This years’ Spoken Word competition “Words on Fire” will take place in Columbus Ohio on May 3rd at the Columbus Museum of Art. Approximate start and finish: 10am to 4pm.

1. **Basic Information:**
   1. This event is for 8-12th graders.
   2. Each school may send **2 students per category** except the team event which can include up to **4 students**.
   3. There will be **four categories**: Free Form Spoken Word, Recited Spoken Word, Persuasive Speech, and a Team Event – a winner will be selected for each category as well as a second and third place winner. No props or music are allowed. Participants present in front of judges and a live audience, and memorization is optional, though encouraged.
      1. **Free Form Spoken Word** – Students prepare an original work based on the theme “Words on Fire.” Maximum time: 3 minutes.
      2. **Recited Spoken Word** – Students choose a published work, which they cite, (no original work in this category) to recite based on the theme “Words on Fire.” Maximum time: 3 minutes.
      3. **Persuasive Speech** – Students will be given a persuasive topic based on the theme, “Words on Fire,” a month and a half prior (**March 21st**) to the competition. Students write a speech with the help of their advisor/teacher and then present in front of audience and judges. Time limits: 2-4 minutes.
      4. **Team Event** – Students prepare an original work and present together a unified message on the theme “Words on Fire.” Maximum time for each participant: 2 minutes. For example, a team of three people may have up to 6 minutes.
   4. You must submit the names of your students and a copy of their piece to Andy Flaherty at [aflaherty@conceptschools.org](mailto:aflaherty@conceptschools.org) no later than **April 4, 2014**. Entry forms will be available on March 1st. A list of participants will be announced once entries have been reviewed.
   5. Student names may not be changed after the deadline for submission.
   6. Rubrics (Free form and recited share rubric, persuasive and team will have their own rubrics) are attached.
   7. Number of rotations/participants per grade level will be announced in January.
   8. There will be a **$100 fee per school** to cover event costs.
2. **Ways to prepare in school:**
   1. Consider the following extra-curricular suggestions:
      1. Form an after school Spoken Word club.
      2. Hold regular meeting times, once a week or twice a month, etc.
      3. Watch Spoken Word and Persuasive Speakers and teach students how to evaluate good performances.
      4. Have students write and perform for extended periods of time.
      5. Hold your own local school competitions.
      6. Connect to your English classrooms during units on persuasive/argument writing and poetry.
   2. Obtain additional resources through your Instructional Coordinators:
      1. <http://www.louderthanabombfilm.com/>
      2. <http://www.saywhatonline.org/>
      3. <http://www.amazon.com/Spoken-Word-Revolution-PB-Audio/dp/1402202466>

These resources are key to understanding Spoken Word concepts and are invaluable tools to help you set up your after school clubs and connect the competition to your classrooms. One of our teachers, Abbey Pinkerton, does a wonderful lesson with her students as they are watching “Louder Than a Bomb,” where they use something from the film – a line, a topic, or their reaction to create poems of at least 10 – 30 lines for each segment they view.

* 1. Idea Banks for School Programs and Classroom Instruction:
     1. Involve all students, not just poets – create a newsroom atmosphere, perhaps one day a week, where students take photographs and write stories about poets, teams, or the value of poems to make meaning in our lives.
     2. Create a connection between spoken word and popular social media site and music videos, etc. to encourage students to compare the similarities and differences.
     3. Create an on-going event environment in the school to show this as a viable entertainment event just as sports and music already are.

A great website that I have used to get started in the classroom is:

<http://www.visualthesaurus.com/cm/teachersatwork/song-of-myself-spoken-word-poetry-in-the-classroom/>

One teacher’s example of how to lay out lesson plans can be found at:

<http://marshawaldman.com/MarshaWaldman.com/English_files/SpokenWrod_lesson_plan.pdf>