

# INDIGENOUS POETRY CONTEST WINNERS 2022



Volume 6

A collection of our Indigenous Poetry Contest Winning Poems for 2022

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

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*A total of 511 Poems were received in our 2022 contest.*

*Poems were sorted into categories depending on numbers received*

*These are the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> Place winners and those with Hon. Mention in each Category.*

### **Winners from 2022**

**Chapter 1: Winners from Kindergarten Category**

**Chapter 2: Winners from the Grade 1-3 Category**

**Chapter 3: Winners from Grade 3 Category**

**Chapter 4: Winners from the Grade 4 Category**

**Chapter 5: Winners from the Grade 5-6 Category**

**Chapter 6: Winners from the Grade 7-9 Category (\*No entries from Grade 9's this year)**

**Chapter 7: Winners from the Grade 10-12 Category**

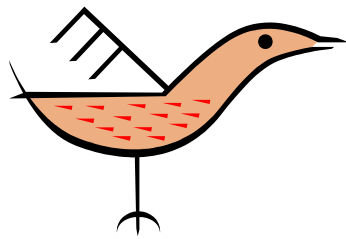
**Chapter 8: Winners from the French Category**

**Chapter 9: Winners from the Chilcotin Language Category**

**Chapter 10: Winners from the Shuswap Language Category**

Chapter One  
2022

# Kindergarten Category



1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner, Kindergarten Category 2022  
Ayla Racine  
100 Mile Elementary School  
Submitted by: Penny Reid

## The Drums

Me and my Granny and Grampa like the drums  
Some people have the feelings of the music  
It made me feel like when my Grampa died  
It made my heartbeat faster



2nd Place Winner, Kindergarten Category 2022  
Rain Thomas-Joseph  
150 Mile Elementary School  
Classroom Teacher: Mrs. Coulombe

**Acrostic Poem of one of the Seven Sacred Animals in the  
Seven Sacred Teachings**

**WOLF**

**W**ild  
**S**trong  
**H**umility  
**F**ast



3rd Place Winner, Kindergarten Category 2022  
Beth Casson  
150 Mile Elementary School  
Classroom Teacher: Mrs. Fofonoff

## My Totem Animal

Based on story: Sometimes I feel like a Fox  
By: Danielle Daniel

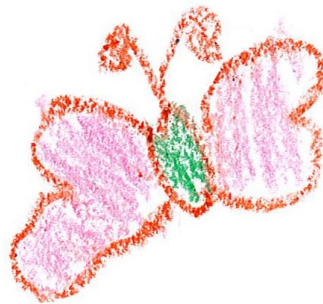


SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE A FOX

*Danielle Daniel*

Sometimes I feel like a Butterfly -

Vulnerable



4th Place Winner, Kindergarten Category 2022  
Devani Jimmie  
150 Mile Elementary School  
Classroom Teacher: Mrs. Fofonoff

## My Totem Animal

Based on story: Sometimes I feel like a Fox  
By: Danielle Daniel



Sometimes I feel like a Rabbit -  
Creative

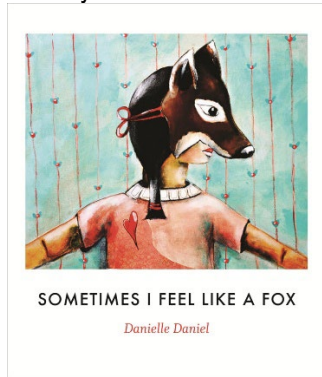




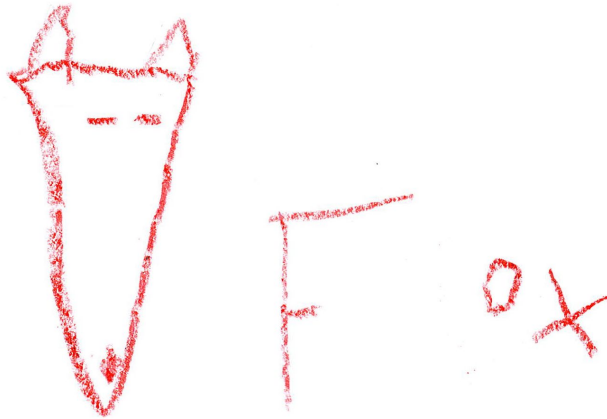
Honorable Mention, Kindergarten Category 2022  
Camden Goodvin  
150 Mile Elementary School  
Classroom Teacher: Mrs. Fofonoff

## My Totem Animal

Based on story: Sometimes I feel like a Fox  
By: Danielle Daniel



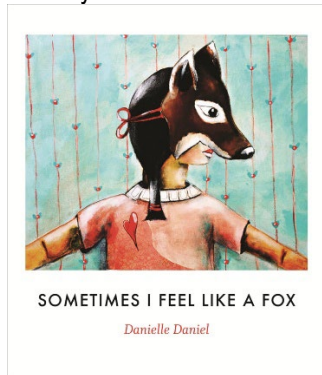
Sometimes I feel like a Fox -



Honorable Mention, Kindergarten Category 2022  
Amara Ivens  
150 Mile Elementary School  
Classroom Teacher: Mrs. Fofonoff

## My Totem Animal

Based on story: Sometimes I feel like a Fox  
By: Danielle Daniel



Sometimes I feel like a Rabbit -

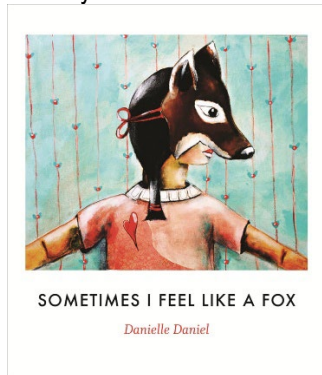
Creative



Honorable Mention, Kindergarten Category 2022  
Gabby Caddy  
150 Mile Elementary School  
Classroom Teacher: Mrs. Fofonoff

## My Totem Animal

Based on story: Sometimes I feel like a Fox  
By: Danielle Daniel



Sometimes I feel like a Butterfly -

Vulnerable



Honorable Mention, Kindergarten Category 2022  
Reece Stewart  
150 Mile Elementary School  
Classroom Teacher: Mrs. Fofonoff

## My Totem Animal

Based on story: Sometimes I feel like a Fox  
By: Danielle Daniel



Sometimes I feel like a Bear -

Brave



# Chapter Two

## Grade 1-3 Category 2022



1st Place Winner, Grade 1-3 Category 2022  
Elsa Van Schaik  
100 Mile Elementary School  
Submitted by: Penny Reid

## MY DRUM

The drum belongs to me and my sister and brother  
We put it on our wall  
The picture on it is beautiful  
It sounds a little like a heartbeat



**2nd Place Winner, Grade 1-3 Category 2022**

**Anya Deyo**

**Mountview Elementary School**

**Classroom Teacher: Ms. Testawich**

**WAPOS**

Wild Animal

An amazing creature

Part of the wild

Outstanding beautiful white fur

So adorable

The beauty of the forest



3rd Place Winner, Grade 1-3 Category 2022

Lorrain Paul

Sxoxomic Community School

Classroom Teacher: Rae Neill

### Obgran

Dus wanders the Rez at night

But he doesn't get a fright.

Xpe7e drives around to see

That everyone's safe as can be.

Elders are sleeping in their beds

Dreaming of kissing their grandkids' heads.





4th Place Winner, Grade 1-3 Category 2022  
Kaycee Cunningham  
Mountview Elementary School  
Classroom Teacher: Mrs. Page, Shuswap Language and Culture Teacher

## The Wind is Cold

The Inuit and Metis and First Nations are awake now.

The wolf is howling.

The deer are still asleep.

The mute black bear is awakening from its sleep.

It hunts for food.

It does not stop.

He sees the berries.

He runs for them, and they are gone.

It finds a deer and kills it and thanks the deer.



Honorable Mention, Grade 1-3 Category 2022  
Naya Thomas,  
100 Mile Elementary School  
Submitted by: Penny Reid

## I SMUDGED

I smudged to keep the spirits away  
We take a feather  
We take some sage  
We light the sage  
We smudge with the feather  
It makes me feel safe



Honorable Mention, Grade 1-3 Category 2022  
Micaiah Stagg,  
100 Mile Elementary School  
Submitted by: Penny Reid

## I AM BEAR CLAN

**B**eading on clothes

**E**at Salmon

**A**re drum players

**R**aven took the Sun

**C**arvings of wood and stone

**L**ive in a teepee

**A**lways hunt for deer

**N**ever hurt the Earth



Honorable Mention, Grade 1-3 Category 2022  
Levi Caddy,  
150 Mile Elementary School  
Classroom Teacher: David Parker

## I AM A WOLF

I can hear my pack  
Howling at the moon  
As the stars come out  
I can smell the scent  
Of elk in the trees  
I can taste fresh meat  
Of a dead deer  
I can touch the ground  
With my paws  
I can see my pack



Honorable Mention, Grade 1-3 Category 2022  
Brittney Neels,  
Chilcotin Road Elementary School  
Classroom Teacher: Patsy McLean

## INUIT

Culture family

Singing, dogsledding, hunting

They make an Inuksuk

Adventure



**Chapter Three**  
**Grade 4 Category**  
**2022**



**1st Place Winner, Grade 4 Category 2022**

**Sophie Johnson**

**Sxoxomic Community School**

**Teacher: Rae Neill**

## Our Land Esk'et

Far, far away all you can hear  
Is the beat of a drum and a beautiful deer  
We always sing, we always dance  
We pray for our ancestors in a sacred trance

We keep our family safe in this age  
With a gift from our beautiful hills of sage  
With our sweet moms and our strong dads on the land  
We walk with the Creator hand in hand.



**2nd Place Winner, Grade 4 Category 2022**  
**Shakoda Grotke**  
**100 Mile Elementary School**  
**Submitted by: Penny Reid**

## **MY JINGLE DRESS**

The wind blows  
While my dress jingles  
And the drum beats  
I dance to the beats  
Of the drum  
I sit down  
Ma braids my hair  
While I put sweetgrass in my moccasins





3rd Place Winner, Grade 4 Category 2022  
Andrea Ibara  
Sacred Heart Catholic School  
Classroom Teacher: Mrs. Smith

Indigenous Culture

*Long ago in the forest lies they,  
The indigenous cultures still thrive right this minute,  
Coyotes and Ravens and Salmon and Bear,  
And also, their people that live their own lives.  
The beaver wars ended and they're still existing  
They enjoy their lives that survive.  
The turtles and totems and dancing for joy,  
They're always the happiest colors of pride.  
When the lights are out,  
They entertain.  
They live their lives in our land "Kanata".*



**4<sup>th</sup> Place Winner, Grade 4 Category 2022**

**Noah Paul-Sellars  
Sxoxomic Community School  
Classroom Teacher: Rae Neill**

## Down in Esk'et

Down in Esk'et  
There are horses, dogs, and cows.  
A long time ago  
Looked different than now.

People lived in pit homes,  
More animals roamed free.  
Culture and language was everything,  
And also family.



Honorable Mention, Grade 4 Category 2022  
Andrew Wells  
Forest Grove Elementary School  
Classroom Teacher: Ms. Babicky

## FIRST NATIONS

**F**riends of mine

**I** like First Nations

**R**esidential schools are bad

**S**almon is good

**T**ea is made from dandelions

**N**ature is awesome

**A**nimals like eagles, raven, buffalo, and coyote

**T**raditions like singing, dancing, and drumming

**I**nuit are Indigenous people of the Arctic

**O**rcas are important to First Nations

**N**eed to remember their history

**S**huswap language



Honorable Mention, Grade 4 Category 2022  
Olivia Gobin  
100 Mile Elementary School  
Submitted by: Penny Reid

## TOTEM

**T**all

**O**riginal

**T**ruly unique

**E**verlasting

**M**any Carvings



Honorable Mention, Grade 4 Category 2022  
Mclean Harry  
Sxoxomic Community School  
Classroom Teacher: Rae Neill

## Smudging with Dad

I smudge with my dad  
We smudge in the house  
We smudge all over our bodies

First, my face  
Then, my heart  
And then, my legs

My dad has an Eagle feather  
It's big and brown  
It blows the smoke all over my back

I smell smoke  
Sage  
Cedar

I feel happy  
My dad helps me  
I love my dad



Honorable Mention, Grade 4 Category 2022  
Amira Magnusson  
150 Mile Elementary School  
Classroom Teacher: Mrs. Johnson

## Winter in the valley

In the valley it starts snowing fluffy ice.

It covers the valley in a smooth blanket.

When the deer run by the valley and trees, I hear it calling for me.

The water flows by the mountains and gets a thin coat of ice.

The days pass by when the wind blows north.

When the deer eat the bark off the trees, that is how I know it is winter.



**Chapter Four**  
**Grade 5 - 6 Category**  
**2022**



**1st Place Winner, Grade 5-6 Category 2022**  
**Quinshana Setah, Grade 6**  
**Nesika Elementary School**  
**Teacher: Ms. Nasuszny**

**Sense Poem**

I am Quinshana from Xeni Gwet'in  
I hear the cars going places in the city  
I see people walking everywhere in the city  
I taste the food, but it isn't the same, like the food I eat back at my home  
I smell the flowers, trees, grass, but in the city, I smell no trees no grass,  
If feel the wind blowing through my face but in the city, I feel no wind unless when the wind  
wants to come  
I know I am from Xeni Gwet'in  
I am here





2nd Place Winner, Grade 5-6 Category 2022  
Camila Hilbert-Torres, Grade 6  
Sacred Heart Catholic School  
Teacher: Mrs. Davis

## Mother

You show a gentle grace as a warm smile illuminates your face.

You carry the knowledge of those who came before.

Of medicine, regalia and so much more.

I learned of all that ties me to this land.

And how I must care for this fragile earth with a deliberate hand.

Now that you are no longer here.

I must push past doubt and fear.

I see your smile in a springtime bloom.

I hear your voice in the call of a loon.

You are the link to my future and my past.

A connection that will forever last.



3rd Place Winner, Grade 5-6 Category 2022  
Ryder McLennan, Grade 6  
Cataline Elementary School  
Teacher: Chris Armstrong

### Hands Rough

Hands rough and firm clasp braids their faces hard as stone stare  
At young brown faces stained with tears the ones  
Whose faces are hard as stone grab knives and slice through the braids  
Clasped in their iron grip tears fall down the children's face anew  
Rough hands let go of the braids black hair descends eventually black  
Hirs's land on a tear-soaked floor  
Casually they brush away the hair  
Others their faces just as hard roughly shove the crying children  
Many children slip on their own tears  
The nuns the ones whose faces are hard as stone keep shoving them  
No emotions cracking their faces



4th Place Winner, Grade 5-6 Category 2022  
Chance Palmantier, Grade 5  
150 Mile Elementary School  
Teacher: Mrs. Campbell

Free from My "Culture"

RESPECT me AND respect Them

Manners to my Elders

SOME **INDIGENOUS** people have the GIFT

To see SPIRITS

I CAN SEE

SPIRITS

My Grandma usually  
SMUDGES me when times are hard

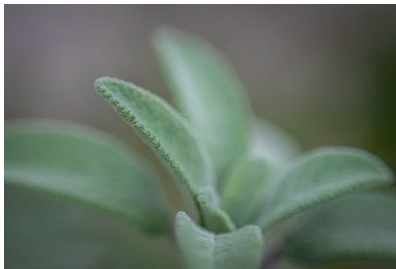
**WE pray to the creator**

**To have messages to our dead to send them off WITH GOOD  
THOUGHTS**

For them to have a better place

These thoughts are way back in my memories

**I FEEL IMPORTANT** that people are actually there for me



Honorable Mention, Grade 5-6 Category 2022  
Adrianna Rae, Grade 6  
Marie Sharpe Elementary School  
Teacher: Mrs. Walton

## Voices

Losing their mothers, sisters, and wives.  
Hear their voices, hear their cries for help.

The sun will fall, the ravens will fly  
and the families will weep.

The women are not found  
and their voices are not heard.

No one will listen.

Where did they go?



Honorable Mention, Grade 5-6 Category 2022  
Arora Brunsdon, Grade 5  
Nesika Elementary School  
Teacher: Jennifer Wintjes

## FIRST NATIONS POEM

Everything was peaceful before they came  
And then they took our children; it was such a shame  
I was overcome by a sadness I could not contain

They made our children speak English  
And made them feel like they needed to be extinguished

Our poor children came home with scars  
All the nights they were away, I spent crying at the stars.

Now that they have stopped, let's try to heal what hurts  
It this was still allowed; our language would still be on the outskirts.



Honorable Mention, Grade 5-6 Category 2022  
Name withheld, Grade 6  
Nenqayni Education Unit  
Teacher: Norma Macdonald

## To Be Free

To be free to be me  
Confronting my past, confronting my future

I will strive to do things right

To help some Elders and others

Hunting, I have hunted with my grandpa  
I saw the spirit leave the deer

Wildlife and Mother Earth it's our culture



Honorable Mention, Grade 5-6 Category 2022  
Kallum Sampson, Grade 5  
Dog Creek Elementary/Jr. Secondary School  
Teacher: Mr. Carpenter

## Drumming

*Hon.  
mention  
Gr. 5-6  
Category*

Drumming is important to our culture

Respectful rhythm

Unify

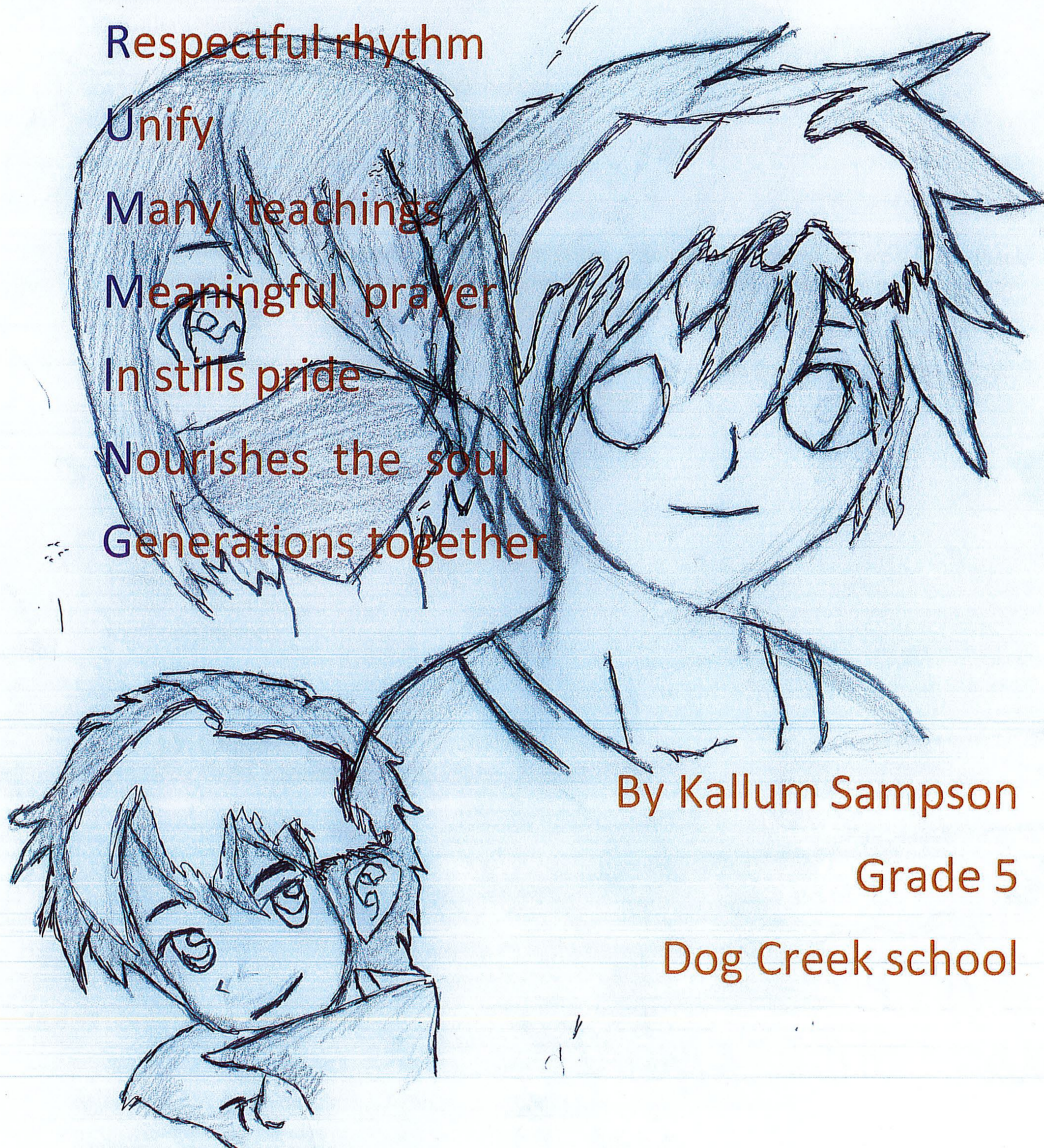
Many teachings

Meaningful prayer

In stills pride

Nourishes the soul

Generations together



By Kallum Sampson

Grade 5

Dog Creek school

**Chapter Five**  
**Grade 7 - 9 Category**  
**2022**





1st Place Winner, Grade 7-9 Category 2022  
Brookelyn (Kat) Wilkinson, Grade 7  
Lake City Secondary School (Columneetza Campus)  
Teacher: Ms. Watkinson

## Faces in the Wind

I see faces in the wind.  
When I visit the old schools.  
I hear their voices in my head,  
and feel them in the pools.  
The Children that had to go there,  
Those horrible, stupid schools.  
They weren't able to resist,  
to those vicious, cruel rules.  
But there were a few survivors,  
whose voices are whispered to me.  
They tell me of the pain they felt,  
when they were stripped of their clothes and pelts.  
Very little good came out,  
and when I visit those old schools,  
I see faces in the wind.



2nd Place Winner, Grade 7-9 Category 2022  
Zoe Kugelstadt, Grade 7  
Lake City Secondary School (Columneetza Campus)  
Teacher: Mr. Tyne

The River Path

We go where the water flows  
We see the pretty sights  
Where fields of roses grow  
Is where we stay the nights  
We travel far and wide  
To find a place to stay  
We will remain side by side  
Keep following me this way  
The mountains stand up tall  
And the sky is midnight blue  
I can hear the wolfs call  
I'm just glad that I'm with you  
We tell stories as we walk  
Of the sun, the stars, the moon,  
And above us flies a hawk  
While the hummingbird hums a tune  
We go where the water flows  
We've seen the pretty sights  
But the roses no longer grow  
And now we say good night.



3rd Place Winner, Grade 7-9 Category 2022  
Lynnea Sharp, Grade 7  
Lake City Secondary School (Columneetza Campus)  
Teacher: M. O'Keefe

## Unmarked Graves

I live among you, but nobody can see me  
Nobody knows my name  
I am forgotten  
I am unmarked in my grave  
They beat me  
They never let me speak my language  
They never let me see my family or friends  
They took me away  
They said it was ok  
but they never felt my pain



4th Place Winner, Grade 7-9 Category 2022  
Matisse Alfaro, Grade 7  
100 Mile Elementary School  
Teacher: Mlle. Smith

### A very Brief History of Colonialism in Canada

In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue  
Never discovering anything new  
In 1497, Cabot "discovered" Newfoundland  
Spilling blood upon its gravelly sand  
In 1534, Cartier landed in Gaspé  
And kidnapped two young men that day  
In 1608, Champlain arrived  
"Founding" Quebec, new races thrived  
In the 1700s, Cook came and went  
Near the crook of the strait where the shoreline was bent  
In the 1800s, populations had boomed  
As Old Worlders came to where fireweed bloomed  
But still they ignored and they treated  
Those who had been there for centuries  
But while more immigrants came,  
The Indigenous people waned  
Murders and lack of rights  
The languages died  
In 1834, residential schools began  
Trying to whitewash the land  
Rights were debated in abundance  
They couldn't vote till the mid-1900s  
In the 2000s, we discovered some horrors  
No longer labeling those "brave men" explorers  
For we know what they were now:  
Colonialists, who made a vow  
To capture the New World...for incompetent leaders  
Whose power stood taller than Eastern White Cedars  
And still today, they face discrimination and toil  
That cannot be ended unless we unsoil  
The truths of Canadian history  
From then until eternity,  
**END RACISM NOW.**



Honorable Mention, Grade 7-9 Category 2022  
Heidi Reed, Grade 7  
Lake City Secondary School (Columneetza Campus)  
Teacher: M. O'Keefe

The Pain of the Past

I was lost  
I was lost,  
Drowning  
In the pain of the past.  
Never did I think  
It could hurt this bad,  
But there I was drowning,  
Drowning in the pain of the past.  
My parents feel this pain,  
And their parents before them.  
This is not a pain I want to pass on,  
But generations to come, should know.  
They should understand why we feel the pain,  
The pain of the past.



Honorable Mention, Grade 7-9 Category 2022  
Meghan Sellars, Grade 7  
Lake City Secondary School (Columnnetza Campus)  
Teacher: Ms. Watkinson

## Rez Dog

When I was five  
I remember my Kye7e's crazy  
Rez dog.  
I first saw my  
Kye7e's  
dog at a pow wow  
where I was  
drinking deadly lemonade.  
Powwow lemonade is the best  
because whenever I drink it;  
it reminds me of my Kye7e's  
crazy Rez dog.



Honorable Mention, Grade 7-9 Category 2022  
Sydney Mason, Grade 7  
Lake City Secondary School (Columneetza Campus)  
Teacher: M. O'Keefe

## THE RULE

The rule is cruel  
I suffer for no reason  
I thought I was beautiful  
But my beauty is treason  
My culture was unique but apparently not  
They hate me for everything  
But I've done nothing wrong  
They don't to accept me  
Because of my skin  
It's not fair  
We are all the same inside  
The rule is cruel.



Honorable Mention, Grade 7-9 Category 2022  
Choesang Doen, Grade 7  
Lake City Secondary School (Columnnetza Campus)  
Teacher: Ms. Watkinson

## I WONDER

You have tradition and so do I,  
But I wonder, what do you see with your eyes?  
Do you see your family and friends dancing?  
Or do you see deers prancing?  
I don't know what you do each year,  
But I wonder, what do you hear?  
Do you hear rivers flowing on a sunny day?  
Or do you hear animals running around to play?  
Do you wake up every morning and say thanks for every meal?  
But I wonder, what do you feel?  
When you're fishing, do you feel the fishing rod in your hand?  
Do you feel the drum in your grasp when playing it on your land?  
You have so many wonderful stories to tell,  
But I wonder, what do you smell?  
Do you smell fresh air when you wake?  
Do you go down to the water and smell the fish in the lake?  
What emotions do you feel?  
Do you cry when you're hurt?  
Do you feel proud wearing an orange shirt?  
I wonder.





Honorable Mention, Grade 7-9 Category 2022  
Logan Archie, Grade 7  
100 Mile Elementary School  
Submitted by: Penny Reid

### Through the Air

Soft, breezy, cool wind  
Flowing through my tightly braided hair  
Fringe, freely flying through the air  
Drumsticks, hitting the drum  
To the rhythm of my heart  
Crowds cheering  
As I spin through the air  
Waiting for the end  
I give my all for my family



**Chapter Six**  
**Grade 10 - 12 Category**  
**2022**



**1st Place Winner, Grade 10-12 Category 2022**  
**Cam Pinette, Grade 12**  
**Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)**  
**Teacher: Mrs. MacKinnon**

Imagine

Can you imagine leaving the only home that you have ever known? Never to return.

Can you imagine leaving your entire family? Never to be seen again.

Can you imagine getting in a vehicle with strangers? Driving somewhere you have never been.

Can you imagine listening to and having to speak an unknown language? Eventually forgetting your own.

Can you imagine eating food that you have never seen? When you get fed.

Can you imagine being slapped for being kind? You were only trying to help a little one.

Can you imagine being raped by a priest – a man of God? Again, and again.

Can you imagine being beat by a nun-married to the church? Over and over.

Can you imagine doing all these things at the age of five? So scared.

Can you imagine your life being gone without any proof you were ever there? Documents lost.

Can you imagine ending up in an unmarked grave with nobody to mourn you? Destroyed family.

Can you imagine not growing up? Dead at 10.

Can you imagine being a Catholic after hearing all this horrific stuff?

I can.... I am.... shame, guilt, sadness, remorse...

I cannot undo the horrendous things, but I can imagine a future with less pain.

Can you imagine surviving, persevering, thriving like a salmon. Beating all odds.

Can you imagine having the guts to find your language, your culture? The true meaning of who you are.

I can.



2nd Place Winner, Grade 10-12 Category 2022  
Jaelle Oakley, Grade 12  
Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)  
Teacher: Mrs. MacKinnon

I've Missed You

I missed their songs singing to me  
And the steps of their dance moving so free.  
The stories they told had given me voice  
But they took that away leaving no other choice.

The skies turned black raining autumn leaves,  
That swept them away like filthy thieves.  
Those thieves took their hands then told them to write  
And write they did, even put up a fight.

Those you lost were far from weak,  
They left you their words to find and speak.  
Their spirits dance to the beat of your drum  
And now you tell stories for everyone.

The sky so warm with the rising sun,  
To welcome my people one by one.

I hear your songs singing to me  
And see your dancing, oh so free.

I've missed you

**3rd Place Winner, Grade 10-12 Category 2022**  
**Carmen Dyck, Grade 12**  
**Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)**  
**Teacher: Mrs. MacKinnon**

## The Fire Inside Us

Eighteen-seventy-six:

The year that the Indian Act arrives and sticks,  
The year white men wearing dark suits  
Get to decide whose culture trumps whose.  
They declare that our culture is banned,  
Our human rights are ripped from our hands.

Nineteen-fifty-one:

The year that some headway is somewhat won.  
Perseverance prevails and  
We're allowed to own land.  
We're allowed ceremonies and dance.  
And yet against discrimination and more,  
We must still take a stance.

Nineteen-eighty-five:

We're still fighting and trying to thrive.  
We succeed in ending enfranchisement,  
And, to a two-generation extent,  
Those who lost status regain it.  
But still, we climb out of this government pit

When the last one finally closes in nineteen-ninety-six,  
The government says the residential school problem is fixed.  
(It's not, there's lots of trauma, we know,  
But hey, the government says we're good to go.)  
Later, in two-thousand-eleven,  
To descendants of women, some status is given.  
In August two-thousand-and-nineteen,  
Status-based gender equality is seen.

And now in two-thousand-twenty-two,  
There still remains much work to do.  
And with all this generational trauma we've inherited,  
No matter what, we refuse to be defeated.  
Because, even after they tried to silence us,  
They could not put out the fire that burns inside of us.



4th Place Winner, Grade 10-12 Category 2022  
Halle Dean, Grade 12  
Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)  
Teacher: Mrs. MacKinnon

## They are Champions

Our lives years ago  
Do not compare.  
They tried to strip us of culture  
Yet they failed.  
We came out stronger,  
Prouder of our culture.  
No one can change us,  
Not now or then.  
They will never try to strip us,  
Not ever again.



Honorable Mention, Grade 10-12 Category 2022  
Xeni Lulua, Grade 12  
Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)  
Teacher: Mrs. MacKinnon

### Why we stand Together

*We as First Nations faced many tragedies,  
Residential school being one of the worst.*

*Beat for speaking our language  
Beat for speaking up against them.*

*Children raped and murdered,  
Discarded into mass unmarked graves.  
Our mothers at home fearing they will never see us again,  
Most because  
Knowing that they never will,  
Makes them feel like they cannot carry on.*

*We try our best every day to stay strong,  
But sometimes the sadness that lurks in the halls,  
The fear that lives in our hearts,  
It begins to become too much.*

*When the lights go out all throughout the school  
that's when real fear sets in,  
Because that is when they come,  
That is when it happens,  
We all lay here as though we are asleep,*

*When we wake no one speaks  
No one says a word,  
Silence fills the room as we get ready*

*To do it all over again.*

*When we grow ill and are no longer of use,  
They toss us aside like a bag of trash.  
Those that make it out, and return home are not the same,  
And some never will be.*

*Despite all of this,  
Despite how much you hurt us,  
We are still here,  
And we are thriving.  
We still have our language to teach to our children,  
We still have our culture it lives within us,  
We still have our pride,  
We are stronger than ever.  
All of us together as a nation, as a community, as a family,  
Together we stand,  
Together we fight,  
Together as First Nations people,  
We will continue to strive,  
To grow,  
And heal from the traumas of our past.*

*Together as people is how we move forward,  
How we are to become stronger as a people,  
That's why we stand together.*

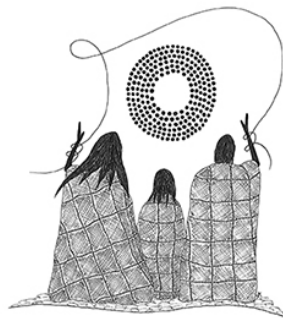




Honorable Mention, Grade 10-12 Category 2022  
Joseph Henley, Grade 11  
Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)  
Teacher: Mrs. MacKinnon

## The Next Generation

As cold as ice  
As dark as the shadows  
Our history is dark  
But through the pain shall the sun shine bright  
Through the clouds should the eagle fly high  
Spread its wings  
Spread its word  
Pass along the key  
To open the door to a fresh, better start  
A start with healing  
No separation only love  
Let the stories be told  
And spread culture wide  
But especially to  
The Next Generation



Honorable Mention, Grade 10-12 Category 2022  
Morgan Langford, Grade 11  
Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)  
Teacher: Mrs. MacKinnon

## Lost Tradition

When the sunset settles across the horizon  
Jackets zip up and arms cross tightly, preparing for a night of tradition  
When the fire crackles in the pit  
Stories are passed down through generations  
When elders take joy in teaching the ways of the past  
Young ones drift off to sleep, curled among their guardians' laps  
When the snap of a twig silences the crowd  
Amusement spreads when it is only another coming to share  
When the owl gives signs of its presence  
Recognition is given to the wonders of life  
When memories shared create a picture of past experiences  
Eyes widen in amazement, hearing the wonders of early generations  
When the night grows darker  
Sleep is forgotten, and replaced with the desire to learn more  
But memories will never be forgotten, they will pass down for years to come



Honorable Mention, Grade 10-12 Category 2022  
Ty Oviatt, Grade 12  
Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)  
Teacher: Mrs. MacKinnon

## **The Heart Beats with the Drum**

The wind blows with each breath  
The birds chirp with the beat of the drum  
The fire trickles out heat into the souls of our people  
The trees absorb our cultural energy  
While we dance and sing our sorrows away  
The moonlight shimmers through the tree branches that shade our gathering  
The feathers on our heads soar through the air  
The elders watch and reflect on their past  
Through which they will never get back  
That pain they still hold will never leave  
The heart continues to bleed and bleed -



Honorable Mention, Grade 10-12 Category 2022  
Veronica Keats, Grade 12  
Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)  
Teacher: Mrs. MacKinnon

We are the Spirit of the Land... we are the Indigenous

We are the keepers of the land  
The bridge between man and nature  
We are the connection that binds us to the earth  
For our souls are home to its spirit  
We are changing seasons  
Found in the whisper of the wind and the persistence of the river  
The mountains give us strength through the ever-changing times  
And the eagle gives us wings to soar through raging storms  
We are the shining stars on the blackest night  
As our ancestors watch over us with their guiding eyes  
We are the stories we share around the dancing flames  
Until the last embers have burned in the dying fire  
We are at the core of the earth, rooted deep like the trees  
And we mustn't forget our legacy  
We are proud and we are free  
We are the indigenous

Honorable Mention, Grade 10-12 Category 2022  
Kiya Rai, Grade 12  
Lake City Secondary School (WL Campus)  
Teacher: Mrs. MacKinnon

## Survivors

We are children

We are taken from our homes

We are taken from our families

We are taken from our culture

We are taken from our language

We are beaten

We are starved

We are released

We are overcoming our trauma

We are survivors



# French Poems

## Français



1st Place Winner, French Category 2022  
Heidi Reed, Grade 7  
Lake City Secondary School (Columneetza Campus)  
Teacher: M. O'Keefe

## Prochaine, Disparue

Je me demande comment ça çest arrivé

Un moment elle était là

Prochaine,

Disparue.

Il était si vite

Si sournois

Si enjôleur.

Un moment ma mère estait la,

Prochaine,

Disparue.

Pourquoi es-ce que ça arrive?

Trouvez votre humanité

Un moment elles sont là

Prochain,

Disparue.



2nd Place Winner, French Category 2022  
Sydney Mason, Grade 7  
Lake City Secondary School (Columneetza Campus)  
Teacher: M. O'Keefe

## La Maison

Je reviens

Je revient pour apprendre, pour embrasser

Mes-ancêtres, mon passé

Je reviens

Brave, dur, prendre des risques

Je suis assor

Je les s'aiment, je m'aime, j'aime ma belle culture

Je revient





3rd Place Winner, French Category 2022  
Grace Yang, Grade 7  
100 Mile Elementary School (French Imm.)  
Teacher: Mlle. Smith

### Protestations Indigènes

Le Droit à L'autodétermination.

Le droit à l'auto-gouvernance.

Meilleure éducation des enfants.

Eau potable améliorée.

Des taux de pauvreté plus faibles.

Des taux de chômage plus faibles.

Baisse des taux d'incarcération.

Moins de risque d'itinérance.

Pas de dénutrition.

Des niveaux de revenu plus élevés.

Ce sont toutes nos choses

Les autochtones constamment

Ressentir le besoin de se battre ou

Pour protester.



4th Place Winner, French Category 2022  
Harmony Glanville, Grade 7  
Lake City Secondary School (Columneetza)  
Teacher: M. O'Keefe

### Les tambours

Letambour résemble le Coeur.

Rempli avec joix et paix.

Le tambour est quelqncchose que tu

Crée. Tu fabrique quelquechose qui

Resemble toi, puis quand tu a fini

Tule frapper et tu danse et chante

Heurensement avec tous la joie

Du monde.



Honorable Mention, French Category 2022  
Peyton Kreschuk, Grade 7  
100 Mile Elementary School  
Teacher: Mme. Smith

## Les cinq sens

Je sors de la maison.

Je touche de l'herbe autour de moi.

Il se sent doux mais avec les bords tranchants.

Je regarde les arbres autour de moi.

Ils sont vert sur le haut mais brun et blanc sur le fond.

Je peux entendre les voitures sur le roux et le feu crépitements avec les personnes qui rit  
autour.

L'air a senti comme la fumée et le poisson cuit.

Je marche avec les personnes qui rit autour du feu et prend une morsure de poisson c'était sale  
très bon.

On a par le feu toute la nuit jusqu'à ce que l'on ait entendu le hurlement du loup.

Sans ces choses l'herbe, les arbres, le feu, les personnes, la joie. Ça c'est quelque chose  
notamment important dans la vie.



Honorable Mention, French Category 2022  
Lynnea Sharp, Grade 7  
Lake City Secondary School (Columneetza Campus)  
Teacher: M. O'Keefe

### La nature

La nature est toute  
mais nous la voyons comme rien  
la nature est belle  
mais certains disent que c'est moche  
la nature nous respecte  
mais nous ne la respectons pas  
La nature est calme et tranquille  
Mais certains disent que c'est bruyant et ennuyeux  
La nature est belle, calme et tranquille  
C'est tout que nous en avons besoin



Honorable Mention, French Category 2022  
Teara Wolstenholme, Grade 7  
Lake City Secondary School (Columnneetza Campus)  
Teacher: M. O'Keefe

Ces't une ancienne tradition que nous faisons

Une chose qui est touj'our dans la vie

La chose qui aide quand tu besoin

Ta culture est tres speciale

Une culture peut être pour un communauté

Refaire la culture que vous pouvex

En fin chérissez toujours votre culture



# Tsilhqot'in Poems (Chilcotin Poems)

The Tsilhqot'in (Chilcotin) are an Indigenous people who live between the Fraser River and the Coast Mountains in west-central British Columbia. Traditionally Dene (Athabaskan) speaking, their name means "people of the red river" and also refers to the Chilcotin Plateau region in British Columbia.



1st Place Winner, Chilcotin Category 2022  
Arianna Olsen, Grade 7  
Naghtaneqed Elementary/Secondary School  
Teachers: Tony Speers, June Williams

## I AM

Nesdlin

Indigenous

Nenqayni nesdlin.

Brave and beautiful

Lha nisjedbelh nesun jinis?in.

Strong like medicine

Dadaben ch'ah nadest'i.

Hair as delicate as an eagle's feather

Setsigha dagish-ta ch'ah dezilhti.

Voice as confident as a grizzly's roar

Sajeni nunitsiny ch'ah delwen.

Language as fragile as a drum

Ch'ah yas'elhtig delden ch'ah sajintsen.

Family as loving as a mother bear

Sedeni ses-ban ch'ah sajintsen.

Our land demands respect

Nexwenen gwedetaghalti.

First Nations

Nenqayni

2nd Place Winner, Chilcotin Category 2022  
Jordelle Alec, Grade 6  
Naghtaneqed Elementary/Secondary School  
Teachers: Tony Speers, June Williams

## Dinlhdzan Hunest'in

Yat'ax belhtu dinldazn hant'ih.

Dzelh chuh dinlhdzan.

Gwelu belh lhud chuh.

Dechen town sunt'inlh gunlin.

Xi ?eguh nilhts'i.

Gwening'eê, gwedetaghalhk'anlh.

Xi biny gwedetinsh.

Sa ten bideninad, deltel.

Dan ?eguh biny taghinlin. Biny tu lhan gwelish.

Ts'iyen belh gwezel ts'edan dinlhdzan.

Melghes, gwezel ts'edan

Yeê belh gwelu belh gwezel ts'edan.

Gwelu dinlhdzan.

Sa tan bideninad.

Gwelu hutelog hink'an xi chunchuh tu detinsh.

Lhud gulin ?eguh detaghalteê.



**3rd Place Winners, Chilcotin Category 2022**  
**Mrs. Therrien's Grade 3 Class**  
**Nesika Elementary School**

(Each student in this class won)

Poem by Carter Cochran:  
Grade 3

**Melemstyé Melemstyé**

You are so smart  
Melmstye Melemstye  
You like to howl at the moon.

Nun Nun  
You are cool hunters  
Nun Nun  
You are good at tracking.



3<sup>rd</sup> Place Poem by Logan McDonald:  
Grade 3  
Ms. Therrien's Class, Nesika Elementary School

**Sqlu 7' uwi, Sqlu 7' uwi**

**You are good swimmer.**

**Sqlu 7' uwi, Sqlu 7' uwi**

**You are good building**

**Tsa ' Tsa**

**You are good at chomping**

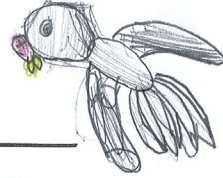
**Tsa ' Tsa**

**Your teeth are big.**



Entry 3

Raven



A Poem By: Arya Oswald.

setse 7, setse 7,

you are creative.

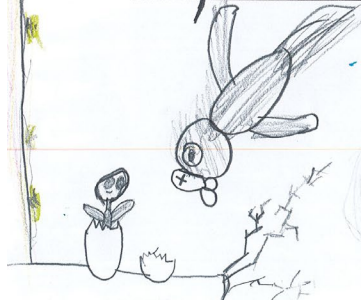
setse 7 sets 7,

you inspire



Datsanchugh, Datsanchugh  
you solve problems.

Datsanchugh, Dasanchugh  
you never give up.



Grade: 3  
School: Nesika Elementary  
Teacher: Ms. Therrien



3<sup>rd</sup> Place Poem by Kohen Akeson  
Grade 3,  
Ms. Therrien's Class, Nesika Elementary School

**RAVEN**

Datsan chugh, Datsan chugh  
You never give up  
Datsan chugh, datsan chugh  
You inspire me

Setsé 7, Setsé 7  
You are smart  
Setsé 7, Setsé 7  
You are creative



3<sup>rd</sup> Place Poem by Chace Kohlen  
Grade 3,  
Ms. Therrien's Class, Nesika Elementary School

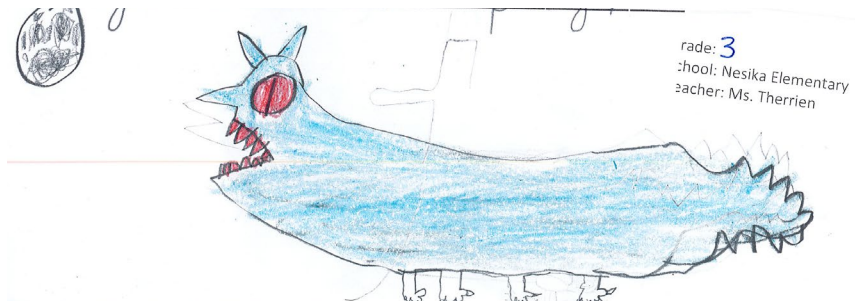
## WOLF

Mélemst ye, Mélemst ye  
You are a good communicator.

Mélemst ye, Mélemst ye  
You work together

Nun, Nun  
You stay together.

Nun, Nun  
You attack Prey



3<sup>rd</sup> Place Poem by Fiyin Olawuwo  
Grade 3,  
Ms. Therrien's Class, Nesika Elementary School

## SALMON

SQELTEN, SQELTEN  
You are a critical thinker

SQELTEN, SQELTEN  
You are an excellent swimmer

TS'EMAN, TS'EMAN  
A long journey home

TS'EMAN, TS'EMAN  
You never give up



3<sup>rd</sup> Place Poem by Lennon Bouchard  
Grade 3,  
Ms. Therrien's Class, Nesika Elementary School

Entry 7

Wolf

A Poem By: Lennon Bouchard

Nun, Nun

You listen good

Nun, Nun

You are so fast.

Mélemst ye, Mélemst ye

Sometimes you are white

Mélemst ye, Mélemst ye

You are so cool.



Grade: 3  
School: Nesika Elementary  
Teacher: Ms. Therrien

Entry 8

# Wolf

A Poem By: Jericho Murphy-Lulua

melemst ye, melemst ye

You are a good communicator.

melemst ye, melemst ye

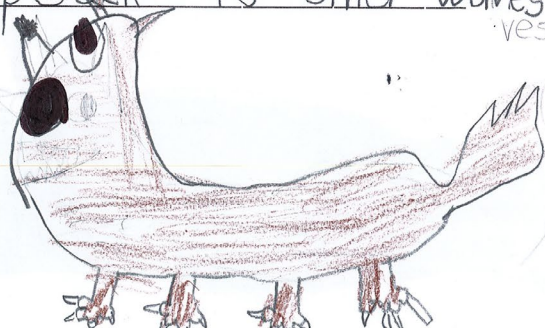
You stay together.

nun, nun

You listen for your prey.

nun, nun

You speak to other wolves.



Grade: 3  
School: Nesika Elementary  
Teacher: Ms. Therrien



3<sup>rd</sup> Place Poem by Gurleen Bindra  
Grade 3,  
Ms. Therrien's Class, Nesika Elementary School

Entry 9



Salmon

A Poem By: Gurleen Bindra

Sqéltén Sqéltén

you are critical thinker

Sqéltén Sqéltén

you are strong

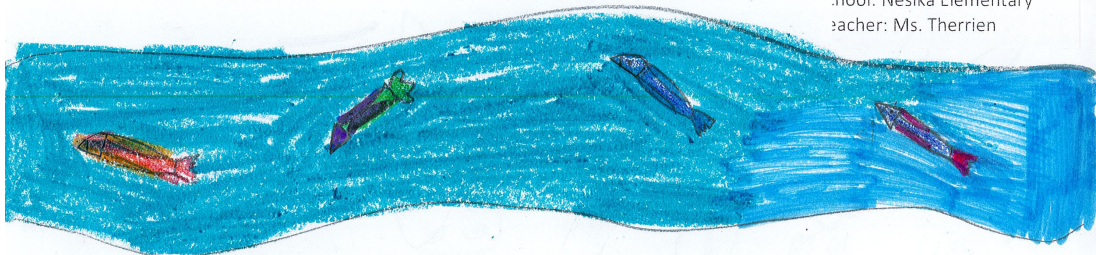
Sqéltén Sqéltén

you never give up

Sqéltén Sqéltén

you can jump over rocks

Grade: 3  
School: Nesika Elementary  
Teacher: Ms. Therrien

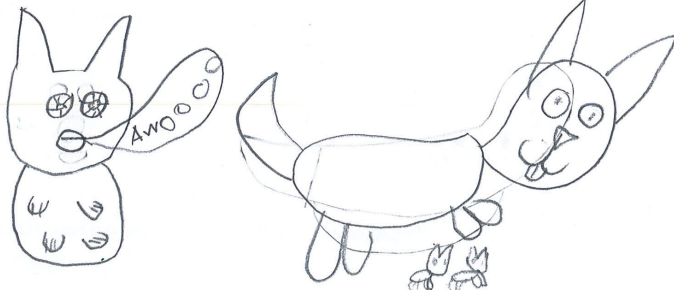


Entry  
10

Wolf

A Poem By: Olivia Zurak

Mélemst ye mélemst ye  
You howl to speak with pack  
mélemst ye mélemst ye  
you look cool together  
Nun Nun  
you  
stay together  
Nun nun  
Love their pack



Grade: 3  
School: Nesika Elementary  
Teacher: Ms. Therrien

4th Place Winner, Chilcotin Category 2022  
Tanner Loring, Grade 6  
Chilcotin Road Elementary School  
Teacher: Charlotte Haines

## BEAR

Ses nentsutsel

Small bear

Ses nentsutsel

Small bear

Nendid nilh?in

What you looking at?

Honey nis?in

I'm looking t honey

Ses nenchagh

Big bear

Ses nenchagh

Big bear

Nendid nilh?in

What you looking at?

Lhuy nis?in

I'm looking at fish



Honorable Mention, Chilcotin Category 2022  
Lucian William, Grade 7  
Naghtaneqed Elementary/Jr. Secondary School  
Teachers: Tony Speers, June Williams

**Gwetil**  
**(Valley)**

Lha gwetesjiz, Gwagwenini  
(Peaceful, Fun)

Našlhiny Binats'edilh, Nats'elgash, Nats'elʔilh  
(Horseback Riding, Hiking, Swimming)

(Safe, Nice, Comfortable, At Ease)

Seʔant'ih, Gunzun, Su gweʔʔan, Bini sušeʔan)

Xeni  
(Nemiah)



Honorable Mention, Chilcotin Category 2022  
Nelghes Mitchell-William, Grade 9  
Naghtaneqed Elementary/Jr. Secondary School  
Teacher: June Williams

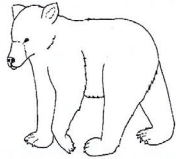


Hon.  
Mention  
Chilcotin Cat.

Name: Nelghes Mitchell-William  
Gr. 9  
Naghtaneqed  
Teacher: June Williams

Lhek'el

Ses , lhin , busi  
Bear , dog , cat



Yeš, yeš – deni , gex  
Snow, snowman, rabbit



Našlhiny , nun , t'askal  
Horse , wolf , butterfly



# SECWPEMC (SHUSWAP CATEGORY)



Secwepemc (pronounced Se-KWEP-umk-wh) means “The People”. Early settlers had trouble pronouncing the word and chose to say “Shuswap” instead.

1st Place Winner, Shuswap Category 2022  
Heath Helmer, Grade 6  
Marie Sharpe Elementary School  
Teacher: Mrs. Page (Shuswap Language & Culture)

## Píxem

In the fall, I went hunting.  
I went up and down hills trying to find a teníye (moose) or a tsí7 (deer)  
“Look” I said to qé7tse (dad), “TENÍYE!” (‘IT’S A MOOSE!’)  
Le7úwí (Good job”) said dad.  
“Oh no!” I said. “It’s running away.”  
But then qé7tse (dad) shot the teníye (moose), right in its sképgen  
Qé7tse (Dad) said he was proud of me.  
We went home to celebrate.  
Kí7ce (Mom) was happy for me.  
Then we had it for dinner.



2nd Place Winner, Shuswap Category 2022  
Liam Galisky, Grade 3  
Mountview Elementary School  
Teacher: Mrs. Page (Shuswap Language & Culture)

## Crelrelálsé

Weyt-k, once upon a time there were three kids named Jarette and  
Liam and Ryley, and they lived in a tree house.

A kenkékнем was about to climb our melénllp,  
But we were crelrelálsé and fought kenkékнем off.

Kukwstsétsemc





3rd Place Winner, Shuswap Category 2022  
Mrs. Therrien's 2nd Grade class  
Nesika Elementary School

All students in the class shared 3<sup>rd</sup> place! These poems follow.

G g e l t e n

A Poem By: Karman Virk

G g e l t e n

you can have more

g g e l t e n

you can swim

T a e m a n T e m a n

you go back home

T e m a n T e m a n

you are a good swimmer



rade: 2  
chool: Nesika Elementary  
eacher: Ms. Therrien

# Raven

A Poem By: Darian Kirechuk

Datsan chugh Datsan chugh

You inspire me

Datsan chugh Datsan chugh

You are so smart

Setse7 Setse7

Never give up

Setse7 Setse7

you are creative.

Grade: 2  
School: Nesika Elementary  
Teacher: Ms. Therrien

salmon

A Poem By: Logan Buick

sqéltén sqéltén

you are so smart

sqéltén sqéltén

you are so strong

sqéltén sqéltén

perserver

sqéltén sqéltén

jump over rocks

Grade: 2  
School: Nesika Elementary  
Teacher: Ms. Therrien

Bear

A Poem By: Mahaveer Pooni

Ses, Ses

Making wise choices

Ses, Ses

Such a great protector

Kenkéknem, Kenkéknem

You listen to your heart

Kenkéknem, Kenkéknem

You are so strong.

Grade: 2  
School: Nesika Elementary  
Teacher: Ms. Therrien

# Bear

A Poem By: Jaxon Miller

Bear Bear you are

very strong Bear Bear you are

smart Bear Bear you

are Patient Bear Bear you make

wise choices Bear

Bear you listen to your

heart

Grade: 2  
School: Nesika Elementary  
Teacher: Ms. Therrien

# WOLF

A Poem By: COOPER WESTWICK

mélem st ye mélem st ye  
you are a good communicator  
mélem st ye mélem st ye  
you work together and you look cool.

Nan Nan ya a nesó  
strong you listen you are a pack  
Nan Nan you are smart  
you never give up you stay together.

Grade: 2  
School: Nesika Elementary  
Teacher: Ms. Therrien

# Wolf

A Poem By: Riley - Roney

Mélemstye, Mélemstye

you are a good leader

Mélemstye Mélemstye

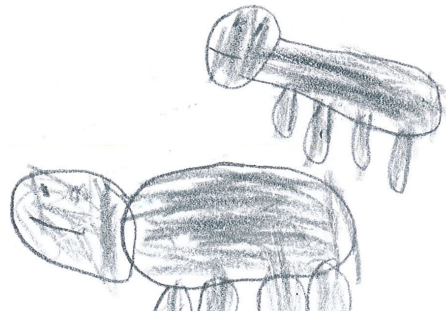
you look so cool

Nun nun

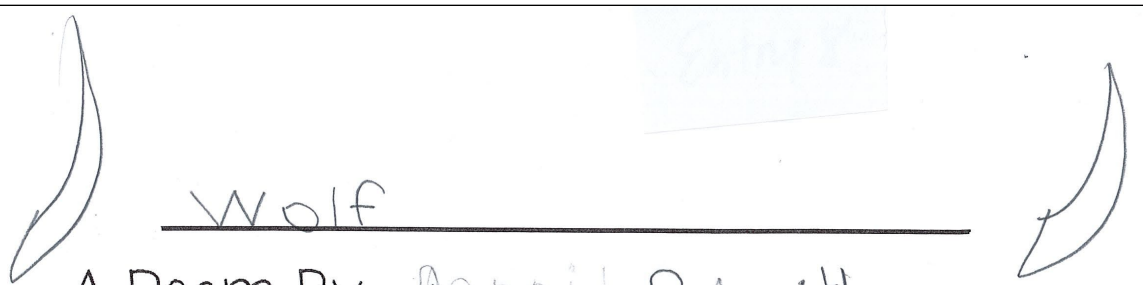
you love your pack

you work together

you like to howl



Grade: 2  
School: Nesika Elementary  
Teacher: Ms. Therrien



Wolf

A Poem By: Abigail Bennett

Nun, Nun

you are white you howl

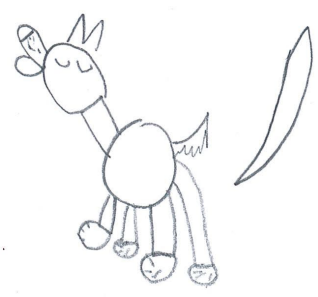
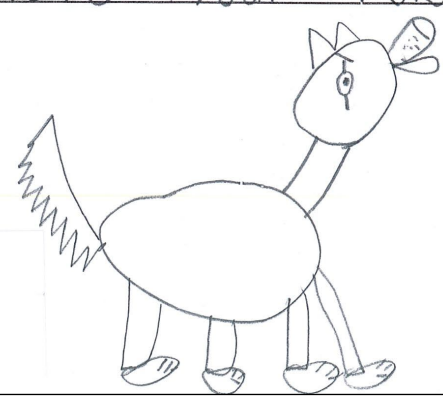
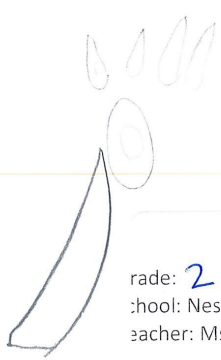
Nun, Nun

you howl



Mélemst ye, Mélemst ye  
you work together

Mélemst ye, Mélemst ye  
you love your pack.



Grade: 2  
School: Nesika Elementary  
Teacher: Ms. Therrien



# Raven

A Poem By: William Hanson

setse7, setse7

Do you get hot because you are black?

Setse7, setse7

How high can you fly?

Datsan chugh, Datsan chugh

You are a problem solver.

Datsan chugh, Datsan chugh

You are really big!



Grade: 2  
School: Nesika Elementary  
Teacher: Ms. Therrien

# Salmon

A Poem By: torin. wright

Sqéltén sqéltén

resilient and strong

sqéltén sqéltén

critical thinker

ts eman ts eman

never give up

ts eman ts eman

a long journey home



Grade: 2  
School: Nesika Elementary  
Teacher: Ms. Therrien

# Wolf.

A Poem By: Sephira Setah

Mélemst ye Mélmst ye

you are Strong

Mélemst ye Mélmst ye

you stay together

Nun Nun

you hear so well

Nun Nun

you are cool



Grade: 2  
School: Nesika Elementary  
Teacher: Ms. Therrien

4th Place Winner, Shuswap Category 2022  
Talyn Wycotte, Grade 3  
Marie Sharpe Elementary School  
Teacher: Mrs. Page (Shuswap Language & Culture)

### Pexpíxem

In the ilwélsten (fall) I went pexpíxem (hunting)

Ell (and)

I saw a lot of tsí7 (deer)

Ell (and)

We almost shot tsí7 (deer) but we were too far from it

Ell (and)

We went home after the weekend was over

Ell (and)

We went again the next weekend.



Honorable Mention, Shuswap Category 2022  
Kammille Cunningham, Grade 6  
Mountview Elementary School  
Teacher: Mrs. Page (Shuswap Language & Culture)

## Lecúllqwelt

Sqepts, Lecúllqwelt,  
Tsmamelye, speqmic.

*Translation:*

*Beautiful voice*

*spring, beautiful voice  
young beaver, swan.*



*Thank you to all the teachers and support staff who encouraged their students to participate in our annual poetry contest in 2022*

**Compiled by School District No. 27 Indigenous Education Department**