

Wade Wright: Poetry Slam Winner Review

It's easy to talk to Wade Wright. As I sat with him in the Literary Magazine's office to conduct the interview for this review, there was no awkward tension or weirdness. It makes sense that he would so personable. After all, he did win the South Pointe poetry recitation last fall, and poetry recitation essentially boils down to communication skills.

Wade started doing spoken word and poetry recitations in the eighth grade. Since he is currently a junior, that makes for four years of practice. It's no wonder that he's so good at deciphering poetry and communicating its meaning to the masses. It turns out Wade never really gets nervous before a slam, he simply asks himself, "Will being nervous help me do better?" When the answer is no, he stops being nervous with the reasoning that there's no reason that a person should be nervous when they're doing something they're passionate about. Wade is clearly passionate about poetry and self-expression.

When I asked Wade what his favorite poems are and to talk about the poems he recited at region, he could speak in detail. Wade's favorite poem is *Fish* by Matt Coonan. He showed the poem to me, and it's awesome. It has fantastic wordplay, and the whole poem is an intricately insightful extended metaphor. At region he recited two poems, *Barber* by Larry Bradley and *Insomnia* by Dante Gabriel Rossetti. He was also pleased to show those, and would absolutely recommend reading them to anyone who'll take the time to look them up. He recommends writing poetry or spoken word to "anybody who has something inside that they want to say".

There is a common misconception that poetry recitation and spoken word are the same thing, but Wade quickly showed the distinctions between the two. Spoken word is an outpour of emotion that comes directly from the heart of the speaker. It is an original piece. A poetry recitation is when the person doing the recitation attempts to understand, interpret, and then communicate a poem written by another poet.

Wade participates in both spoken word and poetry recitations. However, his poetry recitations are what is getting him recognition right now. Wade just won the Region Slam. Next, he will be one of ten kids in the state that competes in South Carolina's State Slam. If he wins the State Slam (and it seems like his odds are good), he will go on to compete in the "Poetry Out Loud Poetry Slam" along with 51 other teens from different states for the grand prize of \$20,000.

In another vein, Wade writes slam poetry. Slam poetry is a whole different genre of poetry. It is made to be spoken- not read. He has written and performed pieces titled *Strength*, *Dear Grandpa*, and *ADHD*. You might have seen him perform at our school's last poetry slam or at the Blumenthal Theatre in Charlotte. If you've never seen spoken word performed before, maybe ask Wade about it or go see him perform sometime. You won't be disappointed.