



RULES FOR SLAM POETRY JUDGES

- 1) **Five judges award scores.** Each judge will be given a means to write a score after each poet. The highest and lowest scores are discarded and the three middle scores are added up as the final score. The team with the highest cumulative score at the end of the fourth round wins the slam.
- 2) **Decimals are your friends.** Please, please be sure to carry to the first decimal point in your score as often as possible. Only add one digit after the decimal. (e.g. 4.5 for something terrible or 9.7 for something terrific). You are of course at liberty to award the maximum 10 at any given moment!
- 3) **Be consistent!** If you give the first poem a seven and the other judges give it a nine, that doesn't mean you should give the second poem a nine unless it's a lot better than the first poem. In fact, if it's not as good as the first poem, we count on you to give it a lower score!
- 4) **Be aware of the "score creep"** this is when scores start to rise as the slam progresses and it sucks for the poets who go up first. Do your best to stay consistent with your scores. Meaning, if you give a piece a 10, ensure that it was much better than the 8.7 you may have given in the first round.
- 5) **Be true to your sentiments.** It's okay to have a prejudice that favors the true and the beautiful over the mundane and superficial or vice versa. Score how your heart tells you to.
- 6) **Be conscientious of audience participation.** Do remember they are entitled to boo and/or applaud the judges for their scores. However, it is up to **you** whether or not the poet's connection with the audience impacts your score. Remember, they don't have the score sheet, you do.
- 7) **Give the better poem the better score.** Self-explanatory.
- 8) **Treat your scores very seriously!** You'll be surprised to know that slams have been won by as little as 0.1 points and some times 1st, 2nd and 3rd places can end up with a decimal point away from each other. Although the high and low scores will be thrown out, don't ever make a joke out of your score thinking that it doesn't really matter.
- 9) **Respect the poets.** The poets have worked hard to get here; treat them with respect. They are the show, not you (although there could be no show without you).
- 10) **Standards for judging.** Each judge decides for him/her self what standards to apply in arriving at a score for any one performance. Generally, however, it is suggested that judges take into account, content, performance, delivery, connection with the audience into account. Just stay consistent!
- 11) **Scores are FINAL!!!** The MC will not announce the scores until all five score sheets are lifted in the air. Once you put yours in the air you have committed to this score and can not change it.