



Alabama FY2020-2021
Program Overview
For High Schools Grades 9-12

NEW THIS YEAR

- We are going virtual, at least through our regional competitions.
- Students without participating schools may sign-up and participate individually.
- 2020 Social Challenge Poem Competition will be added, creating 3 options for students.
- Regional coordinator may allow school alternates (or 2 students per school per competition) to compete in the regional competition if they are able to handle the number of students involved. Regions with a lot of schools may not be able to handle more than one student.
- Regional Coordinators may identify five students for each competition to move forward to the State finals without the restriction of only one winner per school.

PHASE I: CLASSROOM COMPETITIONS (August-October)

Whether your classes are meeting in person or virtually, we hope you will consider joining Alabama's Poetry Out Loud program. **National Poetry Out Loud Competition:** At this level students choose one poem from the www.poetryoutloud.org website to memorize and recite for the rest of the class.

State Original Poetry Out Loud Competition: students write, memorize and recite their own poem.

2020 Social Challenge Competition: students write and recite their own poem addressing any topic relevant to the challenges the world has been facing in the year 2020. Memorization of this poem is not required, but the criteria will be heavily weighted toward performance as the other two competitions. Memorization is highly recommended, but accuracy will not be scored. Students may opt to participate in one, two, or all three competitions. Schools that have at least 5 classes involving every student participating are eligible to receive a \$75.00 grant to support Poetry Out Loud activities. Each participating school will receive materials supplied by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. Additional resources may be found on the www.poetryoutloud.org website. It is recommended that the student research the poet and/or topic and biographical information on the website. Class champions move forward to a school wide competition to identify a school champion for each of the three competitions. If only one class is participating, the class champion becomes the school champion.

PHASE II: SCHOOL COMPETITIONS (October-November)

National Poetry Out Loud Competition: At the school level students choose two poems from the www.poetryoutloud.org website to memorize and recite for the school. Students should begin to consider the requirement for specific poems by the time they reach the regional level so a poem pre-20th century or a poem 25 lines or less would be good to consider at this stage. **State Original**

Poetry Out Loud Competition: students write, memorize and recite their own poem again. Students may revise and edit poems, but it is recommended they continue to use the poem that helped them

get to this level. **2020 Social Challenge Competition:** students may revise and edit and recite the one poem addressing any topic relevant to the challenges the world has been facing in the year 2020. Memorization of this poem is still not required. School Champions move forward to the Regional Competitions. *Individual participating students will compete at this level by sending virtual entries to the Alabama State Council on the Arts. Individual Champions will be notified and sent to a regional site for the regional competition. Individual students may not go straight to a regional competition without competing at this level.*

PHASE III: REGIONAL COMPETITIONS (December – January)

All students must send virtual entries at this level. Guidelines for preparing and filming regional entries must be strictly followed in order to be eligible (*See Guidelines for filming Alabama Poetry Out Loud recitations*). Regions with 10 or more schools participating may decide to accept only one champion per school. Regions with fewer schools may opt to accept a champion and an alternate from each school. Please check with your regional coordinator for rulings concerning how many students may compete regionally. All schools are encouraged to identify alternates in case a champion is unable to participate at the regional level. **National Poetry Out Loud Competition:** At the regional level students choose three poems from the www.poetryoutloud.org website to memorize and recite for the school. Students must select one poem pre-20th century and one poem 25 lines or less. Both criteria may be met with one or two poems. **State Original Poetry Out Loud Competition:** students write, memorize and recite two original poems. One poem must be 25 lines or less (each line of 12pt type with one-inch margins counts as one line). **2020 Social Challenge Competition:** students recite an original poem addressing any topic relevant to the challenges the world has been facing in the year 2020. Memorization of this poem is still not required. Five finalists for each competition move forward to the State Finals. Two alternates should be identified in case a finalist drops out. It is possible for more than one student from a school to be a state finalist in any competition this year. It is also possible for a student competing individually to become a state finalist.

PHASE IV: STATE FINALS (February 22, 2021)

Our current plan is to hold our State Finals as usual on February 22nd on the Festival Stage at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival in Montgomery. If that is not possible we will simply extend our virtual guidelines to include the State Finals. We will make a decision one way or the other in late December. The Finals will include the Original Poetry Competition and Award Ceremony in the morning (starting at 8:00 am). We will hold an awards ceremony. Next we will have the one round only competition for the 2020 Social Challenge Poem. In the afternoon we will hold the National Poetry Out Loud Anthology Competition and award ceremony. We intend to do all these competitions live whether in person or virtually. So save the date to be with us one way or the other. The state champion from the National Poetry Out Loud Anthology Competition will compete in the National Finals in Washington DC

PHASE V: National Finals in Washington DC

Like Alabama, the Nationals are being planned as an in-person event. However, we have been informed that the National Finals will occur this year even if they have to be virtual. If possible, this student and a chaperone will receive an all-expenses paid trip to our Nation's Capital to compete with 52 champions from across the United State and US territories. The finals will be held April 26-28, 2021.