



photos by JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

Judging the 1992 statewide spelling bee at Lawrence Technological University in Southfield were Bobby Whitehead, left, from Detroit Public Schools, Glider D. Jackson from Lawrence Tech and James Edwards from Wayne-Westland Schools. Below, Chandan Reddy of Rochester spells "thoracodynia" correctly to win the 1992 Lawrence Technological University Spelling Bee. Seated in the background is second place finalist Mukta Srivastava of Okemos.



T-h-o-r-a-c-o-d-y-n-i-a

Young spelling whiz tops in the state

By Valerie Olander
staff writer

If a person was unsure of the spelling of "thoracodynia" and looked it up in the second college edition of the American Heritage Dictionary, chances are you still wouldn't know how to spell it because the word isn't listed.

But don't fret, just ask Chandan Reddy of Rochester. He's Michigan's best elementary school-age speller.

The eighth grader from Detroit's Country Day in Birmingham competed with 36 students, drawn from 400 schools statewide, and won the 1992 Lawrence Technological University/Detroit News Spelling Bee by correctly spelling "thoracodynia."

Now he's on his way to Washington, D.C. for the Scripps Howard National Spelling Bee May 24-30.

"I had thoracodynia when I won," said Reddy, adding that the word means "to have chest pains or pains in one's chest."

Coincidentally, Reddy also placed second in the state's MathCounts competition and will represent Michigan as one of its four top math students at the national math tournament, also in Washington, D.C., only two weeks prior to the national spelling bee.

The competition lasted 11 rounds with Reddy and Mukta Srivastava of Okemos trading words for several rounds before Srivastava incorrectly spelled "soloviyas."

Other area youths participating in the event included Daniel Kim of Bloomfield's Conant Elementary,

who was knocked out in the fifth round, and Christina Ventura of Farmington Hills' O.E. Dunckel School, who was knocked out in the fourth round.

"Chandan is an outstanding student, well liked among his peers. He's not only respected by his peers and teachers for academics but also for character," said Cheryl Duggan, Reddy's former English teacher and coordinator of the spelling bee.

Since Reddy was in sixth grade and placed second in the Lawrence Technological Spelling Bee he had set a goal to win the competition, she said.

"He really did it by himself with the help of his parents going over the words with him."

Reddy's parents, Gopal and Kala Reddy, both are physicians.

'He really did it by himself with the help of his parents going over the words with him.'

—Cheryl Duggan
former teacher

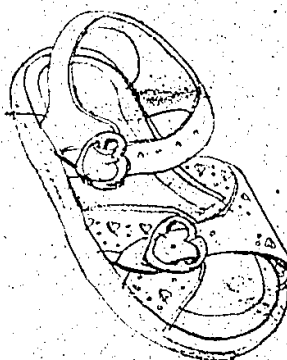
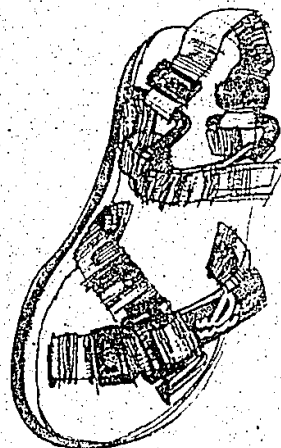
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Feeling the pressure when the competition is narrowed to two finalists, Mukta Srivastava of Okemos, above, awaits her turn at the 1992 Lawrence Technological University/Detroit News Spelling Bee. Richard Marburger, Lawrence Technological University president applauds the 1992 state spelling bee champion, Chandan Reddy of Rochester, who attends Detroit Country Day in Birmingham.