



- The slam will be judged by a mixed panel of poets, adults and young people. Judges will be preselected. We will strive for diversity in the judging panel.
- Memorized poems are not mandatory, a paper is allowed. (**A music stand will be available upon request however it will be considered prop if use on stage for anything other than holding a paper poem**)

## **AUDITION SCORING AND EVALUATION CRITERIA** **(60 points)**

**Poems will be judged on five factors by three judges.** Each poem has a potential total of 10 points per judge (30 points for each poem and 60 points for both poems combined).

1. Physical Presence
2. Voice and Articulation
3. Dramatic appropriateness
4. Evidence of Understanding
5. Overall Performance

1. **Physical Presence** is a category that can only be judged by looking at the reciter. Poet's eye contact, body language, and poise. The poet should be poised—but not artificially so—projecting ease and confidence by their physical presence. This is an important category, but also one of the easiest to rate. A less seasoned performance may be one in which the poet displays nervous gestures, appears stiff, or loses eye contact with the audience.
2. **Voice and Articulation** is a category based in the auditory nature of the recitation. Poet's volume, pace, intonation, rhythm, and proper pronunciation. Poet should be clear and loud enough to capture the audience's attention, but watch out for poets who mistake projection for yelling or communicate passion by shouting. (See "dramatic appropriateness.") Any changes in tone should be appropriate to the subject matter. Poet should proceed at a fitting and natural pace, not speaking too quickly or slowly from nervousness. Poet should correctly pronounce every word in the poem. With rhymed poems, or with poems with a regular meter, the poet should be careful to not fall into a singsong rhythm. Decide if the pauses come in suitable places for the poem. A recitation that is mumbling, inaudible, or monotone will obscure a poem's meaning for the audience.
3. **Dramatic Appropriateness** is the category used to evaluate the interpretive and performance choices made by the poet. Recitation is about conveying a poem's sense through its language. This is a challenging task, but a strong performance will rely on a powerful internalization of the poem rather than distracting gestures or unnecessary emoting. The reciter represents the poem's voice during the course of a recitation, not a character's. Consider whether the poet's interpretative and performance choices enhance the audience's understanding and enjoyment of the poem without overshadowing the poem's

language. Low scores in this category should result from recitations that have an affected pitch, character voices, singing, inappropriate tone, distracting or excessive gestures, or unnecessary emoting.

4. **Evidence of Understanding** measures a poet's comprehension and mastery of a poem. How well does the poet interpret the poem for the audience? Does the poet make difficult lines clearer? Does the poet communicate the correct tone of the poem—angst, dry humor, ambivalence? The poet's words should take precedence, and the student who understands the poem best will be able to voice it in a way that helps the audience to understand the poem better. Consider the poet's use of intonation, emphasis, tone, and style of delivery. Poets should demonstrate that they know the meaning of every line and every word of the poem through the way these elements are handled.

In a strong recitation, the meaning of the poem will be powerfully and clearly conveyed to the audience. The poet will offer an interpretation that deepens and enlivens the poem. Meaning, messages, allusions, irony, shifts of tone, and other nuances will be captured by the performance. A great performer may even make the audience see a poem in a new way. A low score should be awarded if the interpretation obscures the meaning of the poem.

5. **Overall Performance** is worth a bit more than other categories. Judges are encouraged to consider the content, language, and length of the poet's poem under "overall performance." This category evaluates the total success of the performance, the degree to which the recitation has become more than the sum of its parts. Consider whether the poet's physical presence, voice and articulation, dramatic appropriateness, and evidence of understanding all seem on target and unified to breathe life into the poem. Has the poet captivated their audience with the language of the poem? Did the poet bring the audience to a better understanding of the poem? Does the poet understand and show mastery of the art of recitation? Use this score to measure how impressed you were by the recitation, and whether the recitation has honored the poem. Judges may also consider the diversity of a poet's recitations.

### **Timing for Preliminary & Grand Slam Final:**

Poets must keep to the time limit of 3 minutes. If a poet goes over the time limit, their score will be penalized 1/10<sup>th</sup> of 1 point for each 10 seconds beyond 3:09, starting at 3 minutes 10 seconds (i.e. up to 3:09 – no penalty; 3:10 to 3:19 -0.10 point penalty; 3:20 to 3:29 – 0.20 point penalty). The lead judge will stop a poem if it exceeds 3:30.

**WRITER'S STATEMENT & SAMPLE SCORING AND EVALUATION CRITERIA (20 points)** Application packets will be evaluated by three evaluators. Each application is worth a total of 20 points, and these points will be based on an average of the combined scores of each evaluator.

Applications will be evaluated on two factors:

1. Quality of "Writer's Statement" (10 points)
2. Quality of "Writing Sample" (10 points)

### **YEARS OF BNV ELIGIBILITY SCORING**

**(20 points)**

**Those students who have limited years of eligibility to compete in BNV will be given special consideration.** A student's years of eligibility will be worth up to 20 points, and these points will be assigned in the following way:

- |                                   |           |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Seven (7) years of eligibility | 5 points  |
| 2. Six (6) years of eligibility   | 7 points  |
| 3. Five (5) years of eligibility  | 9 points  |
| 4. Four (4) years of eligibility  | 12 points |
| 5. Three (3) years of eligibility | 15 points |
| 6. Two (2) years of eligibility   | 18 points |
| 7. One (1) year of eligibility    | 20 points |

### **OVERALL SCORE WEIGHTING AND BNV TEAM SELECTION**

**(100 points)**

**Overall, students will be scored out of 100 total points on three factors:**

- |                         |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Audition             | 60 points |
| 2. Application          | 20 points |
| 3. Years of Eligibility | 20 points |

### **TIE-BREAKING FOR IDENTICAL OVERALL SCORES**

**Ties will be broken in the following manner.**

1. In the case of a tie, the student with the **least years of Eligibility will be selected** for the team. If both students have the same years of eligibility,
2. The student with the **highest Audition Score will be selected** for the team. If both students have the same audition score,
3. The student with the **highest Application Score** will be selected for the team. If both students have the same application score,
4. There will be a **vote of the Word As Bond, Inc. Board of Directors and Executive Officers to choose which applicant will become a member of the BNV team.**

## **ADDITIONAL TIPS AND ADVICE**

### **Tips & Advice**

- We encourage you to participate in all or some of the Word As Bond, Inc. Workshops, they are free and offered to help you through the competition process.
  
- We encourage you to become intimately familiar with the poems you will compete with. Memorization is not required but you want to really speak your peace...Practice Practice Practice!
  
- We encourage you to review the official guidelines and rules to become familiar, prepared and comfortable with the format of the audition.
  
- Judges will be given criteria for judging on both writing and performance quality. This will be as standardized as possible, but like each of us, judges come with their own biases for and against certain topics and styles. Remember, the standard is yourself. Be your own best “judge.”
  
- Be respectful of yourself, the youth writing community, and the community you represent.
  
- Have fun in this process, win or lose by getting on a mic and speaking your peace, you are already showing your strength, character, and spirit, all of which makes you are an instant winner.