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National Endowment for the Arts and
Poetry Foundation

How to film a POL recitation

Filming requirements:

- Film with a horizontal orientation.
- Face the camera so it captures your head to mid-torso (medium shot).
- Each recitation should be filmed in one single shot from one static angle.
- The sound and picture must be clear.
- Videos cannot be edited. Do not add music, graphics, titles, virtual backgrounds, or computer animation.
- Use of professional recording studios is prohibited.
- For video submission contests, each recitation requires its own separate video.

Tips:

- Stand in front of a neutral background, if possible. Try to avoid wearing clothing in similar colors to the background.
- Do not place light sources behind you to avoid being backlit.
- Students may look directly into the camera, at a fixed spot, or at an imagined audience.
- Make sure you are the only visible and audible person in the video.
- Use a microphone, if possible. If the microphone is on the camera, position the camera close to you.
- Start recording a few seconds before the recitation and stop recording a few seconds after the end.
- For video submission contests, check with the contest organizer if there are file size limits to videos and if there is a preferred naming convention to save your videos.
- Examples of student filmed POL recitations can be found on the [POL YouTube page](#).

Reminder – Recitation Requirements:

- Students must begin by stating the title of the poem and the poet's name, and the translator, if applicable.
- A student's own editorial comments before or after the poem are not allowed.
- Poems must be recited from memory.
- For more details regarding the evaluation criteria, please consult the Teacher's Guide.

Accessibility:

- Please refer to the National Endowment for the Arts' guide [Resources to Help Ensure Accessibility of Your Virtual Events for People with Disabilities](#).
- Review [POL Accessibility Checklist – Venue & Event Promotion](#) for planning recommendations for captioning and sign language interpreter vendors, alternate formats of materials, and communication of access accommodations. Reach out to participating schools for the Deaf and Blind prior to event planning to inquire about preferences.
- Check the compatibility of your virtual platform for screen-reading software and captioning capabilities (do not rely on auto-generated captions and plan to work with a third-party). Avoid using only the chat feature for essential information that will not be said aloud. Reach out to accessibility@arts.gov for guidance.



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- Set communication rules at the start, speak slowly, and introduce yourself before speaking, which is also helpful for captioners and interpreters.
- Research audio description vendors for live streamed competitions, in particular for participating schools for the Blind.
- If an access accommodation is requested by a judge or a teacher who will be in a breakout room, make sure the captioner or interpreter is directly assigned to the requester.

To request accommodations, please contact your contest organizer or [POL state coordinator](#).