



# THE 2010 HAWAII EDUCATION ASSOCIATION FREE-VERSE POEM COMPETITION

For Students in Grades 1 through 12

## Application and Information at [www.heaed.com](http://www.heaed.com).

1. This contest is open to **ALL** students enrolled in public schools. Each student is invited to submit one free-verse poem to his/her teacher, who will select **no more than three per grade level, per class period** to send to HEA.
2. Prizes will be awarded as follows:  
Grades 1-3 \$30 (first), \$25 (second), \$20 (third), and four \$10 (Honorable Mention) prizes  
Grades 4-6 \$30 (first), \$25 (second), \$20 (third), and four \$10 (Honorable Mention) prizes  
Grades 7-8 \$35 (first), \$30 (second), \$25 (third), and four \$10 (Honorable Mention) prizes  
Grades 9-12 \$50 (first), \$45 (second), \$40 (third), and four \$10 (Honorable Mention) prizes

Each winner and his/her teacher will be presented with two complimentary copies of the HEA publication of all winning entries, *Write On, HEA! 2010*.

### 3. FORMAT

- a. The free-verse poem must be **ORIGINAL** and written during the 2009-2010 school year. It should be related to Hawaii and be within the scope of the writer's experience.
  - b. The free-verse poem shall follow the instructions on the HEA handout "You Can Write a Free-Verse Poem." Free verse is poetry that has no prescribed metrical pattern. It may be rhymed or unrhymed. Poems from **GRADES 1 THROUGH 8** may have up to twelve lines. Poems from **GRADES 9 THROUGH 12** may have up to twenty lines.
  - c. The free-verse poem must be typed and should be titled.
  - d. The entrant's name should **NOT** appear on the page with the free-verse poem. **ONLY THE FULL TITLE SHOULD BE STATED AT THE TOP OF THE PAGE WITH THE POEM.**
  - e. A **COVER FORM**, giving HEA the right to publish the entry if it is a winner, shall be attached to the poem. The form accompanies these rules. Both the form and the rules may be duplicated.
4. Entries will be scored, using the attached "HEA Guidelines for Judging a Free-Verse Poem, Revised 11/91." Judges look for poems that readers will remember with pleasure and respect.
  5. **DEADLINE: ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY 12:00 NOON ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2010.**
  6. All entries from a school may be sent in one package but must be stapled separately by teacher, by grade level, and--if teacher has more than one class--by class period.

Send your entries to:                      Free-Verse Poem Contest Chairman  
    Hawaii Education Association  
    1953 South Beretania Street, Suite 3C  
    Honolulu, HI 96826

**Note:** We invite students to submit line drawings with their writing, but drawings will **NOT** be part of the judges' evaluation. Winners' drawings may be published in *Write On, HEA! 2010*.

## H.E.A. GUIDELINES FOR JUDGING A FREE-VERSE POEM

HEA definition of a Free-Verse Poem:

**FREE VERSE IS POETRY THAT HAS NO PRESCRIBED METRICAL PATTERN.** It may be rhymed or unrhymed, and it should use imagery, metaphor, and other poetic devices. It should have a title.

	Low				High
	1	2	3	4	5
<p><u>IDEA</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shows creativity/originality</li> <li>- Arouses distinct emotions</li> <li>- Suggests specific insights</li> </ul> <p><u>WORDING</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Employs clear, vivid, and precise language</li> <li>- Employs language to create imagery, arouse emotions, and stimulate thought</li> </ul> <p><u>MECHANICS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Employs prescribed format</li> <li>- Employs correct spelling except for artistic effect</li> </ul>					

## YOU CAN WRITE A FREE - VERSE POEM

The Hawaii Education Association Writing Contest will offer a category of free-verse poetry. This category will be open to all grades. As in the past, there will be four separate competition levels: Grades 1-3, Grades 4-6, Grades 7-8, and Grades 9-12.

### What is free verse?

Free verse is poetry that is *free* of metrical restrictions, i.e., it doesn't have a systematic arrangement of measured rhythm. It may be rhymed or unrhymed, and it should use imagery, metaphor, and other poetic devices. Its only requirement is that it have a rhythm and cadence that is pleasing to the ear. It should have a title. An example of free verse follows.

### FORECAST

**Eventually  
I will have written  
my philosophy in poems  
for everyone to see.  
I don't want to finish,  
knowing as my fingers lose their grip  
on the wheel of life,  
unable to steer it longer,  
I'll say,  
"But this is not the way I've lived."  
Lies.  
All lies.**

### How does one write a free-verse poem?

There are many ways to write a poem, but you may want to try a simple method used by many poets.

1. Choose a subject and write a paragraph or two about it. Use freewriting or brainstorming techniques, and toss in as many of the five senses (sight, sound, smell, feel, taste) as you can in writing on the topic. At this point, the ideas don't even have to make sense. "Forecast," for example, might have started out like this:

**I think I'd like to write my philosophy of life in poetic form. That would be different. It could go on all my life, adding this and that. I probably won't have the energy to finish it. But what will I have when I complete it, if I do finish it? Maybe the whole effort won't amount to anything. Maybe it will all be lies.**



**It little profits that an idle king,  
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,  
Matched with an aged wife, I mete and dole  
Unequal laws unto a savage race,  
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.  
I cannot rest from travel; I will drink  
Life to the lees. All times I have enjoyed  
Greatly, have suffered greatly, both with those  
That loved me, and alone; on shore, and when  
Through scudding drifts the rainy Hyades  
Vest the dim sea. I am become a name; . . .**

Is the line count really that important?

Yes. You may write three quatrains, but do not write three quatrains and a couplet. That could be a Shakespearean sonnet, particularly if it is written in iambic pentameter. Here is one by the master himself:

**That time of year thou mayst in me behold  
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang  
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,  
Bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang.  
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day  
As after sunset fadeth in the west,  
Which by and by black night doth take away,  
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.  
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,  
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie  
As the deathbed whereon it must expire,  
Consumed with that which it was nourished by.  
    This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more strong.  
    To love that well which thou must leave ere long.**

Those are the rules. Send us your poems, and good luck to all of you.

Suggested Reference: Sound and Sense--An Introduction to Poetry, Laurence Perrine.