



Youth Poetry Contest

Calling all youth poets! The City of Nanaimo's Youth Poet Laureate, Paige Pierce, is hosting a Youth Poetry Competition. Submit a poem of any style, length, or topic for a chance to win prizes! Poems must be appropriate for school-aged audiences.

Applicants must include in their submission the following documentation:

- One (or more) poem(s) appropriate for school-aged audiences.
- A completed submission form with contact information.

Eligibility:

In order to be eligible as Nanaimo's Youth Poetry Contest, candidates must be **under the age of 18 (youth)** and reside within the City of Nanaimo Region.

Selection process:

All poems will be read and selected by the City of Nanaimo's current Youth Poet Laureate, Paige Pierce. Paige will be looking for the following criteria in submitted works:

1. Creativity. Don't be afraid to get creative and be unique! Poetry is abstract and Paige is hoping to see a range of styles and topics submitted through this project.
2. Grammar and writing conventions. Does your poem include proper spelling and grammar? Your poem can have whatever structure, rhyme scheme, or layout you feel best suits the piece, but it has to be readable!
3. Basic information. Please include your first name (last name optional), age, and either an email address or phone number we can contact you at. If families are submitting on behalf of children, please include the first name of a guardian and their contact information. Don't forget to add a title to your poem!

Deadline for Applications

Applications must be received **by midnight on Sunday, June 15th, 2025.** Deliver completed applications to:

- Submit [ONLINE](#)
- Hard Copy: Bowen Complex Drop Box, 500 Bowen Rd, Nanaimo, BC V9R 1Z7
- Email: cultureandevents@nanaimo.ca, ATTN: Youth Poetry Competition

Questions? Contact: cultureandevents@nanaimo.ca

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Submission Form

Applicant Name:	
Pronouns:	
Date of Birth:	
Email:	
Phone Number:	
Emergency Contact: <i>(If applicant is under the age of 18, please provide name of parent or guardian)</i>	
Parent/Guardian Email: <i>(If applicant is under the age of 18, please provide email of parent or guardian)</i>	
Secondary Phone Number: <i>(If applicant is under the age of 18, please provide phone number of parent or guardian)</i>	

Don't forget to include your poems when you submit this form!

Example: “Recollections of a Canadian Childhood” by Youth Poet Laureate, Paige Pierce

when I entered a room
in this bright primary colour
my Nan would sing an old tune
dropping her voice ten octaves
a swoop of the neck
for drama
for emphasis
lady in red

my memory carries me back
to the sand between Stories and Saratoga
brushing off crumbs of the ocean
in the water hose of their backyard
and though the sprawling acres
could never quite resist
the lingering smell of campfire
permeating every strand and pore
I have never breathed so well
as out in the open of this earth

I tell people
I am too young to know
what nationalism really means
until I roam the streets of another country
find only that my smile is reflected back
by those who stemmed from this very tree
I laugh too loud and use the word “eh”
unironically
and when someone sings Shania Twain
on the train under the sea
the essence of this place
bubbles up within

I tell them of our origins
this nest we are all cradled by
how an island isn’t just rock and riverbeds
when you lay your back into the compassion of it
under a star-lit sky

I think we all grow up a little wild
in the throes of a Canadian childhood
can feel summer’s approach in our very bones
retell stories of lake monsters
and what hides in the dark
we run fast on bare feet
see the green of this life
stained on skinned knees

the dark ages of our past
still ring out in the evening light
we grasp for something brighter
we know that we are underlined
a work in progress
but what a beautiful ground
to start from scratch