



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on June 3, 2017

Six-Year-Old Is Youngest-Ever to Compete in Nat'l Spelling Championship

Six-year-old Edith Fuller may not have won this year's Scripps National Spelling Bee, but as the youngest-ever contestant of the prestigious championship, she still managed to win the hearts of judges and observers.



Another Scripps National Spelling Bee is in the books — and the winner of the 2017 championship is 12-year-old Ananya Vinay from Fresno, California, who on Thursday correctly spelled the word “marocain” — a type of dress fabric — to defeat 14-year-old runner-up Rohan Rajeev June 1 at the tournament held near Washington, D.C.

Ananya bested a total of 291 other contestants in the national championship of spelling and survived 36 grueling rounds, nailing such obscure English words as “konditorei,” “heiligschein” and “wayzgoose.” As the new champion of word-spell, she received a check for \$40,000, a \$2,500 savings bond, a handy set of reference books — and the latest Kindle e-reader.

Ananya, the 13th Indian-American in a row to win the spelling bee, also made the rounds of morning talk shows June 2, including an interview on CNN's *New Day*, where Chris Cuomo and Alisyn Camerota managed to make a subtle dig at President Trump by asking the champ to spell Mr. Trump's now-famous Twitter word, “covfefe” (she got it wrong).

However, perhaps the biggest story coming out of the annual event was about Edith Fuller, who at six years old was the Scripps National Spelling Bee's youngest-ever contestant. While the home-schooled girl from Tulsa was eliminated early from competition because of her score on a written test, she still managed to impress by correctly spelling the words “nyctinasty” and “tapas.”

She also won the hearts of judges, observers, and the media with her confidence and poise. During a pre-tournament press conference where she sat with her parents Annie and Justin, Edith, who actually qualified for the National Spelling Bee as a five-year-old, told reporters that “it feels really exciting” to be the youngest-ever contestant. Asked if she plans to return for next-year's competition, she responded, “I do if I don't win this time.”

Edith added that she would also like to help her three younger brothers become spell-masters. “I want to start teaching them, and maybe William might want to go to the Spelling Bee, too,” she said.

Photo of Edith Fuller: AP Images



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