

2023-24 Sijo Competition Winners

The East Asian Studies Center at The Ohio State University and the Korea Foundation present the winners of the 2023-24 Kentucky-Ohio Sijo Student Competition for K-12 students to honor the traditional Korean form of poetry.

High School Division:

First Place:

Allison Noggle

11th Grade, Wayne Trace High School

Waves smack the side of a boat throwing a man over the rails,
Thrashing in the freezing water, darkness closely approaching,
With his head barely above water, he remembers to stand.

Elementary/Middle School Division:

First Place:

Briar Shepherd

8th Grade, Ironton Middle School

A field, flowers, a yellow dress, childlike excitement, six
Momma happy, laughing, taking pictures, my rock, everything
Now I'm 13 in my bed, and I can't get out of my own head

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Elementary/Middle School Division:

Runner-up:

Piper Anderson

7th Grade, Heath Middle School

Graceful dancers glide across the water//to assume first position.
Along the neck as the wind hums a tune //and pirouette on through
The leap about to start//and the ballet of the swans began.

Honorable Mention (partial):

Clara Rudmann

8th Grade, Ironton Middle School

The bright pretty colors filled the pages, splashing on the canvas.
The colors filled all of the empty white spaces, creating life.
With power, the painting faded into the darkness of night.

Carleigh Holston

8th Grade, Ironton Middle School

The intercom switched on, It spoke about a lock down drill.
Calmly, I walked to the side of the room and talked to my friends.
The next day, our school was on the news. Fifty kids were found dead.

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Honorable Mention (continued):

Laylen Autherson

8th Grade, Ironton Middle School

She was pretty, he told his friend; the room filled with an aura.
The boy felt heavy; as his breath flustered the girl still sat there.
Then she turns to meet his eyes, together they're both surprised.

Eli Williams

8th Grade, West End School

Luka is a top NBA player
He dropped seventy-three
No one else but Luka is doing that
Point blank period
Cleanest whiteboy in the league
Dude dropped sixty-twenty and twenty

Siera Johnson

8th Grade, Ironton Middle School

In fields amidst chaos where poppies weep, echoes of strife resound,
In war's cruel embrace, brave souls collide, humanity's cries abound.
Hope faintly whispers in the rubble, peace's fragile ground.

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High School Division:

Runners-up:

Elyse Langton

12th Grade, Delaware Christian School

Books, papers bound together, creating worlds different from mine,
Worlds I can escape to when reality is too oppressive.
I get lost in these worlds, sometimes confusing them with mine.

Jessie Khuu

12th Grade, Licking Heights High School

Awake in morning darkness, the moon still shines as sounds begin.
The horses voice their hunger, their impatience does not tell time.
Now sleeping late 'til sun light comes, quietness falls in empty fields.

Honorable Mention:

Abbey Hupp

10th Grade, Millersport High School

Laughing echos off of the walls, his eyes scrunched up in joy
The lines on his face telling the deepest stories of his life
and as I tear up over his urn; i yearn for these memories again

Stefany Lopez-Castillo

9th Grade, Wayne Trace High School

Writing soothes this baffling part of me that begs to be heard.
Scattered thoughts flee onto paper and open a distinct world.
A world where I am understood, heard, and not hidden behind words.
