

POETRY OUT LOUD



Guidelines for Filming Alabama's Poetry Out Loud Recitations

Requirements:

Any video not following these requirements will be disqualified.

- Each recitation requires its own separate video file.
- Each video file submitted must be filmed in one single shot, with the camera in a horizontal position, at eye level.
- No cutting, splicing or editing of the film is allowed.
- The camera must be still and in the same location for each video.
- Student must be standing*, directly facing the camera.
- The image of the student must include the torso arms and head, without any of these body parts leaving the frame at any time during the recitation.
- Student must be standing in front of a plain background, with no identifying visual representations of any kind.
- No music, graphics, titles, or computer animations.
- No other person may be visible or heard in the video.
- All poems must be memorized. No use of notes allowed while filming.
- Sound and picture must be clear.

*Students with a disability that prevents standing for the duration of a recitation may contact the competition administrator for a waiver of this requirement. Please notify us of any other accommodations needed.

File Naming Convention: Each video file should be named using the following format:

lastname_firstname_competition_order#

For example: jones_alice_anthology_3.mp4 or
 baker_jonathan_original_2.mov

Recommendations:

These are things that will increase the quality of your videos.

- To avoid frustration and the need for multiple takes, make sure you are well rehearsed and know your poem well before beginning to film. The only reason to repeat a take should be getting the lighting, sound and positioning correct. If you are not well rehearsed, it will show in all your videos.
- We recommend videos be filmed by someone else if possible.
- It is possible to do a “Selfie Video”. Find a place to prop up your tablet or phone and use the automatic shutter to begin.
- Rehearse while filming to make sure the camera is situated correctly for your image. Review the rehearsal videos to make sure gestures do not leave the image frame, or that you are shifting your weight causing your image to leave the frame. If it looks like you are looking down at the camera, adjust the height of your camera to eye level.
- Indoor filming is best to avoid outside noise or birdsong, but make sure the lighting is adequate to see contrast so that facial expressions are readable.
- Outside filming can provide excellent lighting but pick a quiet time free of people talking, children playing, automobiles driving past, or nature sounds. Listen to your video before submitting to make sure there are no distracting sounds.
- Wear solid colors and avoid bright white clothing.
- Do not have a light source directly behind you (check the video for “white out” and shadows).
- Submit your best takes. Which one makes you happiest about the way it expresses your intent. Accuracy will count, but it is not the only thing on the rubric.

Cell Phone Video Tips:

Phones can shoot all types of file sizes and frame rates. We recommend 1080p and 30 frames per second. You can shoot larger—at 4K—but that eats up a lot of space on your phone and takes longer to upload and download. To change the settings on your phone, go to Settings > Camera > 1080p at 30 fps. Please note some phone models may offer different recording options. When in doubt, enter “change camera settings” in your browser to find your phone’s make and model.

Lighting:

Try to shoot with the sun or a window in front of you, not behind you. This will keep you from becoming a dark, faceless shadow. Your camera will iris-down to accommodate for the bright sun.

TriPod:

If you have a tripod for your phone or tablet, use it. But if not you can make your own tripod for a phone by turning a paper cup upside down and cutting a notch across the middle for your phone to stand in. Books work really well to prop up phones and tablets. So do umbrellas in the center of a table. If you are filming yourself, remember to use your delayed shutter so you will have time to get back in place comfortably without having to rush.