

2026 WPSU Poetry Writing Contest Rules

Any individual (each such individual is hereinafter referred to as a "Participant") who enters, attempts to enter, or in any way participates or attempts to participate in the WPSU Poetry Writing Contest ("Contest") conducted by The Pennsylvania State University ("Penn State") agrees to be bound by the terms and conditions provided in these Official Contest Rules ("Rules"), as well as by Penn State's interpretations of these Rules, which are final and binding in all matters relating to any Contest. Any Participant under the age of 18 must have permission of their parent(s) or guardian(s) to enter the contest.

1. No Purchase Necessary. NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN A PRIZE. A PURCHASE WILL NOT IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES OF WINNING.
2. Applicable Law/Void Where Prohibited. The Contest is subject to and governed by applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Participation in this Contest is void where prohibited or otherwise restricted by law.
3. Eligibility. The Contest is open to legal residents of the United States of America, who reside in one the following counties: Armstrong, Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Cameron, Centre, Clarion, Clearfield, Clinton, Columbia, Elk, Forest, Fulton, Huntingdon, Jefferson, Juniata, Lycoming, McKean, Mifflin, Montour, Potter, Somerset, Tioga, Union, Venango, Warren, are enrolled in grades Kindergarten through 12th grade, and if under the age of 18 have permission of their parent(s) or guardian(s) to enter the Contest, except that the following individuals are not eligible for the Contest:(a) employees within Penn State's WPSU; (b) any individual involved in the sponsorship of any Prize of the Contest, and immediate family members(and those living in the same household, whether or not related) of any of the foregoing. Immediate family members shall include spouses, siblings, parents, children, grandparents, and grandchildren, whether as "in-laws", or by current or past marriage, remarriage, adoption, co-habitation, or other familial extension.
4. Entry. To enter the Contest, an individual must create an original piece of writing ("Poetry"), that is to be reviewed and uploaded by the parent/guardian or classroom teacher through the <http://wpsu.org/poetrycontest> website, that meets the following requirements: 1) poems must not exceed 200 words; 2) all poems must include a title; 4) text should be typed; 5) poem must be formatted as a PDF, Word, JPEG, PNG, or TXT; 6) single-author poems written within the current school year; 7) all poem elements should be original; copyrighted names are not allowed; 8) if the students is writing an homage to another work, that work must be mentioned, e.g. "in the style of- title- by - author-;" 9) students may conference with parents, teachers, and peers on their work. Entries must be submitted and received by 11:59 p. m . on February 28, 2026 (the "Entry Period"). Limit one entry per person. Penn State is not responsible for problems with Contest entries, including but not limited to, entries which are lost, late, misdirected, damaged, incomplete, illegible, or cannot be completed, even if the problem is the result of the sole or partial negligence of Penn State.
5. Original creation. You represent and warrant that the Poetry you submit for the purposes of this contest is original and of your own creation.
6. Selection of Winner. Each entry will be reviewed by a panel of volunteer judges. Judges will score entries individually and make final evaluations among the highest scoring entries and select a winner from the following grade band categories: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12. Two additional finalists will be selected in each of the grade bands. Participant's names will not be attached to any entry during the review process. The winners and finalists will be notified by April 1, 2026.
7. Prizes. Penn State will provide the following recognition and promotional support for the winning Participant in each grade band:

- Participant's poem will be read on WPSU-FM during Poetry Moment. Participant will have the option of recording themselves reciting their poetry to be aired or have the poem be read on air by the host of Poetry Moment.
- Top three finalists of each grade band will have their poems published on WPSU website, www.wpsu.org/poetrycontest, recognizing their name, grade, and school.

No transfer, assignment or substitution of a prize is permitted, except Penn State reserves the right to substitute a prize for an item of equal or greater value in the event an advertised prize is unavailable. Any difference between the actual value and the approximate retail value of any prize will not be awarded. No substitution or cash equivalent will be made.

7. Odds of Winning. The odds of winning a prize are dependent on the number of Participants and entries in the Contest and the quality thereof.
8. Taxes. Each prize winner shall be solely responsible for any federal, state, or local taxes associated with his/her receipt of the prize.
9. Claiming the Prize. Prior to being awarded a prize, winners are required to provide their full name. Penn State reserves the right to deny the awarding of the prize if the winner fails to provide satisfactory identification, as determined in Penn State's sole discretion. Penn State reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to award unclaimed prizes to alternate contestants or not to award the unclaimed prizes. Any costs relating to the prizes, including travel, are the sole responsibility of the winner.
10. Release and Limitation of Liability. By participating in the Contest, you hereby agree to release and hold harmless The Pennsylvania State University and its trustees, directors, officers, employees, agents, and representatives ("Released Parties") from and against any and all claims or causes of action, including but not limited to claims or causes of action arising from third party claims of infringement, or Penn State's own negligence and claims or causes of action for personal injury, death, or damage to or loss of property, arising out of participation in the Contest or the receipt, use, or misuse of any prize. By participating in the Contest, you also agree that you shall not be entitled in any circumstance to punitive, incidental, or consequential damages, or any other damages, including attorneys' fees.
11. Consent, License and Release. Participant hereby grants an irrevocable, world-wide, non-exclusive, royalty-free license and right to Penn State to use, print, distribute, reproduce and publicly display (a) the Poetry, and (b) my name, image, likeness, biographical information, and voice (collectively, "Likeness"), for any promotional, educational, informational, advertising or commercial purpose, in any materials and communications in any form now known or later developed, including but not limited to publications, websites, articles, brochures, books, magazines, newsletters, exhibits, videos, films, social media, advertisements, and training programs. All participants (and parent or guardian) will retain ownership of copyright to their Poetry. In the event that any applicable law requires certain formalities to be fulfilled to effectuate such grant to rights, each participant (and parent or guardian) agrees to cooperate with WPSU to achieve fulfillment of such formalities.
12. Disqualification. All participants agree to be bound by these Rules. Non-compliance with any of these Rules will result in disqualification and all privileges as a Participant will be immediately

terminated. Penn State, in its sole discretion, further reserves the right to disqualify any person for: (i) tampering with the entry process or the operation of the Contest; (ii) gaining an unfair advantage in participating in the Contest; (iii) obtaining winner status using false, fraudulent, or deceptive means; or (iv) engaging in otherwise unsportsmanlike or disruptive behavior.

13. Reservation of Rights. Penn State reserves the right in its sole discretion to supplement or make changes to these Rules as well as the rules of any contest at any time without notice. Penn State reserves the right in its sole discretion to interpret the rules of any contest, and such interpretation shall be binding upon all Participants. If for any reason the Contest is not capable of running as planned, including without limitation lack of significant participation, tampering, unauthorized intervention, fraud, technical failures, or other causes which adversely affect the administration, security, fairness, integrity, or proper conduct of the Contest, Penn State reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to cancel, suspend and/or modify the Contest.
14. Contact Information. If you have questions about the Contest, you may contact: Susan Chyczewski, Director of Strategic Partnerships and Resource Development
 - via phone: 814-863-5604
 - via email: scm4@psu.edu
 - via U.S. Mail: 238 Outreach Building, University Park, PA 16803