

POETS: SEE RULES AND REGULATIONS

I. POEMS & PERFORMANCE

- 1) Poems can be on any subject and in any style.
- 2) Each poet must perform work that s/he has created.
- 3) No props.

Sampling

It is acceptable for a poet to incorporate, imitate, or otherwise "signify on" the words, lyrics, or tune of someone else (commonly called "sampling" in his own work. If he is only riffing off another's words, he should expect only healthy controversy; if on the other hand, he is ripping off their words, he should expect scornful contumely.

The No Repeat Rule

A poem may be used once during the preliminary and semifinal rounds and once again on the night of the finals (in either the team finals or individual finals, but not both).

The Three-Minute Rule

No performance should last longer than three minutes. The time begins when the performance begins, which may well be before the first utterance is made. A poet is certainly allowed several full seconds to adjust the microphone and get settled & ready, but as soon as s/he makes a connection with the audience ("Hey look, she's been standing there for 10 seconds and hasn't even moved"), the timekeeper can start the clock. The poet does not have an unlimited amount of "mime time." Poets with ambiguous beginnings & endings to their performances should seek out the timekeeper at each venue to settle on a starting & ending time. After three minutes, there is a 10-second grace period (up to and including 3:10.00). Starting at 3:10.01, a penalty is automatically deducted from each poet's overall score according to the following schedule:

3:10 and under no penalty
3:10.01 - 3:20 --0.5
3:20.01 - 3:30 --1.0
3:30.01 - 3:40 --1.5
3:40.01 - 3:50 --2.0
and so on [-0.5 for every 10 seconds over 3:10]

The announcement of the time penalty and its consequent deduction will be made by the emcee or scorekeeper after all the judges have reported their scores. The judges should not even be told that a poet went overtime until it is too late for them to adjust their scores.

II. TEAMS & INDIVIDUALS

Team Eligibility

Teams must be chosen from an ongoing slam or reading series open to all poets regardless of age, sex, race, ability, appearance, or sexual orientation. All certified/registered venues are expected to uphold the Equal Opportunity Statement. Team members must be chosen through some form of competition; how that competition is structured is up to the local venue or SlamMaster so long as anyone who considers him/herself to be a part of the community fielding the slam team has the competitive opportunity to join it.

III. JUDGING & SCORING

Judging

All efforts shall be made to select five judges (volunteers from the audience) who will be fair. Once chosen, the judges will:

- 1) be given a set of printed instructions on how to judge a poetry slam
- 2) have a private, verbal crash course by the emcee or house manager on the do's and don'ts of poetry slam judging (where they can ask questions)
- 3) hear the standardized Official Emcee Spiel which, among other things, will apprise the audience of their own responsibilities as well as remind the judges of theirs.

Having heard, read, or otherwise experienced these three sets of instructions, a judge cannot be challenged over a score. Complaints, problems, and/or disagreements regarding the impartiality of the judges should be brought privately to the attention of the emcee or house manager BEFORE the bout begins. Having heard and understood the complaint, the house manager or emcee will then make a decision (also privately) that cannot be further challenged

Scoring

The judges will give each poem a score from 0 to 10, with 10 being the highest or "perfect" score. They will be encouraged to use one decimal place in order to preclude the likelihood of a tie. Each poem will get five scores. The high and the low scores will be dropped and the remaining three scores will be added together.

IV. OFFICIALS

Emcees

The emcee will announce to the audience each poet's name and the team he is from. He will also require that all judges hold their scores up at the same time and that no judge changes his score after it is up. He is expected to move the show along quickly and keep the audience engaged and interested in the competition. Since she must be completely impartial, any witty banter directed at individual poets, poems, teams, or scores is inappropriate. Even genuine enthusiasm has to be carefully directed. The safest thing to do is encourage the audience to express their own opinions.

V. DEFINITIONS

Primary Author(s): Those writers/performers whose contributions to a particular group piece are so fundamental that they have at least as much of a right as any other writer/performer of the piece to claim ownership of it at any time. Primary authors must perform their pieces; if a writer/performer is watching other members of his team perform a group piece, then any contributions s/he might have made to it must not be significant enough to constitute primary authorship.

Bout: a competition between two or more teams.

Round: a complete set of bouts in which every team that is still eligible to compete does so. Eligibility to compete in successive rounds may be contingent upon success in earlier rounds.

Order: the schematic that determines the order in which teams will read. x

Prop: an object or article of clothing introduced into a performance with the effect of enhancing, illustrating, underscoring, or otherwise augmenting the words of the poem.

Rotation: when each team's first poet has read in a bout, the first rotation is over. There are as many rotations in a bout as there are poets on a team.

For more information visit www.poetryslam.com

Bull City Slam Team Selection Process (subject to change)

Poets become eligible for the Durham - Bull City Slam team by competing in the Jambalaya Soul Slam throughout the year. We typically begin in September (2007 we are beginning in August) and the final team is selected in April of the following year.

Jambalaya Soul Slam is held the last Friday of every month at the Hayti Heritage Center, Durham, NC located at 804 Old Fayetteville Street, Durham, NC 27701.

Slams are FREE for participating poets. Slams are open to the public, have an open sign up, and are not censored.

Winners of individual slams automatically advance to finals held in April. In addition to the winners of individual slams, we also include the poets with the top cumulative scores from previous slams for a total of twelve (12) competing poets.

4 team members are selected through competition. The four highest scoring poets make the team. If a team member needs to be replaced for any reason, we select the next highest scoring poet from finals.

Slams follow the rules and regulations listed below.

Team Commitments

Please be aware, this is a major commitment of your time. You will be required to participate in team practices at least once a week. Time must also be spent writing and rehearsing away from practice; there must be contact with other teammates for collaborations, and voluntary participation in team fundraising events over the summer. The Foundation will make team arrangements for regional and national competition, but YOU must be dedicated to the team. Also, be aware of the time spent away from family, work, and other responsibilities during competition regionally and nationally.