

Poetry Out Loud

Poetry Out Loud (POL) is a national competition for high school students created by the [National Endowment for the Arts](#) and the [Poetry Foundation](#) and facilitated locally by the [Vermont Arts Council](#). The program provides pathways for students to explore, memorize, and recite great works of poetry.

Participation in Poetry Out Loud begins at the classroom level around the country. Teachers engage students through poetry and performance instruction and organize contests involving one class or a whole school. Winners advance to the state finals, and ultimately to the national finals in Washington, D.C.



Proficiency-based Learning

How does Poetry Out Loud connect to the proficiency-based learning movement happening in Vermont schools? Poetry Out Loud has partnered with the [Vermont Agency of Education](#) to identify several ways that our work can broadly support proficiency-based learning.

Poetry Out Loud targets key [English Language Arts proficiencies](#), which are also enshrined in the [Common Core State Standards](#). These two groups of learning goals are deeply entwined, but in brief, Poetry Out Loud helps students work on attaining proficiency or even mastery of English Language Arts (ELA) skills.

- These ELA skills include, but are not limited to, “Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate,” “Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings,” “Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience,” and “Write ... to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.”
- While Poetry Out Loud is traditionally an activity for the whole class, students not in those classes could choose to do Poetry Out Loud independently with support from a teacher or qualified community member.
- Done in class or independently, Poetry Out Loud could be part of a student’s personalized learning plan, helping them work towards mastering certain skills and/or begin to build those skills.



Transferable Skills

Poetry Out Loud also allows students to work towards proficiency in the “transferable skills,” a set of skills and behaviors that cut across the subject areas and set students up for career, college, and life success. Some [sample transferable skills](#) targeted by Poetry Out Loud activities include, but are not limited to, “Clear and Effective Communication,” “Self-Direction,” and “Informed and Integrative Thinking.”