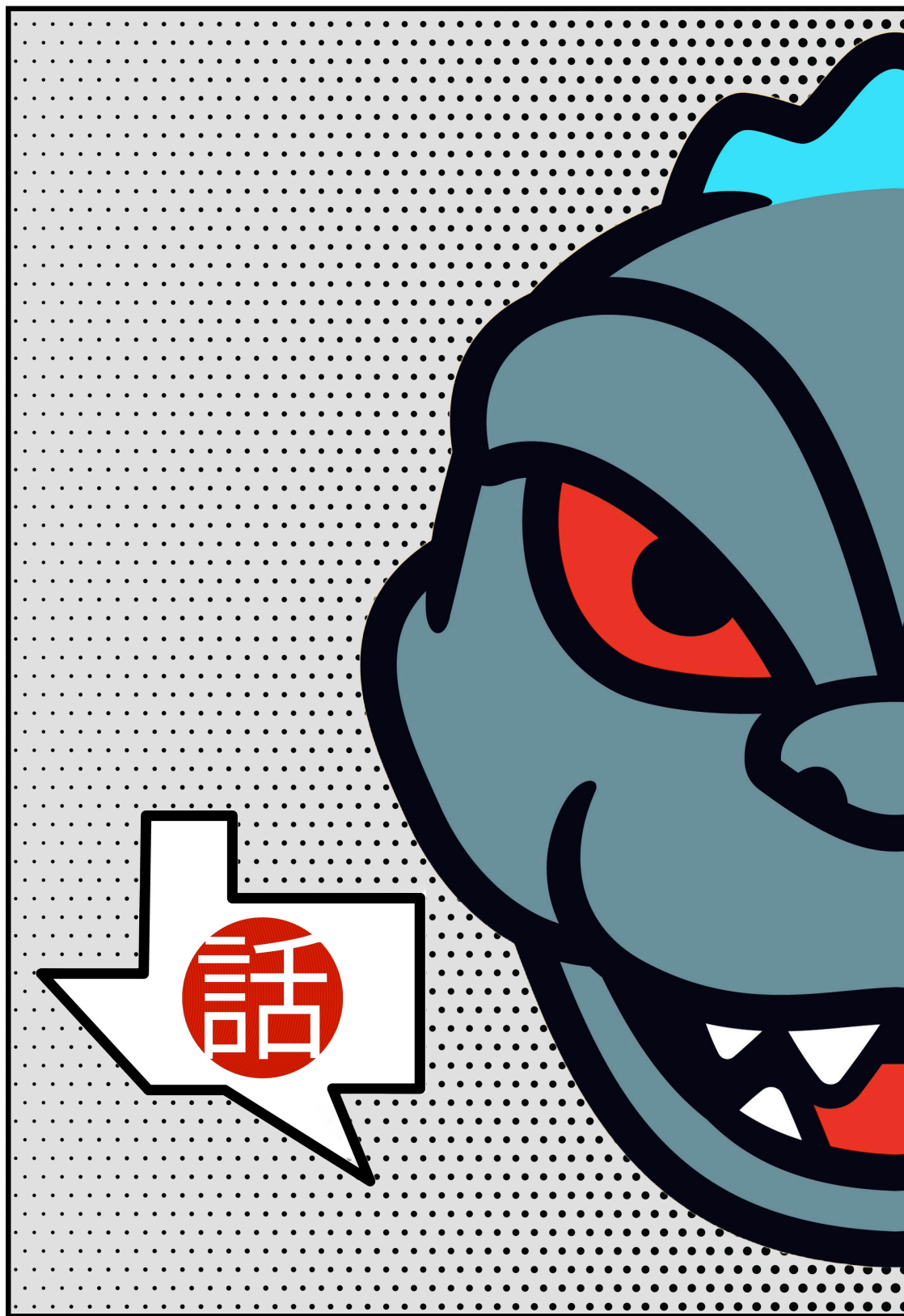


2024

ハンドブック



presented by:



JAPAN  
AMERICA  
SOCIETY OF  
HOUSTON



## INTRODUCTION

The Texas State Japanese Language Speech Contest is an important part of the Japan-America Society of Houston's educational programming. Jointly hosted with the Consulate-General of Japan in Houston, the Contest provides Japanese language learners with speaking experience as well as the opportunity to learn by observing proficient speakers.

The goal of the Texas State Japanese Language Speech Contest is to inspire and empower Japanese language learners at all levels of study and of all ages to challenge themselves to become more effective communicators and leaders using Japanese, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth.

This handbook contains the rules and standard procedures that will be followed by the 2024 Texas State Japanese Language Speech Contest. The purpose of this handbook is to help students, their parents and teachers better understand and prepare for the contest.

The handbook includes:

- Event information
- Registration information
- Contestant responsibilities
- Eligibility requirements
- Division descriptions
- Contest rules
- Contest materials
- Contest conduct guidelines

Please read the handbook carefully and thoroughly. By doing so, you will help ensure a fair speech contest and an enjoyable event for all.

The Japan-America Society of Houston reserves the right to make the final decision on all matters related to the 2024 Texas State Japanese Language Speech Contest.

Inquiries should be submitted to Lauren Hurley by email at [lhurley@jas-hou.org](mailto:lhurley@jas-hou.org).

Note: Unless otherwise stated, this Handbook applies only to the Texas State contest. Please contact your local organizing body for information about the regional contests in Austin, Dallas/Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio.



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## GENERAL EVENT INFORMATION

The 2024 Texas State Japanese Language Speech Contest will be held in-person.

Date                      MARCH 9, 2024 (SAT)  
Times TBA

Location                Rice University  
Anderson-Clarke Center  
6100 Main Street  
Houston, TX 77005

### Attire

We ask that all participants please dress appropriately and professionally and that their parents, teachers and guests do the same.

### Food

Participants will be provided light refreshments at the State competition. Parents, teachers and guests are welcome to bring their own refreshments but must consume them outside the competition venue.

### Audience Etiquette

Students have worked very hard to prepare for both the Regional and State Contest. Please make sure you and those you may invite respect that effort by being courteous audience members. That means silencing cell phones, games, iPods and other electronics. Please, ***TURN OFF ELECTRONICS*** to ensure contestants and judges are not distracted.

Also, please limit the times you enter and exit the auditorium. Contestants may easily lose their concentration if you are frequently whispering, shuffling past others, or opening and closing doors. We ask that unless it is an emergency you and your guests only enter and exit during the pause between performances.



## REGISTRATION INFORMATION

### Eligible Contestants

Those who have placed first or second in their divisions of the Regional Contests are eligible to register for the State Contest. In the event that a first or second place contestant is not able to attend the State Contest, the third-place contestant will be notified and given the opportunity to compete.

The Open Division is not offered at the regional level, so there are no additional criteria for eligibility in this category.

### Registration Instructions

The form for registration will be made available on the Japan-America Society of Houston (JASH) website at [www.jas-hou.org](http://www.jas-hou.org).

Along with the completion of a registration form, contestants will be required to submit a Certification of Eligibility bearing signatures of (i) the student contestant, (ii) a parent/guardian of the student contestant (in the event the student contestant is a minor), and (iii) the teacher of the student contestant certifying that the rules regarding eligibility have been read and understood.

### Registration

Registration will **open on Monday, February 19, 2024**, and **close on Friday, March 1, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.** Those who do not complete registration by the closing date will not be eligible to compete in a scored performance and third place contestants will be notified if first and second place finishers do not register in a timely manner.

*Due to limited time, all contestants, including those in third place, should be prepared to register on short notice.*

### Late Registration

**LATE REGISTRATION WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED FOR A SCORED PERFORMANCE.** Students who attend the State Competition and have not registered will be allowed to perform although they will not be scored and will not place in the competition.



## **TEACHER/ STUDENT/ PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Teachers**

Teachers must review this Handbook and encourage students to enroll in the category that best suits them and for which they are eligible to participate, taking into consideration years of formal and non-formal study, skill-level, and past participation. Teachers must notify the Speech Contest Committee if they become aware of a student registering inappropriately. Teachers must certify that their students are eligible to participate in the Contest.

### **Students**

Students must review this Handbook and challenge themselves to enroll in the category that most suits them and for which they are eligible. Students must divulge all useful and truthful information to the Speech Contest Committee when registering for the State Contest. Students must certify that they are eligible to participate in the Contest.

### **Parents**

Parents must review this Handbook to verify and certify that their children seeking to participate in the Contest are eligible to do so.

Note: Students who are found to have enrolled in an inappropriate division may be barred from competing at the State level or may be relocated to the Open division. Japan-America Society of Houston reserves the right to make decisions on a case-by-case basis.



## ELIGIBILITY AND DIVISION GUIDELINES

	Beginner	Intermediate
General Info . . .	POETRY	HAIKU
Target Participant	1st Year H.S. Japanese Language Students / 1st & 2nd Year J.H.S Japanese Language Students	1st & 2nd Year H.S. Japanese Language Students / 2nd & 3rd Year J.H.S. Japanese Language Students
Number of Times Participant Can Enter Category	Once for H.S. Students / Twice for J.H.S. Students	Once for H.S. Students / Twice for J.H.S. Students
Time Requirement	1:00 – 2:00 min	0:30 – 2:00 min
	Beginner	Intermediate
Students must . . .	POETRY	HAIKU
Create original content	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Memorize content	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Not be a native speaker	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Not live in a household in which Japanese is spoken more than any other language	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Not have lived in Japan more than six months after age six	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Not be a past or present <i>Hoshuko</i> student	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Be a Texas resident or enrolled in a Texas school.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



## ELIGIBILITY AND DIVISION GUIDELINES

	Intermed. – Adv.	Advanced	
General Info . . .	OPEN	AURORA	COLLEGE / UNIVERSITY
Target Participant	Adults, Grad Students, <i>Hoshuko</i> students, etc.	3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Year H.S. Japanese Language Students	College and University Japanese Language Students
Number of Times Participants Can Enter Category	Unlimited *see pg. 9 for additional notes	Twice	Unlimited
Time Requirement	2:00 – 3:00 min	2:00 – 3:00 min	2:00 – 3:00 min
	Intermed. – Adv.	Advanced	
Students must . . .	OPEN	AURORA	COLLEGE / UNIVERSITY
Create original content	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Memorize content	*see pg. 9 for additional notes	*see pg. 9 for additional notes	*see pg. 9 for additional notes
Not be a native speaker	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Not live in a household in which Japanese is spoken more than any other language	N/A	N/A	N/A
Not have lived in Japan more than six months after age six	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Not be a past or present <i>Hoshuko</i> student	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A
Be a Texas resident or enrolled in a Texas school.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	*Be currently or previously enrolled in a Japanese class as an undergraduate student.





## DIVISION DESCRIPTIONS | BEGINNER & LOWER INTERMEDIATE

### **Beginner**

Poetry: The poetry division is aimed at beginner Japanese language learners.

Contestants must memorize the provided poem before the competition. During the competition, each contestant must state the title and author of the poem before reciting it from memory. *The use of notes is not allowed.*

*\*See pg. 14 for the poem.*

### **Intermediate**

Haiku: The Haiku division is aimed at beginner and lower-intermediate Japanese language learners.

Contestants must choose one of the haikus provided by The Japanese Teachers Association of Texas and compose one original, complementary haiku. This haiku must be submitted during registration. During the competition, contestants must (i) recite the provided haiku twice, (ii) present their explanation **in English**, and (iii) recite their original haiku twice. *The use of notes is not allowed and explanations should be in English.*

*\*See the Haiku Appendix on pgs. 15-18 for more details.*

## JUDGING CRITERIA

Division	Evaluation Criteria
Poetry	<p>Poetry recitation will be judged on: (i) content; (ii) presentation; (iii) delivery and (iv) overall impression.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to pronunciation, flow and clarity, accuracy of memorization, and overall delivery and presentation.</p>
Haiku	<p>Haiku will be judged on: (i) content; (ii) language ability/structure; (iii) presentation and delivery; and (iv) overall impression.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to structure (5-7-5 <i>mora</i>, and a <i>kigo</i>), understanding of original haiku, vocabulary, creativity, connection between original and new haiku, and expression of students' personal feelings.</p>



## DIVISION DESCRIPTIONS | UPPER INTERMEDIATE & ADVANCED

### Upper Intermediate & Advanced

Aurora: The Aurora division is open to upper-intermediate and advanced Japanese language learners.

The speech theme should be chosen by the contestant, and the student must state the speech title before reciting it during the competition. Upon completion of the speech, contestants will be asked several questions in Japanese about the speech by voting judges. Contestants must respond to the questions in Japanese. *The use of notes is allowed, but those who do not rely on notes will be scored more favorably.*

College/Uni: The College/University division is open to undergraduate students.

The speech theme should be chosen by the contestant, and the student must state the speech title before reciting it during the competition. Upon completion of the speech, contestants will be asked several questions in Japanese about the speech by voting judges. Contestants must respond to the questions in Japanese. *The use of notes is allowed, but those who do not rely on notes will be scored more favorably.*

Open: The Open division is open to life-long learners, graduate students, *hoshuko* students, or students who are otherwise ineligible to compete in lower contest divisions. Past grand prize winners are ineligible to participate for the three-year period following their winning year.

The speech theme should be chosen by the contestant, and the student must state the speech title before reciting it during the competition. Upon completion of the speech, contestants will be asked several questions in Japanese about the speech by voting judges. Contestants must respond to the questions in Japanese. *The use of notes is allowed, but those who do not rely on notes will be scored more favorably.*



## JUDGING CRITERIA

Division	Evaluation Criteria
Aurora	<p>Free speeches will be judged on: (i) content; (ii) presentation and delivery; (iii) language ability; (iv) overall impression; and (v) Q&amp;A interview responses.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to pronunciation, command of grammar and vocabulary, creativity, clarity, comprehensibility, enthusiasm, and ability to understand/answer questions from judges.</p>
College / University	<p>Free speeches will be judged on: (i) content; (ii) presentation and delivery; (iii) language ability; (iv) overall impression; and (v) Q&amp;A interview responses.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to pronunciation, command of grammar and vocabulary, creativity, clarity, comprehensibility, enthusiasm, and ability to understand/answer questions from judges.</p>
Open	<p>Free speeches will be judged on: (i) content; (ii) presentation and delivery; (iii) language ability; (iv) overall impression; and (v) Q&amp;A interview responses.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to pronunciation, command of grammar and vocabulary, creativity, clarity, comprehensibility, enthusiasm, and ability to understand/answer questions from judges.</p>

Note: As contestants select their own speech topics, some of the content may be personal in nature and contain language, ideas, or beliefs that some audiences may consider sensitive. Contestants should not significantly change the content, topic, or meaning of their speech from the Regional Contest to the State Contest. Updates to grammar, style, speech organization, or other fundamental aspects of their speech are acceptable. Audio from the Regional Contest will be submitted ahead of the State Contest to ensure continuity.



## PROTESTS & DISQUALIFICATIONS

All decisions of the voting judges\* are final, and scores will not be released.

Protests are limited to eligibility, originality, and reference to another contestant's speech and can only be lodged by voting judges and/or contestants. Protests from audience members will not be considered.

Before a contestant can be disqualified on the basis of originality, the contestant must be given an opportunity to respond to the voting judges. A majority of the voting judges must concur in the decision to disqualify.

Japan-America Society of Houston reserves the right to disqualify a contestant on the basis of eligibility.

**Note:** Voting judges have no prior knowledge of contestants, their schools, or their presentations.



## CONDUCT ON STAGE AND MICROPHONES

### Introduce Yourself

*\*Please do not identify your school when introducing yourself to judges.\**

No matter your division, you should introduce yourself to the judges on stage respectfully and in Japanese. Give them your name; for example: コーレン・ハーリーです. Do not mention the region from which you are competing or your school. If you know a more formal or advanced way to introduce yourself, you are free to do so. End your introduction with the typical よろしくおねがいします and a small bow. Then begin your presentation.

### Make Sure Judges Can Hear You and Speak Clearly

Contestants should prepare to give their presentation at a standing microphone. Practice speaking at a comfortable pace and in front of many different people - not too slow and not too fast. Although you are speaking in Japanese and most judges are native Japanese speakers, they want to clearly hear your thoughts and your pronunciation. Try to stand about 1-2 inches from the microphone and pay attention to the judges' faces. If they are sitting forward or look confused, speak up or move closer to the microphone.

### Be Mindful of Gestures

While use of gestures can enhance language production, the appropriate frequency, magnitude and type of gesture must be considered. Gestures, even if planned, must flow naturally as you speak. Choreographed and theatrical gestures may look unnatural and detract from your speech and your score.



## HOW TO ANSWER QUESTIONS DURING Q&A

The Aurora, College/University, and Open Divisions require you to answer questions in Japanese after your speech.

For these categories, after your speech judges will engage you in a short conversation about your speech. This is the style of Q&A used at the national level for which some participants wish to prepare. Following this short conversation, the judges may ask additional direct questions.

In order to prepare for the Q&A, we suggest you become familiar with the following types of responses so that you can employ them when necessary:

- 1) すみません。もういちどゆっくりおねがいします。

*Excuse me. Can you say that one more time, slowly?*

This is a simple and polite way to ask the judge to repeat the question slowly and clearly. Do not be afraid to use this phrase liberally.

- 2) すみません。「ことば」のいみは何ですか。

*Excuse me. What does (this word) mean?*

Use this phrase with a specific word. Do not simply say you don't understand the question because that will end your interview prematurely. If judges know which word is difficult for you, they may change their phrasing and vocabulary choice to better match your speaking ability.

Prepare to answer questions based on your speech by becoming familiar with vocabulary based on your speech topic or that you use in your speech.

You may also be asked some of these more familiar sample questions:

1. 日本語が好きですか。どうしてですか。
2. 日本語のクラスはいつありますか。
3. 日本の食べ物が好きですか。何が一番おいしいと思いますか。
4. どうして日本語を勉強していますか。
5. 日本で一番したいことは何ですか。
6. 日本にどんなおみやげを持って行きますか。
7. アメリカについて日本人に何を知ってほしいですか。

## POEM FOR POETRY DIVISION

たびじ ふじいかぜ  
「旅路」 藤井風

あの日のことは 忘れてね  
幼<sup>おさな</sup>すぎて 知<sup>し</sup>らなかった  
恥<sup>は</sup>ずかしくて 消<sup>き</sup>えたいけど  
もう大丈夫 旅路<sup>だいいじょうぶ</sup>は続<sup>つづ</sup>く  
あの日のことは 忘<sup>わす</sup>れるね  
みんなだって 彷徨<sup>さまよ</sup>ってた  
この宇宙<sup>うちゅう</sup>が 教室<sup>きょうしつ</sup>なら  
隣<sup>となり</sup>同士<sup>どうし</sup> 学<sup>まな</sup>びは続<sup>つづ</sup>く  
果<sup>は</sup>てしないと 思<sup>おも</sup>えても  
いつか終<sup>お</sup>わりがくると  
知<sup>し</sup>らなかった  
昨<sup>きのう</sup>日<sup>う</sup>までより  
優<sup>やさ</sup>しくなれる気<sup>き</sup>がした  
あーあ  
僕<sup>ぼく</sup>らはまだ先<sup>さき</sup>の長<sup>なが</sup>い旅<sup>たび</sup>の中<sup>なか</sup>で  
誰<sup>だれ</sup>かを愛<sup>あい</sup>したり 忘<sup>わす</sup>れたり  
いろい<sup>ろ</sup>ろあるけど  
あーあ  
いつの間<sup>ま</sup>にかこの日<sup>ひ</sup>さえも懐<sup>なつ</sup>かしんで  
全<sup>すべ</sup>てを笑<sup>わら</sup>うだろう  
全<sup>すべ</sup>てを愛<sup>あい</sup>すだろう

## WHAT IS HAIKU?

A haiku is a traditional, three-line Japanese poem. Each line has a set number of *mora* that follows the pattern 5-7-5.

“What is a *mora*,” you ask? A *mora* is the Japanese version of a syllable, but it is counted differently than in English. Each hiragana or katakana character is counted as one *mora*.

For example: はいく has three *mora*. する has two *mora*. まって can have either two or three *mora*.

Small つ are sometimes counted and sometimes not. This decision is up to the poet/participant.

Even though when you say these words out loud you may be tempted to count according to English syllables, *mora* must be based upon the correct spelling of the word in Japanese.

Also, haiku traditionally include a seasonal word called a *kigo*. A *kigo* indicates the season that the haiku takes place in and helps to evoke an emotion in the audience. *Kigo* are traditionally nouns, but we will accept any part of speech such as *cold*, *sweaty*, *rafting* which all indicate a specific season. *Kigo* can also be more subtle like *football*, *green*, *hot chocolate*, *watermelon* which also indicate specific seasons. Select a single *kigo* and try to write your haiku around it. You will be asked to identify your *kigo* on your application. *Kigo* do not have to be too obvious. Feel free to use *kigo* that has significance in your life or culture.

## WHAT ARE THE HAIKU CRITERIA?

Making a haiku sounds difficult because it is a high form of art in Japanese society.

**Do not worry!** We do not expect you to be Matsuo Basho.

Each haiku must adhere to the 5-7-5 standard and include *kigo*, a season word. Beyond this, use your creativity! We look forward to seeing serious haiku, thoughtful haiku, silly, funny and clever haiku. Show us your personality.

## HOW WILL HAIKU BE JUDGED?

Haiku will be judged on the following criteria:

- Structure (5-7-5 *mora* and a *kigo*)
- Understanding of the provided haiku





- Connection between provided haiku and new haiku (which can be explained in English explanation)
- Expression of students' personal feelings

### WHAT IS THE STRUCTURE OF THE HAIKU DIVISION?

First, select one of the provided haiku prompts to be your inspiration. These haiku are written by the masters! Pick one that you really enjoy. Then, write one original haiku that is inspired by the provided haiku you selected. Your finalized haiku must be submitted during registration and cannot be changed after this point. At this point you will also be asked to identify your *kigo*. It is possible that there may be multiple *kigo*, or seasonal words, in your haiku, but only one should be the focus of your poem. Be careful to craft your haiku around the *kigo* that you identify for us during registration.

*Your haiku are meant to be derivative works. They do not have to match the style or level of grammar present in the provided haiku.*

To make the connection between your haiku and the provided haiku clear, you will be asked to give a three to four sentence explanation, **in English**, of your inspiration and feelings on these haiku before you begin the recitation of your original poem.

This short explanation helps to give the audience and judges context and insight into the meaning of your poem. Because haiku are short and are often abstract, please take this opportunity to give a clear subject to your recitation.

### HELPFUL HAIKU HINTS

Many haiku use the short form of verbs instead of the long form because it uses fewer *mora*. For instance, **します** uses three *mora*, but **する** only uses two. This can free up space for a particle or possibly even another word. Conversely, if you are a few *mora* short, consider using the long form.

Embrace the use of short phrases. Sometimes writing full sentences will work well, but many haiku, as you will see in the examples, use short phrases or individual words to express greater emotions.

Katakana is appropriate to use when natural or when it serves the purpose of the haiku. Names, places, holidays and the odd word or phrase that you are used to seeing in katakana can be used without penalty in your haiku. However, we caution you against being too liberal with katakana. If a word or phrase is more generally seen in Japanese, it is best to use Japanese.

Write your haiku without using kanji and ensure that your spelling is correct. This will help you create a haiku with the right number of *mora*. Kanji should be added later when submitting the final haiku during registration.

## STUDENT HAIKU EXAMPLES

あさぎり 朝霧は ・ まつ 松の木にある ・ なつ 夏の山 - セイヂィ・ワード

The morning fog / on the mountain trees / summer mountains – Sadie Ward

You can see the performance of Ms. Sadie Ward of McCullen High School in Austin as an additional example. Ms. Ward won 2<sup>nd</sup> Prize in the 2016 State Speech Contest Haiku Division.

## PROVIDED HAIKU

Select one poem to serve as the inspiration for your original haiku.

春

こばやし いっさ  
小林 一茶

すずめ こ  
雀の子

そこのけそこのけ

うま とお  
お馬が通る

夏

まつお ばしょう  
松尾 芭蕉

しずか  
閑さや

いわ い  
岩にしみ入る

せみ こえ  
蝉の声

秋

まさおか し き  
正岡 子規

かき え  
柿くへば

かね な  
鐘が鳴るなり

ほうりゅうじ  
法隆寺

冬

まつお ばしょう  
松尾 芭蕉

はつゆき  
初雪や

すいせん は  
水仙の葉の

たわむまで

## RECITATION FORMAT

First, introduce yourself in Japanese. Then recite twice the provided haiku you have chosen and the poet's name, with a short pause between each recitation. Next, present a three to four sentence explanation of your haiku in English. Lastly, present your original haiku twice, with a short pause between each recitation. Taking your time is not only good for your presentation, but helpful to judges. You may be asked questions about your haiku, in English, by the judges after your reading. The entire recitation must be done from memory.

For example:

ローレンハリーです。よろしくおねがいします。

*(slight pause before quoting famous haiku)*

てん ち  
天も地も

(x2) なしただ雪の

ふ  
降りしきる

— かじわら はしん

*(slight pause before sharing explanation)*

I'm originally from Indiana, which is very far north. The first haiku reminds me of how winter can seem unending in Indiana and in the colder months people almost forget the happy feeling of spring. I decided to write my haiku about that feeling of sadness and anticipation I get in the middle of winter.

*(slight pause before sharing original haiku)*

さび  
寂しすぎ

*Too lonely*

(x2) ひさびさはる  
久々の春

*A spring from long ago*

はやき  
早く来て

*Come quickly*

*(slight pause before closing)*

ありがとうございます。