Poetry FOR NEANDERTHALS

Original Edition

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DEVELOPED BY EXPLODING KITTENS

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

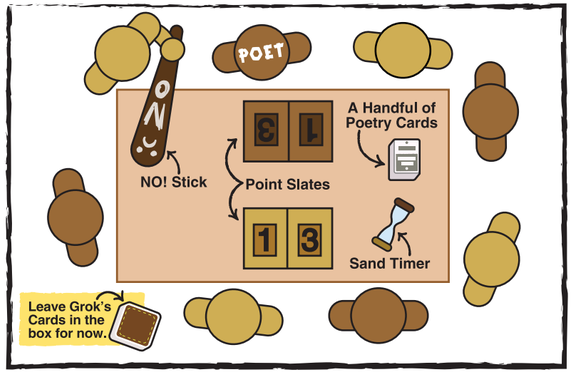
- Poetry Cards (200)
- 90 Second Sand Timer (1)
- Point Slates (2)
- NO! Stick (1)
- Grok's Words of Love & Sad Cards (20)

GOAL

Score the most points by correctly interpreting words and phrases.

SETUP

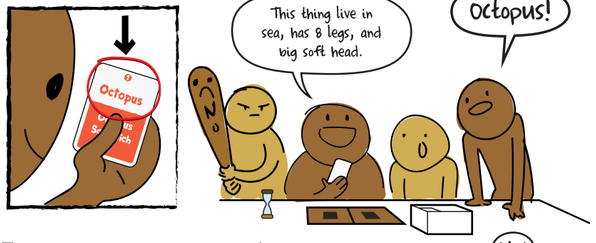
1. Form two teams (**Team Glad** and **Team Mad**) and give each team their Point Slate (see image below). It's okay if one team has an extra player.
2. Sit around the table in alternating team positions.
3. Set up the table like this:



4. Team Glad goes first and picks a player to be the first Neanderthal Poet.
5. The Poet chooses which side of the Poetry Cards all players will read from (gray or orange) for the whole game.
6. A player from Team Mad who can see the card in the Poet's hand gets the ***NO! Stick.***

GAMEPLAY

If you are 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 words with one syllable.



Everyone on your team can shout out words 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 your Point Slate (1 point or 3 points).



- **Starting with the 1-point word:** If you start with the 1-point word and get it correctly shout, "YES!" and then you can either collect your points 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 other team's 1-point spot.
- **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 give the card to the other team to put on the 1-point spot on their Point Slate.

In all cases, draw a new Poetry Card to continue playing until the timer runs out.

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

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 is the other team's turn, 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.** Then take the Poetry Card in the Poet's hand and put it on the 1-point spot on your own 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 your Point Slate. It is now the other team's turn.

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WINNING

When all players have had one turn as Poet (or both teams have had the same number of turns as Poet), add up the points on each team's Point Slate. The team with the most points wins the game.

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. Then decide as a group what to do with the Poetry Card in question. 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™:
https://www.howmanysyllables.com

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

Here's a completely optional (but fun) thing to try at the end of the game.

Grok's Words of Love and Sad Cards

The winning team should go through their Poetry Cards and pick their 3 favorites. Take a "Grok's Words of Love and Sad" Card at random and decide which of your three chosen cards to insert into the three blanks (you can use either the 1-point words or the 3-point phrases). Then read your poem out loud to the group. The losing team gets to hold the ***NO! Stick*** during your recital and will decide whether or not to use it based on the quality of your poem.

Reciting a poem has no impact on points or scoring. It exists purely as poetry should: to convey sophisticated emotions to your fellow Neanderthals.



PRACTICE

Now you know all the rules, but before playing, try one practice round!



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 your Point Slate and draw another card to continue.

PRO TIP:

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

PLAYING WITH 2 OR 3 PLAYERS

2 Players

Both players are on the same team and switch off being the Poet. Play with a single Point Slate. Any cards you skip count as **-1** point. After each player has been the Poet three times, add up your points:

- 10 points or less: This Team Bad
- 11-30 points: Team Is So-So At Make Words
- 31-49 points: Team Have Much Big Brain
- 50+ points or more: A Stunning Evolutionary Exemplar

3 Players

Players rotate the three roles: Poet, Player-with-Stick, and Guesser. The Poet and Guesser have one of the Point Slates, while the Player-with-Stick has the other.

The Poet and the Guesser earn points as normal and add cards to their Point Slate. The Player-with-Stick earns points as normal (i.e., each time the Poet skips or gets caught saying an illegal word).

At the end of a turn, both teams add up the points they've earned on a piece of paper where each player's individual scores are kept. (The Poet and Guesser earn the same number of points each round.)

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

After each player has been the Poet three times, the player with the most points wins.



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