



2016/17 Season

The English-Speaking Union

# National Shakespeare Competition

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Branch  
Handbook







The English-Speaking Union  
National Shakespeare Competition  
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THE ESU NATIONAL SHAKESPEARE COMPETITION**

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**Handbook Created by the ESU Education Staff**

NOTE: This handbook and other Branch resources are also available online at [www.esuus.org](http://www.esuus.org) in the Branches/Branch Resources Section; they are listed on *National Shakespeare Competition* Page.



# The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition 2017 MESSAGE TO BRANCHES

August 2016

Dear English-Speaking Union Branches,

We invite you to celebrate the power of the English language as we launch the 2017 English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition.

This project, a performance-based education program that unites high school students and teachers with ESU Branches nationwide, reaches over 20,000 teenagers in over 1,000 schools from Boston to Honolulu. In the Competition, students read, analyze, perform and recite Shakespearean monologues and sonnets in as many as three qualifying stages: school, community (ESU Branch) and national levels. Approximately sixty Branches annually participate in the program. We encourage you to become one of the many Branches involved in the Competition. And to those dedicated Branches who continue to participate, we look forward to another year of celebrating the Bard with you.

The ESU National Shakespeare Competition truly embodies the mission of The English-Speaking Union by celebrating arguably the most timeless writer in the English language. With over fifty-percent of the world studying the Bard's works, Shakespeare is a global playwright. As American students read and analyze the Bard's plays and sonnets, they gain a global understanding that transcends past and present. They learn essential skills, such as critical thinking and close reading. In a friendly, competitive atmosphere, students experience encouragement and good will and increase their self-confidence. As they get up on their feet and perform Shakespeare's words, they create and convey their own unique perspective to the audience. More than 300,000 students and their teachers have benefited from this transcending and enriching program.

This handbook includes everything you need to start a Competition at your Branch or continue to hold your annual Competition. This booklet and other resources (including template materials that you will need to edit with details specific to your Branch Competition) are available online at [www.esuus.org](http://www.esuus.org) in a section designed especially for a Branch audience: Branch Resources/National Shakespeare Competition Page. Throughout the year, please look here for any Branch materials and updates relating to the Competition.

We are again conducting all Branch registration through our national website forms. We will also be offering schools the opportunity to sign-up for the program online as well. We encourage you to use this technology on your own Branch websites for the Competition and your other programs and activities.

New this year: Branches will arrange and pay for Branch Competition Winner's travel to the National Competition in New York City. The Branch will be reimbursed by the ESU National office for up to \$350 of student-only travel. The National office will continue to arrange and provide all of the accommodations and food for the National Competition.

We look forward to expanding and sustaining the ESU National Shakespeare Competition with you.

Best regards,

Carol Losos  
Director of Education  
144 East 39<sup>th</sup> Street, New York, NY 10016  
[closos@esuus.org](mailto:closos@esuus.org)



## The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

### **WHAT IS THE COMPETITION?**

In the English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition, high school students nationwide read, analyze, perform and recite Shakespearean monologues and sonnets in as many as three qualifying stages: school, community (ESU Branch) and national levels.

### **HISTORY OF THE COMPETITION**

The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition began over thirty years ago with 500 students in New York City. Now the Competition involves approximately sixty English-Speaking Union Branch communities nationwide. Annually 20,000 high school students from Honolulu, HI to Boston, MA and their thousands of teachers participate in the program. Over the Competition's history, nearly 300,000 young people of all backgrounds have discovered Shakespeare's writings and learned to express his words with understanding, feeling and clarity.



Early contestants with judges Kate Burton, Christopher Reeve and Peter MacNicol.



2015 National Competition contestants in front of the fountain at New York City's Lincoln Center.

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.



## The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### COMPETITION STRUCTURE: SCHOOL → BRANCH → NATIONAL

The program begins in classrooms nationwide. A **school-wide competition** is held in the Fall/Winter, where 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 his/her monologue *and* one of Shakespeare's sonnets. The Branch Competition winner advances to the **National Competition** held in New York City in the Spring. The student performs a monologue and sonnet in front of their fellow contestants from across the country. Seven to ten students are chosen for the final round of the Competition; they perform their selections along with a cold reading of a monologue later in the day for another round of judges.



### AWARDS

**Branch Awards:** Each Branch winner receives an all-expenses-paid trip to New York City to compete at the National Competition. 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.

### NATIONAL COMPETITION DATE

The National Competition usually takes place in New York City on the Monday closest to Shakespeare's birthday (celebrated on April 23<sup>rd</sup>). **This year the program is tentatively scheduled from Sunday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> to Monday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017.** Students perform on Monday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2017. All contestants must arrive in New York City by the afternoon prior to the National Competition. Contestants are expected to fully participate in all ESU organized events surrounding the National Competition.



# The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition

## CONDITIONS OF ESU BRANCH PARTICIPATION

*In order for a Branch of The English-Speaking Union of the United States to participate in The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition, its Competition must meet the criteria listed below. Only those ESU Branches 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 (listed on Page 9).
- The Competition must be open to all public high schools in the area the Branch targets for the program. It may be open to independent and parochial schools and home-school groups.
- A minimum of 6 schools must each agree to hold a school competition from which a winner will be selected to advance to the Branch competition. (Exceptions can be made for smaller communities, but requests must be approved by ESU National Headquarters).
- All stages of the Competition must be judged by a panel of at least 3 individuals familiar with Shakespeare's works. For the Branch Competition, a substitute judge should be considered in case one member of the panel unexpectedly cancels. We also recommend that a Branch representative be present during the judges' deliberations.

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*All schools in the Competition should meet the following criteria. The Branch is responsible for ensuring that the schools participating in their competition are eligible for the program.*

### **SCHOOL/HOME SCHOOL ELIGIBILITY:**

- The school must register with its local English-Speaking Union Branch Shakespeare Coordinator.
- The school competition must be open to all students enrolled in the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades or an equivalent (for home school students).
- The school competition must involve a minimum of 3 students. Home-school participants must also emerge 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.

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*All students in the Competition should meet the following criteria. The Branch is responsible for ensuring that the students participating in their competition are eligible for the program.*

### **CONTESTANT ELIGIBILITY:**

- Contestants must be enrolled in the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade or an equivalent (for home school students).
- Contestants *cannot* act for pay on television, the stage or in film during the 2016-2017 school year.





The English-Speaking Union  
National Shakespeare Competition  
**CONDITIONS OF ESU BRANCH PARTICIPATION**

- Contestants should be available to represent their Branch at the National Competition in New York City. If, for any reason, a Branch winner is unable to fully participate, the Branch should send the runner-up from their Branch Competition to advance to the next level of competition.

FOR PREVIOUS SCHOOL WINNERS ONLY: Previous school winners can compete in the school competition in succeeding years and are eligible to advance to the local ESU Branch Competition.

FOR PREVIOUS BRANCH WINNERS ONLY: Each Branch individually decides whether a former Branch winner is eligible to compete in their Branch Competition in succeeding years and/or represent the Branch at the National Competition in New York. Branches should make a decision on this issue early and continue their stance in following years.

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*The Branch must adhere to the following rules at their Branch Competition.*

**BRANCH COMPETITION RULES:**

Students must select, memorize and perform two pieces at the Branch Competition:

- a) one monologue of **no more than 20 lines** (verse and prose) from one of Shakespeare's plays;
- b) one sonnet from Shakespeare's 154 sonnet cycle.

**Length of a monologue is determined by the [Folger Shakespeare Library editions](#) of the plays (Simon & Schuster, 2003-2013). Students performing longer monologues will be disqualified.**

For more on selection eligibility rules, visit the [Rules & Eligibility](#) section of the ESU website.

NOTE: ESU National Headquarters provides *Suggested Monologue and Sonnet Lists* as well as accompanying packets to the Branches, which may also be sent to the schools. The Branch determines whether these selections should serve as a suggestion or a requirement at their Branch Competition (i.e. students must pick from them).

- Students' order of performance should be determined by lot.
- Students should introduce themselves *only* by name.  
They should **not** state where they are from or which school they attend.
- Students should identify their selections before they begin their presentation.  
They may perform their pieces in whatever order they prefer.
- Students *cannot* wear costumes or use props of any kind (including chairs, jewelry, items of clothing and hair/hair clips).
- Students should speak naturally in their own voice (rather than affect a British accent).
- Students are expected to memorize their pieces. If necessary, however, prompting is allowed.  
If students require prompting, they must say "Line."

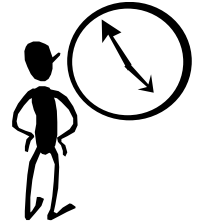




The English-Speaking Union  
National Shakespeare Competition  
**ESU BRANCH PARTICIPATION DEADLINES**

**IMPORTANT DEADLINES:**

**BY SEPTEMBER 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016**



- The Branch must complete the **Branch Participation Agreement Form** (available online at [www.esuus.org](http://www.esuus.org)) and submit it to ESU National Headquarters by this date.
- **New this year:** Branches will arrange and pay for Branch Competition Winner's travel to the National Competition in New York City. The Branch will be reimbursed by the ESU National office for up to \$350 of student-only travel expenses.
- The Branch must also pay the ***\$600 Branch Participation Fee***. Payment can be made by credit card or check (made payable to the English Speaking Union of the United States). If paying by check, the check should be enclosed with a copy of the *Branch Participation Agreement Form*.

**BY MARCH 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

- The Branch must hold their Branch Competition by this date. (Exceptions can be made for special circumstances, but requests must be approved by ESU National Headquarters.)
- The Branch must notify ESU National Headquarters of the results by this date. Notification should be made through the submission of the **Branch Winner Entry Form** (available online at [www.esuus.org](http://www.esuus.org)). Please note: In case of any scheduling conflicts with the Branch winner, we recommend the Branch also send in their Branch runner-up's information as well.
- The Branch must supply a **copy of the Branch winner's monologue and sonnet** that he/she will perform at the National Competition. These documents should be submitted with their *Branch Winner Entry Form*. (We recommend the Branch ask for these documents from the student and/or their teacher at the Branch Competition.)
- If the Branch winner has documented hearing, learning, physical, and/or visual disabilities, the Branch must notify the ESU National Headquarters by this date. This will ensure that appropriate arrangements are made during the National Competition for the student.

**BY JUNE 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017**

- Receipts for student travel reimbursement due.
- ***Branch Competition Questionnaire*** due.



# The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition **FUNDING & PARTNERING**

## **FUNDING THE COMPETITION**



The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition is a relatively inexpensive program for your Branch to run. **The only set cost is the \$600 Participation Fee to ESU National Headquarters.** The rest of the cost depends on how well your Branch uses the resources in your community. Most Branches fund this program through their Branch treasury, member contributions and in-kind donations.

## **COMMON COMPETITION EXPENSES:**

- Competition Venue
- Prizes
- Judges' Expenses
- Printing/Copying Charges
- Food (if applicable)

All of these expenses can usually be offset through in-kind donations from community members, non-profit organizations and/or local businesses. Therefore, reaching out to other local organizations for donations is a wonderful way to keep costs down for your Branch Competition.

## **COST-CUTTING SUGGESTIONS:**

- Begin with your own membership. Ask any 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 can offer a nonprofit rate or donate the space.
- Talk to judges and see if they can donate their services or take a reduced honorarium.
- Ask appropriate 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 looking for business. Ask them to donate food for the Competition.
- Ask local printing/copying stores to give you a nonprofit rate or donate the cost of any printing (such as the programs) in exchange for an ad.

**REMEMBER:** All donations should be acknowledged in your Competition program.



The English-Speaking Union  
National Shakespeare Competition  
**FUNDING & PARTNERING**

**PARTNERING WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**



*Your Branch Shakespeare Competition is the perfect opportunity for your Branch to partner with other local organizations. 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 (finding and/or supplying)
- Prizes
- Local Administration
- Staffing & Volunteers (Training)
- Publicity
- Outreach to Teachers/Schools
- Transportation (if necessary)
- Printing/Copying
- Food & Other Supplies

**PARTNERING EVENTS:**

Some Branches hold an additional event in conjunction with their Branch Competition. :

- Reception
- Meal (Brunch, Luncheon, Dinner)
- Teacher Workshop
- Student Workshop
- ESU Branch Meeting
- Lecture
- Book Reading
- Theater Production
- Library or Museum Exhibition

**NOTE ON STUDENT/TEACHER WORKSHOPS:**

As a way to promote the program in their community, some Branches offer students and/or teachers workshops on the Competition in the Fall/Early Winter. These sessions may serve as an orientation on the Competition or merely an introduction to performance-based teaching of Shakespeare. Workshops are usually held outside school hours (weekday afternoons or weekends).



## The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition OUTREACH TO TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS

*Informing schools in your target area about the Competition is essential. In order to make outreach easier, template materials are available online at [www.esuus.org](http://www.esuus.org) in the National Shakespeare Competition section. All template materials should be reviewed and updated with Branch-specific information.*



- **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):**

- Go to 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 address for appropriate teachers (English and Drama departments as well as Speech and Debate coaches).
- Save these emails in a mass contact list (*Teacher Email 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](http://www.greatschools.org) or [www.privateschoolreview.com](http://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.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION SOURCES:**

- Existing teacher contacts: Ask current teachers to forward Competition information to colleagues and suggest contacts.
- Websites of local networks (Educator organizations and unions, Speech and Debate groups such as the National Speech and Debate Association, your local branch of The National Council of Teachers of English)
- Board of Education's electronic bulletin board
- Mailing/contact lists for any organization(s) that your Branch is partnering with for the Competition
- Local graduate education schools/universities (for local alumni currently teaching)

### **STORING CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Create a master list of teacher contacts (electronic preferred). A sample, *Teacher Email Contact List*, is available online at [www.esuus.org](http://www.esuus.org). 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 can also be added (if information is available).

**REMEMBER:** Always have a backup copy of contact information on a flash drive *and* keep a hard copy.



## The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition **OUTREACH TO TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS**

### **Email Etiquette:**

The Branch Competition Coordinator and Co-coordinator (if applicable) 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's name 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 Competition Coordinator and Co-coordinator (if applicable) 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 Competition Coordinator for that year). Additionally, in the age of spam and hackers, teachers will delete messages from unknown addresses.

### **CONSTANT OUTREACH:**

Outreach to teachers and schools should not cease after your Branch Competition is complete. Instead 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 them a thank-you email for participating in program.
- Hold a teacher reception to celebrate and recognize their support of the Competition.
- Add them to your Branch's newsletter mailing list.
- Invite them to appropriate Branch events and introduce them to local members.
- Encourage them to become more involved in your ESU Branch and its programs.
- Send them information on other English-Speaking Union education programs, especially the Teaching Shakespeare Workshops and the British Universities Summer School program (BUSS).
- Host a Teaching Shakespeare Workshop in your Branch community.
- Send in their email addresses to ESU National, so they can be added to the mailing list for the ESU Education Department's national newsletter to educators.
- Send them the news and press release from the National Competition.
- Send them links to local press coverage of the Competition.

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



# The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition MAILINGS TO TEACHERS

All documents can be found online at [www.esuus.org](http://www.esuus.org) in the National Shakespeare Competition section.

## 1<sup>ST</sup> MAILING TO TEACHERS:

This initial mailing should be sent to teachers/schools (preferably by email) in Early Fall (after a Branch Competition Coordinator has been chosen for the 2016-2017 school year).



### *Necessary Materials:*

- *Sample Memo to Teachers:* Introduces teachers to the Competition and includes essential information about participation (Completed and sent by the Branch.)
- *School Participation Form:* **Registration form for schools** to participate in the Competition (Completed by lead teacher and returned/submitted to Branch Shakespeare Coordinator.)

### *Instructions:*

- Place the *Sample Memo to Teachers* in the body of an email.  
Note: You can update/edit this text if needed with your local Branch competition information.
- Include a link (and instructions) to the *School Participation Form* in your email.
- Email in a mass mailing to teachers and school administrators in your target area.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> MAILING TO TEACHERS:

This follow-up mailing should be sent (preferably by email) *only* to teachers/schools who have returned /completed the *School Participation Form*. Again we have the ability to register schools online this year.

### *Necessary Materials:*

- *School Winner Entry Form:* **Registration form for the school winner** who will advance to the Branch Competition (Completed by lead teacher and school winner and returned to Branch Shakespeare Coordinator.)
- *Photo Release Form:* Permission form for participants in the Branch Competition (Signed by student and their parent and returned to Branch Shakespeare 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 the teacher and/or student may need. Also post this information on your Branch's website.
- Request any additional details the Branch needs from the teachers for the Branch Competition (such as the copies of the student's monologue and sonnet).
- Include links (and instructions) to the *School Winner Entry Form* and *Photo Release Form* in the email.

**REMEMBER:** Send each mailing multiple times, and ask teachers to forward them to others.



## The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition PUBLICITY TIPS

*Your Branch Shakespeare 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
- Podcasts (School)
- Television
- Newsletters (School/Community/Branch)
- Websites (School/Community/Branch)
- Blogs & Social Media Sites

### PRIOR TO 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 their newsletters and school papers.

### PRIOR TO BRANCH COMPETITION:

- Post a reminder (with any relevant details) on your Branch's website.
- Suggest schools announce their school competition 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 participant 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 cannot publish or distribute any photos or videos of the participants. 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). Please respect anyone who chooses not to sign the release.





# The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition PUBLICITY TIPS

## **FOLLOWING THE BRANCH COMPETITION:**

- Send press release and photos to local media outlets (radio, newspaper, television, etc.) Highlight any stories unique to your Branch Competition.
- Post results, photos and videos of the Competition on your own ESU Branch page.
- Encourage members and participating students and teachers to post about the Competition on social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, their blogs, etc.).
- Invite contestants to perform for members/donors at other ESU events.
- Encourage Branch winner to perform winning 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.

NOTE: A sample press release for your Branch Competition is available online at [www.esuus.org](http://www.esuus.org).

## **FOLLOWING THE NATIONAL COMPETITION:**

- Send the national press release about your Branch winner (emailed following the National Competition in New York City) 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) on your ESU Branch page.

Note: This national press release will be sent from ESU National Headquarters directly to the contestant, their parent(s), teacher, Branch Shakespeare Coordinator(s) and Branch President (assuming all have previously provided an email).





The English-Speaking Union  
National Shakespeare Competition  
**ORGANIZING THE BRANCH COMPETITION**

### **PICKING A DATE**



The majority of Branch Competitions take place from mid-January to early March. 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

### **THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN PICKING A DATE**

#### **• TOO MANY CONTESTANTS FOR ONE DAY**

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 multiple days (depending on the number of contestants participating). From the qualifiers, a pre-set number of contestants are selected to advance to the Branch final round. The Branch finals take place at any time following the qualifying rounds. You may need to hold the Qualifier Rounds & Finals at different venues.

#### **• TOO FEW CONTESTANTS FOR ONE DAY**

If your **Branch Competition will have less than 10 contestants**, we recommend also allowing the participating schools' School Runner-Up to enter your event. These additional students create a more diverse and well-rounded lineup, and ultimately add to the audience's enjoyment of the program.



# The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition **ORGANIZING THE BRANCH COMPETITION**

## **PICKING A VENUE**

Reserve a local theater, auditorium 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 in the community.

The ideal setting should have:

- a raised platform or stage
- theater-style seating
- accommodation for the contestants and audience



Note: No sound system is required; students are expected to perform without amplification.

## **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 Branch (increases awareness of the program and support for the ESU 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 arts and 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 principal, other teachers, fellow classmates)

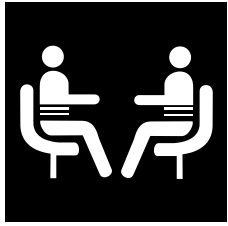
**TIP:** Use your Branch Competition as a hook to interest more schools in the program for next year; seeing the contestants onstage reciting Shakespeare really engages potential students and teachers.

- 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 Branch member/representative speak to them about the program.



# The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition

## STAFFING THE BRANCH COMPETITION



*The 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 BUSS teaches to take on leadership roles as well. If necessary, enlist help from other organizations in your community supportive of the ESU and its mission.*

### **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, registering schools for the Branch Competition 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.)
- **Branch Co-coordinators** (2 or more): 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** (1 or more): 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 (providing introductory remarks, introducing judges and announcing the winners).
- **Judges** (at least 3): 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 board has an academic, an actor and a director. More on judges on Page 21.
- **Judges' Liaison** (1): This person should be familiar with the judges. The role may be filled by the Branch Coordinator or one of the Co-coordinators.



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**STAFFING THE BRANCH COMPETITION**

- **Photographer:** To take photos for your Branch materials and publicity.
- **Videographer:** Shorter clips dividing each contestant's performance rather than one long tape of the whole program are recommended. For examples: [www.YouTube.com/EnglishSpeakingUnion](http://www.YouTube.com/EnglishSpeakingUnion).
- **Prompter:** Someone familiar with Shakespeare's works. Responsible for the prompting book and for prompting the contestants during the Branch Competition (if necessary). The prompter follows along with the text as the contestant recites his/her selections.
- **Ushers** (as many as necessary)

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**TO PROMPT OR NOT TO PROMPT: INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROMPTERS**

*Prompting is generally a self-explanatory duty. As the student performs their selections, follow along on the hard copies in the prompting book. Please be aware that competitors can perform their selections in any order. We suggest having highlighters, sticky notes and copies of and/or access to the Folger Shakespeare Library editions with you at the event.*

- Do not give a line prompt unless the student says "Line." Sometimes students take very, very long dramatic pauses; do not be fooled into thinking they want a prompt.
- If the student **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 to note; students are limited to monologues of no more than twenty lines (verse or prose). Any student who performs more than twenty lines will be disqualified. Double-check the Folger editions (if needed).
- If the competitor **drops lines from their 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 to note; students who drop lines from the sonnet will be penalized by the judges.

*The prompter is responsible for giving the prompting book to the Judges' Liaison and letting them know if there are any issues with a student's performance. The Judges' Liaison will then alert the judges to any issues.*

REMINDER: Length of a monologue is determined by the Folger Shakespeare Library editions of the plays (Simon & Schuster, 2003-2013). Free digital copies are available at: [www.folgerdigitaltexts.org](http://www.folgerdigitaltexts.org).



# The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition **JUDGES**



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

## **JUDGING PANEL:**

When selecting a judging panel, please remember AAA.

Academic (Professor, Teacher, Shakespeare Scholar, etc.)

Artistic (Actor, Director, Teaching Artist, etc.)

Another (Shakespeare Educator, Casting Director, Theater Critic, etc.)

Select appropriate candidates from local organizations your Branch has worked with in the past or use the Competition as an opportunity to work with new organizations and individuals.

## **SUBSTITUTE JUDGE:**

In case one member of the panel unexpectedly cancels, we always recommend that you secure a substitute judge for your panel. Encourage the substitute judge to attend your Branch Competition, so he/she can see the program in action and be on hand in case of any emergency.

## **SOLICITING JUDGES:**

- Contact the prospective judge (by email, phone, in person).
- Describe the program and invite them to judge. Mention other judges who will be on the judging 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.
- Discuss an honorarium (if applicable).
- Select a follow-up date to discuss judging criteria.
- Request a short biography to include in your Branch Competition program.



# The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition JUDGES

**REMINDER:** Familiarize yourself with the *Judge Handbook* (including the rubrics and evaluation sheet), so you will be better able to answer any judges' questions.

## PREPARING JUDGES:

- Send *Judge Handbook* (includes Competition rules/guidelines and instructions for judging at the school and Branch levels). Note: Copies of the *Monologue Scoring Rubric*, *Sonnet Scoring Rubric* and *Judges' Evaluation Form* are included in this booklet.
- Suggest they view the *Judges Resources* section on the ESU website ([www.esuus.org](http://www.esuus.org)).
- Schedule an orientation or conference call prior to the competition, so all judges can ask questions and have consistent scoring advice.
- Encourage them to view videos of the National finalists' performances online at [www.YouTube.com/EnglishSpeakingUnion](http://www.YouTube.com/EnglishSpeakingUnion). Suggest they practice scoring these performances to prepare themselves for the actual Branch Competition.
- Send the students' selections to them prior to your Branch Competition, so judges may familiarize themselves with any unusual pieces.

## GUIDELINES FOR JUDGES DURING THE COMPETITION:

- Judges should not have any interaction with the contestants or the audiences 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 at the end of the program (especially if the program lists the students' schools).
- Separate the judges from the rest of the audience, so they are not distracted by anyone.
- Do not allow audience members to sit behind judges (for at least a couple of rows). This ensures that no audience member can see the judges' evaluation sheets during the performances as they make notes on them.
- Judges should be informed by the judges' liaison of any issues with a student's performance (i.e. student went over the twenty line limit for their monologue or dropped lines from their sonnet).
- A Branch representative must be present during the judges' deliberations.

## AFTER THE COMPETITION:

- Thank the judges. Acknowledge them in the Branch newsletter and on your Branch website.
- Invite them to join the ESU (if they are not already members) and/or participate in other ESU events and programs.





# The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition BRANCH COMPETITION SUPPLIES

The following supplies are necessary for your Branch Competition. All documents can be found online at [www.esuus.org](http://www.esuus.org) in the National Shakespeare Competition section.

## **FOR PARTICIPATING STUDENTS/TEACHERS:**

### • **Awards** (In addition to the Branch winner's all-expenses-paid trip to New York City)

The Branch can choose to include additional awards to the runner-up, 3<sup>rd</sup> place winner and teachers of the top contestants. Some suggestions for student 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 various teaching Shakespeare materials.

TIP: We encourage you to use your Branch's funds for teacher education (as described above) rather than large monetary awards for students.

### • **Certificate of Participation (1 per contestant, 1 per teacher)**

We recommend a certificate of participation be awarded to all contestants and all teachers. Sample certificates of participation are available online at [www.esuus.org](http://www.esuus.org). The certificate should be signed by the local Branch President or other high-ranking Branch officer.

### • **Branch Winner's Information Sheet (1 copy for Branch Winner Only)**

This document should be given to the Branch Competition Winner immediately following the announcement of awards.

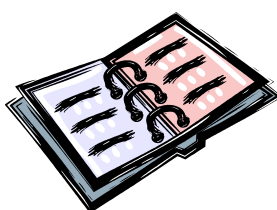
## **FOR JUDGES:**

### • **Scoring Book (1 per judge)**

This notebook consists of the *Judges' Evaluation Sheets* for each contestant in the order of performance. Fill in student/selection information prior to event.

### • **Judge Handbook for the ESU National Shakespeare Competition (1 per judge, 1 for judges' liaison)**

A copy of this handbook (available for download online) should be given to all judges. Please point out the sections about Competition rules, rubrics and scoring.





The English-Speaking Union  
National Shakespeare Competition  
**BRANCH COMPETITION SUPPLIES**

**FOR GENERAL AUDIENCE:**

• **ESU Promotional and Membership Materials**

Your Branch Competition is a great place to distribute membership and promotional materials. Hand out information on other ESU Education programs. Provide memberships (or membership brochures) to the teachers participating in the Competition and involve the educators in other ESU programming.

• **Program**

Create a program for the Branch Competition. It should contain the following:

- Contestants' Names
- Participating Teachers
- Participating Schools
- Contestants' Selections  
(Monologues and Sonnets)
- Judges' Names and Bios
- Awards
- Any Local Funders
- Volunteers/Staff

List the students' names and participating schools separately in the program. By keeping the contestants' origins unknown, you reduce bias and help maintain the fairness of the Competition.

**FOR COMPETITION STAFF MEMBERS (including this handbook):**

• **Prompt Book (1 per prompter)**

A prompt book consists of large-font copies of the contestants' selections (monologues and sonnets) in the order of performance.

• **Additional Materials**

- Directional Signs & Tape
- Pens and Highlighters
- Sticky notes
- Camera (with extra batteries)
- Folger Shakespeare Library editions of the plays (Simon & Schuster, 2003-2013). See: [www.folgerdigitaltexts.org](http://www.folgerdigitaltexts.org).
- Extra Copies of Judging and Contestant Materials
- Poster (if applicable)
- Reception/Event supplies (if applicable)



# The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition BRANCH COMPETITION SCHEDULE

## SAMPLE SCHEDULE

### Length of Time

### Description

5 minutes

Welcome remarks and explanation of the Competition.  
Introduction of the judges and summary of Competition rules/  
judging criteria.

5 minutes per contestant

Contestant presentations (approximately 5 minutes per student).  
Judges should take no more than 1 minute for writing notes  
between presentations.

30 minutes

Judges retire to another room to deliberate. Presentation of  
certificates to students and teachers onstage.

30 minutes

Judges return to theater/auditorium. Announcement of winner and  
runner-up. Presentation of prizes and closing remarks.

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## AT THE END OF BRANCH COMPETITION:

After the judges have chosen a Branch winner, please complete the following tasks:

- Give the Branch winner a copy of the *Branch Winner's Information Sheet*. Double check that he/she has no conflicts with the timing of the National Competition and can fully participate in all events. Remind the student and parent/guardians to contact the Branch Coordinator to coordinate the travel to New York City for the National Competition.
- Submit the *Branch Winner Entry Form* (along with copies of the student's monologue and sonnet) to ESU National Headquarters **as soon as possible**. ESU staff will use this information to communicate with the student and the National Competition logistics.





# The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition

## COMPETITION FOLLOW-UP WITH ESU NATIONAL



*Once you have held your Branch Competition, there is follow-up that needs to be completed. First, please give yourselves a huge pat on the back for organizing the Branch Competition. We thank you and your Branch for its dedication and hard work for this vital educational program. Additionally, please complete the listed follow-up to ESU National Headquarters.*

### 1<sup>ST</sup> FOLLOW-UP TASK:

This task should be completed **immediately** following your Branch Competition.

#### *Necessary Materials:*

- Branch winner's information (use their *School Winner Entry Form*)
- Copy of Branch winner's monologue (complete text)
- Copy of Branch winner's sonnet (complete text)
- Branch runner-up's information (use their *School Winner Entry Form*)

#### *Instructions:*

- Submit the *Branch School Winner Entry Form* (online form) to ESU National Headquarters.
- Include copies of your Branch winner's monologue and sonnet (complete texts).
- NEW THIS YEAR: Arrange travel for student to New York City for the National Competition. The Shakespeare Coordinator is responsible for either booking the ticket directly or reimbursing the parent/guardian for the ticket.

NOTE: In case of any scheduling conflicts with the Branch winner, we recommend you supply us with the Branch runner-up's information as well.

### 2<sup>ND</sup> FOLLOW-UP TASK:

This task should be completed in Late Winter/Early Spring (in response to an email from National Headquarters with the link for the online *Branch Competition Questionnaire*).

#### *Necessary Materials:*

- A copy of the program for your Branch Competition
- Forms from teachers (*School Participation Forms* and *School Winner Entry Forms*)
- Budget/financial information on your Branch Competition
- Any additional notes on your Branch Competition
- *Teacher Email Contact List*

#### *Instructions:*

- Complete survey with your Branch-specific information.
- Send *Teacher Email Contact List* to ESU National Headquarters.

### 3<sup>rd</sup> FOLLOW-UP TASK:

Send reimbursement request including receipt to ESU National Headquarters for student travel expenses, not to exceed \$350.



## The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition **CHECKLIST FOR ESU BRANCH**

### **LATE SUMMER/EARLY FALL:**

- ☐ Review the *Conditions of Branch Participation* and *Participation Deadlines*.
- ☐ Choose a Shakespeare Branch Coordinator and/or Shakespeare Competition Committee.
- ☐ Complete the *Branch Participation Agreement Form* (available online at [www.esuus.org](http://www.esuus.org)).
- ☐ Pay the \$600 Branch Participation Fee (payment may be made by credit card or check).
- ☐ Pick a date(s) for your Branch Competition.
- ☐ Find a venue for your Branch Competition.
- ☐ Post Competition information (local details and deadlines) on your Branch's website.

### **FALL:**

- ☐ Compile school/teacher contact list for program target area (*Teacher Email Contact List*).
- ☐ Update any documents for 1<sup>st</sup> mailing to schools with Branch-specific information (*Sample Memo to Teachers* and *School Participation Form*). Send out monthly reminders.
- ☐ Send out 1<sup>st</sup> mailing to schools/teachers. Also post information on your Branch's website.
- ☐ Additional outreach to teachers and schools (visit new schools, attend teacher conferences, etc.)
- ☐ Register teachers for the Branch Competition.
- ☐ Compile email with Branch Competition information (for 2<sup>nd</sup> mailing).
- ☐ Send out/post 2<sup>nd</sup> mailing to registered schools/teachers (*School Winner Entry Form*, *Photo Release Form*)

### **WINTER (PRE-COMPETITION)**

- ☐ Recruit judges from your community and send them judging information (*Judge Handbook*).
- ☐ Buy/solicit prizes for contestants and teachers.
- ☐ Collect *School Winner Entry Forms* from schools and copies of contestants' selections.
- ☐ Compile and print Prompt Book (monologues and sonnets for each student).
- ☐ Create program for Branch Competition (with acknowledgment for any donors).
- ☐ Compile and print Scoring Books for judges.
- ☐ Create Participation Certificates for contestants and teachers (template online)
- ☐ Print out any other materials (Programs, Certificates, ESU materials, *Branch Winner's Information Sheet*, etc.)
- ☐ Hold your Branch Competition.

### **WINTER (POST-COMPETITION):**

- ☐ Submit the *Branch School Winner Entry Form* to ESU National Headquarters.  
Note: Please include copies of winner's monologue and sonnet selections (complete texts).
- ☐ Send in your Branch runner-up's information to ESU National Headquarters.
- ☐ Inform ESU National Headquarters if your winner has documented disabilities (if applicable).
- ☐ Send out press release with Branch-specific information (*Sample Branch Competition Press Release*).
- ☐ Update Branch website with news of your Branch Competition (photos, videos, stories, etc.)

### **SPRING**

- ☐ Complete the *Branch Competition Questionnaire* online.
- ☐ Send in contact information for all teachers who participated in your Branch Competition to ESU National Headquarters (*Teacher Email Contact List*).
- ☐ Submit receipt for travel reimbursement.
- ☐ Send in any pictures, video and/or press from the event to ESU National Headquarters.
- ☐ Forward Branch winner's national press release to their school and any local press.
- ☐ Stay in touch with teachers (send ESU mailings/newsletters, invite to Branch events, etc.).



The English-Speaking Union  
National Shakespeare Competition  
**INDEX OF COMPETITION FORMS**

*These are all the documents you will need for the Competition. Branch resources are available online at [www.esuus.org](http://www.esuus.org) in the Branches/Branch Resources section of the ESU website.*

<b><u>Document Name</u></b>	<b><u>Recipient</u></b>	<b><u>Category</u></b>
<i>Branch Participation Agreement Form (online)</i>	ESU National Headquarters	<a href="#">Branches</a>
<i>Teacher Email Contact List*</i>	ESU National Headquarters	<a href="#">Branches</a>
<i>Sample Memo to Teachers*</i>	Teachers	<a href="#">Branches</a>
<i>Invitation to Schools*</i>	Teachers	<a href="#">Branches</a>
<i>School Participation Form*</i>	Teachers	<a href="#">Branches/Teachers</a>
<i>Teacher Handbook (booklet)</i>	Teachers	<a href="#">Teachers</a>
<i>Invitation to Students</i>	Teachers	<a href="#">Teachers</a>
<i>Instructions for School Competition</i>	Teachers	<a href="#">Teachers</a>
<i>Instructions for Students (monologue)</i>	Teachers & Students	<a href="#">Students</a>
<i>Suggested Monologues Packet &amp; List</i>	Teachers & Students	<a href="#">Students</a>
<i>Judging Advice for Students</i>	Students	<a href="#">Students</a>
<i>Suggested Sonnets Packet &amp; List</i>	Teachers & Students	<a href="#">Students</a>
<i>Instructions for School Winner (sonnet)</i>	Teachers & School Winners	<a href="#">Students</a>
<i>School Winner Entry Form</i>	School Winners & ESU National Headquarters	<a href="#">Branches/Teachers</a>
<i>Photo Release Form</i>	All Branch Competition Participants	<a href="#">Branches/Students</a>
<i>Judge Handbook (booklet)</i>	Judges	<a href="#">Judges</a>
<i>Monologue and Sonnet Scoring Rubrics</i>	Students & Judges	<a href="#">Judges</a>
<i>Judges' Evaluation Form</i>	Students & Judges	<a href="#">Judges</a>
<i>Branch Winner's Information Sheet</i>	Branch Competition Winner	<a href="#">Branches/Students</a>
<i>Branch Winner Entry Form (online)</i>	ESU National Headquarters	<a href="#">Branches</a>

\* This form needs to be edited and/or updated with your Branch-specific information.