

Poetry for NEANDERTHALS

ORIGINAL GAME DESIGN BY FRANCESCA SLADE AND JACOB MATTHEWS. DEVELOPED BY EXPLODING KITTENS.

HEY! DON'T READ THESE RULES!

Reading is the worst way to learn how to play a game. Instead go online and watch our instructional video:

POETRY4NEANDERTHALS.COM/HOW



→ WHAT IS THIS?!? ←

It's good to be a Poet.
It's good to be a Neanderthal.
What isn't good is being both of those things at the same time.

As a **Poet**, you'd love to recite thoughtful prose like:

The mighty Woolly Mammoth makes a mockery of my tiny hairless body.

But as a **Neanderthal**, you're only capable of saying:

The most strong big thing with trunk and much hair make fun of my too-small bald bones and skin.

The trouble for you is that as a Neanderthal, you don't know any words that are more than one syllable.

The trouble for your team is that they're listening to a Neanderthal recite poetry.

CONTENTS

- Poetry Cards (200)
- 90-Second Sand Timer (1)
- Poet Point Slate (1)
- Team Point Slate (1)
- NO! Stick (1)
- Repair Patch (1)
- Team Point Slate (1)

GOAL

Score the most points by correctly interpreting words and phrases.

SETUP

- 1** Form two teams (**Team Glad** and **Team Mad**).

→ It's ok if one team has more players than the other.

2 or 3 players: read these instructions, then see the other side.

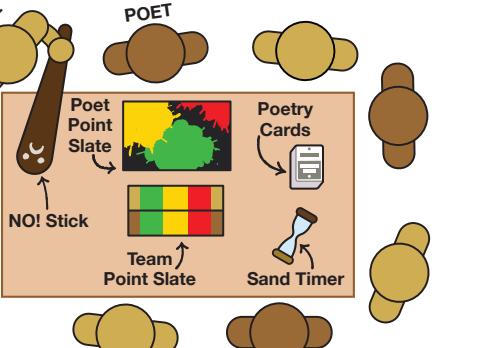
- 2** Sit around the table in alternating team positions (someone from your team, then their team, etc.)

- 3** Team Glad goes first and picks a player from their team to be the first Poet. Put the Poet Point Slate in front of them (see image below).

- 4** The Poet chooses which color side of the Poetry Cards (gray or orange) all players will read from for the whole game. Put the Poetry Cards in a stack on the table with that color face down.

- 5** A player from Team Mad gets the **NO! Stick**, and will be the first Judge.

- 6** Set up the table like this:



GAMEPLAY

If you're the Poet, the opposing team starts the timer while you take the first Poetry Card. Begin trying to get your team to say either the 1-point word (easy) or the 3-point phrase (hard) using only one-syllable words.



Everyone on your team can shout out as many words as they'd like, all at the same time when trying to guess the word or phrase. When someone is correct, say "Yes!" and put the card on the appropriate spot on the Poet Point Slate.

Starting with the 1-point word: If you start with the 1-point word and get it correct, shout "Yes!" and then you can either put your card in the 1-point spot or try for the 3-point phrase. However, if along the way you accidentally break any rules, you lose the earned point and must put the card on the "Oops" (-1 point) spot of the Poet Point Slate.

Starting with the 3-point phrase: If you start with the 3-point phrase and your team says the 1-point word, shout "Yes!" and follow the rules above as if you had started with the 1-point word.

Skipping: If you want to skip a card before earning any points, you can say "Skip!" and put the card on the "Oops" (-1 point) spot of the Poet Point Slate.

NOTE: You can never earn more than 3 points from a card.

In all cases, the same Poet keeps drawing new Poetry Cards to continue playing until the timer runs out.

You Can

- You can only speak using words with one syllable.
- You can say any word on your card AFTER a Guesser has said that word.

You Can't

- You can't say any word, part of any word, or any form of a word that is on the Poetry Card (unless someone on your team has already said it out loud).
- You can't use gestures/charades.
- You can't use "sounds like" or "rhymes with."
- You can't use initials or abbreviations.
- You can't use other languages.

We're sure there's more that we just didn't think of, but just remember — **If it feels like cheating, it's cheating!**

The NO! Stick

When it's the other team's turn, a player on your team will be the Judge. If you are the Judge, grab the No! Stick and stand beside the Poet. If they violate any of the rules above, shout "**NO!**" and hit them gently(ish) with the **NO! Stick**. The Poet must then put the Poetry Card in their hand on the "Oops" (-1 point) spot on the Poet Point Slate.



ENDING YOUR TURN

Each Poet's turn continues until the timer runs out. If you've earned any points for the Poetry Card in your hand, put the card in the appropriate space on the Poet Point Slate. Then, move ALL the cards from the Poet Point Slate to the right spots on the Team Point Slate. It's now the other team's turn.

WINNING

When both teams have had 3 turns, calculate each team's score using the cards on the Team Point Slate. The team with the most points wins!

TIES

In the event of a tie, play one more round. Repeat as necessary.

CHALLENGES

If the Poet feels they were penalized incorrectly, they shout "Wait!" and turn the timer on its side. Decide as a group if the challenge is valid. We're not going to give you a lot of rules here...but as you aggressively debate about personal pronunciation, accents, and *that one rule* about syllables you learned in school, please try to remember that this is just a game and really probably not that important.

If you're one of those people who MUST HAVE the official answer, head over to How Many Syllables™:

www.HowManySyllables.com

After a challenge is resolved, turn the timer upright and continue.



! PRO TIP !



Avoid saying single words and then waiting for your team to guess!
Instead, try speaking in full sentences like this example.

Example

Now you know all the rules, but before playing, let's look at an example!

You say:

This thing pick up dirt.
I use to make floor nice.



Your teammates shout:

Broom!

So you say:

No, this thing
scare my dog.

Your teammates shout:

Vacuum!

You now have the 1-point word, so you call it out and say:

Yes!

Vacuum!

1 point!

But you still want to go for the 3-point phrase, so you say:

Next word is
man who job
is to wash.

Your teammates shout:

Cleaner,
Vacuum Cleaner!

You say:

Yes!

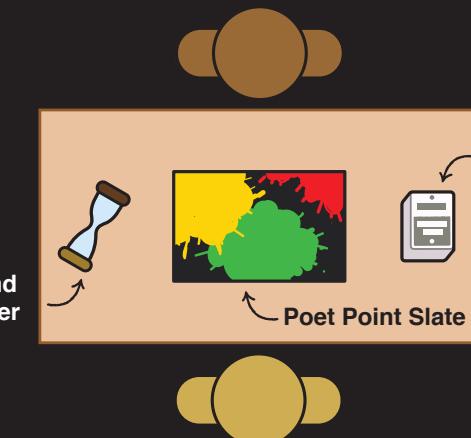
Then put the card in the 3-point area of the Poet Point Slate and draw another card to continue.

PLAYING WITH 2 OR 3 PLAYERS

2 Players

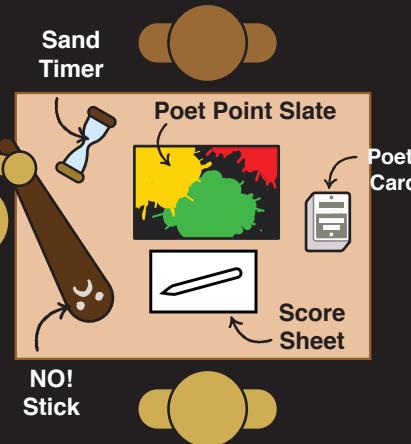
Both players are on the same team and switch off being the Poet and Guesser. Play with just the Poet Point Slate (you don't need the Team Point Slate).

Your table should look like this:



3 Players

Players rotate between three roles: Poet, Guesser, and Judge. Poet and Guesser use only the Poet Point Slate. They cooperatively earn 1, 3, or -1 points per card. The Judge makes sure no rules are violated and uses the **NO! Stick**.



Play as normal, then, at the end of each round, the Poet and Guesser calculate the points on the Poet Point Slate and record the same number of points for each of them on the score sheet. (Use a separate piece of paper.)

Next, discard all used Poetry Cards into the box, rotate each player's role, and start the next round.

After each player has been the Poet twice, the player with the most points on the score sheet wins!

For example:

Player A and Player B begin the game as Poet and Guesser; they each earn and record 10 points.

Next, Player B and Player C are the Poet and Guesser and each earn 5 points. Finally, Players A and C are the Poet and Guesser and each earn 20 points.

At this point in the game, Player A has 30 points, Player B has 15 points, and Player C has 25 points.