



Supported by



Open to KS1 - KS5

DEADLINE
Monday 16 March 2026

Competition open to ISA Members' schools only
Visit the ISA website for more information

isaschools.org.uk | isaarts@isaschools.org.uk

ISA
ARTS

Eligibility

Only schools whose Head is a Member with ISA are eligible to enter ISA competitions. Any pupils competing must be on the main school's admissions register, on the date of the event.

Open to Year 1 to 13. Our year groups are based on the UK national curriculum, for more information and to check the correct year group for your students see [here](#). Please ensure you enter pupils according to the UK system, even if your own school's age group system differs.

At ISA, we are committed to making our opportunities accessible, we welcome applications from all pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities. If your pupil(s), those with an EHCP or on the school's SEND register, are working at a level that differs from their age group's key stage, or if your school or student focuses on development and skills rather than year groups, please contact us.

Alternative formats of these guidelines are available on request. Please notify us at the earliest opportunity so we can provide the document accordingly, if required.

Age group categories

Schools can submit a maximum of four entries per year group. Cursive or non-cursive entries are welcome. We encourage schools to run a competition in house and put through their best projects. (Please note that some year groups might be combined for the judging process).

- Year 1
- Year 2
- Year 3
- Year 4
- Year 5
- Year 6
- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Year 10
- Year 11
- Year 12
- Year 13

How to enter

Please see below the set poems for each age category. Individual entries only, no groups.

Entries must be submitted via the online entry form [here](#) on the ISA website as JPEG or PDF format by **Monday 16 March 2026** at the latest.

We strongly encourage students to use the templates provided on our website. However, if they wish to use a different paper it's important for each entry must be titled in the following format: school name followed by the pupil's name e.g. SchoolName_JohnSmith and their year group so we can identify the entry easily.

Judging criteria

- Legibility – how easily the writing can be read and the formatting of the letters making them legible.
- Fluency – smoothness and flow of the writing. For the older years, has the writing style been defined and flow naturally
- Competence – Spacing between letters and words, consistency of letter size, is it along a straight line
- Accuracy and neatness
- Correct punctuation – Capital letters and punctuation in the right place
- For the older years, has the writing style been defined and flow naturally

Rules

- Please ensure entries are complete with the name of the pupil, school name and their category clearly written in the bottom right of the page they are submitting.
- Entries should be on one single sheet of plain white A4 paper no more 500 words, with a suitable margin. Line guides can be accessed on our website, if desired, but spacing should be planned to suit the individual pupil's handwriting.
- Handwriting can be in pencil or black or blue ink.
- Entries must include all the text from the sample, including the title and the name of the author/poet if this is known.

Optional poems for ISA Handwriting Competition 2026

Year 1-2

Pam and Sam

Pam the ram like to eat ham
With Sam the ram who likes to eat jam
Sam the ram gives jam to Pam
And Pam the ram gives ham to Sam

Year 3-4

Spring

The welcome spring
Is a beautiful thing.

Birds on the wing
All start to sing

Warm breezes blowing
And daffodils glowing!

By Anonymous

Year 5-6

Seashell
Shell at my ear -
come share how I hear
busy old sea in whispers.

Moans rise from ancient depths
in ocean sighs
like crowds of ghost monsters.

Waves lash and fall -
in roars and squalls
with all a mystery ahhh!

By James Berry

Year 7-9

Meeting at Night

The grey sea and the long black land;
And the yellow half-moon large and low;
And the startled little waves that leap
In fiery ringlets from their sleep,
As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.

Then a mile of warm sea-scented beach;
Three fields to cross till a farm appears;
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match,
And a voice less loud, thro' its joys and fears,
Then the two hearts beating each to each!

By Robert Browning

Year 10-13

Since there's no help, come let us kiss and part,
Nay, I have done: you get no more of me,
And I am glad, yea glad with all my heart
That thus so cleanly I myself can free,
Shake hands forever, cancel all our vows,
And when we meet at any time again,
Be it not seen in either of our brows
That we one jot of former love retain.
Now at the last gasp of love's latest breath,
When his pulse failing, passion speechless lies,
When faith is kneeling by his bed of death,
And innocence is closing up his eyes,
Now if thou wouldst, when all have given him over,
From death to life thou mightst him yet recover.

By Michael Drayton

If you have any questions, please contact isaarts@isaschools.org.uk