

# 30 Ways to Celebrate Poetry

## **Host a Favorite Poem Community Reading**

Diverse members of a single community come together to share unique, personal treasures: the poems they love.

## **Submit your favorite poem to the International Festival of Arts & Ideas**

From these submissions readers will be selected for the Festival's final Favorite Poem Community Reading, to be hosted by Robert Pinsky on June 13, 2009. The poems and stories may also be used to create an anthology or video documentaries.

## **Bring a poem to the Festival**

From June 13-27 Poetry Walls will be erected on the New Haven Green and anyone is welcome to post their favorite poem along with an explanation about why the poem is so meaningful to them.

## **Create a Favorite Poem Video**

The Festival will offer space on its website for community members and students to post videos inspired by the Favorite Poem Project. See *A Guide to Creating Student Favorite Poem Videos* for ideas about how to make a Favorite Poem Video.

## **Kick-off the Favorite Poem Project by celebrating Poem in Your Pocket Day**

April 30, 2009 is the 2<sup>nd</sup> national Poem in Your Pocket Day. The idea is simple: select a poem you love then carry it with you to share with co-workers, family, and friends on April 30. Visit <http://www.poets.org/page.php/prmID/406> for more ideas or to download pocket-sized poems.

## **Pass poetry on / Encourage inter-generational sharing of poems**

Pair young people with elderly residents of their communities and have them exchange their favorite poems. Visit <http://www.favoritepoem.org/lessonplans-links/passingpoetryon.html> for a sample lesson plan.

## **Explore poetry in other languages**

Create cross-cultural connections by introducing a class or group to poems written in other languages. Invite a native speaker to read the poem in its original form. Visit <http://www.favoritepoem.org/lessonplans-links/intro-poems-trans.html> for a sample lesson plan.

## **Read a book of poetry (or create a display of poetry books in your library, bookstore, classroom, or workplace)**

Poetry is a response to the daily necessity of getting the world right.

**Memorize a poem**

Getting a poem or prose passage truly 'by heart' implies getting it by mind and memory and understanding and delight.

**Revisit a poem**

America is a country of second acts, so today, why not brush the dust off of these classics and give them a fresh read?

**Put poetry in an unexpected place**

Books should be brought to the doorstep like electricity, or like milk in England: they should be considered utilities.

**Bring a poem to your place of worship (or encourage your place of worship to incorporate poetry into a service)**

We define poetry as the unofficial view of being, and bringing the art of language in contact with your spiritual practices can deepen both.

**Host (or attend) an open mic**

It's a great way to meet other writers in your area and find out about your local writing community.

**Support literary organizations**

Many national and local literary organizations offer programs that reach out to the general public to broaden the recognition of poets and their work.

**Google a poem**

Many people carry single lines of verse with them, sometimes for years, and are eager to remember the rest of that particular poem.

**Hear a poem**

Often, hearing an author read their own work can clarify questions surrounding their work's tone. Many recordings are readily available at [www.poets.org](http://www.poets.org).

**Subscribe to a literary magazine**

Full of surprising and challenging poetry, short fiction, interviews, and reviews, literary journals are at the forefront of contemporary poetry.

**Put a poem in a letter**

It's always a treat to get a letter, but finding a poem in the envelope makes the experience extra special.

**Take a poem out to lunch**

Adding a poem to lunch puts some poetry in your day and gives you something great to read while you eat.

**Put a poem on the pavement**

Go one step beyond hopscotch squares and write a poem in chalk on your sidewalk.

**Recite a poem to family and friends (or host a poetry recitation event)**

You can use holidays or birthdays as an opportunity to celebrate with a poem that is dear to you, or one that reminds you of the season.

**Organize a poetry reading**

When looking for a venue, consider your local library, coffee shop, bookstore, art gallery, bar or performance space.

**Promote public support for poetry**

Every year, Congress decides how much money will be given to the National Endowment for the Arts to be distributed all across America.

**Start a poetry reading group (or read poetry in April, May or June at your book club event)**

Select books that would engage discussion and not intimidate the reader new to poetry.

**Read some literary criticism**

Reading reviews can also be a helpful exercise and lend direction to your future reading.

**Buy a book of poems for your library (or organize a drive)**

Many libraries have undergone or are facing severe cuts in funding. These cuts are often made manifest on library shelves.

**Start a commonplace book (or help a group of children or adults to create their own commonplace books)**

Since the Renaissance, devoted readers have been copying their favorite poems and quotations into notebooks to form their own personal anthologies called commonplace books.

**Start a notebook on Poets.org**

Poets.org lets users build their own personal portable online commonplace book out of the materials on our site.

**Add verse to your email signature**

Many email programs allow you to create personalized signatures that are automatically added to the end of every email you send.

**Sign up for a poetry class or workshop (or host one)**

Colleges and arts centers often make individual courses in literature and writing available to the general public.

(This content is adapted from “30 Ways to Celebrate” on [www.poets.org](http://www.poets.org) from the Academy of American Poets)