

Fitzwilliam College French Translation Competition

Fitzwilliam College is pleased to announce the passage for its inaugural French translation competition. This competition is for students in Y12 (or equivalent).

Please translate this passage by Cocteau into English. Please also select and underline UP TO FIVE words, phrases or structures which presented interesting translation challenges.

For EACH underlined word, phrase or structure, write a brief comment in English on the challenges and how you resolved them. Relevant aspects might include, among others, style, syntax, grammar, vocabulary, register. The five brief comments should amount to roughly 100 words in total.

J'aime les personnes dont la jeunesse annonce la vieillesse et dont la structure permet de se rendre compte de l'air qu'elles auront un jour. La vie les sculpte et les perfectionne. D'ébauche elles deviennent ce qu'elles doivent être et s'y fixent solidement. Je n'ai pas eu cette chance. En moi la jeunesse s'étire. Elle s'abîme et se fixe mal. Il en résulte que j'ai l'air, soit d'un jeune homme fourvoyé dans la vieillesse, soit d'un vieillard fourvoyé dans un âge qui n'est plus le sien. Certains peuvent croire que je m'accroche. C'est fort loin de moi. S'il est beau qu'un jeune homme soit jeune, il est beau qu'un homme vieux soit vieux. La jeunesse doit paraître en outre dans la parole et dans le regard. Ce qui m'importune, c'est cette fausse justesse qui me pousse à des comportements dont je ne suis pas fautif, puisque je déteste la frime et que si je contrôlais mes actes, j'interpréteraient un rôle de vieux. Je n'ose avouer ici, bien que je décide de tout dire, la naïveté qui m'entrave et me pousse vers des fautes qu'une personne de mon âge ne commettrait jamais. Je ne sais rien du monde. La moindre science me trouve imbécile, et si mon nom m'oblige à participer aux conférences de mes collègues, j'ai honte de mon inaptitude à comprendre ce qui s'y dit.

COCTEAU (225 words)

Competition Rules

This translation competition is for students in their penultimate year of education – Year 12 (Eng + Wales), S5 (Scotland), Y13 (NI). Entrants to this competition must not be native speakers of French.

Applicants will be required to enter their details online using the form linked on the translation competitions webpage, and to upload one PDF copy of their translation, formatted using the template provided, electronically **or** post a hard copy of the formatted essay to:

Schools Liaison Officer

Fitzwilliam College

Cambridge

CB3 0DG

by **6pm on Friday 28th of February 2025**. If the PDF file is too large to submit to the online form, please email your submission to essaycompetitions@fitz.cam.ac.uk. Further submission information can be found on the translation competition website: <https://www.fitz.cam.ac.uk/event/fitzwilliam-college-competitions>

Your submission must be entirely your own work. When submitting your translation, you will need to provide contact information for one of your teachers and if necessary, we may contact them to verify that your submission is entirely your own work. Students are only permitted to enter one competition and may only submit one entry to their chosen competition. There is a strict limit of five submissions per school for each competition. If more than five students from the same school enter the same competition, a teacher from that school will be contacted and asked to select the five entries; failure to do so will result in all submissions from the school to that competition being disqualified.

Prizes:

The prize fund (per competition) is £150 with a first prize of £100 and highly commended applicants being awarded a £25 book voucher. A prizegiving ceremony will be held in April 2025

For further information about the competition, please contact:

essaycompetitions@fitz.cam.ac.uk.

For questions about the Modern and Medieval Languages course, please contact:

admissions@fitz.cam.ac.uk.