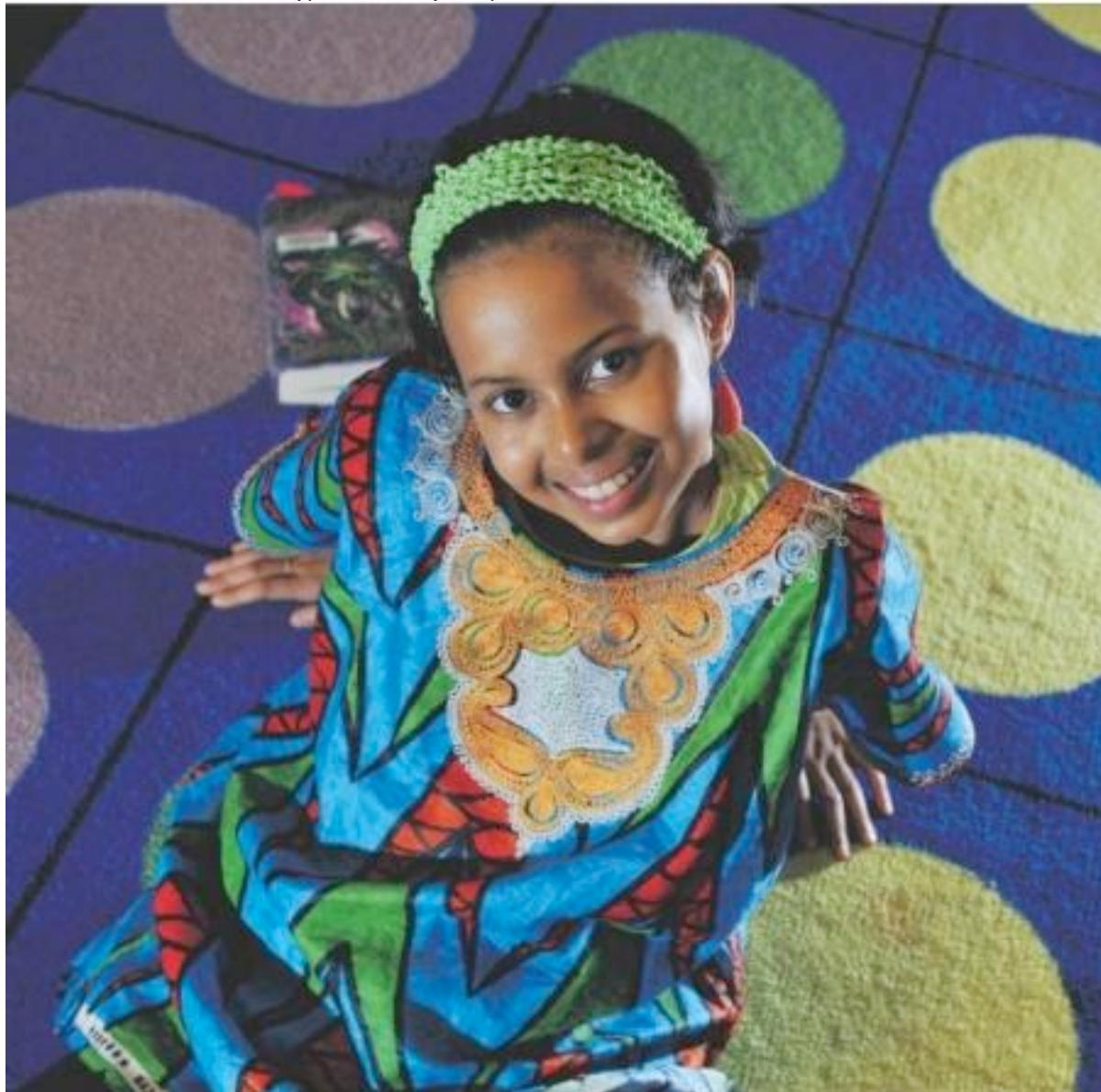


# Student has her A, B, Cs lined up for Journal's spelling competition

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Student Musabe Bwimba credits her teachers for helping her prepare for Sunday's Edmonton Journal Regional Spelling Bee.

**Photograph by:** Shaughn Butts , The Journal

Eleven-year-old Musabe Bwimba oozes confidence and poise.

Words that many of us would struggle to spell don't faze her.

The Grade 6 student from Brander Gardens Elementary School is one of 70 students from across northern Alberta who will compete Sunday in the seventh annual Edmonton Journal Regional Spelling Bee at Myer Horowitz Theatre at the University of Alberta. The event provides students with an opportunity to expand their vocabularies, hone their language skills and make new friends.

The students qualified by beating others at their own schools.

Musabe outlasted 11 other students from her school. Since it's her last year at Brander Gardens she wanted to join as many clubs as possible, including the spelling club.

"I wanted to try something new and do it for fun. I joined and realized I loved it," Musabe said.

However, there is more to Musabe than her love of spelling. In Grade 2, Musabe spent five months studying in Burundi, where she learned to speak Kirundi and Kinyarwanda, languages native to Burundi and Rwanda, respectively. She also loves swimming and is an avid reader.

Two of her teachers, Alissa Sept and Marcia Groves, have played integral roles in helping Musabe prepare for Sunday's event. Musabe said they also helped her learn new tricks to remember difficult words.

"I practise three times a week with my teachers, and they have helped me picture words in my mind," Musabe said. "Without them, I probably would not have got as far."

The winner will receive a \$5,000 Canspell Education Award and direct entry into the Postmedia Canspell National Spelling Bee in Toronto.

"I don't want to get my hopes up too high. I just want to go out there and try my best," Musabe said.

Nine of her competitors will be making their second appearance in the event, including Colton Lawrence, 12, from Gibbons School.

"I will know what to expect," the Grade 7 student said.

"Last year, I was really nervous. I panicked and stuttered when I was in front of such a big crowd.

"I love spelling, and the support I got last year has kept me going."

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