

**OKLAHOMA NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH LANGUAGE FAIR 2026**  
**Traditional Song with Native American Language**  
*Category Description and Guidelines*

Students sing traditional songs in Native languages. Traditional songs, as opposed to modern songs, include hymns, anthems, old children's songs, folk songs and other types of songs sung in a traditional manner. These songs inspire solemn reverence, bolster customs and link singers to their heritage. Singing in Native languages preserves traditions and transmits oral history. Young language learners benefit from singing by attaching culture to words, exploring lyrical creativity and navigating language sound patterns with or without musical accompaniment.

| Category         | Age Ranges |     |     |      | Size  |            | Award  |        |       |
|------------------|------------|-----|-----|------|-------|------------|--------|--------|-------|
|                  | P-2        | 3-5 | 6-8 | 9-12 | Group | Individual | Trophy | Ribbon | Medal |
| Traditional Song | ✓          | ✓   | ✓   | ✓    | ✓     | ✓          | ✓      |        | ✓     |

- This is an in-person live category. You must be pre-registered and present to perform and to receive awards.

## DO

- ✓ Pre-register online
- ✓ Focus on **NATIVE LANGUAGE USE**
- ✓ Keep a five-minute time limit (plus two minutes for set-up and exiting the stage)
- ✓ Use props, costumes, and Native regalia

## DON'T

- ✗ Use scripts, notes or cheat sheets
- ✗ Speak or sing in English
- ✗ Have teachers on stage; teachers cannot assist or direct performances
- ✗ Use food, animals or organic materials (grass, bark, leaves) in the performance

## Judging Performances

A panel of at least three elders, Native language teachers and/or Native musicians will judge performances on these criteria:

- Amount of Native American language used
- Presentation and poise of performance
- Ease and comfort of language use
- Spirit of performance

## Notes

- Give us your background music cd at registration; we'll take care of the audio.
- You can dance if you want to but remember that it's about language use.
- You must pre-register to receive t-shirts and awards. Please do so as early as possible.
- Limited rehearsal space will be available at the Fair. This space is shared with other groups.
- Contact us if you're concerned about whether your props and regalia count as "organic."
- Group sizes and performance venues are subject to change based on registered entries.
- Students performing in multiple categories may experience scheduling conflicts. We try to avoid this but help us out and let us know if you see a potential problem.
- Questions? Comments? Need Help? Contact us at [onaylf.samnoblemuseum@ou.edu](mailto:onaylf.samnoblemuseum@ou.edu) or at (405) 325-7588.