To: All Teachers

Plans are now underway for this year’s Shakespeare Competition sponsored by the English-Speaking Union (ESU), a non-profit, worldwide organization. If you participated last year we welcome you back and would like to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation for your hard work and commitment. If you have not taken part in the Competition and may be hearing about it for the first time, we hope that you will consider offering this exciting and worthwhile no fee program in your school. Participation in the National Shakespeare Competition can help students and teachers meet the nationally adopted Common Core (CCRA) state standards in English language arts. For details on how the competition fits with national guidelines for curriculum and instruction you can find the information here: http://esu-cincinnati.org/pdfs/2015-memo-on-competition-english-standards.pdf.

The local segment of the Shakespeare Competition, sponsored by the Cincinnati Branch of the ESU, is open to students in the 9th-12th grades in the Greater Cincinnati area. The winner of the Cincinnati competition goes on to compete in the national competition in New York City. The winner of the ESU National Shakespeare Competition receives an all expense-paid trip to study acting in Shakespeare’s homeland, London, England.

The purpose of the competition is to interest today's students in Shakespeare, his dramatic and poetic art, his universality, and his use of the English language. In preparing a passage from one of the plays for recitation, a student can bring Shakespeare to life and learn to express his words with feeling, comprehension and clarity.

The local competition has three stages. Participating schools hold their own internal competitions to select a single winner to represent the school. School winners will enter the local semifinals on Saturday, February 27, 2016 where six semifinalists will be chosen. Then these six semifinalists will enter the local finals on the following Saturday, March 5, 2016.

The Cincinnati winner receives a $1000 scholarship and is flown to New York City late April 2016 (exact dates TBA to represent Cincinnati in the National Competition. Second prize is $500; third prize, $250, and the three remaining semi-finalists each receive special awards as well. Teachers of the three winning students will receive $400, $200, and $150, respectively. All semifinalists will be awarded certificates.

Registration will be available by mail or online. Details of the local semifinal and final competitions and further information regarding the monologues and sonnets for contestants will be available MID NOVEMBER at our website (www.esu-cincinnati.org/shakespeare.htm) for those schools that register. For those teachers who prefer mail, the same information will be sent upon receipt of your registration. Please note that no matter what method of registration you might use, the “Conditions of Participation” form must be signed and mailed back to us.

We hope you will give your students the opportunity to participate in this year’s Shakespeare Competition. Attached to this information you will find: Guidelines for the School Competitions, Competition Calendar, Entry Form, and Conditions of Participation. You are being sent a poster for your school bulletin board the week of Sept 9, 2015.

PLEASE POST THE POSTER. If you would like additional posters just give one of us a call. The English-Speaking Union hopes to extend the opportunity to study and perform Shakespeare to every eligible student in the Cincinnati area so if you are not the best contact for the competition, please pass this information on to another interested English or drama teacher. We will be happy to answer your questions. Drop us a line at Shakespeare@esu-cincinnati.org or if you call during the day, please leave a message and a number where we can reach you in the evening, as we cannot return calls during the day. Bob Amott and Janice Flanagan 859-620-1885.
Information on the speeches to be prepared by the students and on the criteria for judging will be provided after we receive the competition entry forms. Please note that students will be required to prepare only one speech for the school competition. The student may choose from a list of passages taken from a designated list of plays that will be supplied to you. A confirmation of your registration will then be e-mailed or mailed (your preference) the week of November 16, 2015. The confirmation will include information regarding the sonnets and monologues for this year’s competition.

Students chosen to participate in the semi-finals are required to prepare a Shakespearean sonnet as well as a monologue. Sonnet choices will be provided with the list of monologue choices so that teachers may require recitation of the sonnet in the school competition if they wish to do so. Many teachers work the Shakespeare Competition into the curriculum so that their students are especially encouraged to study Shakespeare.

The school competition may be held at any time that fits into the school schedule. Some schools use a class period for the competition; others make it a separate event or feature it in an assembly. We have found that Shakespeare competitions held in a general assembly engender the most enthusiasm and reach the most students. At least three students should compete. Essential elements are an audience and judges.

There should be no fewer than three judges and they should have some knowledge of Shakespeare. Their number should include one or more teachers and can include parents or friends of the school. Some high schools have permitted the classes serving as audiences to help judge the school competition. The ESU Shakespeare Committee urges you to allow as many students as possible to see and hear their peers perform Shakespeare.

To encourage interest in our unique, culturally and financially rewarding competition, the poster we are sending the week of Sept. 7 was designed by a student at the Art Academy of Cincinnati for your bulletin board. Please post the poster where it will attract the attention of your English and drama students. We are hoping to reach more high school students every year. Extra posters are available from the committee.

For students with documented hearing, learning, physical, and/or visual disabilities, appropriate arrangements will be made for the Branch Competition. You should advise the Shakespeare Competition Committee of any such disabilities prior to the Branch Competition.

Schools are asked to notify the Cincinnati Branch of ESU of their intent to participate by November 2, 2015 by registering online or by mail using the enclosed forms. Note: The form “Conditions of Participation” requires a signature so please sign and return by conventional mail. This letter, containing the forms (First Mailing), is only available online at www.esu-cincinnati.org/shakespeare.htm. In order to compete in the competition these forms need to be received by the deadline above. School competitions must be held and the school winner reported to the ESU on or before February 1, 2016.
November 2, 2015 –
Deadline for receipt of “Competition Entry Form” & “Conditions of Participation Form” (available online at [www.esu-cincinnati.org/shakespeare.htm](http://www.esu-cincinnati.org/shakespeare.htm).) Remember: Entry form can be emailed but Participation form **must** be via U.S, regular mail.

**Week of November 16, 2015 –**
Participating schools will be provided a link to the Monologue and Sonnet selections for the 2016 competition.

February 1, 2016 –
Deadline for receipt of “School Results Form”.

**Week of February 8, 2016 –**
Participating schools will receive acknowledgement of participation and a link to competition information.

**Saturday, February 27, 2016 (Six finalists will be selected) –**
Semi Final competition, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park.

**Saturday, March 5, 2016 –**
Final competition, Cincinnati Shakespeare Company.

**Late April 2016 (Date TBA) –**
National competition in New York City.
REGISTER ONLINE AT www.esu-cincinnati.org/shakespeare.htm OR BY MAIL USING THIS FORM BY November 2, 2015.

MAILING ADDRESS: MS. JANICE FLANAGAN & MR. BOB AMOTT
1074 JACKSON ROAD
PARK HILLS, KY  41011

NAME OF SCHOOL: ____________________________________________________________
ADDRESS: ________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________ ZIP: ____________
TELEPHONE: ___________________________ FAX: ___________________________

TEACHER IN CHARGE OF INTERNAL COMPETITION:
_________________________________________ e-mail: ________________

HOURS WHEN THE TEACHER MAY BE REACHED BY TELEPHONE AT SCHOOL:
_____________________________________________________________________

PLEASE PROVIDE A PHONE NUMBER FOR LAST MINUTE UPDATES. We had an emergency cancelation of the competition in the past and were unable to reach some teachers and students. Also if you need to talk to us about the competition we can only return phone calls in the evening. Thank you.

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER: ________________________________

*PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU WANT FUTURE INFORMATION BY MAIL OR E-MAIL BY PROVIDING ADDRESS BELOW.
_____________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________

If you have any questions telephone Janice Flanagan or Bob Amott at (859) 620-1885. Please note that this is a home phone number as neither of us can take calls during the day at work. If you need for us to call you please be sure to leave an evening number so that we may call you back. You can also e-mail us at Shakespeare@esu-cincinnati.org.
The Principal or Head of each participating school is **required** to sign this form and return it to the Cincinnati Branch of the English-Speaking Union by **November 2, 2015.**

I AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. The Competition is open to students who are **permanent residents** of the United States enrolled **full-time** in grades 9, 10, 11, or 12 in the Cincinnati area public, parochial and/or private schools and home-schooled groups. Each school competition must involve a minimum of three students. Home-schooled participants must also emerge from a competition of three or more students.

2. The Competition **excludes** students who are paid to appear in a professional or semi-professional theatrical performance during the 2015/2016 school year.

3. The Competition is open to students irrespective of sex, religion or national or ethnic origin.

4. Each participating school agrees to hold an internal Shakespeare competition from which a winner will be selected to go forward to the semifinals.

5. Participating schools agree to be bound by the decisions of the Panels of Judges in the semifinal and final stages of the Competition.

Date Signed: ______________________

Principal/Head: ______________________

School: ______________________

Please return this form to Ms. Janice Flanagan and Mr. Bob Amott, 1074 Jackson Rd., Park Hills, KY 41011. *(This form must be snail mailed in. No e-mails.)*