



## Announcing *Nebraska Poetry Activated:* *A poetry-writing competition for students*

Nebraskans for the Arts, in partnership with the Nebraska Arts Council, is inviting high school students (grades 9 – 12) across our state to participate in the first-ever Nebraska Poetry Activated: A poetry-writing competition for students.

In the words of Poet Laureate, Janice Jobo Sapigao, “**poetry is activism because, line by line, it contains the potential to ask difficult questions, to participate in literary spaces, to push past discomfort, and to build worlds where possibilities drive us.**” This past year, from Amanda Gorman’s powerful speech at the Presidential Inauguration Ceremony to [this anthology of poems](#) that brought awareness to the plight of healthcare workers, audiences have witnessed the power of poetry to captivate, illuminate, and motivate. To reflect this moment, Nebraskans for the Arts is welcoming students to compose and submit an original “advocacy poem” - a poem that brings to light an issue in their community, advocates for something about which they are passionate, or encourages progress in a specific area of society.

### Submission Details

**Entries will be accepted through June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.** To submit your poem please visit [Nebraskans for the Arts’ website](#).

Submissions should meet the following criteria:

1. Submitted as a PDF or Word Document (.doc) via the form in the link above.
2. Formatted with the poem’s title in italics at the top of the page.

Contestants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. Students must be residents of Nebraska.
2. Students must be in grades 9 through 12. Submissions from rising freshmen and graduating seniors *will* be accepted.
3. Entries from students at public and private schools are eligible to compete, as well as students that are home-schooled.

If you have questions about the above criteria, please contact Skyler Dykes, the Interim Executive Director of Nebraskans for the Arts, at [skyler@nebraskansforthearts.org](mailto:skyler@nebraskansforthearts.org)

### Adjudication

Poems will be adjudicated by a panel of three judges with extensive knowledge of poetry and poetry composition. Works will be judged on the following criteria: originality, expressive use of language, clarity of topic, and effectiveness in conveying message. The topic selected by the students will not hold weight in how their work is adjudicated.

Winners will be announced via Facebook Live ([Nebraskans for the Arts Facebook Page](#)) and email at 5:30 pm on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

### Prizes

1<sup>st</sup> Place: \$200

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: \$100

3<sup>rd</sup> Place: \$50

Finalists: The top 15 entries will be compiled into a miniature booklet and mailed to students in July.

## **Resources**

Nebraskans for the Arts recognizes that composing a piece of original poetry might be a new experience for some students. To aid students, we have compiled the following resources, focusing on poetry composition

Poetry Out Loud Resources:

- [Creating “Golden Shovel” Poems](#)
- [Poems Put to Use](#)

[Poetry as Activism | Bethany Montgomery | TEDxSpokane](#)

[The Poetry Foundation: Poems of Protest, Resistance, and Empowerment](#)

[WBUR – Poet Amanda Gorman on Activism and Art in Times of Darkness](#)

Poetry Writing Resources:

- [The Poetry Society – Resources for writers](#)
- [Masterclass: How to Write Poetry: 11 Rules for Poetry Writing Beginners](#)
- [The Creative Independent – How to write a poem](#)