
Greetings from the Kansas Arts Commission!

It is a busy time of year – classrooms are bursting with promise and potential as teachers prepare numerous opportunities for student enrichment and growth. As you plan out the year, **we invite you and your students to participate in the Poetry Out Loud National Recitation Contest.**



Poetry Out Loud is a national contest for high school students sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. The contest begins as a “poetry bee” at the classroom and school level, with regional finals held in early January and state finals held in Topeka on March 12th, 2010.

The winner of the state finals receives a \$200 cash award. Additionally, a \$500 stipend for the purchase of poetry books goes to the state winner’s school. **The state finalist also receives an all expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. to compete for a \$20,000 scholarship in the National finals**, judged by dignitaries such as Garrison Keillor, Natalie Merchant and Caroline Kennedy!

Poetry Out Loud is not only good fun and a chance to win a scholarship, it satisfies most of the National Council for Teachers of English Language Standards, fitting well into literature curriculum. All curricular materials are free and for use, even if you do not sign up for the contest. To summarize its use in the classroom, we have included an outline of the standards / benchmarks that are covered by Poetry Out Loud with this letter.

Poetry Out Loud ignites interest in poetry and helps increase students’ confidence in written and oral communication. We invite you to join teachers nationwide in making poetry come to life for students. For more information, classroom tools, and model recitations, please visit www.poetryoutloud.org. (This website also includes a link to television footage aired recently on the September 13th *CBS Sunday Morning* segment.) Contact your regional coordinator to register your school to set the poetry in motion! We have included a list of the regional coordinators for you, along with their corresponding counties.

If you have questions about Poetry Out Loud in Kansas, please visit the Kansas Poetry Out Loud page on our website at <http://arts.ks.gov/pol/index.shtml>, or call the Kansas Arts Commission at (785) 368-6545. We look forward to hearing from you!

Best Wishes,

Michelle Kirk
Poetry Out Loud State Coordinator

Margaret Weisbrod Morris
Program Manager, Arts in Education