

Let's Chicago Just Writers Write! Association Conference

Let's Just Read! Live Lit Event Tips for Reading Your Work Out Loud

Shawn Shiflett • shiflett1@me.com

On Saturday, June 20, 2026, you will have the opportunity to read your prose or poetry out loud (**350 words or fewer**) to fellow writers at the cocktail party after **Let's Just Write! Chicago Writers Association Conference**. The party will begin at 5:00 pm.

NOTE: The cocktail party is an optional event and requires a separate \$45 fee. You must be registered for the party to participate as a reader.

Each participant will have **2 minutes** to read his or her piece, so **planning is key**. Tips for reading your work out loud:

1. When it's your turn to read we will introduce you with your name. After your intro, **begin your reading**. There is no time for you to set up your reading or tell the audience anything about yourself. You can network afterwards to connect with people who want to know more about you and your work.
2. Whatever you choose to read, even it's a selection from a larger piece, make sure to choose something that stands on its own. Your **2 minutes** is FOR THE READING ONLY.
3. **Select something you can read in 90 seconds or less**. This might be three short poems or two pages (double-space, 12-point font, New Courier preferred). Whatever you choose, practice reading it through without going over ninety seconds. **Why only 90 seconds and not 2 minutes?** The first few times you read, your reading will often be quicker than ideal. That's okay, you're practicing, taking in the rhythm of the words. Just remember that rushing your reading almost never enhances your impact on an audience.
4. **AGAIN**, make sure you don't go over the **two minute limit**. There are other people who want to share their work, and sticking to the limit is simply considerate.
5. If nerves hit, remember that this audience is comprised of writers like you who are there to support and encourage you. Like your family, they're the perfect audience.
6. Most importantly, have fun!