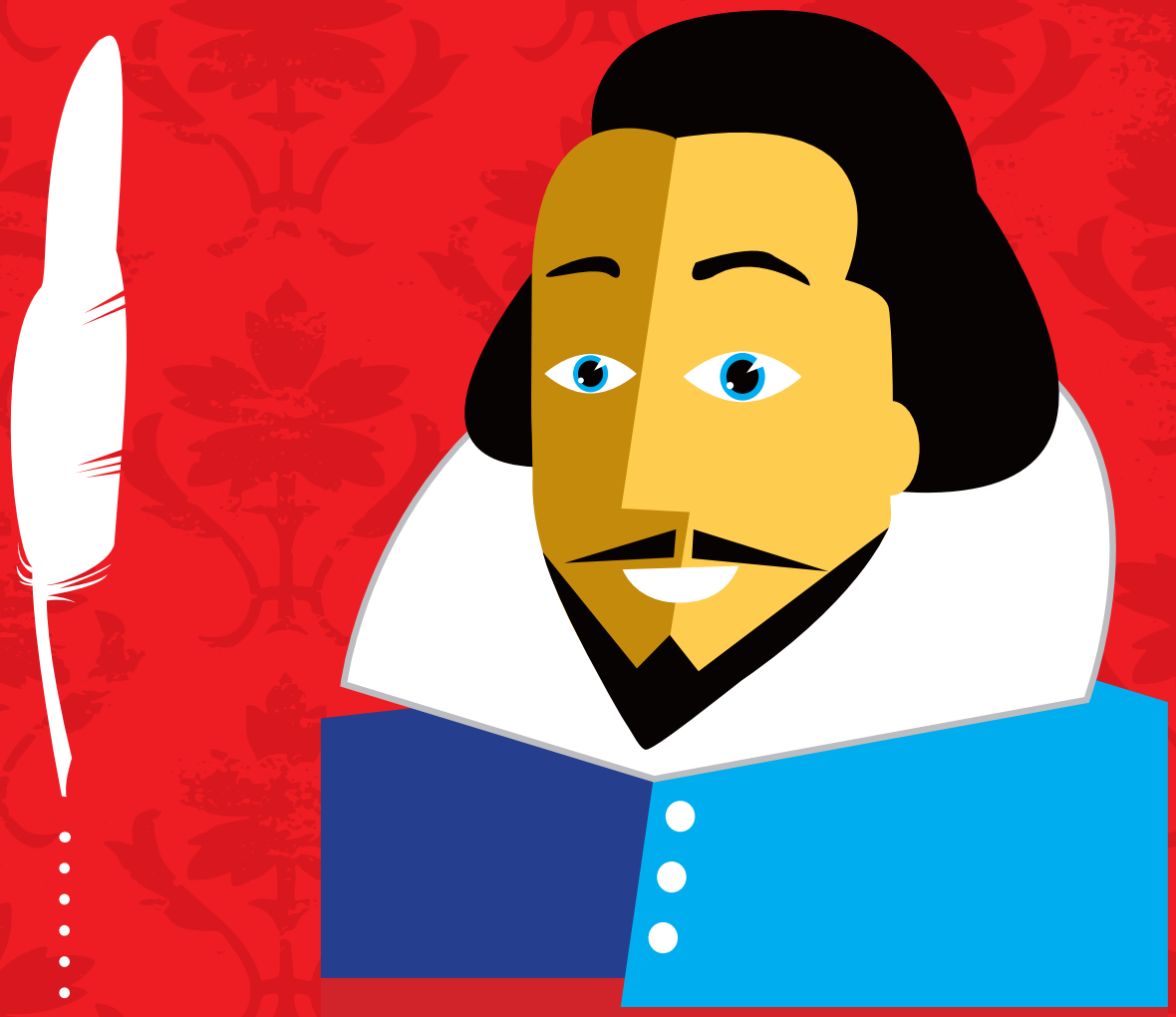
The English-Speaking Union NATIONAL SHAKESPEARE COMPETITION 2019

Branch Handbook



The English-Speaking Union
English in Action
www.esuus.org

English in Action

The English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition

2018 Branch Coordinator Handbook

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Fall 2018

Dear ESU Shakespeare Coordinators,

The English-Speaking Union is pleased to invite you to participate in the 36th annual **English-Speaking Union (ESU) National Shakespeare Competition**!

Every year this performance-based education program unites high school students and teachers with ESU Branches nationwide, reaching more than 20,000 teenagers in over 1,000 schools across the United States. Approximately sixty branches participate in the program annually, many for more than 30 years.

The **ESU National Shakespeare Competition** helps teachers make Shakespeare's work come alive. Students nationwide read, analyze, perform and recite Shakespearean monologues and sonnets in three qualifying stages: school, ESU Branch, and national. In a competitive, yet friendly atmosphere, students engage with material that transcends past and present, distance and differences. They practice essential skills, such as critical thinking and close reading. Students connect with like-minded peers and increase their self-confidence. In its thirty-six year history, the ESU National Shakespeare Competition has empowered nearly 350,000 students to create and convey their own unique perspectives to a live audience.

This handbook includes everything you need to hold a competition at your local ESU Branch. In it you will find links to all necessary resources, including all necessary online registration forms.

Please note the following:

- All students, regardless of past participation, are eligible to participate in both the Branch and National Competitions, including previous Branch and National Winners.
- Students at all levels (school, ESU Branch, national) are required to select their monologue from the new *2019 Monologue Packet* . The packet has been updated for the 2018-2019 season and now includes 250 monologues from more than 120 characters in all 38 plays. Students who edit these monologues or perform monologues other than those listed in the packet will be disqualified.
- There is a fee of $75 per school to participate in the 2018-19 ESU National Shakespeare Competition. Included in this fee is a School Membership with the ESU, discounts on TLab programs, ESU National Shakespeare Competition publicity materials and access to special webinars.
- National Semi-Finalists will submit their Travel Reimbursement Form directly to ESU National. ESU National will reimburse the purchaser the cost of transportation. If the cost exceeds $350, ESU National will remit the reimbursement in full directly to the purchaser and invoice the ESU Branch for the difference.
- National Semi-Finalists traveling to New York City with a chaperone will not be required to stay overnight in the care of ESU chaperones the night prior to the competition. Those who choose not to stay in the care of the ESU will be responsible for the full cost of their chosen accommodation.

We look forward to partnering with you to produce another successful ESU National Shakespeare Competition.

Best regards,

Carol Losos
Director of Education
The English-Speaking Union
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Program Overview

What is the Competition?

The English-Speaking Union (ESU) National Shakespeare Competition is a nationwide competition in which high school students read, analyze, perform and recite Shakespearean monologues and sonnets in three qualifying stages: school, ESU branch, and national.

Competition History

The ESU National Shakespeare Competition began thirty-six years ago with 500 students in New York City. Now the competition involves approximately sixty ESU Branch communities nationwide. Thousands of high school students and their teachers, from Honolulu to Boston, participate in the program each year. Over the competition's history, nearly 355,000 young people of all backgrounds have rediscovered Shakespeare's writings and learned to express his words with understanding, feeling and clarity.

The ESU National Shakespeare Competition has been recognized by the Globe Center (USA), the Children's Theatre Foundation of America, and the American Academy of Achievement. Judges for the competition have included: Andre Braugher, Kate Burton, Maurice Charney, Blythe Danner, Barry Edelstein, Lisa Gay Hamilton, Helen Hayes, Edward Herrmann, Dana Ivey, Peter Francis James, Kristin Linklater, Peter MacNicol, Jesse L. Martin, Cynthia Nixon, Tina Packer, Annie Parisse, Sarah Jessica Parker, Nancy Piccione, Phylicia Rashad, Christopher Reeve, Louis Scheeder, Carole Shelley, Jean Simmons, Richard Thomas, Courtney B. Vance, Sam Waterston, Dianne Wiest, Gene Wilder, and Irene Worth.

Competition Structure: School → Branch → National

The program begins in the classroom as an integral component of a Common Core-aligned ELA, Humanities and/or Theater curriculum, affording teachers the opportunity to use performance as a learning tool. Then, a school-wide competition is held in the Fall/Winter semester, in which students perform a monologue from one of Shakespeare's plays. The School Competition Winner advances to the ESU Branch (Community) Competition in the winter. There, the student performs their monologue *and* one of Shakespeare's sonnets. The Branch Competition Winner advances to the National Competition held in New York City in the spring; all of the winners perform a monologue and a sonnet at Lincoln Center in front of their fellow contestants from across the country. Seven to ten of those contestants are chosen for the final round of the competition. The finalists perform their selections along with a cold reading of a monologue later in the day for another panel of judges.

Awards

Branch Awards: Each Branch Winner receives the opportunity to travel to New York City to compete and perform on stage in New York City alongside their peers from across the country. Additional prizes at this level vary by branch. Some branches also provide awards for the winners' teachers.

National Awards: The winners of the ESU National Shakespeare Competition receive scholarships and cash awards. Exact prizes to be determined. In 2018, the prizes were:

1st place: A scholarship to the Young Actor's Summer School at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London.

2nd place: A scholarship to the American Shakespeare Center's Theatre Camp in Staunton, VA.

3rd place: $500

National Competition Dates

The National Competition usually takes place in New York City on the Monday close to Shakespeare's birthday. **This year the program is tentatively scheduled from Sunday, April 29 to Monday, April 30, 2019.** National Semi-Finalists must arrive in New York City no later than the afternoon of Sunday, April 29, and will perform on Monday, April 30. They are expected to fully participate in all ESU-organized events throughout the competition.

Conditions of ESU Branch Participation

In order for a branch to participate in The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition, it must meet the criteria listed below. Only those schools whose competitions meet these criteria will be eligible to send contestants to the National Competition.

Branch Eligibility

- The branch must meet all the national deadlines and pay the Branch Participation Fee of $600.
- The competition must be open to all high schools in the area the branch targets for the program.
- A minimum of six schools must each agree to hold a school competition from which a winner will be selected to advance to the Branch Competition. (Exceptions may be made for smaller communities, but requests must be approved by the ESU National Headquarters.)
- All stages of the competition must be judged by a panel of at least three individuals familiar with Shakespeare's works. We also recommend that a branch representative be present during the judges' deliberations.
- Branches must provide a prompter (school or branch volunteer) during the competition. See Instructions for Prompters (pg. 15) for more information.
- Branches are required to share written evaluations with the students and their teachers.

All schools in the competition must meet the following criteria. The branch should ensure that the schools participating are eligible for the program.

School/Home School Eligibility

- The school must register with the ESU via the *School Participation Form*.
  - Includes $75 School Registration Fee.
- The School Competition must be open to all students enrolled in the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades or the equivalent for home school students.
- The School Competition must involve a minimum of three students. Home school students must also advance from a competition of three or more students.
- School and home school competitions must be judged by a panel of at least three individuals familiar with Shakespeare's works.

The branch should ensure that all students participating in the competition meet the following criteria.

Contestant Eligibility

- Contestants must be enrolled in the 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade or the equivalent for home school students.
- Contestants *may not* act for pay on television, the stage, or in film during the 2018-2019 school year.
- Contestants should be available to represent their school at the National Competition. If, for any reason, the Branch Winner is unable to participate, the branch should send the First Runner-Up.
- Previous School and/or Branch Winners may participate each year they are eligible (regardless of results in past competitions). Schools and/or branches may not limit contestant participation except for the above mentioned eligibility requirements.

Selection Eligibility: Monologue & Sonnet

The selections that your contestants perform must meet the following criteria. The Branch Coordinator should check that contestants' selections meet these guidelines.

Students must select their monologues from the *2019 Monologue Packet*, provided by the ESU. The packet has been updated for the 2018-2019 season and now includes 250 monologues from more than 120 characters in all 38 plays. The selections offer a variety of monologues, of 15 to 22 lines a piece; students may select any monologue, regardless of gender. Selections have been taken from the Folger Digital Texts resource (folgerdigitaltexts.org).

No alterations may be made to the monologues. They must be performed as written in the packet.

Sonnets must come from Shakespeare's 154 sonnet cycle. These are all listed in the *2019 Sonnet Packet* and are available at folgerdigitaltexts.org. Students must perform the complete sonnet; **no alterations are allowed.**

Branch Competition Rules

The branch must adhere to the following rules at their competition.

- In addition to their monologue, each contestant must select, memorize and perform one sonnet.
- Contestants may perform their pieces (monologue and sonnet) in whatever order they prefer.
- Contestants' order of performance should be determined by lot.
- Contestants should introduce themselves by name *only*.
    - They should **not** state where they are from or which school they attend.
- Contestants should identify their selections before they begin their performance.
- Contestants *may not* wear costumes or use props of any kind (including chairs, jewelry, items of clothing, and hair/hair clips). The use of props is grounds for immediate disqualification.
- Contestants should speak naturally in their own voice (rather than affect a British accent).
- Contestants are expected to memorize their pieces. If necessary, however, prompting is allowed.

Note on Cold Readings

Branch Competition (optional): Some ESU branches with a large number of contestants also include a cold reading of a monologue in the final round of their Branch Competition. Cold reading options are chosen by ESU branch representatives.

National Competition: National Finalists will perform a monologue, sonnet and a cold reading of a monologue. Cold reading options are chosen by ESU Education staff and assigned at random.

If you and your branch are prepared to participate in the 2019 program, please complete the 2019 *Branch Participation Form*.
Please complete this form by Friday, September 14, 2018.

ESU Branch Deadlines

- **September 14**: *Branch Participation Form* due.
    - Branch Participation Fee of $600 due. Payment may be made by credit card within the online form, or via check (made payable to The English-Speaking Union of the United States).
    - Branches conduct outreach to recruit new and returning schools to the 2018-2019 competition cycle.
- **October 3 - February 25**: *School Participation Form* and *School Winner Entry Forms* to be completed by participating schools and submitted online. ESU National will forward these forms to the Branch Coordinator.
- **March 6**: deadline to hold your Branch Competition.
    - *As soon as your competition has concluded*, share the *2019 Branch Winner Information Packet* (coming soon) with the Branch Winner, including the *2019 Travel Reimbursement Form* if applicable.
        - Branch Winner should contact Annelise Nussbacher (anussbacher@esuus.org) immediately after winning the competition.
- **March 11**: *2019 Travel and Accommodation Arrangements Form* (coming soon) due.
    - **Note: The National Competition dates are not yet finalized. Contestant should not book travel until dates are finalized - you will be notified by ESU National.**
    - Submitted by the Branch Winner, but please ensure that they are aware of this deadline.
    - Contestants traveling with a parent/guardian, other family member or a teacher (designated chaperones) will ***not*** be required to stay in accommodation with the ESU.
        - **New (as of 2019)**: Those contestants who choose not to stay in the care of the ESU will be responsible for the full cost of their chosen accommodation.
    - Contestants will stay with ESU staff chaperones if they are traveling without a chaperone (parent/guardian, family member over the age of 18 or a teacher).
- **April 15**: Deadline for families to request reimbursement for contestant transportation to New York.
    - Contestant transportation is fully included as a part of the Branch First Prize.
    - Contestant will complete the *2019 Travel Reimbursement Form* and return it to ESU National.
    - ESU National will reimburse the full cost of transportation to the purchaser, and invoice the branch for any costs in excess of $350.
- **April 15**: Reserve passes (March 2019) to the ESU National Shakespeare Competition **tentatively scheduled for Monday, April 30.**
    - Two free passes for teachers per student.
    - One free pass per branch coordinator.
    - All other passes (families, guests, etc.) are $25.
    - Passes are **NOT** be available on the day of the competition. Please arrange for your pass **in advance**, and advise family members or guests of your contestant to do the same.

Funding & Partnering

Funding the Competition

The ESU National Shakespeare Competition is a relatively inexpensive program for your branch to run. Most branches fund this program through their branch treasury, member contributions and in-kind donations.

Common Competition Expenses

- Branch Fee ($600)
- Branch Winner Travel above $350
- Prizes
- Judges' Expenses
- Venue
- Printing/copying
- Food

Cost-Cutting Suggestions

- Begin with your own membership. Ask members if they are involved in or have contacts with organizations and businesses that can provide discounted or pro-bono goods and services.
- Ask your venue if they offer a nonprofit rate or will donate the space.
- Talk to judges and see if they will volunteer their services or take a reduced honorarium.
- Ask local businesses to donate prizes for the students and/or teachers. Try bookstores for Shakespeare volumes and memorabilia and theater companies for tickets and discounts to student classes or camps.
- Talk to new local eateries or catering companies. Ask them to donate food for the competition.
- Ask local printing/copying stores for a nonprofit rate or to donate the printing in exchange for an ad in the program.

Remember: All donations should be acknowledged in your Branch Competition program.

Partnering with Other Organizations

Your Branch Competition is the perfect opportunity for your branch to partner with other local organizations. Partnerships may potentially offset the cost of the competition through in-kind donations. Identify and contact organizations or businesses in your community who would be interested in this program. Many branches collaborate with local arts and academic organizations (including local Shakespeare and theater companies, colleges, universities, libraries and museums).

Suggested Areas of Partnership:

- Space (Venue)
- Judges
- Prizes
- Local Administration
- Staffing & Volunteers (Training)
- Publicity
- Outreach to Teachers/Schools
- Printing/Copying
- Food & Other Supplies

Partnering Events:

- Reception
- Meal (Brunch, Luncheon, Dinner)
- Teacher Workshop
- Student Workshop
- ESU Branch Meeting

Outreach to Teachers & Schools

Informing schools in your target area about the competition is essential. Email is the most convenient way to contact teachers and schools about the competition; email addresses for public schools and their teachers are easily accessible online.

Tips for Finding Teacher Contact Information (for Public Schools Only)

- Search the desired target area's Board of Education website and find a school directory.
- Identify any schools eligible for the competition and go to their individual websites.
- Search their school's online faculty directory to find email addresses for appropriate teachers (English and Drama departments as well as Speech and Debate coaches).
- Save these emails in a mass contact list.

Contact information for private, charter, parochial, and home schools may be more difficult to find. We recommend online directories like www.greatschools.org or www.privateschoolreview.com to find a list of schools in your target area. Once you have a list of eligible schools, follow the same tips as above. For home school groups, contact a home school organization(s) in your area and ask them to distribute information about the competition to their members.

We also recommend you gather email addresses for each of the eligible schools' principals and assistant or vice principals and inform them about the program and its benefits. Gaining support for the competition in these administrative offices is extremely advantageous for both the teachers in those schools and the branch itself. The *Teacher Handbook* includes a *Sample Memo to Teachers* for teachers to share with their principals and administrators to garner support for bringing the program to their schools.

Additional Information Sources

- Existing teacher contacts: ask current teachers to forward information about the ESU National Shakespeare Competition to colleagues and suggest contacts.
- Websites of local networks: educator organizations and unions, speech and debate associations (such as the National Speech and Debate Association), the National Council of Teachers of English, American Alliance for Theatre & Education, Educational Theatre Association, etc.
- State and Local/District Board of Education electronic bulletin board.
- Mailing/contact lists for any organization(s) with which your branch is partnering for the competition.
- Local graduate schools/universities (for alumni currently teaching high school).

Storing Contact Information

Create a master list of teacher contacts (electronic preferred). Include any teachers who reach out to you about the competition. You should record their name, school name and email. School and/or home mailing address and telephone number may also be added (if the information is available).

Email Etiquette

The Branch Coordinators are representatives of their local ESU Branch and The English-Speaking Union. Therefore, all correspondence between teachers and the branch should adhere to the following guidelines:

- The sender's "Branch Title," their local ESU Branch's name and "The English-Speaking Union" should be included at the bottom of each email.
- For mass email mailings, place all recipients in the "BCC" (blind carbon copy) section of the "To" field.
- The subject line of all emails should include "ESU National Shakespeare Competition."

We also strongly encourage the Branch Coordinators to use their branch's ESU email account for their correspondence with the teachers and schools rather than their personal email accounts. This allows for a smooth and constant connection between the teachers/schools and the branch throughout the years (no matter who is the Branch Coordinator for that year). Additionally, in the age of spam and hackers, teachers will delete messages from unknown addresses.

Consistent Outreach

Outreach to teachers and schools should not cease after your Branch Competition is complete. Stay in touch with teachers via email and in person throughout the year.

Here are some suggestions for keeping in touch with teachers:

- After the Branch Competition, send a thank-you email for participating in program.
- Hold a teacher reception to celebrate and recognize their support of the competition.
- Add to your branch's newsletter mailing list.
- Invite to branch events.
- Encourage them to become more involved in your ESU Branch and its programs.
- Send information on other ESU education programs, such as TLab study abroad opportunities.
- Send news and press releases from the National Competition.
- Send links to local press coverage of the National Competition.

Remember: Word-of-mouth is our best advertisement and outreach tool. Always encourage teachers to pass along relevant information about the ESU National Shakespeare Competition and the English-Speaking Union to interested colleagues.

Mailings to Teachers

1st Step: Recruiting and Signing Up Schools

This initial mailing should be sent to teachers/schools (preferably by email) in early fall and repeated several times prior to registration deadline.

Necessary Materials

- *Sample Memo to Teachers:* Introduces teachers to the competition and includes essential information about participation in both the School and Branch Competition (to be completed and sent by the branch.) If possible, include a date for the Branch Competition.
- *School Participation Form*: Registration form for schools to participate in the competition.
    - Includes $75 School Registration Fee.

Instructions

- Place the *Sample Memo to Teachers* in the body of an email.
    - You may update/edit this text if needed with information about your local Branch Competition.
- Include a link and instructions to complete the *School Participation Form* in the email.
- Keep in mind that students will be able to participate in the School and Branch Competitions *even if they have previously won a School and/or Branch Competition.*
- Email in a mass mailing to teachers and school administrators in your target area.

2nd Step: Soliciting Information on School Winners

This follow-up mailing should be sent (preferably by email) *only* to teachers/schools who have completed the *School Participation Form*.

Necessary Materials

- *School Winner Entry Form*: **Registration form for the School Winner** who will advance to the Branch Competition (to be completed by the School Coordinator and the School Winner).
- *Photo Release Form:* Permission form for participation in the Branch Competition (to be signed by the student and their parent and returned to the Branch Coordinator).

Instructions

- Write an email stating the details of your Branch Competition. Be sure to include the date, time, location (full address), and any other necessary details that the teacher and/or student may need.
    - Also post this information on your branch's website.
- Request any additional details that the branch may need from teachers for the Branch Competition.
- Include links and instructions to complete the *School Winner Entry Form* and the *Photo Release Form* in the email.

Remember: Send each mailing multiples times, and ask teachers to forward them to others.

Publicity Tips

Your Branch Competition is meant to be seen, heard, and enjoyed by your community. Publicize the event and generate positive visibility for your branch. Advertise to local schools and educators as well as your branch members. Celebrate and share students' achievements with all!

Publicity Outlets:

- Newspaper (Print and Online)
- Radio
- Social Media
- Television
- Newsletters (School/Community/Branch)
- Websites (School/Community/Branch)

Prior to the School Competitions

- Post information (local details and deadlines) on your ESU Branch page ASAP.
- Visit schools and talk about the program at school/department meetings.
- Attend teacher conferences in your local area. Distribute competition materials.
- Identify educator and arts organizations in your area. Encourage them to forward competition information to their teacher contacts.
- Encourage schools to post competition information on their website as well as in newsletters and school papers.

Prior to the Branch Competition

- Send a *Pre-Competition Press Release* (coming soon) to local media outlets (radio, newspaper, television, etc.).
- Post a reminder (with any relevant details) on your branch's website.
- Suggest schools announce their winner(s) on their school website, newsletter and social media.
- Ask the local Board of Education to include details of the Branch Competition on their website, newsletter, etc. Encourage them to announce the program at local meetings.
- Contact your local newspaper and/or radio and invite a reporter (usually in the Life/Style, Arts and City/Metro divisions) to attend the Branch Competition.

Publicity Etiquette:
Every contestant in your Branch Competition must sign a *Photo Release Form*. A parental signature is required for anyone under the age of 18. Without this release form, you may not publish or distribute any photos or videos of the contestants. You should distribute the *Photo Release Form* via email ahead of time. Before the start of your Branch Competition, remember to collect any remaining, completed photo release forms (if applicable).

Following the Branch Competition

- Send a *Post-Competition Press Release* (coming soon) and photos to local media outlets Highlight any stories unique to your Branch Competition.
- Post results, photos and videos of the Branch Competition to your ESU Branch page.
- Encourage members and participating students and teachers to post about the competition on social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram, etc.).
    - The official hashtag for this year is #ESUNSC2019 - please include it in all of your social media posts!
- Invite contestants to perform for members/donors at other ESU events.
- Encourage Branch Winner to perform their selections at other community events/locations (such as Shakespeare festivals, libraries, public spaces, etc.).
- Send any coverage, as well as photos and videos, to ESU National Headquarters.

Following the National Competition

- A *National Press Release* will be sent from ESU National Headquarters directly to the Branch Winner (National Semi-Finalist), their parent(s), teacher(s), Branch Coordinator and Branch President.
- Send the *National Press Release* about your National Semi-Finalist to local media outlets (radio, newspaper, television, etc.) Also send to the student's school, guardians, and any other interested local organizations.
- Post this announcement (and any photos) to your ESU Branch page.

Organizing the Branch Competition

Selecting a Date

The majority of Branch Competitions take place from January to early March (and must be held by March 6th). We recommend you hold your competition on a weekday afternoon (late enough for the contestants and their teachers to travel to the venue) or a weekend. Remember, it is winter, so have a snow/ice date.

When selecting a date, please be mindful of:

- School Breaks
- Holidays (religious and national)
- State and Standardized Testing Days (SAT, ACT, etc.)
- Teacher/Professional Development Days
- Competing Education Programs
- Other Community Events

If your **Branch Competition will have more than 25 contestants**, we recommend dividing the event up into multiple days. Qualifying round(s) are held on one day or on multiple days (depending on the number of contestants). From which, a pre-set number of contestants are selected to advance to the final round. There should be a separate set of judges for each round. The final round may take place at any time after the qualifying round(s) but must be held by March 6.

If you hold a small **Branch Competition with fewer than 10 contestants**, we recommend allowing the participating schools' School Competition First Runner-Up to enter your event. These additional contestants create a more diverse and well-rounded lineup, and ultimately add to the audience's enjoyment of the program.

Securing a Venue

Reserve a local theater, auditorium, library, school theater or other appropriate space. Use existing branch contacts within the community to find a venue or use the program to make connections with new organizations within the community. The ideal setting should have a raised platform or stage with thrust or proscenium seating. No sound system is required; contestants are expected to perform without amplification.

Inviting an Audience

The event should be open to the public. Having a public competition is beneficial for both the local community (who will enjoy the program) and the local ESU Branch (increases awareness of the program and support for the English-Speaking Union and its mission). If possible, please invite the following:

- All ESU Branch officers and members.
- Local Board of Education officials.
- Any prominent members of the community interested in the arts and/or education (arts reporters and critics, heads of arts organizations, professors of English and Drama, etc.).
- Contestants' families and friends.
- Contestants' teachers.
- Contestants' school communities (including school administrators, other teachers and fellow classmates).

Send a *Pre-Competition Press Release* to local media outlets to garner interest in your competition.

Remember: Use your Branch Competition as a hook to interest more students, teachers and schools in the program for next year; seeing the contestants onstage reciting Shakespeare engages future students and teachers. Create a target list of schools and home schools that the branch would like to participate in the program the following year. Invite those teachers, school administrators and other school officials to attend your Branch Competition and then have a branch member/representative speak about the program.

Staffing the Branch Competition

The Branch Competition is a wonderful example of the English-Speaking Union's mission in action. Therefore, we encourage the entire branch to be involved in the program. Send out information to all branch officers and members informing them about the competition and the different volunteer positions. Solicit your Shakespeare and TLab teachers and scholars to take on leadership roles as well.

Staff Positions

- **Branch Coordinator** (1): An active ESU Branch member familiar with the local education system or a current/retired teacher familiar with the ESU. This person acts as a liaison between the branch and the local teachers/schools, so good communication and computer skills are required. The coordinator is responsible for outreach to local teachers and schools and running the Branch Competition. The Branch Coordinator is also responsible for sending in the appropriate paperwork to ESU National Headquarters. We recommend that each Branch Coordinator have at least one Co-Coordinator.
    - ***Optional:*** **Branch Co-Coordinator(s)**: Other ESU Branch members or members of an affiliate organization partnering with the ESU for the competition. The Co-Coordinators are responsible for assisting the Branch Coordinator with all planning of the competition. Some branches decide to have a Shakespeare Committee (made up of ESU members) fill this role.
- **Master of Ceremonies** (at least 1): An ESU Branch officer or a prominent member of the community familiar with the ESU. The MC will narrate the Branch Competition to the audience (provide introductory remarks, introduce judges and announce the winners).
- **Judges** (at least 3, more if qualifying round(s) necessary): Judges should be professionals with expertise in Shakespeare studies, production or education. We recommend local members of the community (such as actors, directors, theater educators, professors and teachers). The ideal judging panel includes a mix of professionals.
- **Judges' Liaison** (1): This person should be familiar with the judges and the *Judge Handbook*. This role may be filled by the Branch Coordinator or one of the Co-Coordinators.
- **Photographer**: To take photos for your branch materials and publicity.
- **Videographer**: To record contestants' performances. Separate clips of each contestant's performance (rather than one long tape of the whole program) are recommended. For examples, see www.YouTube.com/EnglishSpeakingUnion.
- **Prompter** (1): Responsible for prompting the contestants during the Branch Competition. The prompter follows along with the text as the contestants recite their selections.
- **Ushers** (as many as necessary).

Instructions for Prompters

As the contestants perform their selections, follow along in the prompting book. Please be aware that contestants may perform their selections in any order. We suggest having highlighters and sticky notes on-hand. Alert the Judges' Liaison to any issues as the judges move to deliberate.

- Do not give a line prompt unless the contestant says "Line." Sometimes contestants take very, very long dramatic pauses; do not be fooled into thinking they want a prompt.
- If a contestant **adds lines to their monologue** that are not in the prompting book, quickly try and mark the added lines. **Do not interrupt the competition in any way.** At the end of the prompting session, put a sticky note with the note "added lines" on the appropriate page. This is very important; contestants must perform their monologues as they are written in the *2019 Monologue Packet*.
- If a contestant **drops lines from their monologue and/or sonnet**, cross out the sections that they did not speak in their performance. **Do not interrupt the competition in any way.** At the end of the prompting session, put a sticky note with the note "dropped lines" on the appropriate page. This is very important; contestants who drop lines from their monologue and/or sonnet will be penalized by the judges.

Judges

Judges are obviously essential elements of your Branch Competition. ***You require at least 3 judges. Please be mindful and sensitive to any conflicts of interest (actual or perceived) within your judging panel.*** *This may include (but is not limited to) judges who are past or present teachers at participating schools, relatives or friends of participating students/teachers or anyone who is otherwise familiar with the students (coach, director, etc.).*

Soliciting Judges

- Your judging panel should be diverse. Try to strike a balance between judges with an **academic** background (English teacher/professor, Shakespeare educator), **artistic** background (Drama teacher/professor, director, teaching artist, actor), and another person familiar with Shakespeare (casting director, theater critic, administrator, etc.) Try to not have a panel of only artists/actors.
    - Select appropriate candidates from local organizations with which your branch has worked in the past, or use the competition as an opportunity to work with new organizations and individuals.
- Contact prospective judges and describe the program. Mention other judges who will be on the panel (if known) or people who have judged in the past.
- Inform them of the details of the Branch Competition (date, time, place and time commitment).
- Select a follow-up date to discuss judging criteria.
- Request a short biography to include in the Branch Competition program.

Preparing Judges

- Send your judges the *Judge Handbook* (which includes competition rules/guidelines and instructions for judging at the branch level). Copies of the *Monologue Scoring Rubric*, *Sonnet Scoring Rubric* and *Judges' Evaluation Form* are included in this handbook.
    - Familiarize yourself with the *Judge Handbook* so that you may better answer any questions.
- Schedule an orientation or conference call prior to the competition, so that your judges may ask questions and receive consistent scoring advice.
- Encourage your judges to view videos of the National Competition Finalists' performances online at www.YouTube.com/EnglishSpeakingUnion. Suggest that your judges practice scoring these performances in order to prepare themselves for the actual Branch Competition.
- Send the contestants' selections to your judges prior to the competition, so that they may familiarize themselves with any unusual pieces.

Guidelines for Judges during the Competition

- Judges should not interact with the contestants or with the audience until the winners are announced at the end of program.
- Judges should not see a copy of the Branch Competition program until the winners are announced.
- Judges should be made aware of the fact that the *Scoring Rubrics* and *Evaluation Forms* will be shared with the contestants and their teachers.
- If possible, separate the judges from the rest of the audience, so that they are not distracted by anyone.
    - Do not allow audience members to sit behind the judges. This ensures that no audience member can see the judges' evaluations as they score and take notes on contestants' performances.
- Judges should be informed by the Judges' Liaison of any issues with a contestant's performance (i.e. an ineligible monologue, added or dropped lines from a sonnet and/or monologue or use of a prop).
- Have a *Judge Handbook* on hand during the competition, for reference.

After the Competition

- Some judges like to speak to the contestants after the competition. They are welcome to offer constructive feedback.
- Collect the completed *Scoring Rubrics* and *Evaluation Forms* and share the results with the contestants and their teachers.
    - *Review all forms and take necessary steps to omit feedback that is not constructive. You may choose to average the scores and summarize the comments. Do not send the evaluations as one document to everyone; rather just send the individual evaluation report to the student and their teacher.*
- Thank the judges. Acknowledge them in the branch newsletter, etc.
- Invite them to join the ESU (if they are not already members) and/or participate in other ESU events and programs.

Branch Competition Supplies

The following supplies are necessary for your Branch Competition. All documents can be found online at www.esuus.org in the ESU National Shakespeare Competition section.

For Contestants/Teachers

Awards: In addition to the Branch Winner's all-expenses paid trip to New York City, you may choose to award the 2nd Place, 3rd Place and the top contestants' teachers. Some suggestions for contestant awards include:

- Books
- Tickets
- T-shirts
- Trophies/Medals
- Workshop/Camp Scholarships
- Other Shakespeare Memorabilia

Some suggestions for teacher awards include: all of the above, and teaching materials.

We encourage you to use your branch's funds for teacher education and TLab Scholarships rather than large monetary awards for contestants.

For Contestants

- **Certificate of Participation (1:Contestant)**
  - Available upon request, to be signed by ESU Branch President
- ***Branch Winner Information Packet*** **(Branch Winner Only)**
  - This document should be given to the Branch Winner at the end of the program.

For Judges

- **Scoring Book (1:Judge)**
  - Compile a binder or notebook with *Scoring Rubrics* and *Evaluation Forms* for each contestant in the order of performance.
- ***Judge Handbook*** **(1:Judge, 1:Judges' Liaison)**
  - A copy of this handbook (available for download online) should be given to all judges. Please point out the sections on rules, rubrics and evaluations.

For the General Audience

- **ESU Promotional and Membership Materials**
  - Your Branch Competition is a great place to distribute membership, TLab brochures and other promotional materials.
- Create a **Program** for the Branch Competition. It should contain the following:
  - Contestants' Names
  - Participating Teachers
  - Participating Schools
  - List of Contestants' Selections (Monologues and Sonnets)
  - Judges' Names and Biographies
  - Awards
  - Local Funders/Donors
  - Volunteers

List the contestants' names separate from their teachers and schools in the program. By keeping the contestants' affiliations unknown, you reduce bias and help maintain the integrity of the competition.

For Competition Staff Members

- **Branch Handbook (1)**
- **Prompt Book (1:Prompter)**
  - Prompt book consists of large-font copies of the contestants' selections (both monologues and sonnets) in order of performance. You can print these from the Monologue and Sonnet Handbooks.
- **Additional Materials**
  - Directional Signs & Tape
  - Pens and Highlighters
  - Sticky Notes
  - Camera or Smartphone
  - Extra Copies of Judging and Contestant Materials
  - Refreshments

Branch Competition Sample Schedule

Length of Time	Description
5 Minutes	Welcome remarks and an explanation of the ESU National Shakespeare Competition. Introduce the judges and summarize the competition rules and criteria.
5 Min per Contestant	Contestant performances. Judges should take no more than 1 minute to write notes between performances.
30 Minutes	Contestant performances conclude. Judges retire to another room to deliberate.
15 Minutes	Deliberations conclude. Judges return to the theater/auditorium. The Branch Winner and Runner-Up(s) are announced. Closing remarks.

Following the Conclusion of the Branch Competition

- Give the Branch Winner a copy of the *Branch Winner Information Packet* (coming soon). Confirm there is no conflict with the date of the National Competition in New York City **(tentatively scheduled for April 30, 2019)**. Instruct the Branch Winner to email Annelise Nussbacher (anussbacher@esuus.org) with their contact information as soon as possible.
- Submit the Branch Winner's information via the *Branch Winner Entry Form*.

Competition Follow-Up with ESU National Headquarters

First, please give yourselves a huge pat on the back for organizing your Branch Competition! We thank you and your ESU Branch for your dedication and hard work in service of this vital educational program. Additionally, please complete the following steps for ESU National Headquarters.

1st Step: Submit the Branch Winner's Information to ESU National Headquarters

This step should be completed **immediately** following the announcement of the Branch Winner.

- Submit the *Branch Winner Entry Form* (online) to ESU National Headquarters (use their *School Winner Entry Form*).
- Ensure that the Branch Winner is prepared to make the trip to New York City in April. The Branch Winner **must** consult with ESU National staff prior to booking transportation.
    - If the Branch Winner is unable to attend the National Competition in New York City **(tentatively scheduled for April 30, 2019),** the First Runner-Up should be allowed to attend.

2nd Step: Transportation to the National Competition

Ensure that the Branch Winner and their parent/guardian are in communication with ESU National. The Branch Winner will apply directly to ESU National for their transportation reimbursement and **must** consult with ESU National staff prior to booking transportation. As in 2018, ESU National will reimburse the entire cost of pre-approved transportation. If the cost exceeds $350, ESU National invoice the ESU Branch for the difference.

3rd Step: Complete the *Branch Competition Questionnaire (Mid-May)*

This step should be completed **immediately** following the National Competition.

Necessary Materials:

- A copy of your Branch Competition program.
- Copies of your school forms (*School Participation Forms* and *School Winner Entry Forms*).
- Any and all budget/financial information pertaining to your Branch Competition.
- Any and all additional notes on your Branch Competition.

Checklist for ESU Branch

Late Summer/Early Fall

- ❏ Review the Conditions of Branch Participation (pg. 6-7) and Participation Deadlines (pg. 8).
- ❏ Choose a Shakespeare Branch Coordinator and/or Shakespeare Competition Committee.
- ❏ Complete the *Branch Participation Form*.
- ❏ Pay $600 Branch Participation Fee.
- ❏ Select a date(s) for your Branch Competition.
- ❏ Find a venue for your Branch Competition.
- ❏ Post competition information (local details and deadlines) on your branch website.

Fall

- ❏ Compile school/teacher contact information for program target area.
- ❏ Update any documents for first mailing to schools/teachers with information specific to your branch (*Sample Memo to Teachers* and *School Participation Form*). Send out monthly reminders.
- ❏ Send out first mailing to schools/teachers. Also post information to your branch's website.
- ❏ Additional outreach to teachers and schools (visit new schools, attend teacher conferences, etc.)
- ❏ Compile email with Branch Competition information (for second mailing).
- ❏ Send out second mailing to registered schools/teachers and post information to your branch's website. (*School Winner Entry Form*, *Photo Release Form*).

Winter (Pre-Competition)

- ❏ Recruit judges from your community and send them copies of the *Judge Handbook*.
- ❏ Buy/solicit prizes for contestants and teachers.
- ❏ Send a *Pre-Competition Press Release* (coming soon) to local media outlets to garner interest in your Branch Competition.
- ❏ Compile and print a Prompt Book for your Branch Competition (monologues and sonnets for each contestant).
- ❏ Create a program for your Branch Competition (with acknowledgment/s of any donors).
- ❏ Compile and print Scoring Books for judges.
- ❏ Create Participation Certificates for contestants and teachers (optional; available upon request - email anussbacher@esuus.org)
- ❏ Print out any other materials (Certificates, ESU materials, *Branch Winner Information Packet* (coming soon), etc.)
- ❏ Hold your Branch Competition.

Winter (Post-Competition)

- ❏ Submit the *Branch Winner Entry Form* (include the First Runner-Up's information) to ESU National Headquarters.
- ❏ Inform ESU National Headquarters if your winner has documented disabilities (if applicable).
- ❏ Send *Post-Competition Press Release* (coming soon) to local media outlets.
- ❏ Update your branch website with news of your Branch Competition (photos, videos, stories, etc.)

Spring

- ❏ Join us in New York City for the National Competition!
- ❏ Complete the *Branch Competition Questionnaire* online.
- ❏ Send any pictures, videos and/or press from the event to ESU National Headquarters.
- ❏ Forward your Branch Winner's *National Press Release* to their school and any local press.
- ❏ Stay in touch with local schools/teachers (send ESU mailings/newsletters, invite them to branch events, etc.)

List of Competition Forms

Document Name	Recipient
Branch Participation Form Review Conditions of Branch Participation (Branch Handbook pg. 6-7) and Participation Deadlines (Branch Handbook pg. 8)	ESU National Headquarters
Sample Memo to Teachers	Teachers
Sample Memo to Principals & Administrators	Principals and/or Administrators
Teacher Handbook ● Invitation/Letter ● Information for School Coordinators ● Information for Participating Teachers ○ Lesson Plans	Teachers
School Participation Form	Completed by School Coordinators; Forwarded to Branch Coordinators
Student Handbook ● Invitation/Letter ● Instructions (Monologue and Sonnet) ● Judging Advice ● Rubrics	Students
School Winner Entry Form	Completed by School Winner/School Coordinator; Forwarded to Branch Coordinators
Photo Release Form	Completed by School Winners prior to Branch Competition; Returned to Branch Coordinators
Judge Handbook ● Monologue Scoring Rubric ● Sonnet Scoring Rubric ● Judges' Evaluation Form	Judges
2019 Monologue Packet	Students & Teachers
2019 Sonnet Packet	Students & Teachers
Branch Winner Entry Form	Completed by Branch Winner/ Branch Coordinator; Sent to ESU National
Branch Winner Information Packet (Coming Soon)	Branch Winner

English in Action

The English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition

To: High School Educators Across the Country
From: Education Department, ESU

2019 Memo to Teachers Interested in Participating in the ESU National Shakespeare Competition

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Dear Teacher,

The English-Speaking Union invites you, your students and your school community to participate in the **English-Speaking Union (ESU) National Shakespeare Competition**!

Since 1982, the **ESU National Shakespeare Competition** has partnered with teachers to make Shakespeare's work come alive. This unique, performance-based education program provides students with multiple points of entry to engage with rigorous material and practice essential skills such as critical thinking and close reading. High school students from across the country read, analyze, perform and recite Shakespearean monologues and sonnets.They connect with like-minded peers, increase their self-confidence, and relate to classic works. In the thirty-six year history of the competition, the ESU has helped educators empower nearly 350,000 students to create and convey their own unique perspectives to a live audience.

We provide all the necessary resources to begin the competition in your classroom. It then progresses through three qualifying stages.

- Ninth through twelfth graders are eligible to participate in a school-wide competition.
- The school winner then advances to a competition held at your local ESU Branch.
- Branch winners will travel, all expenses paid, to New York City.

In 2018, finalists performed on the stage at the world-famous Lincoln Center Theater. Past national winners have received scholarships to the Young Actor's Summer School at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, and to the American Shakespeare Center Theatre Camp in Staunton, Virginia, as well as cash prizes. To learn more about this exciting, educational program online, please visit www.shakespearecompetition.org

The English-Speaking Union of the United States was founded in 1920, on the conviction that a shared language could bring individuals together, despite differences in nationality or background. Entering its second century, ESU is dedicated to supporting teachers and learners of English through programs such as the National Shakespeare Competition, our Teachers Learning Abroad (TLab) program, and the ESU Middle School Debate League. Like you, we understand that mastery of the English language is vital to students' success in the 21st century. Please visit our website at https://www.esuus.org/esu/ to learn more.

If your school hasn't taken part in our competition, we hope that you will consider offering this exciting, educational opportunity at your school this year. To past participants we extend our deep appreciation for your dedication, to both your students and to this program. We look forward to working with you to make 2019 our best competition ever!

Please read on to learn more.

English in Action

The English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition

FAST FACTS

What: A nation-wide competition open to high school students. Please see the *Teacher Handbook* for specific rules and information.

When & Where: You can start your classroom and school competitions as soon as you'd like! Please contact your local branch, visit the website or refer to the *Teacher Handbook* for deadlines, dates and locations.

Why: Because we believe that teachers like you deserve support in your mission to educate and engage students. And because we believe it's never too early to develop their love for reading, analyzing, and speaking the English language, especially Shakespeare! We hope to become an asset to your practice.

Who: For almost 100 years, The English-Speaking Union has been a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting teachers and learners of the English language. The **ESU National Shakespeare Competition** is just one of many programs that help us achieve that goal.

How: Participating in the **ESU National Shakespeare Competition** is easy! Find your local ESU Branch (*Participating Branches*) and fill out the *School Participation Form.*

Visit *ESU National Shakespeare Competition* to review competition materials, including the *Teacher Handbook*. Hold a school-wide competition to determine your school's representative at the Branch Competition. Student monologues **must** be selected from the *2019 Monologue Packet.* Then submit the *School Winner Entry Form* to qualify your student for the Branch Competition.

The *Teacher Handbook* includes everything you need to get your students ready including:

- Conditions of school participation
- Organization of classroom and school competitions and supplies
- Judging materials
- Lesson Plans
- Connection to national standards

Thank you for your interest in the English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition. Please contact shakespeare@esuus.org or your ESU Branch with any questions. We think teachers are the most important people on the planet and we look forward to working with you this year.

English in Action

The English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition

To: High School Principals & Administrators Across the Country
From: Education Department, ESU

2019 Memo to Administrators Interested in Participating in the ESU National Shakespeare Competition

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Dear Administrator,

The English-Speaking Union is pleased to invite you, your staff, students and school community to participate in the **English-Speaking Union (ESU) National Shakespeare Competition**!

Since 1982, the **ESU National Shakespeare Competition** has partnered with educators and schools to make Shakespeare's work come alive. This unique, performance-based education program provides your students with multiple points of entry to engage with rigorous material and allows them to practice essential, college-readiness skills such as critical thinking and close reading.

The ESU National Shakespeare Competition provides an engaging opportunity for student-centered learning. In a recent poll by Teach-Plus, over 27% of teachers cited student empowerment as the most important condition affecting student learning. In the thirty-six year history of the competition, the ESU has helped educators empower nearly 350,000 students to create and convey their own unique perspectives to an audience. High school students from across the country read, analyze, perform and recite Shakespearean monologues and sonnets. They connect with like-minded peers and increase their self-confidence.

In another Teach-Plus poll, teachers cited the provision of additional classroom resources as the most effective teacher-retention strategy available to administrators. Open to 9th through 12th graders, the ESU National Shakespeare Competition is designed for high school teachers. An easily implemented activity that integrates seamlessly into existing curriculum, it is aligned with state and national standards. Participating schools are provided with lesson plans, judging guides and preselected monologues and sonnets for ease of use. These resources facilitate collaboration across departments, competition across grade-levels and help to create an opportunity for community involvement.

Winners of the branch-level competitions will travel, all expenses paid, to New York City for the finals. Past winners have received full scholarships to attend the Young Actor's Summer School at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, full scholarships to the American Shakespeare Center Theatre Camp in Staunton, Virginia and cash prizes. To learn more about this exciting, educational program online, please visit at www.shakespearecompetition.org

The English-Speaking Union of the United States was founded in 1920, on the conviction that a shared language could bring individuals together, despite differences in nationality or background. Approaching its second century, ESU is dedicated to supporting educators and learners of English through programs such as the National Shakespeare Competition. Please visit our website at https://www.esuus.org/esu/ for all of the details.

Please read on to learn more!

English in Action

The English-Speaking Union
National Shakespeare Competition

FAST FACTS

What: A nation-wide competition open to high school students. Please see the *Teacher Handbook* for specific rules and information.

When & Where: Classroom and school competitions can begin as soon as you'd like! Please contact your local branch, visit the website or refer to the *Teacher Handbook* for deadlines, dates and locations.

Why: Because we believe that teachers deserve support in their mission to educate and engage students. And because we believe it's never too early to develop their love for reading, analyzing, and speaking the English language, especially Shakespeare!

Who: For almost 100 years, The English-Speaking Union has been a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting teachers and learners of the English language. The **ESU National Shakespeare Competition** is just one of many programs that help us achieve that goal.

How: Participating in the **ESU National Shakespeare Competition** is easy! In order to participate in the program, your school should:

- Sign up with your local ESU Branch.
    - You can find your local ESU Branch by visiting our *Branch Directory*.
    - Fill out the *School Participation Form*.
    - Confirm with your local ESU Branch Shakespeare Coordinator that your school is registered for the program. *Your registration is not complete until you receive this confirmation.*
- Visit *ESU National Shakespeare Competition* to review competition materials, including the *Teacher Handbook*.
- Your teachers will use the provided resources to plan lessons and hold classroom competitions.
- Hold a school-wide competition to determine your school's representative at the Branch Competition. Student monologues **must** be selected from the *2019 Monologue Packet.*
- Submit the *School Winner Entry Form* to qualify your student for the Branch Competition.

The *Teacher Handbook* includes everything your teachers need to get students ready, including:

- Conditions of school participation
- Organization of the school competition
- Judging materials
- Lesson Plans
- Connection to national standards

Thank you for your interest in the English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition. Please contact us at shakespeare@esuus.org or 212-818-1200 ext. 212 with any questions. We look forward to working with you this year.