United States District Court
District of Arizona - Phoenix Division
Semiquincentennial Celebration
Art & Poetry Contest
(Kindergarten – Fifth Grade)

Rules and Guidelines for the Art & Poetry Contest (K–5)

Who May Enter: The 2026 United States District Court for the District of Arizona, Phoenix Division, Semiquincentennial Celebration Art & Poetry Contest is open to students in kindergarten through 5th grade in following Phoenix counties: Maricopa, Pinal, La Paz, and Gila. Students attending public, private, parochial and charter schools, and home-schooled students of equivalent grade status, are invited to participate.

Prizes:

- First Place: $200
- Second Place: $100
- Third Place: $40

Prompt: *Write or create a piece of artwork about what freedom means to you.*

Artwork Format: There are no limitations to artwork size or medium; however, artwork must be transportable.

Poetry Format: Poems must be submitted in a PDF file.

Contest Submissions: A photo of your artwork or a PDF file of your poem along with a completed and signed entry form must be submitted to Phoenix Semiquincentennial Website. One submission per student—students may submit a piece of art or a poem, but not both. You will receive email confirmation after successful submission of your materials.

Students must retain their original artwork or a copy of their poem pending confirmation of contest finalists. Finalists must be able to transport their original artwork to the Sandra Day O'Connor U.S. Courthouse, 401 W. Washington Street, Phoenix, AZ 85003 at the date and time announced by contest organizers.

Contest Duration: Entries will be accepted starting **February 4, 2026**. Winners will be announced in May. The deadline to submit entries is **April 30, 2026**, by 11:59 p.m. MST.

Judging Criteria:

1. **Connection to the Declaration of Independence;**

2. **Effort and thoughtfulness;**

3. **Creativity, originality, and depth; and**

4. **Reflection on freedom, equality, or self-governance.**

Release Forms: Each entry will require submission of an entry form allowing the District of Arizona to display your artwork and poetry at public events, District of Arizona Courthouses, and/or the Court's public website.

Important Notice on Originality and Use of AI:

Your submission must be your own original work, written or created entirely by you and not generated by or written with the help of artificial intelligence (AI) tools. Submissions may be reviewed using AI-detection tools or other verification methods to ensure authenticity. Submissions found to include AI-generated content will be disqualified.

Compliance with Other Contest Requirements:

Providing any false information, failing to meet the submission deadline, or failing to adhere to other contest rules may result in disqualification.

Questions: Email **artandpoetryphx-pct@azd.uscourts.gov** and include "Question" in the subject line.