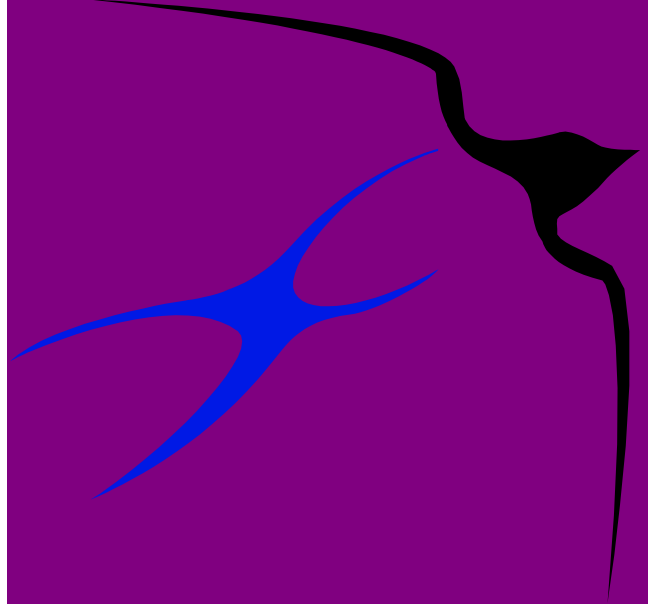


# FIRST NATIONS POETRY CONTEST WINNERS 2015, 2016, 2017



## VOLUME 3

A collection of our Aboriginal Poetry Contest Winning Poems for the years: 2015, 2016, 2017

The First Nations Education Department of School District No. 27 first started our Aboriginal Poetry Contest in 2009 in celebration of National Aboriginal Day. We proudly introduce our winners and share their poems.

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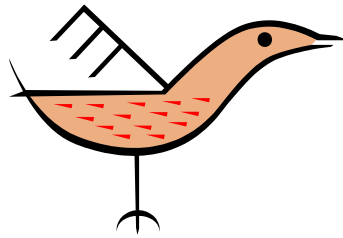
Winners from the Secondary Grades



Chapter One  
2015

# Primary Grades

(Kindergarten, Grade 1, 2, 3)



**1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner for Primary Grades in 2015**  
**Amaya Doucette, Grade 3**  
**Cataline Elementary School**  
**Teacher: Ms. Fushtey**

# Moonlight

THE WIND HOWLING BESIDE YOU  
FALLS DRIPPING DOWN THE ROCKS  
CRUNCHY LEAVES,  
THE VOICES SCARE YOU.  
THE WOLVES HOWLING AT NIGHT  
HERDS RUNNING BESIDE YOU  
TRYING TO SLEEP  
OWL SOUNDS  
MOONLIGHT CREATURES  
GOODNIGHT.



**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner for Primary Grades 2015**  
**Leana Schneider, Grade 1**  
**Tatla Lake Elementary/Jr. Secondary School**  
**Teacher: Clare Gordon, Principal**

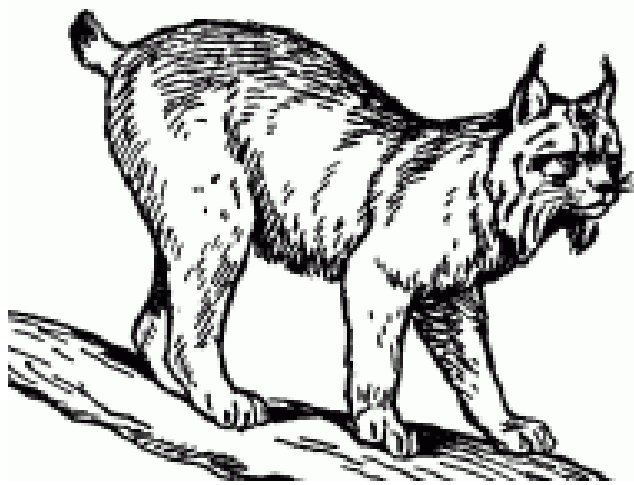
## **LYNX**

Pointed ears

Hunter

Light as snow

Quieter than people



**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winner for Primary Grades 2015**  
**Chloe Shewchuk, Grade 2**  
**Horse Lake Elementary School**  
**Teacher: Mrs. Hopson**

# The Black Ravens

Coal black eyes,  
black as black can be,  
soaring through the night sky,  
watching them fly,  
Ravens tell your secret to me!



**4<sup>th</sup> Place Winner for Primary Grades 2015**  
**Nateo Thompson, Grade 2**  
**Tatla Lake Elementary/Jr. Secondary School**  
**Teacher: Clare Gordon, Principal**

# Making a Fire

Sapwood, pinewood  
Rustle in the trees  
Dada cuts the wood,  
Mom prepares a fire,  
Grandpa and I get some kindling,  
Nona takes a stick and makes it warm.

We take turns  
Blowing at the fire to light it.  
We sit at the fire telling stories.  
Grandpa says to make a fire it needs to have oxygen.  
Thank you family for helping make a fire.



2015

# Intermediate Grades

(Grades 4,5,6)





**1st Place Winner for Intermediate Grades 2015**  
**Antonia Westwick, Grade 6**  
**Sacred Heart Catholic School**  
**Teacher: Miss Kalligosfyris**

Native Poem

I am a drum  
I am made out of deer hide and sinew

I am a drum  
I sing the song of the wolf

I am a drum  
I sing the song of the loon

I am a drum  
I sing the songs of my people



**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner for Intermediate Grades 2015**  
**Haileigh Archie, Grade 6**  
**100 Mile Elementary School**  
**Teacher: Penny Reid**

# **AS IF**

You sit outside and scream at the rain, as if it was the one  
who caused the pain

You yell at the wind that blows around, as if it was the one  
who pulled the trigger and knocked you down

You yell at the lightning with the electrical charge, as if it  
was the one you left in the dark

You yell at the thunder with the booming voice, as if it's  
telling you, made the wrong choice

You're crying at the clouds that layer the sky, as if it was  
the one that's making you cry



**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winner of Intermediate Grades 2015**  
**Adrien Zimmerman, Grade 6**  
**Sacred Heart Catholic School**  
**Teacher: Miss Kalligosfyris**

## **No Longer**

**No longer can you find a place where the air does not smell of  
smog**

**Nor do the rivers run**

**No longer can you taste the sweetness of berries  
For all things now taste of money**

**No longer can we feel the wind because  
The walls of greed keep it from us**

**No longer can we touch the earth  
For it is covered in concrete**

**Now that we know of the galaxies above us  
And the magma below us**

**Now that we know  
What do we feel?**



**4<sup>th</sup> Place Winner of Intermediate Grades 2015**  
**Madelyn Feist, Grade 4**  
**Cataline Elementary School**  
**Teacher: Tanis Stewart**

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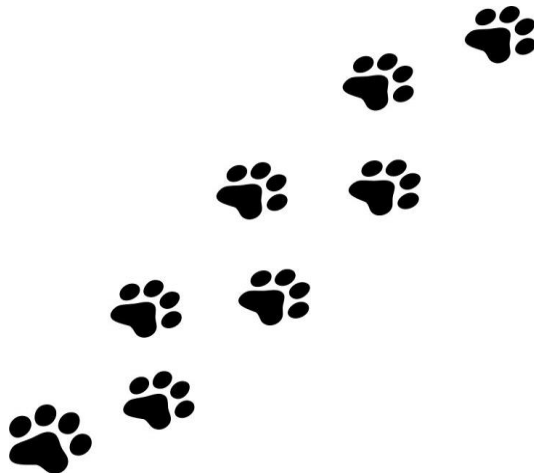
# Spirits of the Night

I am fearless, smart.  
A spirit in the night.

My paw prints shimmer in the moonlight on the newly  
fallen snow.

I am watching from the woods. Yes I am watching.

Watching you from within the forest.  
On a moonlit winter's night.



# SECONDARY GRADES

2015  
(GRADES 7 TO 12)



**1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner of Secondary Grades 2015**  
**Amber Urquhart, Grade 12**  
**Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)**  
**Teacher: Ms. MacKinnon**

## **Sparks Fly**

Enlightening the moonlit sky.  
Crackling, burning, flickering, glowing with delight.  
Smoke dances around telling a legend of its own,  
Air full of spirit and tradition.  
Flames roaring, igniting our past.  
For tonight we sing and chant.  
Under the night sky, our stories are kept.  
Safe, peacefully, our ancestors can be at rest.  
Our minds are open, so we can absorb our history.  
Let's speak softly to the mountains, and sing calmly to the sea.  
Let's give pride and honor, and respect our past.  
Sparks are fading, fire blackened, cooling off to embers.  
Midnight lays down to rest, morning sky rises, painted shades of mauve and  
cobalt.  
Stories of the night become whispers, dampened by the new day.  
But we have not forgotten, what there was to say.  
Sparks fly, enlightening the moonlit sky.  
Crackling, burning, flickering, glowing with delight.  
Smoke dances around telling a legend of its own, air full of spirit and tradition.  
Flames roaring, igniting our past. For tonight we sing and chant.  
Under the night sky, our stories are kept.  
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Midnight lays down to rest, morning sky rises, painted shades of mauve and  
cobalt.  
Stories of the night become whispers, dampened by the new day.  
But we have not forgotten, what there was to say.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner of Secondary Grades 2015**  
**Sarah Green, Grade 12**  
**Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)**  
**Teacher: Ms. MacKinnon**

## BEAUTIFUL TRADITION

The drums pound in the distance  
I race down the dirt road toward the sound.

I'm late, again.

My swift feet carry me until I hear the chants.

Beautiful voices ring out in perfect unison.

Some are high, screaming to the heavens.

Others are low, seeming to force their way into the earth  
below.

My palms are sweaty, heart beating so quickly that I may  
just explode.

This isn't my first time, I started when I was 5.

But that doesn't stop it.

The nervous energy that bubbles and builds inside me.

I slow my pace as I near the circle, filled with my family  
and friends.

They are clapping, in perfect rhythm to the chants.

All while the dancers twirl.

Colorful skirts swish out, as they move with the pounding  
beat.

In a few minutes, that will be me.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winner of Secondary Grades 2015**  
**Isabelle Walters, Grade 12**  
**Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)**  
**Teacher: Ms. MacKinnon**

## EVERLASTING

*Crisp snow crunches beneath my wandering feet;  
My hollow body drifting over white hills aimlessly wandering; wondering ....*

*In this world ever-changing  
How the pine still stand tall.  
On the earth ever drifting  
How the wolves stay together.  
In these time ever rushing  
How tradition remains timeless.*

*My loose hair sways, dancing with the air's Cool fingers.  
Cool fingers turn my face, gently, to look at the proud pine trees.  
Cool fingers carry, to me, the harmonious howl of the pack.*

*Cool fingers embrace me, warmly, and I know it is them.  
I'm swept off my feet as they lead me home.  
Like the pine is at home in the forest, where its roots burrow deep into the soil, I am home.*

*Like the circles of bark protect,  
Each layer making stronger the core  
Each new generation protects the family core.*

*Like the wolves thrive in their pack, dependent on primal instinct,  
Tradition is bred and nurtured: Becoming instinct.*

*I look to the stars in awe, at the countless twinkling spirits,  
And I know they are ever there - ever watching.  
In a sudden rush of light I watch my ancestors dancing proudly and I look to my family  
and smile; proud to be a part of this culture.*





**4<sup>TH</sup> Place Winner Secondary Grades 2015**  
**Georgia DiMarco, Grade 7**  
**Sacred Heart Catholic School**  
**Teacher: Miss Kalligosfyris**

Hunter

I dash through the meadow, wild and free  
I run and jump right into the trees  
My Mother and Father call out to me  
“Come back my son so wild and free”

I run back to the house and open the door  
So excited to see just what is in store

My Father sits down and calls me over  
“Come my son but slower, slower”  
I come and sit down as I was told  
The house is warm, but I am still cold

“The time has come for you to know  
No more playing out in the snow  
No more spinning out in the sun  
You must not have any more fun”

“Why now Father? I am only a child  
Right now for me my jobs are mild  
I am not old enough to know what to do  
Right now that job is only for you!”

“Grow up my son right now, this instant!  
Hard work you seem to think is distant  
You were born a hunter so grow up now!  
Soon others will come to you and bow!”

## 4<sup>TH</sup> Place Continued:

“I don’t want to hunt, I want to be free  
To run and jump right into the trees!”

“Why don’t you just leave!  
Your decision is fine with me!”

So there the son went, out of the door  
His Mother wept openly onto the floor

“I won’t miss him, I never will  
I know he’ll come back, I know he will”

The son he ran and ran and ran  
He leaped and ducked and dashed and ran

“I will never go back, I never will!”  
He ran through the wind till he was chilled

For years he stayed away from home  
Hunting to live and survive on his own  
His Father’s dream had finally come true  
Now he knew what he needed to do

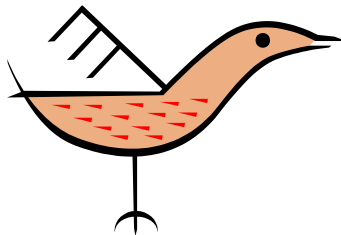
So he ran back home so full of joy  
To the place that he had left as a boy  
To show his parents what was his pride  
A brown bag full of animal hides

In he came, bursting through the door  
He’s back with his family, not alone anymore  
Thinking back to his old blunder  
But now he is a true, true hunter!

Chapter Two  
2016

# Primary Grades

(Kindergarten, Grade 1, 2, 3)



**1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner Primary Grades 2016**  
**Makayla Garner, Grade 1**  
**Bridge Lake Elementary School**  
**Teacher: Mrs. Pecor**

**I Touched an Eagle**

I touched an Eagle  
I turned into a nengie

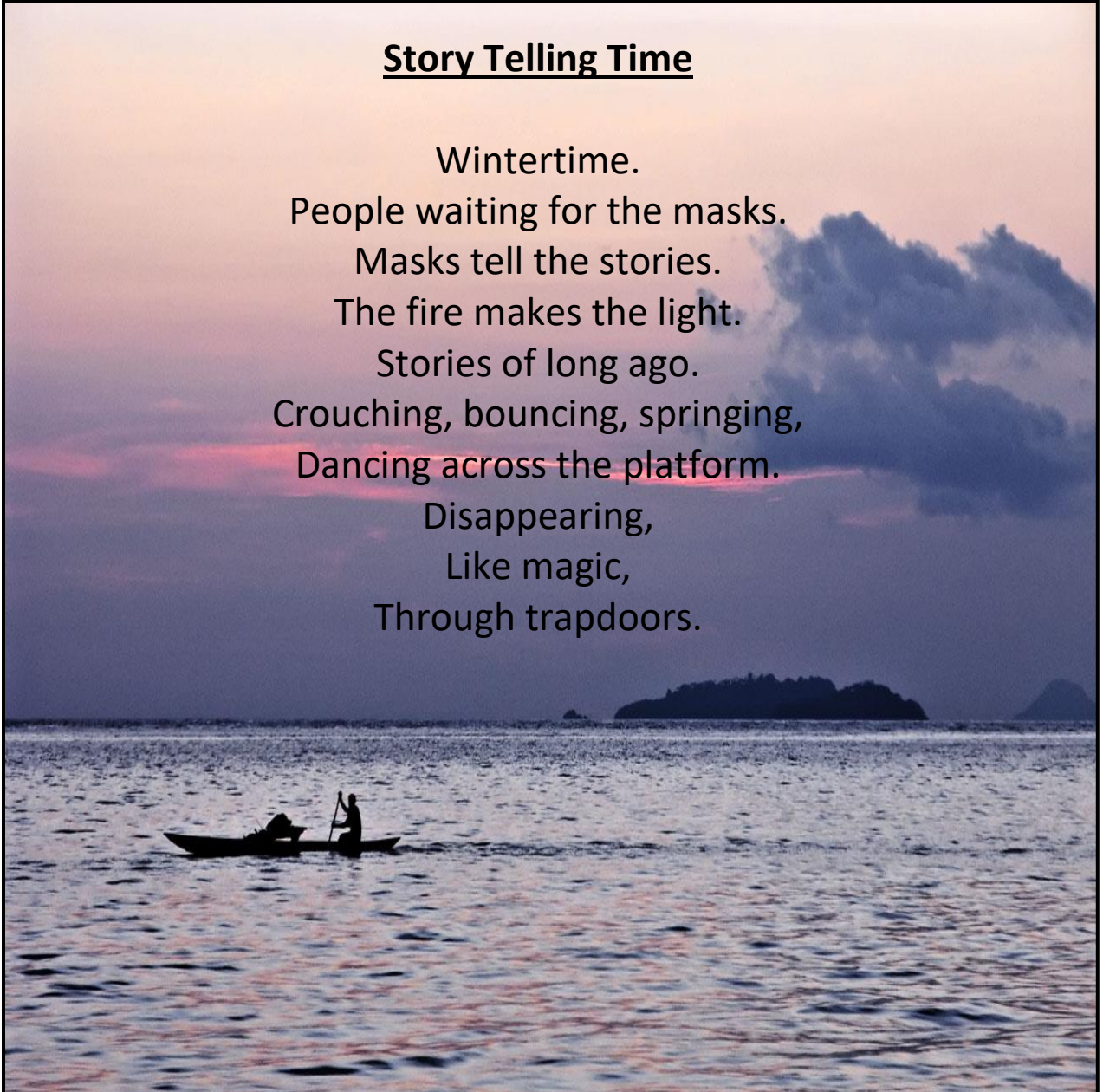




**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner Primary Grades 2016**  
**Sarina Harris, Grade 3**  
**Tatla Lake Elementary/Jr. Secondary School**  
**Teacher: Clare Gordon**

## Story Telling Time

Wintertime.  
People waiting for the masks.  
Masks tell the stories.  
The fire makes the light.  
Stories of long ago.  
Crouching, bouncing, springing,  
Dancing across the platform.  
Disappearing,  
Like magic,  
Through trapdoors.



**3<sup>RD</sup> Place Winner Primary Grades 2016**  
**Simon Weiler, Grade 3**  
**Tatla Lake Elementary/Jr. Secondary School**  
**Teacher: Clare Gordon**

## **Narnuks**

Supernatural tricksters,  
Trickster beasts,  
They live on land,  
They live in the ocean,  
They live in the sky.  
Narnuks live everywhere.  
Watching out for Muddleheads.



**4<sup>TH</sup> Place Winner Primary Grades 2016**  
**Dawson Nohr-Stangoe, Grade 3**  
**Nesika Elementary School**  
**Teacher: Ms. Barber**

## **Drumming**

- ✚ **Drummers warn, warn, warn**
- ✚ **They play, play, play, play**
- ✚ **They play fast, fast, fast.**
- ✚ **They drum so loud and noisy. How can they play so fast?**
  - ✚ **The beat is cool.**
- ✚ **How can they play so long?**
  - ✚ **They are so good at it.**
  - ✚ **I like it a lot!**



2016

# Intermediate Grades

(Grades 4,5,6)





**1<sup>ST</sup> Place Winner Intermediate Grades 2016**  
**Jude Thompson, Grade 6**  
**Tatla Lake Elementary/Jr. Secondary School**  
**Teacher: Ms. Lauren Brophy**

# The Salmon

The salmon waltzed down the river like a graceful  
Dancer, gently swishing under the soft dark blue  
Rippling water, whispering smoothly to his  
Neighbor “friend beware for the waters approaching are evil”  
And so they were, for the eagles tormented them, and  
The bears tortured them as they jumped out and fell  
Back into the ever growing rapids, sometimes wishing  
That they had never come the way they had come.  
But then, when their torments had ended and they had finally  
made it home, it was the greatest gift they  
World could give.



**2<sup>ND</sup> Place Winner Intermediate Grades 2016**

**Kacey Caron, Grade 4  
Horsefly Elementary/Jr. Secondary School  
Teacher: Mrs. Farkas**



**Elders Are Watching**

On the starry night,  
The Elders up in the sky,  
From above they watch

**3<sup>RD</sup> Place Winner Intermediate Grades 2016**  
**Koalen Harry, Grade 6**  
**Alexis Creek Elementary/Jr. Secondary School**  
**Teacher: Mr. Parkin**

## **Dogs Barking**

The Rez had dogs barking

All around

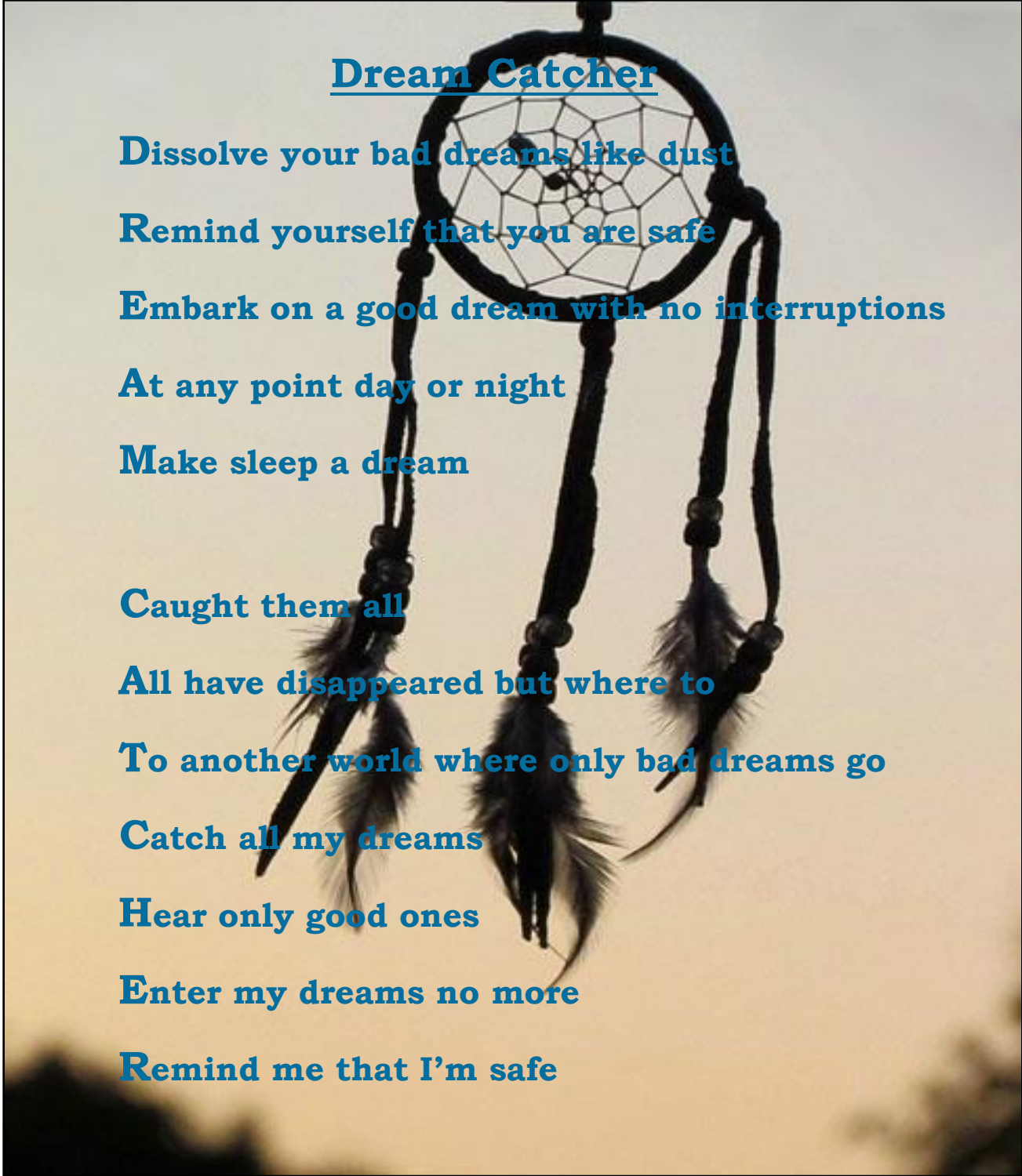
Day and night

The sound will never end



**4<sup>th</sup> Place Winner Intermediate Grades 2016**  
**Vanessa Shearer, Grade 6**  
**100 Mile Elementary School**  
**Teacher: Mr. Price**

## **Dream Catcher**



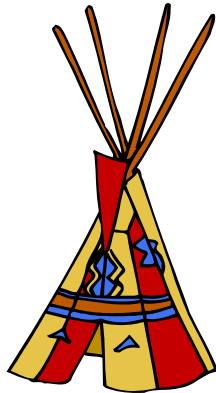
**Dissolve your bad dreams like dust**  
**Remind yourself that you are safe**  
**Embark on a good dream with no interruptions**  
**At any point day or night**  
**Make sleep a dream**

**Caught them all**  
**All have disappeared but where to**  
**To another world where only bad dreams go**  
**Catch all my dreams**  
**Hear only good ones**  
**Enter my dreams no more**  
**Remind me that I'm safe**

# SECONDARY GRADES

2016

(GRADES 7 TO 9)



**1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner Secondary Grades (7-9) 2016**  
**Denny Sill, Grade 8**  
**Lake City Secondary School (Columneetza)**  
**Teacher: Ms. Ferguson**

## **SES**

He rubs back and forth on the tree.

Grumbling and snorting to no one.

His large frame bends the tree and rocks it.

His scent floats on the air.

He is young.

He is alone.

He is Ses.

He is bear.





**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner Secondary Grades (7-9) 2016**  
**Leanne Haller, Grade 7**  
**Alexis Creek Elementary/Secondary School**  
**Teacher: Mr. Parkin**

# COLORFUL EMOTIONS

*I love the color blue because of the sky. But my friend Skyann hates blue.*

*I like the color red because of the roses and my Auntie Rose is allergic to flowers.*

*I love the color purple because of the purple sunset. My cousin Sunrise hates the purple in the sky.*

*I like the color black so I can look at the stars but my friend Drake hates the dark.*



**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winner Secondary Grades (7-9) 2016**  
**Colby Ash, Grade 8**  
**Lake City Secondary School (Columnneetza Campus)**  
**Teacher: Ms. Ferguson**

My Poem of Nature

It is what drives the salmon up the stream.  
Forces bears into hibernation.  
Pushes the caterpillar to become a butterfly.  
Drives the eagle that swoops down,  
taking mice to feed her children.

It is the grass on the ground.  
The beautiful mountains all around us.  
It is the seasons that First Nations watch for signs of change.  
It is the medicine they take from trees and berries.  
The wood that is used for housing and crafts.

Nature is what First Nations are fighting to protect.  
It is for all their future generations.  
A spiritual connection to the Land.  
Keeping their nation strong.





**4<sup>th</sup> Place Winner Secondary Grades (7-9) 2016**  
**Selina Farkas, Grade 8**  
**Horsefly Elementary/Jr. Secondary School**  
**Teacher: Mrs. Farkas' Poetry Club**

**THE SWEAT**

I am greeted by a wave of warm, humid air as I duck into the small,  
dark hut.

As my eyes adjust to the darkness I see smoldering coals in the pit.

I draw in a deep breath smelling pine and fresh earth.

I listen closely to the welcoming words of the Elder.

We share our thoughts about family and our concerns for the future.

Many voices are heard in the darkness.

Sweat runs down my skin as I feel safe and calm and at peace.

Time seems to go slower as my mind wanders, from my forest to my  
family to my future.

Not wanting to leave, but with my breathing becoming difficult, I am  
grateful as I step out into the sunlight.

My soul feels lighter.



**1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner Secondary Grades (10-12) 2016**

**Bethany Trenzek, Grade 12**

**Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)**

**Teacher: Melinda MacKinnon**

**I WONDER. . . .**

How is it possible that I, a white girl from Williams Lake, am a direct descendant of Chief Humsinna from Spuzzum?

My Great-Great-Great Grandmother, Daughter of Chief Humsinna, Who were you? What was your life like? I wonder...

In the tapestry of our family tree is there a single thread that runs from You to me?

I am 16 and safe at school, did you have to face the horrors of residential schools? Did they take you away from your home and family? Did they try to rob your culture from you? I wonder...

You left the reserve to marry and enter the white people's land you must have loved your husband to make that sacrifice. Or was it a sacrifice? Were you judged unfairly? Did your family approve? Were you happy? I wonder...

The family history books say you had 14 children and many of them did not survive. That must have been awful. How did you ever survive that grief? I wonder...

You and your husband were the founders of Merritt, what was that like? Were you respected? Or were you looked down upon? I wonder...

I know your faith was important to you hence the fact you ordered a bell for the church all the way from France. We still go admire it sometimes. Did you plan to leave this legacy? I wonder...

What were you like when you were 16? Did you like to do your hair? Did you like to look nice? Did you like animals? Did you love to be around children? Did you like music? Did you dream about your future? Were you like me? Am I like you? I wonder...

In the tapestry of our family tree there is a single thread that runs from you to me...

In memory of my Great-Great-Great Grandmother, Mary Kroventko of Spuzzum

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner Secondary Grades (10-12) 2016**  
**Ursula Brunsch-Rendek, Grade 12**  
**Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)**  
**Teacher: Melinda MacKinnon**

REINCARNATION

Reincarnated:  
It was a long death.  
I awoke to the sound of ravens  
And of churning rivers.  
I remember the wisdom of the Elders,  
And the strange stories  
About the great journey of the first men.  
I forced myself to stand up  
And speak out,  
But it seemed incredibly impossible.  
My strength began to diminish  
And I shivered in the cold, ancient air.  
My eyes stayed close,  
Yet I was aware of the passing of the days and nights.  
And today,  
Became tomorrow.  
When I woke next, my strength was renewed,  
And I made my way to the river's edge.  
Peering into the green, silver waters,  
I noticed a difference in my appearance.  
I was no longer the man who endured such pain and suffering.  
I was stronger and bolder.  
My existence became suddenly apparent,  
And I moved into the rapids further.  
There I watched the salmon leap and swim against the current,  
And I pushed my nose out towards their beautiful shimmers in the water.  
Instinctually, I snapped my mouth shut  
And sunk my teeth into the flesh of my catch.  
It was fresh and sweet;  
The best taste I had ever had upon my tongue.  
I finished the hunt and began my journey.  
This is who I am now,  
Who I was destined to become.  
I have been reborn,  
And this is where I belong.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winner Secondary Grades (10-12) 2016**  
**Keaton Carruthers, Grade 12**  
**Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)**  
**Teacher: Melinda MacKinnon**

# Walk On

He walks.  
Carrying the weight of the world on his back

Holding on to what is important.  
Things to remember

The humor  
The sense of community  
The respect.  
Values passed down for generations.

He lets go of the negative things  
That hold him back

The oppression  
The stereotypes  
The discouraging opinions.

But remembers them also,  
And uses them as strength.

To walk on,  
Into his own life.



**4<sup>th</sup> Place Winner Secondary Grades (10-12) 2016**

**Hailey, Grade 11  
Nenqayni Wellness Centre  
Teacher: Shirley Giroux**



Home.

You know you are home when you are called by your nickname.  
Regardless of time, separation, and differences.

You are remembered as you are.  
If only for a moment, time stands still.

There is a certain happiness, sadness, and understanding. Some say “hi”.  
Some stare, some swear, yes, even love. Home will always be Mom and Dad.

Home is the reservation and land:  
The land, its substances, its requests, its freedom, its enjoyment and culture,  
the trees, my backyard.

To play, learn, and heal from open wounds.  
A place to walk, talk, sit, and think.

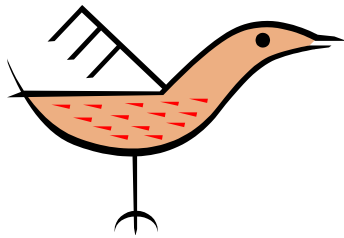
Mother Nature also Mother Earth.  
Giving always the positive essence of life.



**Chapter Three 2017**

# Primary Grades

(Kindergarten, Grade 1, 2, 3)



**1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner Primary Grades 2017**  
**Elley Cobb, Grade 3**  
**Cataline Elementary School**  
**Teacher: Ms. Fushtey**

## **Whispering Air**



The night air is whispering  
All around.  
It whispers through the trees.  
It whispers in the nature.  
It whispers through the meadow.  
The whispering air  
Fills the land with secrets.  
It whispers in my face.  
Whispering so soft.



**2<sup>ND</sup> Place Winner Primary Grades 2017**  
**Georgia Ovington, Grade 2**  
**100 Mile Elementary School**  
**Teacher: Penny Reid**

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**Days of My Gramma**

My Great Great Gramma was a  
Princess  
She won all the contests  
They respected her because  
She won  
I've never seen her  
But I've heard stories





**3<sup>RD</sup> Place Winner Primary Grades 2017**  
**Amelia Charleyboy, Grade 2**  
**Alexis Creek Elementary/Jr. Secondary School**  
**Teacher: Diana Kershaw**

**My Friend Elizabeth**

My friend Elizabeth gave me a BFF necklace.  
Elizabeth is my first best friend.  
We do a lot of things together.  
We go to the woods.  
We climb trees.  
She helps me learn about the woods.

We play soccer and basketball.  
We play with the boys.  
The boys don't think we can win but we do.

The necklace makes me think of her.  
It makes me feel special.



**4<sup>TH</sup> Place Winner Primary Grades 2017**  
**Loghan Archie, Grade 2**  
**100 Mile Elementary School**  
**Teacher: Penny Reid**



### **I JUST DANCE**

I fancy dance  
And jingle dance  
I feel happy  
It takes stuff off my mind  
I throw on my shoes  
And grab my fan or shawl  
I find a flat spot  
And I just DANCE!!



2017

# Intermediate Grades

(Grades 4,5,6)



**1<sup>ST</sup> Place Winner Intermediate Grades 2017**  
**Devon Wisdom, Grade 6**  
**100 Mile Elementary School**  
**Teacher: Mr. Price**

Nature's Way

I am the tree, the wind, the wolf

I see far and wide over the mountains and the sea.  
I am neither young nor am I old.

I am the tree, the wind, the wolf,

I am strong, swift and very wise,  
I breath, I live, I love, therefore

I am the tree, the wind, the wolf

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner Intermediate Grades 2017**  
**Jacy Case, Grade 5, Tši Del Del School**  
**Teacher: Ms. Moray Kennedy**

## **Family**

Exhilarating, happy,  
Gweniny, bedz: Nezun, sunahn inkwiel, aba beth  
Nunisdiny, sequnh

My people





**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winner Intermediate Grades 2017**  
**Phoenix Phillips-Sparks, Grade 6**  
**Marie Sharpe Elementary School**  
**Teacher: Mrs. Lonson-Hoffman**

Tree

Tree, you give us air,  
You give us food, you give us life.

I sit under you and wonder how many birds have lived in you or if any cats have got stuck in you or if you feel ticklish when a squirrel climbs up to your branches or maybe how old you are, or if you feel sad when the leaves fall off in autumn or if you feel happy when the sunshines when the children come out in the summertime to climb you or calm when the winter snow covers you in it's cotton like blanket as if you are going into a deep sleep after a long day at work or is it the way you make me feel when the leaves fall on my face filling me with joy.

Have you been around long enough to see the First Nation when they build their canoes or help them build dream catchers with your branches or hide the First Nation from their prey and help them hunt, or maybe you just sit in the wind and rock back and forth?



**4<sup>th</sup> Place Winner Intermediate Grades 2017**

**Caydence Charleyboy, Grade 4**  
**T̄si Del Del School**  
**Teacher: Ms. Moray Kennedy**

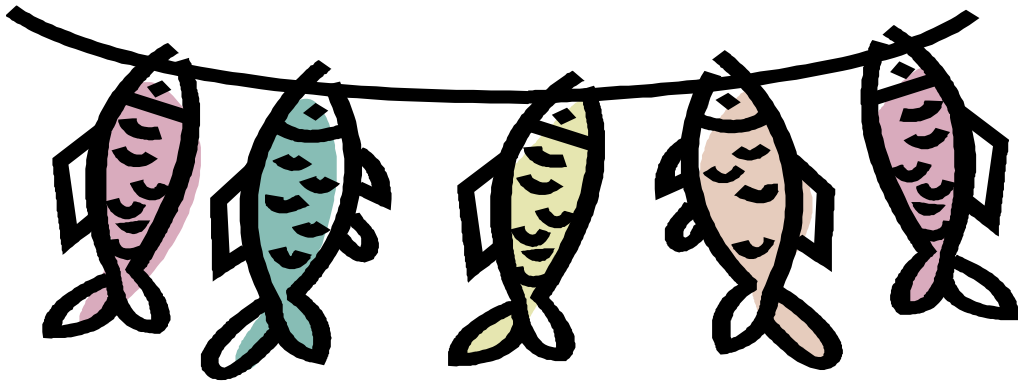
Redstone

Big open grassy fields  
Grazing horses moving gently  
Swift flowing river  
Swift flowing river  
T̄si Del Del



# SECONDARY GRADES

2017  
(GRADES 7 TO 9)





**1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner Secondary Grades (7-9) 2017**

**Dana Quintal, Grade 7**

**100 Mile Elementary School**

**Teacher: Mr. Price**

DOG RACING

RACING WITH A TEAM OF DOGS  
ACROSS FROZEN LAKES  
AND ICE RIVERS  
TRYING TO BEAT THE OTHER TEAMS  
BUT WITH THE COLD WEATHER  
AND THE SHARP ICE ROADS  
THE DOGS NEED TO REST  
AN IGLOO IS FOUND  
THEY REST TILL DAWN  
IN THE MORNING, ITS BACK ON THE ROAD  
THE ICE CRYSTALS IN THE SNOW  
AND THE ICICLES HANGING OFF THE TREES  
SHINE LIKE DIAMONDS WHEN TOUCHED BY THE  
SUN



**2<sup>ND</sup> Place Winner Intermediate Grades (7-9) 2017**  
**Hunter Boston, Grade 9**  
**Lake City Secondary School (Columnneetza Campus)**  
**Teacher: V. Robbins**

**The Meadow**

As I walk through a meadow I hear the sounds of birds,  
grasshoppers and flying insects.

I see the beautiful landscape of a small stream of water  
reflecting the sun's light and the healthy pine trees  
scattered around the meadow.

As I run my hand through the water I can feel the pebbles  
at the bottom.

I smell the pollen rich smell of seasoned lilac breezing by  
my face.

At the end of the day I taste the sweet fresh water and  
then I walk away.



**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winner Secondary Grades (7-9) 2017**  
**Gabe Nerbas, Grade 8**  
**Lake City Secondary School (Columnneetza Campus)**  
**Teacher: Ms. Robbins**

## **Color Green**

The blowing leaves of a tree are green.

Green tastes like sweet candy.

Green sounds like the wind blowing off the  
grass.

Green feels like a round green apple.

Green smells like fresh air and an outdoor  
breeze.

Green is colorful at the pow-wow.



**4<sup>TH</sup> Place Winner Secondary Grades (7-9) 2017**  
**Xanthin Billy, Grade 7**  
**Lake City Secondary School (Columnneetza Campus)**  
**Teacher: Mrs. Hill**

## **Finding Culture**

I got no idea why this is happening,  
Why are we doing this?

Europeans came to tell us to  
stop speaking our language

So now I don't know it.  
This makes me sad.

Chilcotin is my language. My Grandma  
speaks it with the Elders.

I hope she will teach it to me  
so I can speak to the Elders too.

This would make me happy and proud.



# **SECONDARY GRADES**

## **2017 (Grades 10-12)**



**1ST Place Winner Secondary Grades (10-12) 2017**

Hailey Richards, Grade 12  
Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)  
Teacher: Mrs. Mackinnon's Writing class

## *Our Hearts are the Same*



*I don't know much about Aboriginal culture.  
It's sad, but true.  
I know the stereotypes,  
About the drinking,  
The drugs,  
The gambling.  
I'm friends with a few Aboriginal people,  
And they are just as sweet as any other friend.  
But I know nothing of mighty warriors,  
I don't claim to have knowledge of totem poles,  
And I couldn't string a snowshoe to save my life.  
I know them as I know any other person.  
There are some Aboriginal people that are bad,  
Some that are good.  
Some are mean,  
Some are kind,  
Some are smart,  
Some are stupid.  
They are like every other person.  
Our cultures may be different,  
But our hearts are the same.*



**2**nd Place Winner Secondary Grades (10-12) 2017



**Taylor Nolin, Grade 12  
Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)  
Teacher: Mrs. Mackinnon's Writing class**

### **The Sash**

When I was a Child, the stripe of purple was just a Sash  
Flowing from the shoulder across his chest consealing a proudly beating heart  
The intertwined threads of rich tapestry that broke only for a new color  
An intchy wool symbol of culture, tradition and new beginnings all tied into one  
knot at the hip

However,

I had no idea what the true meaning of this strip of fabric really meant

The rich tapestry comes from a family name and a family tradition

It represents a culture that will not die

It represents struggle and fear with an unfair ruling

But it also represents triumph and tragedy

It represents a new ere of an old tradition

It will represent us all as a whole

My grandfather taught me the meaning of the sash

However, our people gave it that meaning

And our people will continue to give it meaning from year in and year out

From generation to generation

The fire of culture may burn to coals but it will never burn out



**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winner Secondary Grades (10-12) 2017  
Makayla Alphonse, Grade 11**

**Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)**  
**Teacher: Patsy Grinder**

## **My Granny**

From birth my Granny has protected me,  
Always telling me stories while sipping her tea

Taking me to the river to show the creatures of the land –  
Life seems timeless when I reach for her hand.

Walking with her beauty by my side,  
my Granny has taught me to love nature  
especially the bears who watch over us.

I wonder how a woman could be so selfless –  
yet so effortless.

Placing a kiss on her cheek,  
holding her tightly  
I will always love you,  
My Granny





**4<sup>th</sup> Place Winner Secondary Grades (10-12) 2017**

**Tia Fooks, Grade 11**

**Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)**

**Teacher: Mrs. Mackinnon's Writing Class**

**Hunter and Scavenger**

**The eagle sings proudly from his perch.  
Despite his broken wing,  
His voice is guttural,  
Strong.**

**Vultures swoop overhead,  
Screeching in their shrill voice.  
"Why have you so much when I have nothing?"  
Envious.**

**The eagle replies calm and collected,  
"You're mistaken, my friend,"  
"You have all while we have little."  
Assured.**

**The vultures sputter,  
"How do you mean?"  
"Look at your perch and listen to your voice!"  
Confused.**

**"My perch is old, broken, and scarred,"  
"I've been stuck since you and your brothers broke my wing."  
"I sing because my voice is the only thing I have."  
Proud**

**The vulture gives up,  
Soaring to a new location,  
Looking for new prey.  
Frustrated.**

**The eagle sings proudly from his perch.  
Despite his broken wing,  
His voice is guttural,  
Strong**

**THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING TEACHERS WHO  
ENCOURAGED THEIR STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN  
OUR POETRY CONTEST**

**2015**

TEACHER	SCHOOL
Ms. Fushtey	Cataline Elementary School
Clare Gordon, Principal	Tatla Lake Elementary/Jr. Secondary School
Mrs. Hopson	Horse Lake Elementary School

**2016**

TEACHER	SCHOOL
Miss Kalligosfyris	Sacred Heart Catholic School
Penny Reid	100 Mile Elementary School
Tanis Stewart	Cataline Elementary School

**2017**

TEACHER	SCHOOL
Ms. Fushtey	Cataline Elementary School
Penny Reid	100 Mile Elementary School
Diana Kershaw	Alexis Creek Elementary/Jr. Secondary
Mr. Price	100 Mile Elementary School
Mrs. Moray Kennedy	T̄si Del Del School
Mrs. Lonson	Marie Sharpe Elementary School
V. Robbins	Lake City Secondary School (Columneetza)
Mrs. Hill	Lake City Secondary School (Columneetza)
Mrs. MacKinnon	Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)
Patsy Grinder	Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)

**Compiled by School District No. 27 First Nations Education Department**