

The GreatTalk Cup #1

Poetry Recitation Competition

Handbook

Organised by Language Arts Trust

Co-organised by Cubee Group, Supported by Speech New Zealand

1. Programme Introduction

The GreatTalk Cup #1 Poetry Recitation Competition aims to encourage young people to appreciate poetry and to develop a deeper understanding of literature. Poetry recitation is not simply reading aloud. It involves interpreting the poem, understanding the emotions and ideas behind the poet's work, and expressing the rhythm, imagery, and meaning of the language.

Through this programme, students are encouraged not only to perform poems, but also to engage with poetry as a literary art form.

Poetry recitation helps students connect literature with spoken language, allowing poetry to be experienced as something living, meaningful, and shared with an audience.

The programme also encourages creativity by welcoming both published poetry and original poems written by students.

The judging criteria are guided by the official assessment framework of Speech New Zealand.

Entry is **free** and open to the public.

2. Registration

Participants must currently be residing in New Zealand.

The competition is open to students from Year 0 to Year 13.

Participants may register by scanning the QR code or using the official registration link provided by the organisers.

Once registered, participants may begin preparing for the Preliminary Round.



Scan the QR code to register.

Entries close: 26 April 2026

3. Important Dates

Registration Period: 3 – 26 April 2026

Preliminary Round (Live via Zoom):

- Friday, 15 May – 6.00 pm: Year 0–3, Year 4–6
- Saturday, 16 May – 6.00 pm: Year 7–8, Year 9–10, Year 11–13

Final Round (Live via Zoom):

- Saturday, 30 May 6pm - 8.30pm

Further information will be available on the official website: www.cubee.nz

4. Competition Categories

Participants will compete according to their school year level.

- Year 0 – Year 3
- Year 4 – Year 6
- Year 7 – Year 8
- Year 9 – Year 10
- Year 11 – Year 13

5. Poem Selection

Participants may choose their own poem.

Allowing open choice enables students to demonstrate their individuality, interpretation, and level of challenge.

Poems must meet one of the following criteria:

- Published Poetry - The poem should be in a book, poetry collection, anthology, or recognised literary platform.
- Original Poetry - Participants may perform a poem they have written themselves.

- A clean, typed copy of the poem must be submitted prior to the competition for judging reference.

6. Time Limits

Junior Division (Year 0–6): 1–2 minutes

Intermediate Division (Year 7–8): 1–2.5 minutes

Senior Division (Year 9–13): 1.5–3.5 minutes

If a performance exceeds the maximum time limit by more than 15 seconds, judges may apply a deduction.

7. Memorisation

All poems must be performed from memory.

Prompting is discouraged. Minor hesitations will not necessarily affect the score, but frequent prompting may result in deductions.

8. Performance Guidelines

Participants should focus on communicating the poem clearly and effectively.

- Simple gestures are allowed
- Natural facial expressions are encouraged
- Dramatic acting should not overpower the poem
- Costumes and props are not required and generally discouraged
- The emphasis should remain on vocal expression and interpretation

9. Competition Format

The competition consists of two rounds conducted live online via Zoom.

Round 1 – Preliminary Round

Participants will perform their chosen poem live via Zoom in front of the judging panel. Pre-recorded videos are not permitted.

The top four performers from each category will advance to the Final Round.

Round 2 – Final Round

The top four finalists from each category will advance to the Final Round. The Final Round consists of two sections:

- **Prepared Recital**

Finalists will first recite the poem they performed in the Preliminary Round.

- **Assigned Recital**

Finalists will also perform a poem selected by the judging panel.

The assigned poem will be provided to finalists one week prior to the Final Round to allow time for preparation.

For the assigned section, finalists will be given a choice between two poems selected by the judges. These may represent different styles or forms. Each finalist will choose one of the two poems to perform.

Judges will evaluate both performances in accordance with the official judging criteria. The combined scores from the two sections will determine the final results for each category. Winners will be officially announced, followed by a prize-giving ceremony on the day of the final competition.

10. Competition Schedule

The competition will be organised across three days according to year levels to ensure a smooth experience and reduce waiting times.

Each session will include participant performances and judging.

Participants will receive their Zoom link and performance schedule prior to the competition.

11. Online Competition Guidelines

Participants must join the Zoom meeting at least 10 minutes before their scheduled performance.

Camera must remain on throughout the performance.

Participants should ensure a quiet environment, stable internet connection, and clear lighting.

The upper body and face should be clearly visible on camera.

Participants should begin by stating: 'My name is ____. The title of my poem is ____.'

12. Adjudication Guidelines

Judges evaluate each performance holistically while considering several key elements.

Understanding of the poem – Demonstrating comprehension of meaning, tone, and emotion.

Vocal delivery – Clear voice, articulation, pacing, and expressive variation.

Interpretation – Sensitivity to language, rhythm, imagery, and poetic intention.

Communication with audience – Confidence, engagement, and natural presence.

Suitability of poem – Appropriateness for the performer's age and ability.

Memorisation and accuracy – Smooth delivery with minimal hesitation.

A detailed scoring sheet for judges is provided separately in the accompanying Excel document.

13. Official Judging Criteria (100 marks)

Genre and Poetic Intention – 20 marks

Structure – 20 marks

Metre / Rhythm / Poetic Devices – 20 marks

Voice and Speech – 20 marks

Mood and Overall Impact – 20 marks

Judging Criteria				
Genre (20 Marks)	Structure (20 Marks)	Metre/Rhythm/Poetic devices (20 Marks)	Vocal Delivery (20 Marks)	Mood (20 Marks)
<p>Does the performance demonstrate an understanding of the genre of the selected poem?</p> <p>Does the interpretation reflect the intention and voice of the poet?</p> <p>Judges will consider whether the performer understands the literary style and purpose of the poem.</p> <p>Common poetry genres may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lyric poetry • Narrative poetry • Light verse • Slam poetry • Satirical poetry <p>The performance should reflect the tone and style appropriate to the genre.</p>	<p>Does the performance demonstrate an understanding of the structure of the poem?</p> <p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • awareness of verses and stanza patterns • recognition of regular and irregular forms • sensitivity to free verse structures • appropriate use of pause and phrasing <p>The performer should respect the structural flow of the poem and allow the form of the poem to guide the delivery.</p>	<p>Does the performance show awareness and understanding of the metre and rhythm of the poem?</p> <p>Judges will also consider the performer's sensitivity to poetic devices and language features used by the poet, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rhythm and metre • repetition • imagery • alliteration • metaphor and symbolism • sound patterns <p>Effective recitation should highlight the musicality and language features of the poem.</p>	<p>This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • audibility • breath control • resonance • articulation • vocal modulation and variation <p>The voice should support the meaning of the poem and maintain clarity throughout the performance.</p>	<p>Does the performance successfully convey the mood and atmosphere of the poem?</p> <p>Judges will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • emotional connection to the poem • consistency of tone • overall impact of the performance • awareness of the audience <p>The performance should communicate the emotional and imaginative world of the poem in a compelling and authentic way.</p>

14. Judge Panel

The judging panel consists of experienced educators and communication professionals.

- ✧ Josephine Carpenter
- ✧ Jennifer Wick
- ✧ Jessie Xinxiao Wu

15. Awards

Each category will include the following awards:

- ✧ Champion
- ✧ First Runner-up
- ✧ Second Runner-up



Additional recognition awards may include:

- ✧ Best Interpretation
 - ✧ Most Expressive Performance
 - ✧ Outstanding Original Poem
- All participants may receive certificates of participation.

Development Opportunities:

- ✧ Selected participants may be invited to attend a specialised poetry and communication workshop, designed to further develop their expressive and interpretative skills.

16. Poetry and Literature Resources in New Zealand

English Teachers Association of New Zealand

<https://nzate.org.nz/>

National Library of New Zealand

<https://natlib.govt.nz/>

Motif Poetry

<https://www.motifpoetry.co.nz/>

New Zealand Poetry Society

<https://www.poetrysociety.org.nz/>

You are most welcome to contact us at cubee@group@gmail.com if you have any questions.

Good Luck!