

The James Whitcomb Riley Boyhood Home 250th Anniversary Poetry Contest Rules

1. Eligibility

- **Age Categories:**
 - **Children:** Ages 5–12
 - **Teens:** Ages 13–17
 - **Adults:** Ages 18+
 - Open to residents of Hancock County, Indiana.
 - Ineligible: Contest organizers, judges, and their immediate family members.
 - Poems must be **original, unpublished work** created by the entrant.
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2. Theme Requirement

All poems must **reflect United States History**.

Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Historical events (Revolutionary War, Civil Rights Movement, etc.)
- Influential individuals (leaders, artists, activists, inventors)
- Cultural or societal changes in American History
- Personal or family stories connected to American history
- Undersung or lesser-known historical moments

Creative approaches—metaphorical, narrative, lyrical, or reflective—are welcome.

3. Submission Guidelines

- **Form:** Any poetic form (free verse, haiku, sonnet, narrative poem, spoken-word transcript).
- **Length:** Maximum *e.g.*, 40 lines or 500 words.
- **Language:** English (*or other language as long as an English translation is provided*).
- **No inappropriate language or imagery is allowed.**
- **Format:**
 - Typed, single-spaced
 - Standard font (*e.g.*, Times New Roman 12 pt)
 - Submit as a PDF or Word document
- **Number of entries:** (*e.g.*, 1–3 poems per entrant)
- **Anonymity:** Author name must **not** appear on the poem itself; include the name only on the entry form.

4. Submission Process

- Submit via Google Forms starting on January 16th, 2026.
- **Deadline for Submission: March 20th, 2026**
- **Late submissions will not be considered.**

5. Judging Criteria

Poems will be evaluated on:

- **Historical relevance**
(Accuracy, depth, or meaningful engagement with U.S. history)
- **Creativity & originality**
- **Language use & poetic techniques**
- **Emotional impact**
- **Overall craftsmanship**

Judging is blind: judges will not see author names or age categories during evaluation.

6. Prizes

Prizes will be awarded **separately for each age category**:

Children (Ages 6–12)

- 1st Place: (*\$50 gift card + certificate*)
- 2nd Place: (*\$25 card + certificate*)
- 3rd Place: (*small prize, certificate*)

Teens (Ages 13–17)

- 1st Place: (*\$100 card + certificate*)
- 2nd Place: (*\$50 card + certificate*)
- 3rd Place: (*small prize + certificate*)

Adults (Ages 18+)

- 1st Place: (*\$150 gift card + publication*)
- 2nd Place: (*\$100 gift card + certificate*)
- 3rd Place: (*small prize, + certificate*)

Other Awards:

- Honorable Mentions
 - Audience Choice Award
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7. Rights & Permissions

- Authors retain full copyright to their work.
 - By entering, authors grant contest organizers a **non-exclusive** right to publish their poem (*e.g., in an anthology or on a website*) with proper author credit.
 - Organizers may request minor edits with the author's approval.
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8. Disqualification

Entries may be disqualified for:

- Plagiarism or inaccurate representation of historical facts
- Violating anonymity rules
- Submitting inappropriate or discriminatory content
- Not following length, theme, or formatting guidelines
- Late submission

9. Winner Announcement

- Winners announced on *April 2nd, 2026, via social media.*
- There will be a chance to read your poetry on April 18th,2026, at our Awards Poetry reading show.
- Prizes distributed within *30 days* of announcement.

10. Contact Information

For questions or assistance, contact:

Riley.Home@greenfieldin.gov