

7. Poetry Out Loud Scoring Rubric*

The scoring rubric is meant to provide a consistent measure against which to evaluate recitations. It is not intended to be comprehensive but serves as a companion to the evaluation criteria. We suggest you review it before the competition to get a sense of what you should look for in individual performances. The rubric, Judge's Guide, and [model recitations](#) are tools to use in preparation for judging.

	Weak	Below Average	Average	Good	Excellent	Outstanding
Physical Presence	Stiff or agitated; lacks connection with audience; appears uncomfortable	Timid; unsure; body language reflects nervousness	Body language is at times unsure, at times confident	Comfortable; confident body language	Poised; body language reveals strong stage presence	Authoritative; body language shows compelling stage presence
Voice and Articulation	Inaudible; slow; distracting rhythm; singsong; hurried; mispronunciations	Audible, but quiet; too loud; monotone; paced unevenly; affected tone	Clear, adequate intonation, even pacing	Clear, appropriate intonation and pacing	Very clear, crisp, effective use of volume, intonation, rhythm, and pacing	Very clear, crisp, mastery of rhythm and pace, skillful use of volume and intonation
Dramatic Appropriateness	Poem is overshadowed by significant distracting gestures, facial expressions, inflections or accents; acting out of poem; singing; over-emoting; inappropriate tone	Poem is secondary to style of delivery; includes instances of distracting gestures, facial expressions, and vocal inflections; inappropriate tone	Poem is neither overwhelmed nor enhanced by style of delivery	Poem is enhanced by style of delivery; any gestures, facial expressions, and movement are appropriate to poem	Style of delivery reflects precedence of poem; poem's voice is well conveyed	Style of delivery reflects internalization of poem; all gestures and movements feel essential to poem's success
Evidence of Understanding	Obscures meaning of poem	Doesn't sufficiently communicate meaning of poem	Satisfactorily communicates meaning of poem	Conveys meaning of poem well	Interprets poem very well for audience; nuanced	Masterfully interprets poem for audience, deftly revealing poem's meaning
Overall Performance	Ineffective or inappropriate recitation; does disservice to poem	Inadequate recitation; lackluster; does disservice to poem	Sufficient recitation; lacks meaningful impact on audience	Enjoyable recitation; successfully delivers poem	Inspired performance shows grasp of recitation skills and enhances audience's experience of the poem	Captivating performance—whole equals “more than the sum of the parts”; shows mastery of recitation skills

*Note that all elements need not be present. Semicolons often represent “or,” especially in the negative categories.