

Poetry Cabaret Guidelines

2019 - 2020

(Mail entries to Lisa Hohn,
410 5th Ave., PO Box 346, Menno, SD 57045)

Purpose and Rationale:

The purpose of the Poetry Cabaret is to provide students of all ages with an opportunity to display their writing abilities, creativity and enthusiasm for poetry.

Our intent is to showcase the achievements of students and to encourage them to continue writing poetry. **General Rules:**

- Students 1st through 12th grades must do all of the work for the Poetry Cabaret - handwritten or typed. If completed on computer, any fonts are acceptable as long as it fits on one page. PK and KDG teachers* may scribe or type their students' entries.
- *ATTENTION: If the Preschool or Kindergarten teacher is scribing or typing for students, PLEASE make sure to keep the integrity of the student's responses, mechanics, grammar, etc. Take this opportunity to teach the editing process that precedes any "published product!"
- Remember, Author/Poet's name appears on official entry name tag only!
- Teachers may help the students with the writing process, as this is a learning experience.
- Content should reflect school appropriate themes.
- Each council may submit up to **three regular and ONE modified** local winners per grade level (PreK-12).
- To enter in the Modified category, the student must be on a Language Arts IEP.
- Use paper with straight edges (no spiral bound) and not larger than 9"x12".
- No illustrations unless it is a concrete poem.
- All state entries must have a completed nametag attached **securely** to the back of the last page of the work and **the local President must sign each entry.**
- Individual students may submit entries to the local council committee with the signature of a sponsoring SDRC member.
- Entries are due to Lisa Hohn by Winter Leadership or post-marked no later than **March 2, 2020.**
- Deadlines will be strictly enforced. Participating councils should make arrangements for mailing before the deadline date. Extension appeals of deadline dates will be treated on a case by case basis for extreme circumstances only.
- All judging will be by blind review.
- The decision of the judges are final.
- All Awards will be given at local events. Dates determined by each individual council.

Poetry Cabaret Guidelines Quick Reference:

- Original poem, written by the student
- 21 lines or fewer
- Any subject (school appropriate)
- Any style including Freestyle
- No illustrations unless it is a Concrete poem
- Paper with straight edges no larger than 9" x12" paper
- Completed Official Name tag-this will be strictly enforced. If there is any information missing, the entry is automatically disqualified.



*The following information is from Georgia Heard's **Awaking the Heart** and Paul B. Janeczko's **How to Write Poetry**.*

Writing Tips for Students:

- Show, don't tell
- Do more with less
- Exploit the senses
- Be specific
- Create vivid imagery
- Match sound with meaning
- Start with basics then proceed to the rhyme (for rhyming poems)
- Use rhythm and line breaks
- Compare with similes and metaphors
- More Ideas...
- Students can give meaning to their poems by expressing feelings and experience through the use of visual and sensory tools. These tools include:
- Image - Picture created with vivid words that appeal to the readers' senses of sight, smell, sound, taste, and touch.
- Metaphor - Comparison of two dissimilar things.
- Simile - Comparison that uses "like" or "as".
- Personification - Comparison that gives human qualities to inanimate objects.
- Words - Love of the language, favorite words or powerful adjectives, verbs and nouns.
- Line-Breaks - Create pause or hesitation, emphasize certain words or change the meaning.
- Beginnings/Endings - Avoid too many introductory words, start with our most immediate experience. Don't end with a summary, repeat the first line, use a surprise image or metaphor or begin with an emotional statement and end with a clarifying statement.
- Titles - Part of the overall poem. It can add another dimension, give a double or symbolic meaning, act as the first line, or surprise the reader.
- Observation - Looking at life through a "magnifying glass".

Students can express their feelings and experiences through auditory, musical and rhythmic tools.

These tools include:

- Rhyme - Repetition of sounds at the ends of words.
- Repetition/Patterns - Repeating words, phrases, lines, or groups of lines.
- Rhythms - Basic beat in a line of poetry.
- Alliteration - Repetition of the initial consonants of words, as in meaning and music.
- Line-Breaks - Use to show emphasis of ideas or to allow words to flow
- Onomatopoeia - Words that makes the sound of the action it describes, as in bang or slap.
- Assonance - Repetition of the vowel sounds in words, as in mouth and house.
- Consonance - Repetition of consonant sounds, as in short and sweet.
- General suggestions about writing poetry:
- When you start writing your poem—jot notes, make lists, try a first draft, revise your work—remember that there is no need to rush to finish your poem. Take your time.
- When you've written a draft that you are happy with, tuck it away and let it rest for a few days. Then take a look at it with fresh eyes. You may like your poem a lot, even though you may see spots that can use some more work. That's fine.
- Don't expect your poem to be perfect when it falls out of your head onto the page. It will need more work. That's how the writing process works, for most every writer. Take the time to write a good poem.
- Remember: Imagination rules! Don't be afraid to try something different. You may be pleasantly surprised by your poem.
- One last thing: Have fun!