OFFICIAL RULES
TAMPA BAY TIMES NEWSPAPER IN EDUCATION
EXPLORING THE WORLD THROUGH VERSE POETRY CONTEST

These are the Official Rules for the Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education "Exploring the World Through Verse Poetry Contest" ("the Contest") sponsored by the Times Publishing Company ("Sponsor"). The Contest opens for entries Nov. 15, 2026, at 12:00 AM ET. All entries must be received by Jan. 15, 2027, at 11:59 PM ET.

Entry into this promotion constitutes the Entrant's certification that he or she has obtained the permission of his or her parent or legal guardian to enter; that both the Entrant and his or her parent or legal guardian have read these rules; and that the Entrant and parent or legal guardian fully and unconditionally agree to be bound by these rules.

ELIGIBILITY: This Contest is open to middle and high school students who are at least 13 years of age on the date of entry, who attend school in Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk or Sarasota County in Florida, and who are legal residents of the State of Florida.

However, employees of the Times Publishing Company, its affiliates and subsidiaries, advertising and promotion agencies, contest prize suppliers, and participating advertisers and their immediate family members are not eligible to win. "Immediate family members" means parents, siblings, spouses, children, grandparents and grandchildren, whether by current or past marriage, remarriage, adoption or cohabitation, and anyone living in the same household, whether related or not. Times Publishing Company's determination as to eligibility is final and binding.

NO PURCHASE IS NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN. Purchase will not improve chances of winning.

HOW TO ENTER: Enter by submitting an original, unpublished poem of no more than 25 lines, with a theme of cultural diversity, global issues or global-local connections. Poems may be in any poetic style. The poem title does not count as a line.

Each entry must be accompanied by the author's name, full mailing address, telephone number, email address, school name and grade level in school. Entrants may submit an unlimited number of entries. The poem should be a Word (doc or docx) or Portable Document Format (pdf) file, in Times New Roman or Arial font. The author's name should not appear on the manuscript.

Only entries submitted online at tampabay.com/nie will be accepted and considered. All entries must be received by Jan. 15, 2027, 11:59 PM ET. Times Publishing Company is not responsible for lost, late, damaged, illegible, misdirected, electronic malfunction or any other problems or errors in transmission or delivery of entries. The odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received and satisfaction of the judging criteria described below.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRY: The entry must be the original work of the author identified as the Entrant, and must be in English. Entries must comply with all applicable law governing intellectual property, including all laws governing copyright. Entry into the contest constitutes the Entrant's and parent(s) or legal guardian(s) warranty that the entry is free of content infringing any rights of third parties. **Plagiarism of any kind will result in disqualification.**

The use of generative artificial intelligence, including Large Language Models (LLMs), is prohibited. "Generative AI" refers to AI systems designed to produce new creative content from text prompts, audio prompts or other automated inputs. Examples include but are not limited to: Chat GPT, Claude, Copilot, Gemini and Grok.

Any entry using poetry, song lyrics, characters, or any other type of material created or authored by someone else must be accompanied by that author's express written permission and properly acknowledged; otherwise, the entry will be disqualified. Depictions of violence, graphic sexual content, and material derogatory to any individual or group based on race, gender, nationality, age, disability, religion or any other similar characteristic will result in disqualification. Entries must not have been previously published or sold.

GRANT OF RIGHTS UPON ENTRY: Submission of an entry constitutes the Entrant's and Entrant's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) grant to the Times Publishing Company of a full, unconditional, royalty-free worldwide license to publish the entry in print, electronic or other media, including online, and in any other form of media now existing or later invented, and to use the entry for promotional purposes without obligation to compensate the Entrant.

INDEMNIFICATION: Submission of an entry constitutes the Entrant's and Entrant's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) agreement to indemnify the Times Publishing Company, including its officers, directors, agents and employees, against any claim of copyright infringement and any other legal claim arising out of the publication of the entry.

HOW WINNERS WILL BE SELECTED: The Winners will be selected by a judging panel composed of Tampa Bay Times staff and professional authors from all timely, eligible entries received based on the following judging criteria: adherence to theme, creativity and grammar. The decisions of the judges are entirely their own, and are final. The Winner will be chosen by the judges and contacted no later than Feb. 15, 2027.

HOW WINNER WILL BE NOTIFIED: A Times Publishing Company representative will notify the winner by phone or email by using the information on the entry. If the company representative is unable to speak directly to a winner by 5 p.m. on the business day following the date of contact first attempted, the winner will be disqualified and forfeit all rights to the prize, and an alternate winner will be chosen. If the company representative is unable to speak directly to an alternate winner by 5 p.m. on the business day following the date of contact first attempted, the alternate winner will be disqualified and forfeit all rights to the prize, and another winner will be chosen. If any winner chosen and notified does not meet all eligibility requirements including signing the Affidavit and Release referred to below, an alternate winner will be selected.

PRIZES: The following prizes will be awarded: There will be one (1) Grand Prize winner. The Grand Prize winner will receive an invitation to read the winning poem at the 51st Annual St. Petersburg International Folk Fair in March 2027. The winning poem will be published in print in the 2027 Newspaper in Education publication "Exploring the World Through Verse" and online on the Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education website. There will be up to three (3) Runners-Up. Runners-Up will receive an invitation to read their poem at the 51st Annual St. Petersburg International Folk Fair in March 2027. At the discretion of the judges, Runner-Up poems may be published in print in the 2027 Newspaper in Education publication "Exploring the World Through Verse" or online on the Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education website. The total monetary value of the prize package is $0.00. The Prize shall be provided by Times Publishing Company, PO Box 1121, St. Petersburg FL 33731.

HOW TO CLAIM THE PRIZE: To claim the prize, within 3 days of notification the Winner must appear in person accompanied by a parent or legal guardian at the Tampa Bay Times during regular business hours and present valid identification showing age and eligibility. The Winner's parent or legal guardian will be required to sign legal documents consisting of an affidavit of eligibility and waiver and release, which releases sponsors, affiliates, and suppliers from any and all liability related to this promotion or use or acceptance of the prize. The affidavit and release must be completed without making changes and returned to Times Publishing Company. Failure of Times Publishing Company to receive a properly executed affidavit within 3 days of winner notification will result in disqualification and forfeiture of prize. Alternate winner is subject to all requirements and limitations in these Official Rules. By accepting a prize, the Winner and his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) agree(s) to allow the use of the Winner's name, voice, photograph, likeness and any information provided on the entry form, in any media now known or hereafter invented and for any purpose, including advertising, promotional or other purposes by the Sponsor and its affiliates, without further compensation.

PRIZE RESTRICTIONS: The Winner is responsible for any charges not specifically listed as part of the Prize, including but not limited to: transportation to and from accepting the Prize, transportation to and from making use of the Prize, parking, tax, gratuities, food and beverages, and incidentals. Prize can not be transferred or substituted, except that Times Publishing Company may substitute a Prize or Prizes of equal or greater value in the event of Prize unavailability or in other circumstances as are necessary. Prize has no cash value and cannot be sold or bartered. No other alternative Prize, cash or other substitution is permitted. Prize is not transferable or assignable by the Winner.

All federal, state and local taxes, fees and surcharges and any necessary or appropriate insurance are the responsibility of the Winner and his or her parent or legal guardian. The Winner and his or her parent or legal guardian agrees to pay all such taxes, fees and surcharges as required by law. As stated above, any transportation required for the Winner to take possession of the Prize is the Winner's responsibility and will not be furnished by the Sponsor. Winner and/or his or her parent or legal guardian agrees to hold harmless the Sponsor, the Sponsor's parent, related, affiliated and subsidiary companies and their respective officers, directors, employees, agents and assigns (collectively, the

"Released Entities") from any and all liability for damages or losses of any nature incurred in connection with the use or misuse of the Prize.

MISCELLANEOUS: Promotion rules shall be governed and enforced pursuant to Florida law, excluding choice of law provisions. Entrants and their parents or legal guardians agree to be bound by these rules by entry into the Contest. The Contest is void where prohibited. The Sponsor is entitled to interpret these rules as needed and its decisions are final. The Sponsor reserves the right to correct typographical, clerical or printing errors in any promotion materials. The Sponsor may cancel or terminate this promotion if, for any reason beyond its control, the promotion is not capable of being run fairly or securely. Each Entrant and his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) acknowledges and agrees that Sponsor may use information submitted to contact Entrant and/or to offer the Sponsor's products or services.

SPONSORS: The Sponsor of the Contest is Times Publishing Company, PO Box 1121, St. Petersburg FL 33731.

WINNERS' LIST: For a list of Winners, send a self-addressed stamped envelope after Feb. 15, 2027 but no later than June 15, 2027, to: Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education, PO Box 1121, St. Petersburg FL 33731.

ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS: All federal, state, and local laws and regulations apply. Void where prohibited by law. By entering the Contest, the Entrant and his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s), for him/herself and for his/her heirs, executors, administrators, assigns and anyone else claiming by or through him/her, waives, covenants not to sue and fully releases and forever discharges any and all rights, claims or causes of action whatsoever that he/she may have against any of the Released Entities arising directly or indirectly out of Entrant's participation in the Contest. This waiver and release covers, without limitation, any damage, liability, cost, attorneys' fees and expenses whatsoever, whether known or unknown and whether foreseeable or not. Sponsor reserves the right to make changes in the rules of the Contest, including the substitution of a Prize of equivalent value, which will become effective upon announcement.

© Copyright 2026 Times Publishing Company. All Rights Reserved.