

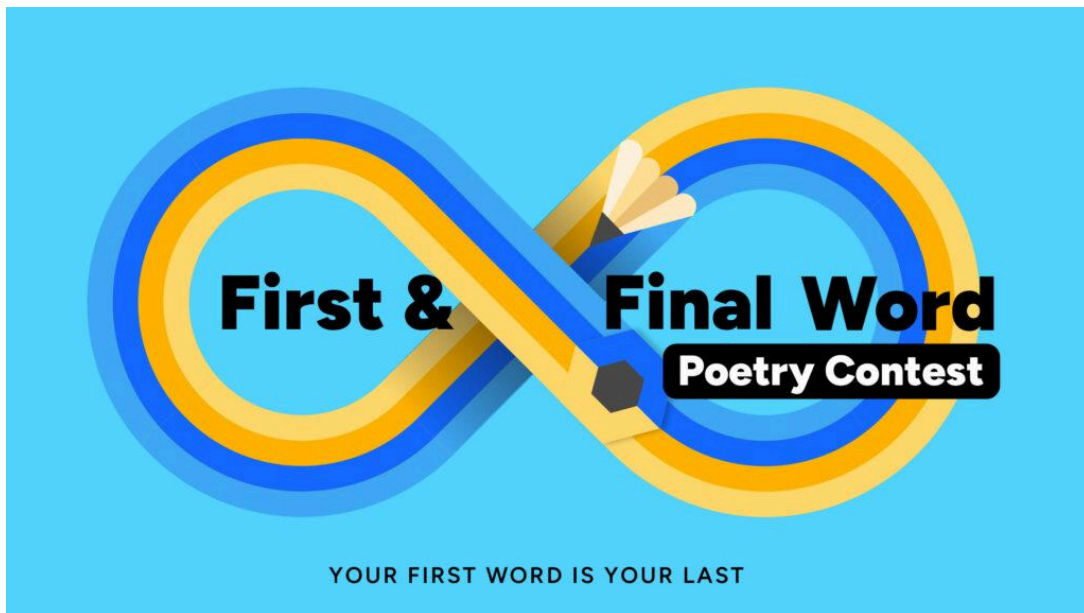


A Way With Words: Dictionary.com Names Winner of National Poetry Month Competition

This year's contest had a special twist—poems must start and end with the same word

SAN MATEO, California — April 30, 2026 — [Dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com) celebrated National Poetry Month the only way it knows how: with words. The world's leading digital dictionary invited writers of all backgrounds to string together their favorite phrases and syllables for its annual Poetry & Lyrics Challenge.

"There's no better time of the year to celebrate words, rhymes and our community than National Poetry Month," said **Steve Johnson, PhD, Director of Lexicography for Dictionary Media Group at IXL Learning**. "The Poetry & Lyrics competition is a great way to bring together our fellow language lovers, and shine a light on their creativity and self-expression."



From couplets and haikus to hip-hop lyrics, limericks and unrhymed free verse—all forms of poetry were welcome. However, this year's contest had a unique rule: each original short poem had to start and end with the same word. Contestants were encouraged to let their work wander, wonder and unfold, so long as it eventually returned to where it began.

The competition featured more than *900* entries from seasoned poets and first-timers alike, but one piece of work rose to the top: Bob Gidcumb's free-verse poem about an encounter in the Northwoods.

*"Stained glass is my window where the first fly butted all afternoon.
All winter I had waited on the thaw, watched February robins peck at frozen green.
But spring has always had its scavengers. He bumped and buzzed against the pane.
I watched him, rolled my Newsweek tight, and squished him where he stood.
Outside the world goes green. I left the window stained."*

As a prize, Bob will receive a \$150 gift card and a curated Dictionary.com prize pack. To see a full list of this year's winning entries, visit [dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com).

Whether you're writing your first verse or have years of experience, poetry is a great way to stretch your imagination and vocabulary. [Dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com) offers an array of resources to get you started, from [guides](#) on different types of sonnets to a collection of [old English words](#) that can add flair to your work. And although National Poetry Month may be coming to an end, it's never too early to start honing your skills for next year's contest!

About Dictionary.com

[Dictionary.com](https://www.dictionary.com) is the internet's leading language reference and learning destination: millions of people turn to us each day to better understand *words*—the very fabric of language, identity and ideas. We are committed to helping people express themselves, make connections and find opportunities through the power and joy of language. From authoritative definitions and grammar guidance to engaging editorial and multimedia experiences, Dictionary.com makes learning intuitive and relevant so you can put your ideas into words, and your words into action.

Press Contact

Eric Bates

IXL Learning

press@ixl.com