

AFMS BULLETIN CONTEST GUIDELINES
ORIGINAL JUNIOR POETRY
SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

1. **Junior Poems** have their own score sheets. Please indicate the age of the junior on the score sheet.
2. **Judges must consider the average ability of a youth of that age** in determining the quality of the poem. Although there are no set rules for exact ability per age, the judge may establish some levels of standards before judging. These standards may be established by knowledge of youth or by advice from those in the public school system. After establishing the standards expected, be consistent for that age level.
3. **Authors** of poems submitted for AFMS competition **must be members of the club submitting the entry.**
4. **Only one poem may be submitted from each author in a club.** If an author belongs to more than one club/regional federation, the same poem will be accepted from only one source. In the case of duplications, only the poem with the earliest publication date will be accepted.
5. The poem submitted **must be an original poem written by the author, written for and printed in the club bulletin, and appearing in print for the first time.** The editor is the first judge of this status. BEACs and judges should be alert to possible violations. There should be **no copyright violations.**
6. The BEAC or the judge will need to circle choices on the score sheet for:
 - A. Appeal/Interest
 1. General Audience **OR**
 2. Specialized Audience
 - B. Meter Rhythm
 1. Open Verse (unrhymed) **OR**
 2. Rhyming
 - C. Originality of subject matter and/or Approach
 - D. No apparent copyright violations
 - E. Clarity & Appropriateness
 1. Serious topic or purpose **OR**
 2. "Just for fun"
 - F. Suitability of verse style for subject
 1. Hai-ku
Limerick
Short stanza
Acrostic Poem **OR**
 2. Long stanza
 - G. Spelling & Grammar appropriate
 - H. Title appropriate; Author identified?

Additional help from knowledgeable people:

1. Simone Wood, **The Poetry Handbook** highly recommended for complete instructions on writing various types of poetry.
2. June Zeitner... "Poetry is very exact writing. Too few judges are able to scan rhythm. In lyric poems, the meter should be near perfect in one of the common patterns (iambic, dactylic, etc.)
x/x/x/x/A
x/x/x/B
x/x/x/x/A
x/x/x/B
3. Ellen Schultz: "The word METER is used to define rhythm or flow of the lines. You can actually make a 'beat' out of the flow of the words. The exception would be the free verse. The judge must decide if the flow is smooth or uneven.
4. Ceil Duluk, who has been a poetry judge for several years, states: "One of the things that makes poetry special: imagery and the use of language. While reading entries all through the first time, about fifteen immediately struck me as very good poetry – not because of form (rhythm, etc.) but because of the images and ideas in them, and because they were NOT filled with the same OLD CLICHES. Also, ORIGINALITY OF THEME, and/or PRESENTATION... This is another place where poetry differs from prose, as the use of language in a special manner makes it poetry."