



A Step by Step Guide for Teachers

Oregon-specific Poetry Out Loud curriculum suggestions have been developed to work alongside existing curriculum, not as a stand-alone program. It is hoped that this curriculum will encourage individual students to “self select” their participation in the Poetry Out Loud competition.

The following Step by Step Guide is designed to help teachers and students prepare for the schoolwide and the statewide recitation competition outside of regular class time.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
WEEK 1	Announce competition in classes	Teachers meet to schedule classroom and school contests	Initial meeting with interested students	Students review anthology online	Students submit poem selections for teacher review
WEEK 2	Recitation and memorization meeting		Group poem discussion	Students work on their own to memorize →	
WEEK 3	→		Model recitation skills	Students work on their own to practice →	
WEEK 4	Practice competition		School competition		



WEEK 1: Introducing Poetry Out Loud and Identifying Participants

Step One: (Teachers)

Announce the Competition in Class

• **10 minutes**

Inform the class about the Poetry Out Loud competition, briefly review the timeline and requirements and announce the statewide and national awards. Students who are interested in participating in the program should plan to attend a short meeting to receive additional information.

•Step Two: (Teachers)

Schedule the Classroom and School Competition

• **1 hour**

Teachers participating in the program should meet to discuss and schedule the dates and times of the classroom and school competitions. The schoolwide competition must take place before February 25, 2009. Teachers should decide on the format of the competitions, including judging procedures, location, invited guests, and publicity.

Step Three: (Teachers and Students)

Initial Meeting

• **1 hour**

The lead teacher will meet with interested students to review the details of the Poetry Out Loud competition. Ask students to review the Poetry Out Loud anthology and select three poems to memorize and prepare for the school competition. Only one poem needs to be recited at the school competition. At the state and national levels, three poems are required. One must be written before the 20th century and one must be fewer than 25 lines long.

Step Four: (Students)

Review the Anthology

• **2 hours**

Students should review the Poetry Out Loud anthology available at www.poetryoutloud.org on their own time and find three poems to prepare for the school competition. Students must select poems from the anthology and are not allowed to prepare their own poetry or poems not included in the anthology.

Step Five: (Students and Teachers)

Students Submit/Teachers Review Poem Selections

• **1 hour**

At the end of the first week, students should submit copies of their three chosen poems to the lead teacher to review and make suggestions about content and style of delivery.

AVERAGE WEEKLY TIME COMMITMENT
(during the four weeks preceding school contest)

- Students - 8 hours
- Teachers - 1.5 hours



WEEK 2: Recitation and Memorization

Step Six: (Teachers and Students)

Recitation Performance and Memorization Meeting

- **1 hour**

The lead teacher should meet with participating students to review the Contest Evaluation Sheet included in this guide (page 23). In addition, students should review the Oral Interpretation of Literature and Memorization Techniques (pages 10 and 11).

Step Seven: (Students and Teachers)

Group Poem Discussion

- **1 - 2 hours**

Students and teachers should discuss the chosen poems together. Understanding the text is perhaps the most important preparation for reading poetry. A group discussion can assist students in developing critical skills in analyzing poetry, and can also assist them in broadening their understanding of their poems through shared responses and questions about meaning.

Step Eight: (Students)

Memorization of Poems

- **2 - 4 hours**

Students should work on their own time to memorize their chosen poems.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

A poem of 20 to 30 lines will take approximately two hours to memorize.

DOING YOUR HOMEWORK

Students should be encouraged to research the poems, the poets, and the historical background of the poetry, and can be asked to write an analytical response to the poem as part of their discovery and analysis process.



WEEK 3: Performance and Memorization

Step Nine: (Students and Teachers)

Model Recitation Skills Meeting

• 1 hour

Teachers should model effective and ineffective recitation practices based on the Contest Evaluation Sheet and Oral Interpretation of Literature (pages 33 and 10).

Step Ten: (Students)

Practice Recitation

• 2 - 4 hours

For the rest of the week, students should work alone or in groups on their recitation skills and to deepen their memorization of their poems. Working together, students may discover different delivery options for their poems and receive immediate feedback from their peers on effective and ineffective recitation options. Groups should use the Contest Evaluation Sheet (page 33) to shape their comments on each other's performances.

MODELING BEHAVIOR

Working with students, develop a list of desirable and undesirable traits in recitation. Suggestions include:

Desirable

- Clear volume
- Variation in tone
- Variation in delivery speed
- Good posture
- Eye contact
- Appropriate gestures
- Purposeful pauses
- Appropriate introduction

Undesirable

- Insufficient volume
- Delivery speed too fast
- Monotone voice
- Distracting movements
- Repetitive gestures
- Mispronunciations



WEEK 4: Final Preparation

Step Eleven: (Students and Teachers)

Practice Competition

• **1 – 2 hours**

At the beginning of the week, participating students and teachers should meet to hold a practice competition. Following the guidelines and schedule for the classroom or schoolwide competition, students will be asked to recite their poems for the group. Written evaluations and scores should be provided to each student. At the end of the practice competition, students and teachers should decide together which single poem will be used for the final competition. Students will then spend the rest of the week focusing on the preparation of that poem for the competition.

Step Twelve: (Students, Teachers and Guests)

Final Competition

• **1 – 2 hours**

The final school competition should take no longer than two hours. A winner and a runner-up should be selected based on overall scores on the Contest Evaluation Sheet (page 32) . A runner-up is necessary in case the school winner is unable to compete at the statewide competition. At the conclusion of the competition, the lead teacher should complete the Statewide Competition Registration Form (page 33) and fax it to the Oregon Arts Commission (503-986-0260) before February 25, 2009.

SIZE OF CONTEST

Ideally, between six to fifteen students should compete in a school's final contest. If your school has fewer than fifteen students participating, there is no need for classroom competitions and your school can simply hold a schoolwide competition. (Suggestions for a schoolwide competition schedule and structure can be found on page 30.)