



Poetry Out Loud

Georgia // 2025-2026



**Alliance
Theatre**

Welcome // Georgia Council for the Arts

GCA Mission

To cultivate the growth of vibrant, thriving Georgia communities through the arts.

GCA Goals

- Expand economic development opportunities through the arts
- Grow GCA's services to new audiences and communities
- Utilize arts to fortify education in the state
- Strengthen the arts sector

GCA is a strategic arm of the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD), the State of Georgia's marketing and sales arm.



Welcome // Alliance Theatre

Mission

The Alliance Theatre is Atlanta's national theater, expanding hearts and minds onstage and off.

Program Goals

The Alliance delivers powerful programming that challenges adult and youth audiences to think critically and care deeply.

Institute

A branch of the organization's robust education department, the Alliance Theatre Institute partners with school districts and schools to deliver professional learning for educators and arts integrated or theater-based instruction for students.



What is Poetry Out Loud?

Poetry Out Loud® lifts poetry off the page, creating community and connection. Since the program began in 2005, more than 4.5 million high school students have participated in this dynamic poetry recitation competition. Poetry Out Loud can help students improve public speaking skills, build confidence, and grow their appreciation for poetry.

In recognition of America's 250th anniversary in 2026, the 2025-2026 Poetry Out Loud program will focus on poems that celebrate the rich tapestry of American history and culture.

An updated list of poems for this year's competition is available at PoetryOutLoud.org.

An initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts, Poetry Out Loud is administered at the state level by the state and jurisdictional arts agencies and free educational materials for teachers and organizers. Poetry Out Loud is managed in partnership with Mid Atlantic Arts.

Poetry Out Loud Structure

Local Contests	→	Regional Contests	→	State Final	→	National Finals
occur at registered school & community sites		in-person on Friday, February 6 and/or Saturday, February 7 virtual on Tuesday, February 10		occur on the Alliance Theatre's Goizueta Stage for Youth & Families on Friday, March 6		occur in Washington, DC from Monday, April 27 – Wednesday, April 29
deadline: by Friday, January 23		details to be announced		details to be announced		administered by the NEA

Important Dates & Deadlines

Early January 2026: Regional Contest details (dates, times, locations) to be announced (informed by registration data)

Friday, January 16 (11:59 PM): Registration for Georgia Schools & Organizations closes

Friday, January 23 (11:59 PM): Deadline for Georgia Schools & Organizations to hold a local contest and report a champion

National Guidelines & Resources

Visit: PoetryOutLoud.org

- Find poems (anthology)
- Resources for students (tips & videos)
- Resources for teachers and organizers (guide, lesson plans, impact study)
- Resources for judges (guide, score sheets, criteria, and tips)
- Guidance on Frequently Asked Questions



Student Workshops

Preparation for Regional Contests

 Virtual: Saturday, January 31 @ 10 AM – 12 PM (Live; via Zoom)

Preparation for State Final

 Virtual: Saturday, February 14 @ 10 AM - 12 PM (Live; via Zoom)

Workshops will orient students to next steps & address Evaluation Criteria:

- Physical Presence
- Voice and Articulation
- Interpretation
- Evidence of Understanding
- Overall Performance
- Accuracy

Prizes // State & National

State Level:

- \$200 for each first-place winner
- \$500 for poetry materials for each first-place winner's school or organization
- \$100 for one runner-up in each state
- \$200 for the purchase of poetry materials for each runner-up's school or organization

Note:

Mid Atlantic Arts provides and administers all aspects of the monetary prizes awarded and travel arrangements to the Poetry Out Loud National Finals.

National Level:

- \$20,000 for the National Champion
- \$10,000 for 2nd place
- \$5,000 for 3rd place
- \$1,000 for 4th–9th places
- Representing schools/organizations of top nine finalists receive \$500 for the purchase of poetry materials.
- One honorable mention in each of the three national semifinal competitions – those students will not advance to the finals, but will each receive a \$1,000 cash award and a \$500 stipend for their school/organization.

Questions + Discussion



Contact



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