

# APRIL IS POETRY MONTH!

## POETRY COMPETITION

### 2019 COMPETITION THEME

write a poem about some aspect or aspects of the

*history of a word*

T H E \*  
L I F E  
O F \* W  
O R D S

### TIPS TO GET YOU GOING



- The study of the history and development of words is called ETYMOLOGY. It comes from Ancient Greek *etymos* (“true”) + *logos* (“discourse”), signifying “a discourse on true meanings.”
- Think beyond what a word means to you right now. Research how it came into English or French and the changes in its meaning over time, or from the donor language to ours.
- If you know another language, try to convey the “true meaning” of a favorite word in that language by following its history.
- COGNATES are words that share a common origin, like *edge*, *acid*, *acumen*, and *oxygen*, all deriving from a root meaning “sharp.” Write a poem that puts cognates back into contact again.
- Some etymologies are mysteries even now! Invent an origin story for a favorite word.
- “Poet” comes from the Greek *poietes*, “maker.” Write a poem based on the name for a person, place, or thing. Or about your own name!

### RESOURCES



- Etymological dictionaries, like [www.etymonline.com](http://www.etymonline.com).
- The *Oxford English Dictionary*, *The American Heritage Dictionary of Indo-European Roots*, and foreign-language dictionaries.

\*Note: by submitting a poem you agree to its publication, online or in print, under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>). Submission does not guarantee publication. No correspondence will be entered into.

Questions regarding this contest may be directed to Professor David-Antoine Williams (St. Jerome’s University).

### PRIZES



- Winner: \$100 gift-card to spend at Indigo.ca, plus:
- Runner(s) up: Inscribed prize copy of a poetry anthology, and a 1-year subscription to *The New Quarterly* for you and your school library, plus:
- Honorable mentions: Publication of your poem in *The Life of Words Anthology 2019*.

### HOW TO ENTER



- Email your poem,\* in English or French, by 30 April 2019, to: [thelifeofwords@sju.ca](mailto:thelifeofwords@sju.ca)
- To be eligible, include in your email: your full name, school, and grade.
- All participants must be students at an Ontario high school to be eligible.
- For information and news, and to download a .pdf of this flyer, visit [thelifeofwords.uwaterloo.ca/competition-2019/](http://thelifeofwords.uwaterloo.ca/competition-2019/)
- Follow us on twitter @thelifeofwords

