



## Summer Assignment English II

**Directions:** Poetry Out Loud is a national competition that encourages High School students to study great poetry. The program helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about both literary history and contemporary life.

The Poetry Out Loud competition begins in the classroom with each student reciting a poem in front of the class from memory. The top two to three students in each grade level will compete at our school-based competition on October 7<sup>th</sup>. Each competitor at our Poetry Out Loud assembly will recite two poems from memory and the top two competitors will earn a chance to compete at the regional competition at Stony Brook University where they will recite three poems from memory.

This summer is a perfect time to begin preparing for your Poetry Out Loud in-class competition.

**Academic Integrity:** All work should be completed independently and without the assistance of unapproved resources. Any work violating academic integrity will be subject to a “0” and any additional consequences as outlined in the Knox Academic Integrity Policy attached to this assignment.

**Due Date:** Your work is due the first day of your English II class. All late work will be subjected to a grade reduction or penalty as outlined in the course syllabus and copied below:

*All major assignments not submitted on the due date will face a 10% deduction of max points per day for up to five (5) days and up to a 50% deduction.*

*Summer Assignments for AP Classes that are not submitted on time will result in the student being dropped from the course.*

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this assignment, please contact the Dean of Academics, Mrs. Pergola, at [dpergola@knoxschool.org](mailto:dpergola@knoxschool.org).

## Part I. Choices

Go to [poetryoutloud.org](http://poetryoutloud.org) and choose TWO poems to work with this summer.

- ONE poem must be fewer than 25 lines
- ONE poem must be pre-20<sup>th</sup> century

## Part II. Graphic Organizer Analysis

For BOTH poems, complete a TPCASTT graphic organizer (see below). Create your own to allow enough room to include all the necessary details.

## Part III. Essay

Choose ONE poem to work with and write a poetry analysis essay on it using ONE of the following prompts:

1. Write an essay in which you describe the speaker's/character's attitude.
2. Write an essay in which the speaker's/character's diction explains his/her attitude
3. Write an essay in which you analyze how the language of the poem reveals the perceptions or emotions of the speaker/character.
4. Write an essay in which you analyze the poems organization, diction and figurative language.
5. Write an essay in which you analyze the shift in the speaker's/character's tone or attitude.
6. Write an essay in which you discuss how elements such as language, imagery, structure, symbolism or point of view help to convey the meaning of the poem.

## Part IV. Writing and Planning

Review the evaluation rubric for your in class recitation. Write a brief summary (2-3 paragraphs) on how you will prepare for your recitation.

## Part V. Reading and Reciting

Practice reading and reciting your poem. *You will recite it from memory the first week of school for a quiz grade.*

## TPCASTT Graphic Organizer

### TITLE

Ponder the title before reading. Make up questions about the title. There are two kinds of titles: interactive titles and naming titles. Interactive titles have some sort of interplay with the piece itself and can affect its meaning. Naming titles may give less crucial information. If a piece lacks a title, you can do this step with the first line of the poem or skip it if allowed to do so. **What do you think of whenever you first read the title?**

### PARAPHRASE (PLOT SUMMARY)

In no more than three sentences **explain the plot of the story**. At times, a thorough paraphrase of the selection will be required.

### CONNOTATIONS

Contemplate the poem for meaning beyond the literal. Identify and figure out the figurative language (Examples: simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole et cetera). **What sensory details, images, or figures of speech can you find and interpret in the writing?**

### ATTITUDE

After identifying a subject/topic of the piece, figure out how the speaker (and/or the writer) feels about it. **What is the speaker's attitude, or tone, in the writing?**

### SHIFTS

Note transitions in the poem (e.g. but, however, then, since, so, etc.). Examine punctuation (dashes, periods, exclamation points, etc.). Look at the white spaces. Note paragraph and stanza divisions or changes in sentence length. Locate any sharp changes in diction (word choice). All of these items may point to shifts in subject, attitude, tone, mood, or motif. **Where does the tone and/or mood change? How does it change?**

### TITLE

Examine the title again, this time on an interpretive level. Answer questions you may have from the first evaluation of the title. Figure out how the title illuminates the piece. Remember a "naming title" may not mean much. Remember you can do this with the first line of a poem if it lacks a title or you can skip this step altogether if allowed. **Does the title have any special meaning? Does it have more than a surface-level meaning?**

### THEME

After identifying a subject/topic of the poem, determine what the author thinks about the subject. Define his/her opinion. **What is the selection really about? What universal experience or truth does the selection convey?**

## Poetry Out Loud Contest Evaluation Criteria

### **Evaluation Criteria #1: Physical Presence**

This category evaluates the physical nature of the recitation. Consider stage presence, body language, and poise.

#### **Advice for the student:**

- Present yourself well and be attentive. Use good posture. Be confident and make a direct connection with the audience.
- Nervous gestures and lack of confidence will detract from your score.
- Relax and be natural. Enjoy your poem; the judges will notice.

#### **Qualities of a strong recitation:**

- The student appears at ease and comfortable.
- The student engages the audience through the physical presence, including appropriate body language and confidence.
- All qualities of the student's physical presence work together to the benefit of the poem.

### **Evaluation Criteria #2: Voice and Articulation**

This category evaluates the auditory nature of the recitation. Consider projection, pace, rhythm, intonation, and proper pronunciation.

#### **Advice for the student:**

- Project to the audience. You want to capture the attention of everyone, including the people in the back row. However, do not mistake shouting for good volume or projection.
- Proceed at a fitting and natural pace. People may speak too quickly when they are nervous, which can make a recitation difficult to understand. Do not speak so slowly that the language sounds awkward or unnatural.
- With rhymed poems, be careful not to recite in a sing-song manner.
- Make sure you know how to pronounce every word in your poem. ARTICULATE.
- Line breaks are a defining feature of poetry, with each one calling for different treatment. Decide whether a break requires a pause and, if so, how long to pause.

#### **Qualities of a strong recitation:**

- All words are pronounced correctly
- Project, rhythm, and intonation greatly enhance the recitation
- Pacing is appropriate to the poem.

### **Evaluation Criteria #3: Dramatic Appropriateness**

This category evaluates the interpretive and performance choices made by the student. Recitation is about conveying a poem's sense through its language. This is a challenging task, but a strong performance must rely on a powerful internalization of the poem rather than excessive gestures or unnecessary emoting. Appropriate interpretation enhances the audience's understanding and enjoyment of the poem without overshadowing the poem's language.

**Advice for the student:**

- Movement must not detract from the poem's voice.
- You are the vessel of your poem. Have confidence that your poem is strong enough to communicate its sounds and messages without a physical illustration. Let the words of the poem do the work.
- Depending on the poem, occasional gestures may be appropriate, but the line between appropriate and overdone is a thin one. When uncertain, leave them out.
- Avoid monotone delivery. If you sound bored, you will project that boredom to the audience. However, too much enthusiasm can make your performance seem insincere.

**Qualities of a strong recitation:**

- Interpretation subtly underscores the meaning of the poem without becoming a focal point of the recitation.
- Avoid affected accents and character voices, inappropriate tone, and inflection, singing, excessive gestures, or unnecessary emoting.

**Evaluation Criteria #4: Evidence of Understanding**

This category evaluates the student's comprehension of a poem. 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. A student must effectively use intonation, emphasis, tone, and style of delivery.

**Advice for the student:**

- In order for the audience to understand the poem fully, you must understand the poem fully. Be attentive to the messages, meanings, allusions, irony, tones of voice, and other nuances in your poem.
- Be sure you know the meaning of every word and line in your poem. If you are unsure about something, it will be apparent to the audience and judges. Don't hesitate to ask your teacher for help.
- Think about how you should interpret the tone and voice of your poem. Is it a quiet poem? Is it a boisterous poem? Should it be recited more quickly or slowly, with a happy or mournful tone? Your interpretation will be different for each poem, and it is a crucial element of your performance.

**Qualities of a strong recitation:**

- The meaning of the poem is powerfully and clearly conveyed to the audience.
- Display an interpretation that deepens and enlivens the poem.
- Meaning, messages, allusions, irony, tone, and other nuances are captured by the performance.
- Avoid obscure meanings or interpretations of the poem.