



# Writing Our Roots

## *First Annual Cincinnati Area Young People's Writing Contest*

Young writers ages 13-23 are invited to share work inspired by the heritage at the heart of their lives. How do your roots, however you define them (geographic, ethnic, racial, religious, other?) help to shape your family, your community, your view of the world?

Whether you write poetry, prose, memoir, or some hybrid form of your own that defies labels, this contest is for you. You may be surprised just how much you have within you— your pride, your questions, your reflections on how the past shapes your life.

**Cash Awards up to \$150**

**Submissions Due by October 11, 2019**

**Public Reading Event for Winners on November 11<sup>th</sup>  
at UC's Taft Research Center, Edwards One**

### **Submission Guidelines:**

Contest participants will be grouped in age categories of 13 – 15; 16 – 19; 20 – 23, with prizes awarded in each category. Poetry submissions can be one or more poems but should not exceed three pages. Prose essay/memoir submissions should not exceed 2000 words. Only one submission per person will be accepted.

To submit, attach your original, unpublished submission plus your name and contact information (address, email address, phone number), birth date (if under 18, please include guardian's phone number and email), school (if attending school), and neighborhood to an email sent to [spadaka@mail.uc.edu](mailto:spadaka@mail.uc.edu) on or before **October 11, 2019**.

Info: <https://www.wordplaycincy.org/mobile-programs>

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## Writing Our Roots Writing Prompts

Do you need some ideas on how to get started? Here are a few inspirational quotes that might jumpstart your writing about your roots.

1. I am from my grandmother's home,  
a home of herbal teas and spices  
that she believes will cure everything.

...

From eating dinner in my mom's  
bed and finding the worst acting on TV,  
I grew into someone that takes matters  
into her hands.

Poem by WordPlay, Oylar and Thomas More students

*Who are the people, places, foods, activities, words, etc., that have formed the foundation of your life?*

2. I was raised by  
Chitterling eating  
Vegetarian cooking  
Cornbread so good you want to lay  
down and die baking  
"Go on baby, get yo'self a plate"  
Kind of Women.

Poem by Kelly Norman Ellis

*How were you raised?*

3. I came to the States within my mother's arms  
As she crossed terrains, freezing rivers, and internal fears  
of her life, on the hope that my life would be not be hers

Poem by Carlos García León

*Where you brought here from somewhere else? How and why?*