NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS, INC.
YOUTH POETRY CONTEST 2025

PLANT AMERICA FOR THE NEXT 100 YEARS

Excite and encourage youth to express and explore their creative thoughts through different types of poetry. NGC's Poetry Contest enables youth to embrace their creativity through the art of writing. This year's theme - "Plant America for the Next 100 Years."

Eligibility and Categories

Youth in grades K-12 compete by grade-level in one of three categories: General Education, Special Education or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).

Submissions and Deadlines

All poems are submitted to a local garden club affiliated with National Garden Clubs, Inc. Local clubs send their winning poems (1 per grade-level in each category) to their State by the published State deadline. State winning poems are sent to their Region Contest by 2/1/2026. Region winners are sent to the National Contest by 3/1/2026. National winning poems are announced in May 2026, and published online in a free digital poetry booklet.

🌐 **Complete Guidelines**
gardenclub.org/poetry-contest

PLANT AMERICA
FOR THE NEXT 100 YEARS

PLANT AMERICA
National Garden Clubs

Guidelines

- Include name, address, age, grade, school, sponsoring local garden club and state garden club of the poet on the back of entry. (Child privacy is important to NGC, and thus, published winning national poems will only identify the poet's first name, last name initial, local garden club and state.)
- Poet's family does not have to be a member of the local sponsoring garden club.
- Poems should be no more than 24 lines (including title) with a max of 42 letters/spaces per line in order to fit on single page of the booklet.
- Poems do not have to rhyme. They may be traditional verse, acrostics, blank verse, cinquains, diamond poems, limerick, or haiku.
- When choosing a poem title, please be creative and incorporate the theme: "Plant America for the Next 100 Years." However, the theme should not be used as the title to any poetry. When judging, the title is worth 10 points.
- Poets should be strongly encouraged to proofread their work for grammatical and spelling errors.
- All entries become the property of National Garden Clubs, Inc.
- Sending Region winning entries to NGC: All Region winning entries must be typed, titled, and sent to the National Chairperson (James Pavelka, jamespavelka@comcast.net) in Word format via email, and the original hard copy mailed for judging.
- National winners will be announced at the NGC 2026 National Convention and the local garden club contact person will be contacted regarding any winning entry.

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Eligibility, Categories and Judging Criteria

- Youth in grades K-12 compete by grade-level in one of three categories: General Education, Special Education or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL).
- Scale of Points: Title 10%, Content 40%, Creativity 30%,
  Style 20%. Total 100%

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