9-12.
- A minimum of 2-3 participating teachers per school is generally required. One teacher at each school serves as the program coordinator and manages communications and school finals. Exceptions may be made for smaller schools, and schools new to the program, on a case by case basis. Please contact us to discuss.
- Each registered school will be connected with the closest regional coordinator. School champions move on to compete in one of four regional finals. Regional champions move on to the state final. All students are eligible for participation and advancement in this program.
- Program materials, all of which are free, include a Teacher's Guide to help instructors teach recitation and performance; a comprehensive website that includes poetry resources, lesson plans, and video clips; an extensive, searchable online poetry anthology of over 1000 poems; and guidelines for recitation evaluation and scoring.

Program Timeline

- Registration opens: September 8, 2020
- Registration deadline: November 16, 2020
- Classroom Implementation: between September 2020 and early January 2021
- School Finals deadline: January 22, 2021
- Regional Finals deadline: February 12, 2021; regional final dates vary by region
- State Final (virtual): Mid-March, 2021
- National Finals: Late April TBA



For additional program information, and the online registration form, go to:

www.arts.wa.gov/arts-in-education/poetry-out-loud

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National **Poetry Out Loud** website: www.poetryoutloud.org

Photo of the 2019-2020 Washington State Regional Champions by Pavel Verbovski