

# STEP

## Prepare your judges

Your judges need briefing about their roles and responsibilities. Getting them together in advance of the competition is the most effective way of doing this, but if that's not possible at least make sure they are briefed well in writing.

Judges need to know how the scoring system works and the judging criteria they need to apply. Copies of the scoring sheets and judging criteria are available as PDF downloads from the website, and are reproduced in this handbook. Send them a copy in advance and explain how the rounds of the competition will be organised. Invite questions.

Judges can prepare – together or on their own – to score poem performances. In the “About the competition” section of the website there are videos in which Andrew Motion talks through a couple of performances from the 2013 contest, explaining what each of the students does well. Judges could also watch some videos of finalists in previous contests available on the website [poetrybyheart.org.uk](http://poetrybyheart.org.uk). Having a go at scoring a few will help judges “get their eye in” before your event.

See the photocopy masters at the back of this handbook OR ask the Poetry By Heart office for our extra judging support pack.