

A Celebration of National Poetry Month

A POETRY CONTEST for High School and Middle School aged youth sponsored by the Johnson County Library

Begins: Wednesday, February 18, 2026

Ends: Wednesday, March 25, 2026

CONTEST GUIDELINES:

Deadline: Postmark or Library Stamped: March 25, 2026

Eligibility: Any Johnson County teen-aged student—middle school to high school aged. Home schooled students as well as public school students are welcome to participate.

Two Divisions: Middle School, grades 6-8

High School, grades 9-12

Fees: NONE

GENERAL RULES for Entry:

1. Any subject.

2. Limited to 3 poems per entrant.

3. Limited to 40 lines per poem, no poem longer than one page.

4. Prizes for first, second, and third places of individual poems in both divisions; honorable mentions for three poems in both divisions.

SUBMISSION RULES:

1. One typed (preferred) hard copy of each poem with the title at the top of the page. Title may appear in the header, not considered a line of the poem. Standard 12-point font (New Times Roman, Arial, Courier). **No color or illustration.**

2. Each entry must be accompanied by a cover sheet. Cover Sheet must include the name of the participant, grade, school name/homeschool, address, phone number and an email, the ***Titles*** of each poem and ***Type*** of Poems (either FREE VERSE or FORM POETRY) per entry. Also sign with a ***legible signature*** of agreement to allow a winning entry to be displayed at the Johnson County Library.

(**FREE VERSE** is distinguished from **FORM POETRY**. Form Poetry includes types like “Sonnet,” “Terza Rima,” “Haiku,” “Rhymed Verse,” “Ballad.” This is not an all-inclusive list. For further clarification, you might like to look at:

<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/poetry-101-what-is-poetic-form-learn-about-15-different-types-of-poems>)

3. Each poem must have a title at the top of the poem

4. Poet’s name **must NOT** appear on the poems submitted.

(The **cover** sheet **should** have the **poet’s name** and the **title** for identification.)

5. DEADLINE: Only poems that meet the **Wednesday, March 25, 2026 deadline** will be considered, **NO SUBMISSIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THIS DATE.**

Submit Entries to:

Mail to Johnson County Library, c/o Teen Services, 171 N. Adams Ave., Buffalo, WY 82834.

Drop-offs at the library must be to a librarian who will date the entry by hand.

Electronic copies may be submitted to tallgood@johnsoncountylibraries.org with the subject **Library Poetry Contest 2026.**

6. No poems will be returned so be sure to keep a copy of your own and the names of the entries.

Entries must conform to these guidelines, or they will be disallowed for winning. *

7. Winners will be contacted by the Johnson County Library Teen Services by Friday, April 17. Winners will be asked to share their poems in print at the library. (**Please note your permission on the cover sheet of entry.**)

Questions regarding this contest may be directed to Teresa Allgood at 307-684-5546 or tallgood@johnsoncountylibraries.org, Mrs. Wages at Buffalo High School at kwages@jcsd1.us, Mr. Scarlet at Clear Creek Middle School at miscarlet@jcsd1.us, or Dr. Hanson at New West High School mhanson@jcsd1.us, Natalie Maxwell nmaxwell@jcsd1.us.

This contest will be judged by 2 judges. Decisions are theirs entirely and may not be disputed by entrants.

Prizes sponsored by the Patricia Marton Memorial Fund.