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Entertainment

Style Invitational Week 1129: Nobody uses spelling bee words? You will.

Plus 'Paint It Bla,' 'Eels on the Bus' and more clipped song titles from Week 1125



Pyopoesis is the thing with pus: For Style Invitational Week 1129, write a poem that uses a spelling bee word. (Bob Staake for The Washington Post)



By Pat Myers Editor and judge of The Style Invitational June 18, 2015
Email the author

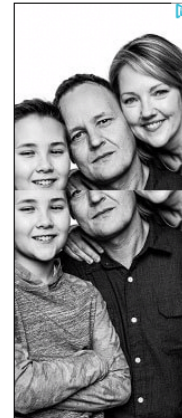
(Click [here to skip down](#) to the results of our contest for shortened song titles)

**Pyopoesis! The word is a doozy.
It's not about matters poetic.
It's all about pustules that smell and are oozy!
(How's that for a morning emetic?)**

Last month's National Spelling Bee, like last year's, ended in a tie between the top two kids: Midwestern eighth-graders Gokul Venkatchalam and Vanya Shivashankar both correctly spelled every word put to them — [20 rounds' worth](#) — until the judges declared them both winners, packed up their Webster's Thirds and went home.

While each speller gained national fame along with \$37,000 in money and prizes, their shared pursuit always brings out [the critics](#) who call spelling bees a colossal waste of time and effort put into memorizing lists of words that nobody ever uses.

Nobody? That's us! We'll use them! **This week: Write a humorous short poem (eight lines or fewer) incorporating one of the 50**



**ROGER.
HUSBAND.
FATHER.**

**DIAGNOSED
WITH
ADVANCED
NON-SMALL
CELL LUNG
CANCER.**



**ROGER.
HUSBAND.
FATHER.**

**DIAGNOSED
WITH
ADVANCED
NON-SMALL
CELL LUNG
CANCER.**

Roger is a real patient.

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short poem (eight lines or fewer) incorporating one of the 50 words listed at the bottom of this page, as in the example above by that, er, udite man of letters (usually the letter F) Gene Weingarten; each was used at some point in this year's bee. The poems have to make sense with the words' true meanings; you can't just pretend they mean something else. (Most of the real meanings aren't brain-achers; they include "horseshoe-shaped," "freckles" and "a wasp nest." A Google search for any of these words should give you the definition and pronunciation on the first page of results. You may use the word in a different form, such as a plural or a different tense.

...
 ...

Other runners-up win their choice of a yearned-for [Loser Mug](#) or the ardently desired "Whole Fools" [Grossery Bag](#). Honorable mentions get a lusted-after Loser magnet designed by Bob Staake: either "[The Wit Hit the Fan](#)" or "[Hardly Har-Har](#)." First Offenders receive a smelly tree-shaped air "freshener" ([FirStink](#) for their first ink). E-mail entries to losers@washpost.com or, if you were born in the 19th century, fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday night, June 29; results published July 19 (online July 16). You may submit up to 25 entries per contest. Include "Week 1129" in your e-mail subject line or it might be ignored as spam. Include your real name, postal address and phone number with your entry. See contest rules and guidelines at wapo.st/InvRules. The headline for this week's results is by Jeff Contompasis; the honorable-mentions subhead is by Mae Scanlan. Join the lively Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev. "Like" the Style Invitational Ink of the Day on Facebook at bit.ly/inkofday.


The Style Conversational: The Empress's weekly online column, published late Thursday afternoon, discusses each new contest and set of results. Especially if you plan to enter, check it out at wapo.st/styleconv.


[And the results of The Style Invitational contest posted four weeks ago . . .](#)

SEASON OF THE WIT[ch]: The chopped song titles of Week 1125

In Week 1125, the Empress asked you to cut the beginning or end (or both) off a song title — as if it were on an electronic readout where the whole name didn't fit — and describe the result. Twenty-four people sent in "Stairway to Heave[n]," and 15 offered "Light My Fir" (the Doors' never-released Christmas album).





4th place:

4 Oprah Winfrey picks prison memoir for her book club 

5 Analysis Do the dismal box-office returns of 'Solo' signal a problem for Star Wars? 

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SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO [Town]: Mrs. Claus sings about the aftermath of a night of excess with the eggnog. (Josh Feldblyum, Louisville)

3rd place:

ITSY BITSY TEENIE WEENIE YELL[ow Polka Dot Bikini]: Original title of “When Doves Cry.” (Ed Flynn, Alexandria, Va.)

2nd place and the “melted” “souvenir snowman” globe from Florida:

CHANGES IN LATITUDE, CHANGES IN ATT[itude]: A song about a dude who gets bad cell coverage on spring break in Fort Lauderdale. (Jeff Brechlin, Eagan, Minn.)

And the winner of the Inkin' Memorial:

PAINT IT BLA[ck]: The new Sherwin-Williams jingle sings the praises of ecru. (Tom Panther, Springfield, Va.)

Maim that tune: honorable mentions

[5]**o WAYS TO LEAVE YOUR LOVER:** The new theme song of the Roman Catholic Church. (Elden Carnahan, Laurel, Md.)

[H]**OLD ME NOW:** Yoda ponders himself in the mirror. (David Clayton, Alexandria, Va.)

[What's] **NEW, PUSSYCAT?:** The song you dread hearing on your first day of hard time. (G. Smith, Alexandria, Va.)

[E]**BONY AND IVORY:** The fashion industry tells what it's looking for in runway models. (Dion Black, Washington)

[All] **ABOUT THAT BASS:** Okay, maybe the fish wasn't quite three feet

[What's] **NEW, PUSSYCAT?:** The song you dread hearing on your first day of hard time. (G. Smith, Alexandria, Va.)

[E]**BONY AND IVORY:** The fashion industry tells what it's looking for in runway models. (Dion Black, Washington)

[All] **ABOUT THAT BASS:** Okay, maybe the fish wasn't quite three feet long . . . (Ben Schwalb, Severna Park, Md.)

[Priv]**ATE EYES:** Newly discovered single by the Zombies. (Larry Gray, Union Bridge, Md.)

[I] **FEEL THE EAR[th Move]:** Spinal Tap's follow-up to “Smell the Glove” (Mike Gips, Bethesda, Md.)

[R]**OXANNE:** “You don't have to turn on the light at all, actually . . .” (Craig Dykstra, Centreville, Va.)

[T]**OUCH ME IN THE MORNING:** Theme from “50 Shades of Grey.” (Mark Raffman, Reston, Va.)

ALL I HAVE TO DO IS DR[eam]: A college student knows how to make his Tiger Mom proud. (Dion Black)

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GET ME TO THE CHURCH ON TIME[e]: In this sentimental holiday ballad, Ebenezer Scrooge forces a boy on crutches to give him a piggyback ride to Christmas service. (Christopher Lamora, Los Angeles)

ETERNAL FLAM[e]:

*Close your eyes, stick your heads in the sand;
Voters, when your candidate's vying, everything is grand.
You won't give a damn even when they're lying,
You'll keep buying their eternal flam!* (Jon Gearhart, Des Moines)

I'D LIKE TO TEACH THE WORLD TO SIN[g]: By the Temptations.
(Jeff Contompasis, Ashburn, Va.)

LAY ME DO[wn]: This original Beatles song title was cleaned up to "Love" for AM radio. (Ben Schwab)

HAZY SHADE OF WIN[ter]: By the Brady Bunch, the official song of Super Bowl XLIX. (Jessica Mathews, Stanley, Va.)

RIVER DEEP, MO[untain High]: A song from "Exodus: The Musical."
(Marni Penning Coleman, Falls Church, Va.)

ROLL OVER BEET[hoven]: Vegan-rock remake of "On Top of Spaghetti"
(Ken Gallant, Conway, Ark.)

STREET FIGHTING MA[n]: A tribute to [Toya Graham](#), Baltimore's recent "mother of the year." (Michael Levy, Silver Spring, Md.)

THANK GOD I'M A COUNTRY [Boy]: The Vatican national anthem.
(Rob Wolf, Gaithersburg, Md.)

WHATEVER LOL[a Wants, Lola Gets]: Teens' texts set to music. (Warren Tanabe, Annapolis, Md.)

[F]IRE AND RAIN: This mix doesn't play well on the Beltway. (Ellen Ryan, Rockville, Md.)

[The Wh]EELS ON THE BUS: Scary kids' song performed by Samuel L. Jackson. (Mark Raffman)

AIN'T TOO PRO[ud to Beg]: A more appropriate song than "Hail to the Redskins." (Kathy Hardis Fraeman, Olney, Md.)

MELLOW YELL[ow]: Donovan sings about sitting on a lit reefer. (Jim Barnes, Leesburg, Va., who got his last Invite ink in Week 180, in 1996)

UNDER THE BOAR[dwalk]: A ballad about Miss Piggy's summer romance. (Ed Edwards, Surrey, England)

I'VE GOT YOU UNDER MY SKI[n]: The Fonz sings to the shark he's jumping. (Gary Crockett, Chevy Chase, Md.)

[St]RANGERS IN THE NIGHT: A song from the Texas border:
Rangers in the night—look out, Hispanics!
Roaming through the night and causing panics,
Checking for IDs to make the state secure;

Doing all they can, protecting borders,
Even if it takes guns, bombs and mortars,
They will keep our race completely white and pure . . . (Neal Starkman,
Seattle)

THE LADY IS A TRAM[p]: Opening number from the musical version of
“A Streetcar Named Desire.” (Bernard and Laurie Brink, Cleveland, Mo.)

TAKE ME TO CHU[rch]: An alien “Jeopardy!” fan comes after the player
he hates most. (Mary Kappus, Washington)

MY BLUE HEAVE(n): Maybe tequila with blueberry pie wasn’t such a
good idea after all. (Jeff Brechlin; Edmund Conti, Raleigh, N.C.)

AFTERNOON DELI[ght]:
Thinking of you’s working up an appetite
Not for you, but lox and bagel and a black-and-white ... (Jeff Shirley,
Richmond, Va.)

And Last: **CAN I GET A WIT**[ness]: The Empress’s weekly lament. (Joy
Sibley, Fairfax, Va.; Roger Dalrymple)

Book Club newsletter

Our monthly selection of book reviews and
recommendations from Book World editors and
critics.

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**Still running — deadline Monday night: Our contest for
mischievous ideas for mini-drones. See bit.ly/invite1128.**

THE SPELLING BEE WORDS FOR THE WEEK 1129 CONTEST

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bayadere
bouquetiere
bruxellois
caudillismo
cerastes
cibarial
cocozele
collutorium
commissurotomy
cravenette
ctenoid
cypseline
distelfink
ephelides
epithalamium
gnathostome
hippocrepeiform
hooroosh
iridocyclitis
kipuka
lulliloo
mamaliga
minhag
mymotherine
nixtamal

nunatak
oflag
pampootie
paroemiology
pipsissewa
poikilitic
porwige
pyopoiesis
pyrrhuloxia
radicolous
samadhi
scacchite
scherenschnitte
scytale
sdrucchiola
tartarean
thamakau
tortillon
vernissage
vespiary
zanja
zimocca
zygoneure

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Pat Myers is editor and judge of The Style Invitational, The Washington Post's page for clever, edgy humor and wordplay. In the role since December 2003, she has posted and judged more than 700 contests. She also writes the weekly Style Conversational column and runs the Style Invitational Devotees page on Facebook. Follow @patmyersTWP

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