

Advice for Teaching Poetry and Holding School Competitions

School contests can be held anytime from January leading up to your Regional Contest (RC), which will be scheduled by RC organizers for March through early April. Encourage many participants in your school contest.

Spend time with the poems in the sampler. Think about why you like the ones you like, what they have to say to you, and how you might adapt their corresponding lesson plans to discuss them with your students. Encourage your students to read the poems on their own and generate questions and observations.

You can work on the poems with your kids in club or one-on-one, but try to get some in-class time, as well. Show your CPs the lesson plans and discuss how to adapt them. Since you'll be discussing big ideas, much of the discussion will likely occur in Hayeren, and that's okay. This is just as much, if not more, about critical thinking as it is learning English.

Students' opinions, ideas, and experiences are important in discussions. There are no right or wrong answers. "Critical thinking" requires analysis with an open mind rather than looking for an answer. Here's a link to simple instructions on teaching critical thinking: <http://www.wikihow.com/Teach-Critical-Thinking>

Help students not only memorize the poems, but work on pronunciation, gesture, intonation, facial expression. They are communicating the poem's message through all these.

Your best reciters from each form are going to the Regional Contest (RC). Criteria for judgment about what constitutes the "best" will be the same as the criteria for the Regional and National Contests. Share these criteria with your students so they know what they're aiming for.

Make your school contest an event. Hold it in the auditorium or a large, comfortable room in the school. Edit the participation and 1st-3rd place certificates to state your school/village's name and print some for the contests.

Invite the Director, other teachers, parents, have students invite their friends. Try to get a third judge to balance the opinions of you and your CP. Emphasize fairness over favoritism.

Refreshments and prizes are optional and must be community-generated at the school-level.

Take pictures and send them with captions to us at: nprcarmenia@gmail.com to post on the website.

Please keep track of how many students participate in your school contest.

Send names of 1st-place winners (aka RC participants!) and their poems to your RC coordinator.