



Style

Style Invitational Week 970: Couple it — rhyme a line of poetry with your own, funnier line



(Bob Staake for The Washington Post)

By **Pat Myers**

May 4, 2012

Those parts of thee that the world's eye doth view (*William Shakespeare*)

Are thanks to Dr. Young, Park Avenue. (*Frank Osen*)

Turning and turning in the widening gyre, (*W.B. Yeats*)

My clothes are almost ready for the dryer. (*Robert Schechter*)




The examples above by two of our most poetic Losers (not Shakespeare and Yeats; *those* guys never won a T-shirt) are from a 2006 edition of the light-verse journal [Bumbershoot](#), which calls them tailgaters. Robert suggested recently on the [Style Invitational Devotees](#) page on Facebook that we try for more. **This week: Take a line from any well-known poem and pair it with your own second line to make a humorous couplet.** I'm not going to say they *must* rhyme and have consistent meter, but my hunch is that rhyming, scanning couplets would be much funnier and cleverer. You can find innumerable poems online by Googling "famous poems" and whatnot.

Winner gets [the Inkin' Memorial](#), the Lincoln-statue bobblehead that is the new Style Invitational trophy. Second place, in accordance with the literary theme, receives a Lil William (Shakespeare) "posable figure," if you like your human figures posed as human Transformers; he's a bit blocky. However, he is lil — about three inches tall. He also seems to be wearing a Speedo. Donated by Loser Brunch coordinator Pie Snelson.

Other runners-up win their choice of a coveted [Style Invitational Loser T-shirt](#), a yearned-for [Loser Mug](#) or the new, ardently desired [Grossery Bag](#). Honorable mentions get a lusted-after [Loser magnet](#). First Offenders get a



Most Read Lifestyle

- 1 Analysis**
 A short investigation into Trump's claims of 'RIGGED' Google results against him 
- 2** John Goodman reveals Roseanne will be killed off in 'The Conners' spinoff 
- 3 Perspective**
 The perils of being a woman who's just asking to be left alone 

smelly, tree-shaped air “freshener” (Fir Stink for their first ink). E-mail entries to losers@washpost.com or fax to 202-334-4312. Deadline is Monday, May 14; results published June 3 (online June 1). No more than 25 entries per entrant per week. Include “Week 970” 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/StyleInv. The subhead for this week’s honorable mentions is by Roy Ashley; the one for the Week 962 extras is by Jeff Contompassis; the alternative headline in the “Next Week” line is by Chris Doyle. Join the Style Invitational Devotees on Facebook at on.fb.me/invdev.

Report from Week 966

in which we asked you to construct strings of words that change by one letter from the previous — adding, subtracting or substituting: Cleverness notwithstanding, there are only so many of these a body can read at once. So we offer some great entries from Week 962 that we didn’t have room for last month.

The winner of the Inkin’ Memorial

MITT: “Mutt must muss, mess less. Let’s let pet pee. See? Set? Get pet! Put pup up! Uh??? UGH!!!!” (*Dave Zarrow, Reston, Va.*)

2. Winner of the little tin of Emergency Underpants:

CAIN, coin, corn, core, lore, lose, LOST!

PAUL, pall, poll, pole, pose, lose, LOST!

NEWT, next, text, test, jest, just, lust, LOST!

RICK, risk, rise, rose, lose, LOST! (*Neal Starkman, Seattle*)

3. OBAMA, 'Bama, bam, lam, slam, ISLAM — Rufus Boggs, Backwater, Ala. (*Chris Doyle, Ponder, Tex.*)

4. PUTIN, poutin’, spoutin’, shoutin’, shootin’, hootin’, hottin’, rottin’, rattin’, ratin’, pratin’, prayin’, payin’, PALIN. (*Kevin Dopart, Washington*)

Badder, sadder: Honorable mentions

“CSI” (spoiler alert):

GROPE, rope, rape, tape, tap, rap, trap, trip, grip, gripe, grime, CRIME. (*Amanda Yanovitch, Midlothian, Va.*)

GOP got God, DoD, Dad, Mad Man; ran Ron, WON! (*Mike Caslin, Round Hill, Va.*)

ObamaCare, ObamaScare, ObamaScar, ObamaSpar, ObamaSpat, ObamaSpit, ObamaSplit, ObamaSplat. (*David Genser, Poway, Calif.*)

WEINER, whiner, whiter, waiter, waster, taster, tester, texter, SEXTER. (*Chris Doyle*)

“I Didn’t Start With P”:

RICK rock; dock dork; pork; porky, perky PERRY. (*Kevin Dopart*)

RUSH, rash, rasp, grasp, grass, CRASS. (*Edmund Conti, Raleigh, N.C.; Larry Powers, Falls Church, Va., a First Offender*)

YOUTH, mouth, south, soot, sooty, booty, booby, boomy, roomy, room, loom, loon, loony, looky, hooky, hoody, MOODY. (*Dan Steinbrocker, Los Angeles*)

NEWT, next, text, test, vest, vast, vase, case, ease, easel, WEASEL. (*Veggo Larsen, Farmers Branch, Tex.*)

just adding to the list above

4 Why our culture’s mild obsession with Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen may never end



5 Perspective Carolyn Hax: A kiss-and-don’t-tell with an ex-boyfriend’s buddy



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EASTER, feaster, faster, master, masser, Mass o'er, Mass over, PASSOVER.
(Mike Gips, Bethesda, Md.)

TRUMP, rump, ump, imp, simp, sim, him, ham, sham, shame, shave, have,
hare, hire, FIRE. (Matt Monitto, Elon, N.C.)

Even More of a Miracle?

WATER: later, LAGER. (Kevin Dopart)

TUTU, tuts, tots, toes, toe, woe, won, win, twin, TWAIN. (Judy Blanchard,
Novi, Mich.)

Market Jitters

BULL, bell, sell, yell, yelp, help, heap, hear, fear, BEAR. (Jeff Contompasis,
Ashburn, Va.)

BEANS, beads, bends, wends, wands, warts, FARTS. (Craig Dykstra,
Centreville, Va.)

Saturday Night

LUST, lush, bush, rush, ruse, rouse, arouse, CAROUSE. (Robert Schechter,
Dix Hills, N.Y.)

And Last: LOSER, loner, boner, bone, bore, sore, swore, sworn, worn,
morn, MORON. (Doug Frank, Crosby, Tex.)

And Even Laster: POO, loo, look, lock, luck, suck, sick, ick, INK. (Amanda
Yanovitch)

Har clippings: More honorable mentions from Week 962

*in which the Losers took a sentence from that week's Posts and came up
with a question it could have answered:*

A. You want to keep banging on him and stop him from jumping.

Q. What's the first step in making Grasshopper Pie? (Beverley Sharp,
Montgomery, Ala.)

A. "I've taken a recent liking to 'man toy.'"

Q. Mr. President, do you have a nickname for Vice President Biden? (Melissa
Yorks, Gaithersburg, Md.)

A. "I can't really pinpoint any actual conversation that we had."

Q. Did your doctor say the medical marijuana is helping you? (David
Genser)

A. They were rare birds indeed.

Q. Is it true that the recent cases of food poisoning were caused by
undercooked turkeys? (Larry Gray, Union Bridge, Md.)

**Still running — deadline Monday night — is our "grandfoals"
contest: See wapo.st/StyleInv; click on "Week 969."**

*Visit the online discussion group [The Style Conversational](#), where the
Empress discusses today's new contest and results along with news about
the Loser Community — and you can vote for your favorite among the
inking entries, since you no doubt figured the Empress chose the wrong
winner. If you'd like an e-mail notification each week when the Invitational
and Conversational are posted online, write to the Empress at
losers@washpost.com (note that in the subject line) and she'll add you to
the mailing list. And on Facebook, join the far more lively group [Style
Invitational Devotees](#) and chime in.*



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3 Comments



Pat Myers

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](#)

The Post Recommends

Mollie Tibbetts's father decries vitriol against Hispanics, saying they're 'lowans with better food'

Rob Tibbetts spoke kind words about the Hispanic community during his daughter's funeral.

13 hours ago



Opinion

Possibly Trump's stupidest tweet ever

Trump's economic illiteracy is staggering

Aug 16



Amid uproar, Melania Trump placates as her husband provokes

The first lady hosted a gathering of presidential descendants for a White House tree planting as outrage swirled over President Trump's tepid tribute to John McCain.

20 hours ago

