

COMPETITION RULES

- Sponsors and students must arrive by 10:30 am on Saturday, February 18th, 2017 at George Mason University's Johnson Center. The adult sponsor must be present with each participant to register.
- Students must remain on GMU campus and may only leave with permission of teacher.
- Every registered poet must have a minimum of two poems prepared for the day. The two poems used for the initial two-round preliminary bout may be used again in the two-round Grand Slam Finals, assuming the participant advances.
- Poets have 3 minutes to perform with a 10 second grace period. Going over 3:10 results in a 0.5 deduction from total score per 10 seconds starting at 3:10 (i.e. 3:10= -0.5; 3:20= -1; 3:30 = -1.5; etc). The time starts at the first utterance after the poet says her name, school, and poem title.
- Poems must be original and of the poet's own construction. NO PLAGIARISM allowed, or it will result in disqualification.
- Poets may NOT use any props, costumes, or musical accompaniment (this can include mentioning and touching clothing or jewelry; we will explain).
- Good sportsmanship is required. Booing or trying to sabotage another poet/school is unacceptable.
- The poets will be judged by three audience members on a scale of 0.0 to 10.0. This means that the highest possible score is a 30. Unlike traditional poetry slams, however, the scores from the preliminary bouts will not be announced to the slam's participants and spectators immediately following each poem.
- Profanity and hate speech are prohibited. Poets cannot use profanity (including the n-word), sexually explicit content, and/or language that degrades any group of people. Violation will result in a 1.5 point deduction from the poet's total score; potential disqualification; and scorn from the host, organizers, and parents.
- Food and drink may not be consumed in the GMU lecture halls. Bottled water is permitted.
- Memorization of poems is not required, but *highly recommended*. All poets, however, are not allowed to physically hold a piece of paper or handheld device while performing; doing so will result in a 1.5 point deduction and/or potential disqualification. If a poem is not memorized, it may be placed on the music stand we provide, and poets will not be penalized by the judges for doing so.
- There will be 5 or 6 preliminary bouts Saturday. Five or six bouts will be taking place simultaneously from 12:00 –1:45 p.m. and the Grand Slam Finals will take place from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- Before each preliminary slam, the bout manager and will draw numbers to determine the order of the two-round slam. This order will be reversed in the second round of the bout.
- The top two scoring poets from each preliminary bout will advance to the Grand Slam Finals at 6:00 p.m. Again, unlike traditional poetry slams, the scores from the preliminary bouts will not be announced to the slam's participants and spectators immediately following each poem; the scoring from the preliminary slams will be done silently. The finalists will be announced at the beginning of the Open Mic in the afternoon.