

# POETRY WRITING – FOREIGN LANGUAGE

## University of Memphis Language Fair 2026

### i GUIDELINES

- Students will submit an **original** work of poetry in the target language prior to the day of the Fair to be judged.
- Format: Submissions **must not exceed the following lengths** (double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt. font., 1" margins):
  - Level I and II – no more than one page.
  - Level III-IV – no more than 1.5 pages.
  - For language-specific requirements, please see [memphis.edu/fair/](http://memphis.edu/fair/).
- All work must be done solely by the student.
- The use of dictionaries is permitted, though online translation and the use of A.I. tools is not.
- Submissions will be accepted starting December 1st and will close on February 2nd. All work is to be submitted via the online registration form at [www.memphis.edu/fair/](http://www.memphis.edu/fair/).
- All submissions must be submitted together in **one PDF or Word file per level** at the time of registration.
- The files should be named in this manner: a submission from French 3 at School X would be named "SchoolXFrenchPoetryWritingLevel3.pdf" or "SchoolXFrenchPoetryWritingLevel3.docx".
- Each student submission must include the following information:
  - Student Name
  - School
  - Teacher
  - Language
  - Level (I, II, III, IV)
- Poems that have won prizes in previous years may not be re-submitted.
- Only second language learners may participate in this event. Native/heritage speakers of the target language and native/heritage speakers of any cognate languages may NOT participate. However, they may qualify to participate in the Native/Heritage Speaker Poetry Writing event.
  - Native Speaker** – the majority of formal education is in the target language
  - Heritage Speaker/Learner** – the majority of formal education is in English, but the target language is commonly used for communication in the home
  - Second Language Learner** – little or no experience with the target language outside of formal education
  - Cognate languages** are ones that closely related to the language being tested, such as Portuguese speakers in Spanish contests. Speakers of cognate languages are excluded from the vocabulary quiz in the name of fairness and may not participate in this event.

### i JUDGING

CRITERIA	OUTSTANDING (3)	NOTEWORTHY (2)	INADEQUATE (1)
Language Task	Language is used <b>artistically</b> and in a <b>unique</b> manner. Ideas, rhetorical devices, and figurative images are clear, creative, and elaborate.	Language is used <b>artistically</b> , but not necessarily in a unique manner. Ideas, rhetorical devices, and figurative images are sometimes <b>unclear</b> .	Language is <b>not used artistically</b> , or in a unique manner. Ideas, rhetorical devices, and figurative images are <b>unclear</b> .
Vocabulary	Vocabulary range is <b>satisfactory</b> and appropriate to level expectations. Mistakes rarely obscure meaning. No or few spelling mistakes may be present.	Vocabulary is <b>generally satisfactory</b> but may only be somewhat appropriate to level expectations. There may be mistakes in spelling that obscure meaning.	Vocabulary is <b>inadequate, limited</b> , and below level-appropriate expectations. There are frequent spelling mistakes that obscure meaning.
Language Control	There is <b>satisfactory control</b> of level-appropriate grammar. Very few or no mistakes that do not obscure meaning.	There is <b>general control</b> of level-appropriate grammar. Mistakes rarely obscure meaning. English sentence structures might be used.	There is <b>minimal or no control</b> of level-appropriate grammar with frequent mistakes. Mistakes generally obscure meaning. English sentence structures are frequently used.

Students of **Japanese** will be able to submit Haiku verse. For further information on the Japanese portion of the poetry-writing contest, please contact Shinobu Watanabe ([swatanab@memphis.edu](mailto:swatanab@memphis.edu)).

If teachers have any questions, please contact [ffair@memphis.edu](mailto:ffair@memphis.edu).