



English in Action

The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition

To: High School Educators Across the Country
From: Education Department, ESU

Memo to Teachers Interested in Participating in the 2019 ESU National Shakespeare Competition: Online

Dear Educator,

The English-Speaking Union invites you, your students and your school community to participate in the **English-Speaking Union (ESU) National Shakespeare Competition!**

Since 1982, the **ESU National Shakespeare Competition** has partnered with teachers to make Shakespeare's work come alive. This unique, performance-based education program provides students with multiple points of entry to engage with rigorous material and practice essential skills such as critical thinking and close reading. High school students from across the country read, analyze, perform and recite Shakespearean monologues and sonnets. They connect with like-minded peers, increase their self-confidence, and relate to classic works. In the thirty-six year history of the competition, the ESU has helped educators empower nearly 350,000 students to create and convey their own unique perspectives to a live audience.

New for 2019 - The ESU National Shakespeare Competition: Online

This year the ESU has expanded the competition to include all students, nationwide, regardless of branch affiliation. Using readily available technology like cell phone cameras, schools without a participating local branch of the ESU can join in the fun and be eligible to compete in a live, semi-finals round via video chat. Winners of the online semi-finals will travel, all-expenses paid to New York City for the finals. In 2018, finalists performed on stage at the world-famous Lincoln Center Theater. Past national winners have received scholarships to the Young Actor's Summer School at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London or the American Shakespeare Center Theatre Camp in Staunton, Virginia, as well as cash prizes. Please visit http://www.esuus.org/esu/programs/shakespeare_competition/ to learn more.

The English-Speaking Union of the United States was founded in 1920, on the conviction that a shared language could bring individuals together, despite differences in nationality or background. Entering its second century, ESU is dedicated to supporting teachers and learners of English through programs such as the National Shakespeare Competition, our Teachers Learning Abroad (TLab) program, and the ESU Middle School Debate League. Like you, we understand that mastery of the English language is vital to students' success in the 21st century. Please visit our website at <https://www.esuus.org/esu/> to learn more.

If your school hasn't taken part in our competition, we hope that you will consider offering this exciting, educational opportunity at your school this year. To past participants, we extend our deep appreciation for your dedication to both your students and to this program. We look forward to working with you to make 2019 our best competition ever!

[Please click here to visit our ESU National Shakespeare Competition: Online FAQs for more information!](#)

Thank you for your interest in the English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition. Please contact us at shakespeare@esuus.org or call 212-818-1200 ext. 212 with any questions. We look forward to working with you this year!