

An Introductory Cree *N̄hiyawēwin* Course Guide

Master of Indigenous Language Revitalization

Laura Burnouf

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## **Introduction**

The idea for creating this guide began during my coursework in the Master of Indigenous Language Revitalization (MILR) program. I have taught an introductory university Cree course for many years and wanted to examine my current teaching practice in hopes of finding ways to strengthen the course. I began research on how languages are learned and focussed specifically on the acquisition of Indigenous languages. I wanted to find out how to develop and implement a 13-week course in order to advance learners further along than I found was possible through the course content and teaching approach I was following. Research that I examined informed the scope and sequence, approaches, techniques, best practices, and overall organization of this course guide.

This handbook, divided into 13 weeks, amounts to 40 hours of instruction time. Each week focuses on one or two main topics followed by learning outcomes. A list of target vocabulary for the entire week is also provided at the beginning of each section. This helps a teacher see at a glance the suggested items, images, pictures, and tools. The remaining components of each lesson includes a warm-up activity, the presentation of new material, the teaching of activities, and a suggested assessment plan. Teachers are encouraged to adapt the topics of the units and make them their own by reflecting on the needs and the goals of the associated community or college.

More and more universities and colleges across Canada are either beginning or continuing to offer Indigenous language courses. I predict that more Cree language instructors will be needed in the future and my goal is to continue to add to this handbook and perhaps make it available for teachers to use. For now this handbook will guide me and help me to become a better second language teacher. One who will continue to reflect on my teaching practices,

mentor other teachers and think of ways to teach those who have the desire to learn the Cree language.

### **Guiding Thoughts**

When developing this handbook the following teaching concepts guided my practice and approach:

1. Think in Cree when developing the components of curriculum.
2. Use real and meaningful communication throughout.
3. Keep in mind the purpose for learning the language.
4. Aim for clear pronunciation, articulation, intonation, pace, and repetition in every lesson.
5. Figure out how to explain grammatical features with clarity.
6. Include many examples for students to listen to, and then later on for them to speak, read, and write throughout the scope and sequence.
7. Begin using the language immediately and stay in the language as much as possible.
8. Continually find opportunities for students to increase their use of the Cree language.

## **Characteristics of Adult Learners in Second Language Acquisition**

Adults lead busy lives and their reasons for learning a second language vary. Some need the course for a credit to fulfill requirements of a degree and others have an internal desire to learn the language. In comparison to children, adults have prior knowledge and experiences and tend to make faster progress at the beginning of their second language learning (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). They are able to make the most out of opportunities to learn the language by applying memory strategies and problem-solving skills that they already know. Most adults know how to read and write in their first language and as a result tend to embrace learning about grammatical and linguistic features and the writing system of another language. They often want to write everything down and learn the rules of how the language works. This course suggests various techniques and strategies to use when teaching linguistic content.

At the same time, adults tend to have more inhibitions and may be self-conscious when speaking a second language with fluent speakers. They often find it frustrating when they are having trouble in saying exactly what they mean. Therefore it is easier for them to resort to only using the language that they know, leaving little opportunity to practice learning the second language (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). All of these inhibitions may cause too much anxiety to learn; creating a safe and trusting place to learn can make a difference. McIvor (2015) suggested that “focusing more on creating and adapting learning environments to provide these optimal conditions may help better serve adult Indigenous learners” (p. 43). These learner characteristics guided me when planning this guide, specifically in regards to pace, self-directed learning, and individualized instruction of Cree. Understanding these characteristics will also guide me when first implementing it.

Engaging in meaningful and real communication may also be effective when teaching adult learners. Adults can choose vocabulary from various domains in order to help them communicate with family members, elders, and resource people in the community. Whenever possible I have created pretend encounters and scenarios and relevant vocabulary that could initially be practiced in a classroom setting. During the course, English should be kept to a minimum even though it needs to be used throughout to explain concepts and procedures.

Best practices in regards to topics, strategies, and techniques are incorporated when possible throughout the handbook. The next section outlines a few techniques, strategies, methods, and ideas related to teaching a second language that may be used throughout the course and in other second language classrooms. These strategies may also be useful for students to apply their learning outside of the classroom environment. Students may want to encourage their families and others to learn the Cree language.

## **Actions, Movements, and Gestures**

Teachers use gestures, body movements, and pointing to indicate what they want from students and what they want students to do. This benefits fast language acquisition without the need for translation, and it is low stress since the environment is fun (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This procedure of using body actions movements and gestures is often referred to as the total physical response (TPR). I have used this technique since I began teaching Cree 20 years ago. Through the years, I learned that it was developed into a method in the 1970s by James Asher. For more information on TPR and using actions to teach languages refer to *Learning Another Language Through Actions* by James J. Asher (2003). Many communities using Indigenous language revitalization (ILR) have embraced this approach and use aspects of it in second language teaching (Johnson, 2017; Rosborough, Rorick, & Urbanczyk, 2017).

The procedure that I use when using actions, movement, and gestures is explained in Week 1 (refer to page 17). I tell the students that I am using TPR and explain that it is teaching language using actions, movements, and gestures. In my experience, TPR works well when the action, movement, and gesture is to demonstrate a concrete verb such as “jump,” “run,” or “stop,” and less effective when relaying concepts such as “work,” “play,” or “visit,” which are more relational and are open to interpretation. I also use TPR as a way of assessing students. When I notice a student is not understanding or performing the action, then I follow up individually.

## **Image-Based Learning**

Image-based learning is effective in second language learning for the same reason as using actions, movements, and gestures. Instead of translating a term into the language with which they are more comfortable learners can look at the image and associate it with the target language. Teaching vocabulary words and phrases using images is less confusing to learners. I have collected images from calendars, workbooks, and photographs over the years but find that dividing them up into genres may not always be effective. A teacher should be able to pick and choose from a variety of genres in order to make the language meaningful. In order to steer away from presenting an image and learning a list of words, use pictures and drawings that communicate a number of concepts. This will be much better than showing image after image and expecting students to memorize the terms without comprehending the meaning.

One approach that is effective in using a selected sequence of key images to teach the language is the Greymorning method or the Accelerated Second Language Acquisition (ASLA) method (see Greymorning, 1997). I had an opportunity to participate in an ASLA workshop taught by Greymorning a few years ago. Since then I have been able to apply a few of the techniques to my teaching. I began to collect images that showed plural objects, demonstrative pronouns, prepositions, and action words. I felt that the students gained momentum in comprehension and applying grammatical rules when they engaged with images.

Teaching using visuals is effective in second language classrooms since artificial scenarios and concepts can be developed by studying pictures. I would like to incorporate more visuals on a day-to-day basis and use visuals as conversation starters. As much as possible I will continue to develop images and collect photos for these purposes.

## **Focus on Form Activities**

Focus on form refers to both the grammatical properties and the semantic meaning of the language. Using focus on form activities can teach learners explicit grammar rules using the vocabulary that they already know. In a course comprising of 40 hours, it is often necessary to correct errors that learners don't seem to notice, since time is limited. To teach using this approach, Cree sentences are read to the learners. They are then asked to identify the tense morpheme and to indicate if the sentence refers to today, yesterday, or tomorrow. It is a great way to get learners to pay attention to how the language works. Prior to this activity the teacher needs to use many examples of Cree in meaningful contexts. An example of a form-focused activity is provided in Week 10, where the sentences are used to teach the tense system used in Cree. The original example can be found in Czaykowska-Higgins, Burton, McIvor, and Marinakis (2017).

Although studies have been done to determine the order to teach grammatical structures in English and other foreign languages, there are no comparable studies done for the teaching of Indigenous languages. Nevertheless many Indigenous language revitalization (ILR) researchers have made progress and have uncovered effective and preferred methods of Indigenous language acquisition (McIvor, 2015; Rosborough, Rorick, & Urbanczyk, 2017; Sarkar & Metallic, 2009).

Focus on form can teach specific grammatical features in Cree such as tense, plural, locative endings, diminutive endings (see example in Week 10, page 57). I would like to use more focus on form activities in my class and I will continue to find ways to teach grammatical features using a method that make students think and apply their learning to new situations.

## Other Strategies and Ideas

1. **Survival phrases** are phrases meant to allow learners to stay in the target language.

Participants engaged in role plays, scenarios, dialogues, and language pods (see definition in #2) can refer to these phrases. This approach helps them stay in the language by asking certain questions, especially when they can't think of the word to use. In my future classrooms I will begin by making flashcards with greetings, survival phrases, and dialogue that they can use when listening to or speaking with others. These will be organized and included in the handbook that they will be developing. I will post the following phrases to be visible in the classroom.

Examples of survival phrases:

Kīkway ōma?	What is this?
Kīkway anima?	What is that?
Kīkway kā itōtaman?	What are you doing?
Kīkway kā itōtahk?	What is he/she doing?
Kīkway ēkwa ta itōtamān?	What do I do now?
Tānisi ta itwīyan_? (students will either show a visual or say the word in English)	How do you say _____?
Kihtwām itwē or Kāwi itwē.	Say it again.
Papiyahtak itwē.	Say it slowly.
nisihkāc.	Slow down.
nēhiyawī.	Speak Cree.
Namoya ninistohtīn.	I don't understand.

2. **Language pod:** Laura Grant (MILR group 2016) taught our cohort the procedures of conducting a *language pod* activity. A group of four to six students sitting around a table or in a circle formation forms a language pod. The facilitator creates a set of cards with scenarios. Conversation starters are composed beforehand and written on index cards. Examples are: How is the weather? What were you all doing out on the lake yesterday? Who came to visit you? Tell us about your favourite meal to cook. A referee is chosen who enforces the negotiated rules. The rule of “no English” can be enforced. It is a good idea to have one or two master

speakers present to get the conversation going. The other three or four participants can be beginning speakers. Stay on one topic for at least ten minutes then turn over the next card and switch to the next topic. Remind learners to use survival phrases when stuck.

3. **Invite fluent Cree speakers** to converse with the instructor in the Cree language. Guest speakers could also be one of the master speakers during the language pod activity.

4. It is a good idea to begin to use **discourse** in the classroom. Instead of using English words start using these phrases in Cree. These will come in handy when learners are engaged in language pod activities or for communicating daily expressions. The following are common ones that teachers and students tend to say on a continuous basis. These could also be used in the language pod activities. Keep adding to this list.

maht̄isa – let’s see	k̄ikway êkwa – what now	ēkosi – that’s all
ēkosi tamâ – that is all for now	takahki – good	mwî tikwî – can’t be
mô dô – oh my	ēkwāni – okay it is done	ēkos̄isi – right
ēkosi tikwī – anyway		

5. **Journals:** Introduce journal writing on the first day. Students can keep track of how much time that they spend studying Cree during the first week. Throughout the 13 weeks they can reflect on the learning strategies and how they could work at developing them. More information on journal writing is provided with the weekly plans.

6. **Dictations:** I use dictation in order for students to begin practicing the sound of symbol combinations. In the past I chose words at random to dictate and would always make sure every sound was spoken for among the ten words I dictated. For this handbook I used words that had similar morphemes and grouped them together in one dictation. I believe this will help learners

hear the sound and then will be able to spell out the words. A list of all 80 dictation words are listed in Appendix 6.

## Explanation of How Nouns and Verbs Function in Cree

Grammar and linguistic structures of Cree are explained, as needed, throughout this guide. Brief explanations describing the features of the Cree language are included in this section. However when teaching introductory Cree, it is a good idea for learners to grasp the meaning of the vocabulary before explaining too many grammar and linguistic aspects of the language.

The main Cree language structure depends on whether nouns are living or nonliving. A noun can either have a life force (living) or not have a life force (nonliving). The terms for these two categories are “animate” and “inanimate.” The gender of the noun determines the form of verbs, pronouns, colour and, clothing terms. Consider the following examples using demonstrative pronouns:

This is a chair – Tēhtapiwin ōma	This is a man – Nāpēw awa
That is a chair – Tēhtapiwin anima	That is a man – Nāpēw ana

The pronouns take on a different form depending on the gender of the noun.

**Transitive verbs** transfer action to a specific object. The object can be animate or inanimate.

Example: I see the lake (inanimate noun). Ni-wāpahtīn sākahikan.

I see a moose (animate noun). Ni-wāpamāw mōswa.

The beginning of the verb, *wāpaht*, means “to see” but the endings are dependent on the gender of the noun to which it is referring. Week 7 will have a brief explanation of these with sample sentences to practice.

**Preverbs (PV)** also have a role to play in the meaning of the verb phrase. The PV “to do well,” *nihtā*, “to want to,” *nohtī*, “to begin,” *māci*, and “nice/beautiful,” *miyo*, may be added in front of the verb to change meaning of the sentence.

Example: Using the phrases “I see the lake” and “I see a moose” will change the meaning of the sentence by adding the preverb “to want to,” *nohtī*.

I want to see the lake.      Ni-**nohtī**- wāpahtīn sākahikan

I want to see the moose.      Ni-**nohtī**-wāpamāw mōswa.

I usually introduce the preverbs all at once when teaching but it is my goal to be able to use these preverbs in normal conversation and see if students can begin to grasp the meaning. I need to incorporate an explanation of how to teach “to try,” *kakwī*, “to do well,” *nihtā*, and “to want to” *nohtē*. This will be elaborated in Week 3.

The **order of the verb phrase** is also important to know, since it always follows the same pattern regardless of meaning. The order of the verb phrase is always:

person indicator + tense indicator + preverb + verb root + ending

Example:      I want to go and see the lake.      Ni-wī-nohtī-nitawi-wāpaht ēn sākahikan.

It is the same thing for animate phrases.

Example:      I wanted to go and see a moose.      Ni- kī –nohtī-nitawi-wāpam āw mōswa.

I am not sure when to introduce the order of the verb phrase as students need to hear many examples of the above phrases first in meaningful contexts. I will probably briefly introduce them in Week 3 at the same time as the PVs.

Most of the time Cree is a **free word order** and most often Cree speakers say the noun at the beginning of the sentence. For example: *Sākahikan ni-wāpahtēn* or *Mōswa ni-wāpamāw*. In

English it is awkward to say “lake I see” or “moose I see,” whereas in Cree it is natural to say the words in whatever order comes to mind. Keep in mind that the verb phrase always stays together.

According to research, students need to hear many examples of this. They will make mistakes and use the wrong endings but they need to be reassured in order to comprehend the meaning of the verb root and understand the noun. Later on when they gain exposure to speaking in more formal and informal settings then they will be compelled to learn these endings. Even though it sounds disrespectful to say “I see Laura” with the ending that describes Laura as a thing, it is better at first for students to comprehend the verb root. The lecture presentation on animate and inanimate noun structure that is explained in Week 6 will help to clarify the difference.

Overall I have designed this introductory course to allow me to use more complex verb and noun phrases. In the past after learners have comprehended the simplest verb, known as the verb root, I introduce the conjugation pattern of the simplest verb and I expect students to memorize and to recite the pattern from memory. I found that I spent too much time getting them to memorize the paradigm and this time I would like to elaborate on whatever class of verb is needed at the time. It often becomes necessary to use more complex structures in order to make sense in conversations, scenarios, dialogues, and any type of oral communication.

## Course Outcomes

At the conclusion of the course students will engage in meaningful conversation about, gain insights into, develop appreciation for, and increase their understanding of:

- the Cree sound system (correct intonations and patterns)
- the Cree writing system
- the Cree worldview (animate and inanimate)
- greeting and routine interactions, simple conversation
- basic grammatical structures (possessives, plurals, tense, verbs, nouns)

In addition, students are expected to:

- follow classroom procedures given in the Cree language
- participate in activities and games
- communicate using survival phrases and Cree language discourse homework
- keep a journal to engage in reflections and to document and measure learning
- design a handbook of common Cree terms, survival phrases, and other information in which they will be expected to keep track of vocabulary and basic dialogue

Throughout the course the foundational objective will be ensuring a safe environment and fostering a positive attitude towards learning Cree.

## WEEK 1 TOPIC: Introduction to the Cree Language and Course Goals

**Outcomes:** Students will:

- participate in the greeting and other activities
- perform actions to identify verbs and nouns
- begin to appreciate and to respect that the Cree language is structured differently from the English language
- be motivated and excited to learn more

Material/Resources: visuals / images / photos for target vocabulary, YouTube videos: 1. Brian MacDonald greeting song. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPKEjlCQq\\_U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPKEjlCQq_U)

2. Twelve year old fluent in Plains Cree: 3:07 min.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y19fBeflVHU&list=PLJzSm80sVtU2ujcGT0y-H3H0OSBTxezR&t=0s&index=1>

3. Maria's Dictionary: 9:36 min. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRDmRXCizEM>

### Target Vocabulary:

Tānisi? – How are you?	Namoya nānitaw – I am fine	Kiya māka? – How about you?
Niya – I	Kiya – you	nitisiyihkāson – my name
Tānisi isi kīsikāw? – How is the day?	Miyo kīsikāw – It is a nice day.	Wāsīskwan – It is clear and sunny
api – sit down	pasikō – get up	pihtokwē – come in
	waniskā – wake up	kāsihkwē – wash your face
sīkaho – comb your hair	mīciso – eat	minihkwē – drink
pimohtē – walk	pimipahtā – run	
pasakwāpi – close your eyes	tohkāpi – open your eyes	
nāpēw – man	iskwēw – woman	masinahikan – book
tēhtapiwin – chair	maskisin – shoe	astotin – hat

### **Warm-up Activity:**

In the Cree language the common greeting is *Tānisi* and the reply is *Namoya nānitaw*. Keep saying *Tānisi* to students as they enter the classroom. Say *pihtokwī*, “come in,” and *api*, “sit” or *apik*, “sit” (plural-pl.). Most likely students will not hear the /k/ at the end unless they notice the formation of your mouth and there is no need to explain the distinction until they have heard numerous examples or until it is time for them to notice the distinction. At this time I am not sure when to actually provide the explanation to them. Throughout the term say commands to one person and then to more than one. Once everyone is seated and class is ready to begin, then the greeting dialogue can be rehearsed.

### **Greeting Dialogue:**

Tānisi? Tānisi kiya? (Hello, how are you?)

Namoya nānitaw, kiya māka? (I am fine how about you?)

Nīsta mīna piyakwan. (Me too, I am the same.)

Laura nitisiyihkāson, kiya māka? Students will each repeat their name and *niya*. For example, Shannon niya.

Sing the greeting song composed by Brian MacDonald.

Students will repeat after the teacher. Lyrics can be found in Appendix 4.

### **Weather Dialogue:**

Ask: Tānisi isi kīsikāw? (How is the day?)

Reply: Miyo kīsikāw (It is a nice day.)

Ask: Tānisi isi kīsikāw?

Show a visual of the sun shining and sky clear and say: Wāsīskwan (It is clear and sunny.) Repeat the process three times.

**Presentation of Vocabulary Words:**

Using **actions, movements, and gestures (TPR)** students will observe the teacher saying the words and performing the actions. Students will begin to internalize the meaning of the following verbs:

āstam	crook your finger and beckon
nipā	with hands together place against face to gesture sleep
waniskā	raise both arms in the air and gesture wake up
kāsihkwī	wiping motion close to face to gesture washing face
sīkaho	gesture combing your hair
mīciso	move hand to mouth in an eating motion
minihkwī	pretend to hold a cup or bottle and gesture drinking
pimohtī	show your fingers doing the walking along your arm
pimipahtā	show your fingers doing the running along your arm
api	use both your hands to indicate a downward movement

Using TPR, repeat and have students listen and observe your actions. The second time around, students can perform the actions.

The third time around, start with the last verb and move up to the first verb, which is *āstam*. At this point adults tend to want to repeat after you. Say each word and invite them to perform the action. If the majority are still unsure, then repeat the process. There are always one or two students that catch on right away but most students need to be able to perform actions before moving on. If the majority are still unsure, then the process can be repeated. In the same way, teach the following nouns: man, woman, book, chair, shoe, and hat (refer to target vocabulary list). Use concrete objects or images for these terms and repeat the names, slowly three times, until the word is recognized.

The vocabulary taught is to be used for interactions for the rest of the course. Example instead of saying, “pick up your books,” you can say *mōsahkinamok ki-masinahikana*.

### **Motivational Talk:**

Begin by sharing Cree knowledge and background. Scan the room and find out if anyone has prior knowledge of Cree. Talk about the advantages of learning a second language and the consequences of language loss or death. Motivate students by proving that it is not too late. There are success stories of people learning their ancestral tongue. Follow the video link listed in the materials and resources about a 12-year-old boy who is fluent in Cree. The second video link is of a woman who is not giving up in documenting and teaching her language, which is almost extinct. (Encourage a short discussion after each video clip.)

### **Suggested Activities:**

1. After teaching the TPR verbs and nouns, students can either write the words phonetically or record the words using their smartphones. Team up students and have them practice the words with partners. One student will sound out the word and the partner will perform the actions. The first student will say a word (with help from notes) and the partner will point to the object. In subsequent practices, students can practice with three or more members to a group and this way they can practice saying the commands in second-person plural (2P).

Example:      *kāsihkwē*                      wash your face (commanded to one person)

*kāsihkwēk*                      wash your faces (commanded to two or more people)

2. **Introduce the journal** and ask students to write a paragraph about their experiences with the Cree language and begin to think of strategies and opportunities to learn Cree in their community. In order to make the language more meaningful, encourage them to keep a running list of vocabulary terms, phrases, and sentences that they want to learn during the term. They will

be expected to bring a list of terms that they say more often at home and that they use with their family and friends. Incorporate these words throughout.

**Assessment Method:** Assessment is done through informal observations. Get to know the students. Are they interested and motivated? How many are receptive to learning the dialogue? Did they all participate in the activity? Are there students who are struggling with comprehension? Is it anxiety? A method to find out if they are catching on to the words is to first tell them to close their eyes, *pasakwāpik*, while saying the word in Cree. If they can show what the word is by performing the action then you know that they have grasped the meaning. Then say, *tohkāpik*, open your eyes. Develop a checklist in a table or spreadsheet.

## WEEK 2 TOPIC: The Sounds of Cree: An Introduction to the Standard Roman

### Orthography

**Outcomes:** Students will:

- begin to identify and produce the sounds of Cree
- identify and practice meaningful vocabulary
- recognize the role of demonstrative pronouns
- continue to practice the greeting and begin to learn place names

**Materials/Resources:** visuals, pictures, images of the target vocabulary words. Make use of examples of objects in the room. Gift of culture and language website:

<http://giftoflanguageandculture.ca/glcp/index.html>

**Target Vocabulary:**

Cree word	English translation	Example in a sentence
Tahkāyāw	It is cold	Tāpwī tahkāyāw anohe – Is it ever cold today
masinahikan	book	Masinahikan ōma – hold up the book
iskwahtēm	door	Iskwahtēm anima – Point to door
wāsinamān	window	Wāsinamān anima – Point to window
pīsimohkān	clock	Pīsimohkān awa – Point to clock (but you need to be close to the clock for the meaning to be correct)
iskwēw	woman	Iskwēw awa – point to a woman
nāpēw	man	Nāpēw ana – point to man farther away
tēhtapiwin	chair	Tēhtapiwin ōma – point to chair
ayamihcikē	read	ayamihcikēk (act out reading – commanded to 2 or more)
masinahikē	write	masinahikēk (act out writing – commanded to 2 or more)
Tānitī ohci kiya	Where are you from?	_____ ohci niya – place name

**Warm-up Activity:**

Continue to focus on the greeting as each student comes into the room. Interact and welcome them in. Say: *pihtokwē*, “come in,” and *tawāw*, “there is room.” Sing the “*Hello Song*” from previous unit. Most Cree Indigenous language teachers know this song but there is one verse available on youtube.com. The lyrics can be found in Appendix 4.

**Presentation:**

The next few hours will focus on a number of activities that have to do with listening to the sounds of Cree. Additional examples of Cree words will be used in order to voice the sounds of Cree but students do not need to memorize the meaning of the words. There are two parts to this week. Part One is a preliminary showcase of the sound system and Part Two involves introducing more vocabulary using images, actions, movements, and gestures.

***Part One:***

Begin the explanation of the phonology of the Cree sound system. The writing system is based on the Roman orthography or the English alphabet and is known as the Standard Roman Orthography (SRO). Show how the below sounds are pronounced. The examples and phrases are to be presented orally and students will need to be convinced not to get caught up in writing. Even though the English alphabet is used in writing Cree, students should focus on the sounds and intonations of Cree first. Some sounds are identical to English but there are far more other sounds that the English alphabet does not include. The following vowels and consonants show how the sounds are voiced. Students can voice sounds as they are introduced. Ten consonants and seven vowel sounds are used in writing Cree. Below are words the instructor can say as they introduce: /p/, /t/, /k/, /c/. The four consonants are introduced first because they differ from the way English is pronounced.

Consonants:

**/p/** – sounds like the /p/ in “spot” and not the /p/ in “pot.” Hold your hand in front of your mouth and notice the difference that you feel after saying “spot” as compared to “pot.” The puff of air that you feel when saying “pot” is not the way to pronounce /p/ in Cree. It is the /p/ in “spot” that you will practice saying. Examples of Cree words that have the sound of /p/ are:

pīsīm – sun

pipon – winter

asapāp – thread

**/t/** – sounds like /t/ in “stop” and not /t/ in “tip.” There is a breath of air in “tip” and the word is formed when your tongue is closer to the back of your mouth and air is flowing through. What you need to voice is the hard /t/ where your tongue is placed firm against the top of your teeth.

Below are a few Cree words that use this sound.

tānisi – hello

tipiskāw – it is dark

mitātaht – ten

**/k/** – can sound like a /k/ or a /g/ depending on the position. If /k/ is in the middle of the word it is more like the /g/ sound. However this is not always the case and it depends on the dialect and area where it is spoken.

kīspin– *k* sounds like *k* in kiss

okāw – *k* sounds like *g* in gill

**/c/** – can be confusing as it sounds like /ts/ as in cats for the northern Y dialect and /ch/ as in chalk for the TH woodland dialect.

cīmān – canoe

cī – question indicator

acahkos – star

All the rest of the letters that are used in Cree sound similar to English but there are many more combinations of vowel diphthongs and consonant clusters and endings that have distinctive sounds. Refer to Okimāsis & Wolvengrey (2008), *How to Spell it in Cree* (see bibliography).

Vowels: Cree has seven distinct vowel sounds: /ē/ /ī/ /i/ /ō/ /o/ /ā/ /a/

/ē/ – sounds like the e in “berry” or the a in “acorn.”

ēkosi – that is it                      mēkwāc – presently                      kīwē – go home

/ī/ – with a macron on top indicates the long sound of ee. It sounds like “see” or “bee” in the English language. In Cree “duck” is spelled *sīsīp* but phonetically you would say “seeseep.”

nīsta – me too                      sīsīp – duck                      kocī – try

/i/ – sounds like the English /i/ in “bit.”

mispon – it is snowing                      itwaha – point to                      atim – dog                      niska – goose

/ō/ – with a macron is sounded out like the oo in “loon” or “soon.”

ōta – here                      pōsi – climb aboard                      ōhō – owl

/o/ – sounds like English word “book” or “hook.”

otina – take it                      postiska – put it on                      nikamo – sing

/ā/ – sounds like the /a/ in “father.”

āstam – come here                      māto – cry                      astā – put here

/a/ – sound like the /u/ in “but.”

awas – get out                      kapā – disembark                      kāsīha – wipe

Drill and practice using the sound chart in the table below. Practice the /p/ /t/ /k/ /c/ combinations and pronounce each sound consistently paying attention to the formation of the consonants and vowel combinations.

ē	ī	i	ō	o	ā	a
pē	pī	pi	pō	po	pā	pa
tē	tī	ti	tō	to	tā	ta
kē	kī	ki	kō	ko	kā	ka
cē	cī	ci	cō	co	cā	ca

Include a new consonant each day /m/ /n/ /s/ /w/ /y/ /h/ and practice saying the consonant with vowel combinations. (Refer to Appendix 3 for the complete chart.)

**Part Two:**

Introduce place names as part of the greeting.

Tānitī ohci kiya? (Where are you from?)

\_\_\_\_\_ ohci niya māka ōta niwīkin. (Place the name in the blank.)

Introduce the seven nouns, two verbs, and one weather word for “it is cold” listed in the target vocabulary section. Use images and concrete objects in order for students to understand the meaning of the nouns. Use the pronouns “this” and “that” with the given nouns as examples of how to demonstrate where an object is located. Introduce the phrase about the weather “it is cold” by showing a picture of someone shivering on a cold day. Choose the image that has a thermometer to show temperature below freezing. Review:

Miyo-kīsikāw. (It is a nice day.)

Explain that it could be a cold nice day.

Introduce the previous verbs from Week 1 and add the verbs “to read” and “to write.”

Introduce the personal pronouns in the paradigm. This will help students begin to understand that adding the morpheme /ni/ means “I” and /ki/ means “you” and adding a /w/ to the end of the verb root means “he/she.” Later on they will be able to hear it during conversation.

<i>1s</i>	niya	I, me	<i>1s</i>	Ninipān	I sleep
<i>2s</i>	kiya	you	<i>2s</i>	Kinipān	you sleep
<i>3s</i>	wiya	he/she	<i>3s</i>	Nipāw	he/she sleeps

**Suggested Activities:**

Go to the Gift of Language and Culture website

Click on “Interactive” and then click on “Audible Resources.” Under this tab there are many Cree vocabulary words that students can listen to. There is also a free i-phone application that can be downloaded that was developed by Fort Qu’Appelle File Hills Tribe Council and information can be retrieved on how to download this app at the following address:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/cree-fhqtc/id839720921?mt=8#>. A Cree dictionary app is also available for Android smartphones at <http://www.creedictionary.com/help.php>. Provide at least 15 minutes for students to navigate through the website and apps. Come together after the time is up and discuss how these tools can help them throughout the course. Remind students to reflect in their journals and to think of how they will want to organize their handbook.

**Assessment:**

Note which students are participating in voicing the sounds of Cree. How comfortable are they? Can students point to the correct visual or do the action when saying the word. Give feedback to the students and suggest ways to practice words and phrases.

## WEEK 3 TOPIC: The History and Background of the Cree Language

**Outcomes:** Students will:

- gain appreciation for the diversity of Cree people and their worldview
- gain knowledge about the history of the Cree language
- identify the different dialects of Cree in Canada
- recognize and respond to commands and common phrases

**Materials/Resources:**

- map of language families and language dialects in Canada (Appendix 1, p. 51).
- 30-minute video clip, called *Why Save a Language*, about the importance of learning your mother tongue: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x7BLBUS1IXc>

**Target Vocabulary:**

oyākan – plate	mohkomān – knife	cīstahāsēpon – fork
ēmihkwān – spoon	minihkwākan – cup	nīpiy – water
mīcisowinahtik – table	tēhtapiwin- chair	atoskē - work
piminawaso – cook	sīpīkinicīhcī – wash hands	kāsīcihcī – wipe your hands
asamin kīkway – feed me something	minahin nīpiy – give me a drink of water	kīwī – go home
kakwē (PV) – to try	nihtā (PV) – to do well	nohtī (PV) – to want to
Tānite ī wī itohtiyān? – Where are you going?	Ē-wī nohtī-kīwīyān. – I am going to go home.	Ē-wī kakwē atoskēyān. – I am trying to work.
Kā waniskāyān māna ni kāsīhwān. – When I wake up I wash my face.	ēkwayispī māna ni-sīkahon. – and then I comb my hair.	Ni-kīkisīpā-mīcison pāmwayes ta-sipwēhtiyān. – I eat breakfast before leaving.

**Warm-up Activity:**

Drill and practice the sound of Cree using the sound chart. Practice the target vocabulary from Weeks 1 and 2. Continue to use actions and movements and have selected images and

objects on hand to teach vocabulary. Show a picture or image and pronounce the Cree word. Ask students to repeat back the word and point to the correct image.

### **Presentation:**

Part one involves providing information about the background and history of the Cree language. Part two will target vocabulary relating to kitchen and dining room scenarios. Activities relating to the two parts will follow.

### ***Part One:***

There is a greater population of Cree people throughout Canada than any other Indigenous group. Cree territory spans the subarctic regions from British Columbia to Quebec as well as in Southern Plains and Northern Woodlands in Saskatchewan (McCreery, 2013; Okimāsis, 2004; Ratt, 2016; Wolfart & Carroll, 1981). Cree is a part of the Algonkian language family. Other languages that belong to this family are Saulteaux, Nakawe, Blackfoot, Ojibway, Micmac, Plains Ojibway, and many more. The following website can be referred to in order to identify other languages in this family: <http://www.native-languages.org/famalg.htm>. The term “language family” is used to describe a group of languages that have similar linguistic features and share other common attributes (show the language family map in Appendix 1).

There are five dialects of Cree in Canada (see Appendix 2 for the dialect map). First point out the Plains Cree or the *y* dialect, then refer to the Woods Cree or the *th* dialect, which is further north and the Swampy Cree or the *n* dialect, which is further east in the area of Cumberland House and Shoal Lake. Further east around James Bay is the Moose Cree or *l* dialect and even further to the east is the Quebec Cree or the *r* dialect. The *l* and the *r* dialects are very different than the Cree dialects in Saskatchewan. Ask them why this could be. Tell students

that root words in all dialects stay the same but endings and other aspects of the language may change. In Cree the root words are the foundation of all other words.

Examples: The root word *wīcī* means “to go with” and “to offer support.”

*niwīcīwākan* means “my friend” (someone who is there for support)

The root word *wīki* means “his/her home.”

*ni-wīkimākan* means “my partner” (someone that I share my home with)

There are more examples that will be explained during Week 7 (Kinship Systems). Students can fill in the dialects map.

Have a discussion about the diversity of Cree. Each time that the Cree people moved to another location for one reason or another, their environment changed. They encountered different plants, animals, and weather differences. Regardless of where the Cree moved to, they had to adapt to new environments and in the process new words needed to be invented or modified. Language is never static and changes with time. Do not forget that while words change or get added upon, the structure of the language and the root words that are used do not usually change. These are embedded in the language and stay constant. Students will begin to understand that the Cree worldview is expressed in the language.

### ***Part Two:***

Teach the target words by having concrete examples of plate, knife, spoon, fork, cup, and water. Say the Cree words slowly, at least three times. Call on students to identify the objects. Use the pronouns “this,” *awa / oma* and “that” *ana / anima* as you are holding up the items or images. The spoon is considered animate so it is the only one where you will use *awa* “this” or *ana* “that.” Continue this until most students can identify the utensils, plate, cup, and water. Next use TPR to teach the verbs “wash hands,” “wipe hands,” “give me something to eat,” “give me

water to drink,” and “go home.” They will need these words to participate in the following activities.

### **Suggested Activities:**

Describe the scenario that students will engage in. In groups of four to six students, depending on the size of the class, they will make up a conversation using the target vocabulary and the realia. They will practice saying the following words in Cree: plate, cup, spoon, fork, knife, table, chair, sit down, get up. First take them to a place where there is a washing up station. Direct them to wash their hands, *s̄p̄īkinicihc̄īk*, and then to wipe their hands, *kās̄īcīhc̄īk*. Then they will walk back and set up tables, *m̄īcisowinahtikwa*, with the place settings provided. Students will practice identifying the vocabulary words using dialogue to ask for things (refer to survival phrases on page 8 and discourse language on page 9). They can pick up an object and say *K̄īkway ōma* (What is this?) or *K̄īkway anima* (What is that?).

Students will continue to sit with the same groups. Ask them to add the verb *m̄īciso*, “to eat,” *asamin k̄īkway*, “feed me something,” *minihkw̄ī*, “to drink,” *minahin*, “give me a drink,” *minihkw̄ī nipiy*, “drink water” and *minahin nipiy*, “give me a drink of water.” Focus students’ attention by asking the following:

Tānite ī wī itohtiyan? (Where are you going?)

Students respond with:

*Ē-wī- k̄īw̄īyān* (I’m going to go home) or *Ni-wī-k̄īwān* (I am going home)

In Cree there are two ways of expressing the same thing but to a Cree mind they have slightly different intentions. The first phrase above (*ē-wī-k̄īw̄īyān*) is conversational and used more often. The second phrase (*ni-wī-k̄īwān*) is a more formal way and seems to be more a matter of fact. It is difficult to explain and students just need to know that either one is correct at this time.

Another response is: *Ē-wī-atoskiyān* or *Ni-wī-atoskān* (I am going to work)

**Assessment:**

Check for completion of the dialect map. Are students able to name each utensil and vocabulary word? Can they correctly identify the action of the verbs presented? Keep track of the participation level, as this indicates if strategies and activities are effective. Remind them to reflect in their journal.

## WEEK 4 TOPIC: Learning the Concepts of Numbers and Time

**Outcomes:** Students will:

- count to 10 and be able to identify number words
- understand the role of the question indicator *cī*
- respond with a yes or no answer

**Materials/Resources:** weather visuals, numerals flash cards, Cree number song (URL)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zi2wmz\\_SxzI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zi2wmz_SxzI) Lyrics (see Appendix 4). Copy of the Cree sounds chart for students (see appendix 3).

**Target Vocabulary:**

<i>cī</i> – question indicator		
Kimiwan – It is raining.	Mispon – It is snowing.	Yōtin – It is windy.
piyak – 1	nīso – 2	nisto – 3
nēwo – 4	niyānan – 5	nikotwāsik – 6
tīpakohp – 7	ayinānēw – 8	kīkā mitātaht – 9
mitātaht- 10	otākosihk – yesterday	anohc – today
wāpahki – tomorrow		

**Warm-up Activity:**

Drill and practice the sound chart. Test students’ knowledge of verbs using actions and gestures. Play a game of Simon Says:

Simon *itwēw mīciso* (Simon says eat), Simon *itwēw nipā* (Simon says sleep), Simon *itwēw pimohtī*, (Simon says walk), *masinahikī* (write)

If they perform the writing action then they are out. Continue with six more verbs.

## **Presentation:**

This week the presentation will be in three parts. Part One involves the teaching of the numbers; Part Two introduces the concept of time (today, yesterday, and tomorrow); and Part Three is to practice the role of the *cī* question indicator.

### ***Part One:***

Begin teaching numbers 1–10. Use various ways of teaching. Show a number and say the Cree word.

Example: 1, *piyak*; 2, *nīso*, and so on.

Explain the importance of knowing the numbers in Cree. Many phrases will use a number in front to explain what is happening.

Example: *Kī piyakwapiw* (He/she was home alone)

*Kī nīso-mīcisowak* (They ate together, just the two of them)

Numbers are also used for days of the week and days of the month, and also to explain how many things you saw or how many things that you will need. In general, numbers from 1–100 are taught in an introductory course but in this course it is practical only to learn number up to 31, then students will be able to say all the dates in the month. Once students know the numbers to 10, the rest of the numbers follow a pattern.

Example: *piyakosāp*, *nīsosāp*, *nistosāp*, and so on up until 20, which is *nīstanaw*

### ***Part Two:***

Introduce *anohc* (today) by showing the calendar.

Example: *Anohc nīsokīsikāw*. (Today is Tuesday.)

*Otākosihk kī piyakokīsikāw*. (It was Monday yesterday.)

*Wāpahki ta nisto kīsikāw*. (It will be Wednesday tomorrow.)

Explain the role of the *cī* indicator. It is used to ask questions in Cree. *Cī* needs to be placed in the second position in a sentence and could be last if there are only two words in a sentence.

Example: *Sāsay cī ki-kī mīcison?* (Have you eaten?)

*Kī pē kīwēw cī kitēm?* (Did your dog come home?)

*Ki kimowan cī otākosihk?* (Was it snowing yesterday?)

*Wī-tahkāyāw cī wāpahki?* (Will it be cold tomorrow?)

*Wī yōtin cī anohc?* (Will it be windy today?)

Remember that the verb phrase is one word and can't be separated.

### **Suggested Activities:**

Sing the Cree number song with students: Brian MacDonald wrote a collection of Cree songs in 1983 and “Hello – Tānisi” and the number song are part of this collection. Lyrics for this song can be found in Appendix 4. Students can drill and practice numbers. Play a game with numbers flashcards. Sing the song at least three times. Add some actions to the song. For example while singing the numbers clap on the second syllable. You could sit up and down as you say each number and then students can offer suggestions for an action to perform when singing for the third time.

Show visuals of weather words and describe what is happening in Cree. *Kimowan*, *Mispon*, *Miyo-kīsikāw*. Start using the *cī* indicator. Show a visual and say *Kimowan cī?* (is it raining?) Students will either repeat *āha* (yes) or *namoya* (no), depending on what picture is shown. Repeat the same with *mispon cī*, *miyo-kīsikāw cī*, *tahkāyāw cī*, and *yōtin cī*. This will give students practice with yes or no responses.

Remember to continue to motivate students and give strategies for them to use. Students can write down the words phonetically in order to be able to pronounce the words. Give time for students to fill in their journals with their reflections from the day. Provide students with phrases that they could practice with their families at home.

**Assessment:**

Ask students to write or place the numbers 1–10 in random order on the board. Say a number, such as *nīso*; are students able to point to the correct number? Continue by saying the numbers from 1–10 in random order and see if they can identify the numbers. Many students at this point will need to repeat the numbers by rote.

## WEEK 5 TOPIC: Writing the Sounds of Cree: Standard Roman Orthography (SRO)

**Outcomes:** Students will:

- distinguish sound symbol combinations and notice patterns that exist
- recognize the role of the macron
- count to 21 and recognize numbers when given randomly
- recognize words that indicate the concept of time
- be able to identify more verbs and nouns

**Materials/Resources:** Stories, chants, numeral flash cards, and pronunciation guide from Week 2 and the sound chart (see Appendix 3).

Suggested book: *The Three Bears* translated to Cree *Nisto Maskwak* by Ida McLeod. Available by order from the Saskatchewan Indigenous Cultural Center: <http://www.sicc.sk.ca/product-catalogue.html>.

**Target Vocabulary:**

atoskī – work	mētawī – play	sīsawī – exercise
minihkwē sīwāpoy – drink juice	mōsahkina masinahkana – pick up the books	mōsahkina tīhtapiwin – pick up the chair
itwaha iskwahtēm – point to the door	itwaha wāsīnaman – point to the window	itwaha oyākan – point to the plate
anohc – today	otākosihk – yesterday	wāpahki – tomorrow
Tahkayaw anohc – It is cold today.	Ki tahkayaw otakosihk – It was cold yesterday	pē- mīcisokan wāpahki – come and eat tomorrow
piyakosāp – 11	nīsosāp – 12	nistosāp – 13
nēwosāp – 14	niyānosāp – 15	nikotwāsosāp – 16
tēpakohposāp – 17	ayinānewosāp – 18	kīkāmītāhtosāp – 19
nīstanaw – 20	nīstanaw-piyakosāp – 21	nīstanaw-nīsosāp – 22

**Warm-up Activity:**

Drill and practice using the sound chart. Read the story of *The Three Bears*, Nisto Maskwak. This is a repetitive story and students will hear the sounds of Cree and identify target words. It is a good idea to read until the end of the first event when the bears begin their walk and before the girl enters the house. I am curious about how many vocabulary words learners can identify at this point.

**Presentation:**

This presentation will be in four parts since each part focuses on a specific concept.

***Part One:***

Writing can sometimes become overused in second language acquisition (SLA). Even though this course focuses mainly on oral communication, it is beneficial for learners to have a good grasp on the writing system just in case this is the only course they are able to take. Reading and writing in Cree is more straightforward than reading and writing in English. In my experience the writing system can be taught in a short amount of time and students usually have a basic grasp of how SRO works by the end of one day.

When writing Cree, ten consonants and seven vowel sounds are used. This writing system is called the Standard Roman Orthography (SRO). Refer to the sound chart (Appendix 3). In SRO, Cree is spelled phonetically and students can begin reading and writing in Cree as soon as they are able to match the sound with the symbol. Most of the time Cree is written using consonant, vowel, consonant, vowel (CVCV) or vowel, consonant, vowel, consonant (VCVC). Some Cree words do not follow this pattern and have a double consonant cluster or end with a vowel diphthong. Relying on the sound that is heard is the best way to explain this. For example: sīsāwī, tānisi, sīsīp, and many other words follow CVCV all the way through. Words such as

anohc, ispimihk, and iskwahtēm have either the /hc/, /hk/, or /ht/ combinations. Other combinations include /sp/ and /tw/ such as ispimihk and tahtwāw. These will be practiced throughout the next seven weeks.

When using SRO it is crucial that a macron (a line above the vowel) be used since without it the meaning of the word changes. For example the number “five” and the word meaning “us” in Cree are both spelled with the letters *niyanan*. To write “five” you need the macron over the first /a/ and when writing “us” the macron is over the last /a/: *niyanān*. Basically the macron is like having an entirely different sound other than the letter that is used to write it. Spend some time with sound combinations and how words are spelled.

**Dictation:**

Give students a dictation of 10 words in order for them to begin hearing the long *ī* sound.

The dictation list with translations is found in Appendix 6. Here is an overview of the words:

1. nīpin	2. mīnis	3. wīwa	4. wīyās	5. sīsīp
6. pīsīm	7. kīsīpin	8. mīci	9. cīki	10. kīmōc

After dictation, write the words on the board and pronounce each one with and without a macron. Do students notice the difference? It takes some time for some students to hear the difference between the long and short vowels. Listening and participating is key to learning these sounds.

**Part Two:**

Use actions to teach the words for “work,” “play,” and “exercise.” Review all other verbs and keep using them throughout the day. Say sentences and phrases such as *itwaha iskwahtēm* (point to the door), *itwaha wāsinamān* (point to the window), *itwaha oyākan* (point to the plate).

Review all dining room/kitchen words and refer to the target vocabulary and use the key words listed. Students will add these words and phrases to their handbook.

**Part Three:**

Introduce phrases that use “today,” “tomorrow,” and “yesterday.”

Phrases with key words:

*Tānite wāpahki ī wī itohtyan?* (Where are you going tomorrow?)

*Tahkāyāw anohc.* (It was cold today.)

*Kī-tahkāyāw otakosihk.* (It was cold yesterday.)

*Pē mīcisoḥkan wāpahki.* (Come and eat tomorrow.)

Notice the ending /*hkan*/ after *mīciso*, which means that the eating is delayed as it is not happening until a later time. In grammar terms this is called a delayed imperative. Throughout the rest of the course use verbs in the delayed imperative as a way of reminding students what to do later on whether it is reading, writing, eating, visiting, going home, etc.

**Part Four:**

Review numbers up to 21 and practice counting items around the room. For example: 6 books, 19 chairs, 1 clock, 1 door, 5 windows, 12 plates, and so on. Ask questions such as: How many of you want to go for a break now? How many chairs are actually in the room now? Count the numbers in Cree.

**Suggested Activities:**

Play the number 0–20 BINGO game. Refer to the BINGO game instructions in Appendix 5. These can also be made by the teacher or bought from a teacher store. This BINGO card should have 8 squares.

Teach and review the Cree words for “today,” “yesterday,” and “tomorrow” using a calendar. Make a copy for each student to refer to.

Practice using the following phrases:

Yesterday was Monday. Today is Tuesday. Tomorrow will be \_\_\_\_\_.

Wait for student responses.

**Assessment:**

Check students’ dictation to see if they are corresponding sounds to symbols. Do they recognize the CVCV pattern on most words? Can they identify that consonant clusters are only used on certain combinations? Are students able to see the pattern system in reciting numbers up to 21? Are students beginning to recognize the additional vocabulary? Are they beginning to self-correct and adding to the handbook.

## WEEK 6 TOPIC: Categorization of Nouns

**Outcomes:** Students will:

- begin to classify and categorize nouns into living and nonliving domains
- pluralize nouns
- identify that “this / that” and “these / those” are communicated according to gender

**Materials/Resources:** images of nouns listed in the target vocabulary images of animate nouns (such as man, woman, girl, boy, moose, dog, cat, fly, duck) and images of inanimate nouns (such as table, chair, book, scissor, knife, window, door).

**Target Vocabulary:**

<b>Animate add “ak” to make plural</b>	<b>Inanimate add “a” to make plural</b>
nāpēw – man	mīcisowinahtik – table
iskwēw – woman	tīhtapiwin – chair
mōswa – moose	iskwahtēm – door
iskwēsis – girl	masinahikan – book
sīsīp – duck	wāsinamān – window
nāpēsis – boy	oyākan – plate
asīniy – rock	wāpikwaniy – flower
ēmihkwān – spoon	mīcihciy – hand

**Warm-up Activity:**

Drill and practice sound chart. Use the following dictation words (see Appendix 6 for a list of dictation words and translation):

1. wāpos	2. wākās	3. pātos	4. wāwā	5. māto
6. mitās	7. pakān	8. sāsay	9. māka	10. kāsō

Dictate and pronounce each word 3 times. Write the words on the board and students will self-correct.

Practice dialogue about the concept of time.

Example: Question: *Tānitahto kīsikāw anohc?* (What day is it today?)

Reply: *Nisto kīsikāw anohc.* (It is Wednesday today.)

Question: *Tānīkohk akimāw anohc?* (What is the date?)

Reply: *Nikotwāsik akimāw anohc.* (It is the sixth today.)

Question: *Tānisi isi kīsikāw anohc?*

Answer: What is the weather like today?

Prompt students by showing various photos of weather and saying:

*Yōtin cī?* (Is it windy?)

*Kimiwan cī?* (Is it raining?)

*Tahkāyāw cī?* (Is it cold?)

*Mispon cī?* (Is it snowing?)

If it is windy outside then the answer to the question is: *Yōtin anohc.* (It is windy today.)

### **Presentation:**

There are three parts to this presentation: the first is the explanation of gender in Cree, the second explains how to pluralize nouns, and the third is an introduction to “this” and “that.”

#### ***Part One:***

This week the students will be given the explanation on the gender of nouns and the significance of categorizing them into animate and inanimate categories. Images are used to show living and nonliving nouns. Students will also determine endings used to pluralize nouns.

Gender in Cree refers to how people view the world around them. All nouns are either living (animate) or not living (inanimate). Knowing the gender of the noun helps to ensure correct usage of pronouns, number, verbs endings, and colour terms. Perhaps students have begun to notice the different ways that pronouns and interrogatives are expressed. Take the example of “where is.” In English it is expressed in one way: “where is.” In Cree it depends on the gender of the noun and could be either said as *Tāniwā iskwēw?* (Where is the woman?) or *Tāniwī masinahikan?* (Where is the book?). The Cree view the world as either something having a life force or not having a life force. All animals, insects, birds, fish, and people have a life force and it should not be questioned if they are animate or not. They are always considered animate. Material things are given less esteem and they are things that can likely be replaced. A fluent speaker knows this distinction by birth so it is challenging to teach this concept to beginning learners. I have waited until Week 6 to provide a thorough explanation of this because learners need to first hear many examples of how the language is structured. The following are examples that show this distinction. Refer also to the introduction on how nouns and verbs function in Cree (see page 11). Examples of distinctions using pronouns and transitive verbs:

<b>Animate noun</b>	<b>Inanimate noun</b>
<i>Tāniwā Laura?</i> (Where is Laura?)	<i>Tāniwī sakahikan?</i> (Where is the lake?)
<i>Laura awa.</i> (This is Laura.)	<i>Sakahikan ōma.</i> (This is a lake.)
<i>Laura ana.</i> (That is Laura.)	<i>Sakahikan anima.</i> (That is a lake.)
<i>Ni-wāpamāw Laura.</i> (I see Laura)	<i>Ni-wāpahtīn sakahikan.</i> (I see the lake.)

This categorization and using different endings and morphemes on words designates a life force on the animate noun. It is better to start with presenting the vocabulary words that are not the exceptions. Refer to the target vocabulary and introduce each image and place them on either the living side or on the nonliving side. Don’t introduce the rock and the spoon as animate until later

on. In the same way, do not use the flower and the hand as nonliving examples at first because it does confuse the learners.

Show one picture at a time and place it in either the living or nonliving category. Show the exceptions as soon as learners know that all things that crawl, fly, or move on their own are animate and that most items that do not have a life force are inanimate. There will be many questions as to why a spoon, bannock, a rock, a pipe, and pants are animate but there is no clear answer to this. The foundation on which this language was built happened many years ago and we can infer that things considered animate were necessary for survival. For the purpose of this introductory course, students will just have to understand that nouns are characterized as either having a life force or not having a life force. They will need to memorize the few items that are the exception. One way to teach this concept is by using the concept attainment strategy.

***Part Two:***

Show images of plural nouns. Or point to chairs, books, plates, forks, men, women, spoons, clocks, etc. and say their names, emphasizing the ending. What ending do you hear for the inanimate nouns as compared to the animate nouns? How can we write a rule for this? Students can then write the rule and endings in their handbooks.

***Part Three:***

First provide a demonstration for using the pronouns “this” and “that” and “these” and “those.” Use objects and locations around the room. I think that giving an overview of these pronouns and explaining how they are used will help students in the future. I am sure that during the past five weeks they have heard examples of Cree pronouns and are beginning to distinguish when they are used.

Explain that there are four ways to say “this” and “that” in Cree and four ways to say “these” and “those.” The following chart will help visualize this.

	<b>Animate</b>	<b>Animate Example</b>	<b>Inanimate</b>	<b>Inanimate Example</b>
this	awa	Nāpēw awa. – This is a man.	ōma	Iskwahtēm ōma. – This is a door.
that	ana	Nāpēw ana. – That is a man.	anima	Iskwahtēm anima. – That is a door.
these	ōki	Nāpēwak ōki. – These are men.	ōhi	Iskwahtēma ōhi. – These are doors.
those	anika	Nāpēwak aniki. – Those are men.	anihi	Iskwahtēma anihi. – Those are doors.

### **Suggested Activities:**

Show images that show more than one noun (listed in the target vocabulary) and have students say the name with the correct ending. Students can copy down the target vocabulary words and they could write the correct ending to make it plural.

Examples:

*nāpēw – nāpēwak*

*iskwēw – iskwēwak*

*tēhtapiwin – tēhtapiwina*

Students can take some time and write information for their handbook. Provide time for journal reflection. Students can continue to find opportunities to learn Cree.

### **Assessment:**

Are students able to understand the concept of gender? Are they questioning whether or not a certain noun is animate or inanimate? Do students understand that anything alive is known as animate and most nouns that are things are inanimate? Are they attaching the correct ending to

nouns to make plural? Do students know that demonstrative pronouns are classified according to gender in Cree?

**WEEK 7 TOPIC: Kinship *Wahkohtowin* and Cree Ways of Knowing**

**Outcomes:** Students will:

- begin to recognize and use kinship terms in the first and second person
- figure out that a part of the Cree worldview is embedded in kinship, *wahkohtowin*
- begin to recognize words that derive from root words
- practice using verb phrases in varying class systems

**Materials/Resources:** kinship charts, lyrics for the song “Grandpa” (see Appendix 4):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCwGRJnJ7CY>

**Target Vocabulary:**

nimosōm – my grandfather	nohkom – my grandmother	nikāwiy – my mother
nohtāwiy – my father	nistēs – my older brother	nimis – my older sister
nisīmis – my younger brother/sister	nitānis – my daughter	nōsisim – my grandchild
nikosis – my son	niwīcīwākan – my friend	niwīkimākan – my partner

**Warm-up Activity:**

Drill and practice the sound chart. Have a dictation of words that include /o/ and /ō/ in the. Use the following dictation words (see Appendix 6 for a list of dictation words and translation):

1. pōsis	2. mitōn	3. osih	4. kona	5. pona
6. mostos	7. takosin	8. astotin	9. mikot	10. kotak

Sing the “Hello” and “Number” songs and recite the sound chart.

## **Presentation:**

This week the focus will be on presenting kinship terms and introducing the concept of relations. The rules of possession can be explained. Kinship terms are dependent nouns, which means that the noun itself is mixed with the personal pronoun and can't be separated.

Example: *nikosis* (my son). There is no way to say only say the term “son.”

Kinship, *wahkohtowin*, is a complex topic in the Cree language. It is a system of knowledge that is not being passed on from generation to generation. In this lesson more common kinship terms will be presented in order for students to begin addressing their parents, siblings, husband, wife, and children by their kinship term. If they choose to do so then they will be familiar with the proper term to use.

In the past people figured out relationships by hearing the kinship term used. If a sibling referred to his/her older sister as *nimis* then people would know it is that person's older sister. Likewise if a sibling said *nistēs* then one would know that he/she is referring to their older brother. If a sibling said *nisīmis* then one would know that he/she is referring to a brother or a sister younger than themselves. The name for “uncle” would depend on whether it was the father's brother or the mother's brother. The connections were always made by calling relations according to the kinship terms.

Often times a person will need to tell others how many brothers, sisters, or grandchildren that one has. In the Cree kinship system this cannot be literally expressed because a human being cannot own another human being. Literally, if a person was saying I have two older brothers it would be translated as *Nitayāwāwak nīso nistēsak*. The word *ayāw* means to “have him/her/it” and even though it is literally correct, according to the Cree kinship system it is not possible.

Therefore the concept of “have” needs to be embedded within the kinship term and the proper way to say “I have two older brothers” is to say *Nīso nitostēsin*. Likewise, I would say *nisto nitōsimisin* (I have three grandchildren). The way that I could explain this system is that the kinship is running through the veins and it is not detached. It is a part of all your relations, *wahkohtowin*.

Teach these terms by using a kinship chart and having the student attach a kinship term to a relative or relation. Students can gather up photos of family members and then learn those kinship terms. Make copies of kinship charts and have students fill out as many names of their kin that they are comfortable in sharing and learning about. Introduce each kinship term listed in the target vocabulary and add any other ones that the students want to learn or know about. Say the kinship term in the first and second person, as presented in the chart below.

Fill in the possessive forms of the kinship terms in first and second person:

<b>1<sup>st</sup> person</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> person</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> person</b>
my mother – nikāwiy	your mother – kikāwiy	his/her mother – okāwiya
my father	your father	his/her father – ohtāwiya
my older brother	your older brother	his/her older brother – ostēsa
my older sister	your older sister	his/her older sister – omisa
my grandmother	your grandmother	his/her grandmother – ohkoma
my younger sibling	your younger sibling	his/her younger sibling – osīmisa
my daughter	your daughter	his/her daughter – otānisa
my son	your son	his/her son – okosisa

The following example shows how the morpheme /nīk/ communicates the concept of “home” (a place of safety and a place of nurturing):

nīkih – my home	nikāwiy – my mother	ninīkihikwak – my parents
nīkā – mother	onīkānīw – traditional leader	

Knowing this, we can determine that a chief or leader had a great responsibility to provide a safe haven where people can get nurturing just by examining the morpheme *nīk*.

### Suggested Activities:

Group students into language pods (see page 8 for an explanation of a language pod). Students can pretend that they are visiting their relative and have to call each other by their kinship title. They could make up a role play by choosing selected conversation starters. The following five sentences can be used as conversation starters or just to practice reading and sounding out the words. Choose a kinship name and write in the blanks.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ wī-pē-kiyokēw wāpahki. (\_\_\_\_\_ will come to visit tomorrow.)

- a) Nikosis                      c) Kikosis
- b) Nikāwiw                    d) Nohkom

2. Tānisi isi wahkōmat awa? (How are you related to this person?)

- a) Nohtāwiw ana              c) Nitānis ana
- b) Nimosōm ana              d) Nōsisim ana

3. Wī piminawasow cī \_\_\_\_\_ anohc? (Is \_\_\_\_\_ going to cook today?)

- a) kimis                        c) kimāmā
- b) kiwīcīwākan              d) kitānis

4. Ka kī wīcihāw cī \_\_\_\_\_? (Will you help \_\_\_\_\_?)

- a) kipāpā                      c) kistēs
- b) kisīmis                      d) kitēm

5. Tāniwā ki māmā? (Where is your mom?)

- a) nīkinahk (at home)      c) kanawīmāwasiw (taking care of children)

b) atoskēw (working)    d) otēnahk (in town)

Journal entry: Students can draw a kinship tree as a journal entry. Students can ask for help from a fluent person.

Listen to the song *Nimosōm-Nohkom*, which has been translated to Cree from the original song by The Judds called “Grandpa” (see Appendix 4).

**Assessment:**

Can the student identify kinship terms relating to their immediate family? Is the student able to apply the first-and second-person possessives to kinship terms? Is the student able to complete a reflection as a journal entry by incorporating concepts of *wahkohtowin*?

## WEEK 8 TOPIC: Telling Time and Sequencing

**Outcomes:** Students will:

- recognize how to tell time on the hour and on the half hour
- pronounce common words and phrases comprehensibly
- sequence events of a simple story
- improve proficiency levels of listening and speaking

**Materials/Resources:** cardboard clock for each student, visuals and images for vocabulary words and stories

**Target Vocabulary:**

Tānitahto tipahikan ōma – What time is this?	kika-mitātaht tipahikan – 9:00
Tānitahto tipahikan kā waniskāyan? – What time did you wake up?	tīpakohp tipahikan – 7:00
Tānitahto tipahikan kā wī pī-kīwīyan – What time will you be home?	nēwo tipahikan niyānan tipahikan
Kikway ki-kīkisīpā mīcin anohe? – What did you eat for breakfast this morning	kohkōsowiyās – bacon pahkwēsikan – bannock wāwa – eggs pihkahtīwāpoy – coffee
kīkisīpā mīciso – eat breakfast	kīkisēp – this morning
Tānitī ēkwa ī wī itohtīyan? – Where are you going now?	ni wī kīwān – I am going home.
tipahikan – hour	mināpihtaw – half hour
Pōnāpihtā-kīsikāw. – It is afternoon.	tipiskāw – night

**Warm-up Activity:**

Drill and practice using the sound chart. Sing “Grandpa,” *Nimosōm-Nohkom*. Do a dictation and use the following dictation words (see Appendix 6 for a list of dictation words and translations):

1. nisis	2. niska	3. tipiska	4. atim	5. mistik
6. nahapi	7. nahāpi	8. papāsi	9. nakata	10. kayās

**Presentation:** Teaching how to tell time in Cree

Review the numbers from 1–20. Using the clock, show the time on the hour, beginning with 1 o’clock and say *piyak tipahikan*. Continue going clockwise and show all the times on the hour from 2 until 12 o’clock, which is *nīsosāp tipahikan*. For telling time on the half hour the term is *mīnāpihtaw*.

Examples:     *piyak tipahikan mīnāpihtaw* – 1:30

*nīso tipahikan mīnāpihtaw* – 2:30 (and so on until 12:30 pm.)

To be specific to morning, say *kīkisēp*; and in the afternoon it is *pōnāpihtākīsikāw*; and at night it is *tipiskāw*.

Hand out the clocks and students can practice telling the time. Continue to ask them questions in Cree.

Question: *Tānitahto tipahikan ōma?* (What time is it?)

Reply: *nisto tipahikan* (3:00; or whatever time the clock indicates).

Refer to the target vocabulary to ask, “What time did you wake up?” and “What time will you be home?” and “What did you eat for breakfast?” Follow the order given on the chart. Show images of bacon, bannock, eggs, and coffee and use image-based learning techniques.

**Suggested Activities:**

Continue to use the cardboard clock and students can practice asking each other what four different times are. Students can write their own sequence of events in their journal. For example: I wake up, I get ready, I eat, I go to work, I go to school, I go home, I read, I sleep.

They could practice saying these in order and then they could mix the order up and see if they can put back together in the right order.

Play the telling-time BINGO game.

Make up a little story to tell such as the one that I made up below:

Kīkisēp ni kī osāmiḥkwāmin. Ni papāsi mamanān. Mwāc ni kī-kīkisēpā-mīcison. Ni-ati sipwēpayin. Kīkāc ni-patahīn nitatoskēwin. Ni kī kīwān nānitaw itikwī nēwo tipahikan kā ispayihk. Ēkosi.

Translation: I overslept this morning. I got ready in a hurry and didn't even eat breakfast. I started out for work and I almost missed it but made it in time. I went home at about 4pm. That is all.

Go over the story sentence by sentence and then mix up the sentences and ask the students to sequence the events.

**Assessment:**

Can students identify the time on the hour and on the half hour? Are they able to sequence events such as saying the verbs in the sequence that activities are done? Can they identify key words when asked questions about what time they got up and what they ate for breakfast?

## WEEK 9 TOPIC: Clothing Terms and Compounding

**Outcomes:** Students will:

- identify terms for clothing and weather
- understand the purpose of compounding in Cree
- recognize the function of future conditionals (part of the Cree worldview)
- describe images using simple terms

**Materials/Resources:** images or real clothing of the clothing terms listed below. A calendar of any kind to show the days of the week. *When the Trees Crackle with Cold: A Cree Calendar p̄simwasinahikan* and *When the Trees Crackle with Cold: A Cree Seasons Activity Book* by Johnson-Laxdal and Körner (see bibliography).

**Target Vocabulary:**

astotin – hat	mitās – pants	maskisina – shoes
astisak – gloves or mittens	papakowayān – shirt	asikanak – socks
postiska – put on	ayiwīnisa – clothing	miskotākay – coat
k̄isikāw – day	Piyakok̄isikāw – Monday	N̄iso k̄isikāw - Tuesday
Nisto k̄isikāw – Wednesday	N̄ewo k̄isikāw - Thursday	Niyānok̄isikāw – Friday
Nikotwāsok̄isikāw – Saturday	Ayamih̄iwik̄isikāw – Sunday	Wāpan – It is dawn.
mihta – wood	pihtokwē – come in	

**Warm-up Activity:**

Drill and practice the sound chart. Do a dictation and use the following dictation words (see Appendix 6 for a list of dictation words and translations):

1. pētā	2. tāpwē	3. sēmāk	4. kinēpik	5. tēpwē
6. mēkwāc	7. cēska	8. iskwēw	9. nāpēw	10. piyēsīs

Sing the number song and choose a dialogue to practice.

## **Presentation:**

This week will focus on learning common clothing terms and examples of how to use these in everyday dialogue. Days of the week will be introduced and weather terms will be reviewed in order to explain the future conditional. Students will continue to work on their journals and handbooks. There are two parts to the presentation.

### ***Part One:***

Cree has an interesting way of combining verbs and nouns and using an ending to make it a command, phrase or sentence. This is known as compounding.

For example:

*postiska kitastotin* means “put on your hat” (literal expression)

*postastotinī* means the same thing: “put on your hat”

instead of *postiska kitayiwīnisa*, it is *postayiwīnisī* that means “put your clothes on”

instead of *postiska maskisina*, it is *postaskisinī* that means “put on your shoes”

instead of *postiska kitasakay*, it is *postasakī* that means “put your coat on”

instead of *postiskaw kitās*, it is *postatāse* that means “put on your pants”

Most clothing items are inanimate except for the pants, socks, gloves, and scarf. These are animate but when compounding the ending does not change. To make meaning and have students practice with their family it is appropriate to command your child to put on socks, hat, or a pants. Compounding also works with taking off clothes. If you need to tell someone to take off their hat instead of saying *kicikona kitastotin*, you could say *kītastotinē*. Only introduce clothing terms that could be used in an appropriate and useful manner.

Introduce the book *When the Trees Crackle with Cold*. Read a few of the pages and show the pictures. The months of January and October, in particular, show compounding.

January explains the activity about bringing in the wood.

*Ni-pihtikwacimihtānān* – We bring in the wood.

*Ni-pihtikwatānān mistikwa* – We bring in the wood. (literally)

October explains the process of canning berries.

*Nimīnisāpohkānān* – We can berries

### **Part Two:**

In Cree the days of the week, weather, and colour terms are verbs and are expressed in the present, past, and future tenses. Preverbs are also used in front of weather words to emphasize or to include more detail about it. However there is another aspect of tense that is expressed through these types of verbs. These verbs are referred to as future conditionals. The ending /ki/ is added to the end of the days of week, weather terms, seasons, and colours to mean “if and when something will happen.” It infers that a person must be always prepared for the unexpected.

Examples: *wāpan’* – dawn; add /ki/ to the end after changing the /n/ to an /h/ and the new word becomes *wāpahki* – if/when it is dawn. In English terms this translates to tomorrow.

*Miyo-kīsikāw* – It is a nice day. *miyo-kīsikāki* – If/when it is a nice day.

*Piyakokīsikāw* – It is Monday. *piyakokīsikāki* – If/when it is Monday.

*Tahkāyāw* – It is cold. *Tahkāyāki ka pihtikwānaw* – If/when it is cold we will go inside.

The list goes on and these could be practiced orally with students at first and should be used in situations that make sense. In the Cree worldview it means always being prepared and to always make amends when possible.

**Suggested Activities:**

Divide students in groups and have them make up a weather report and practice conducting it. All group members should help in making up this report. Once the report is done they could choose a reporter and roles for each of the members. They will greet the audience with a loud and clear voice. Give them reminders to include the day and date, and state the weather in at least two places. Offer suggestions as to what to wear and what to do. If it is too slippery out then people should stay at home. To end say your name and say *Kihtwām ka wāpamitin* (I'll see you again).

Role play the actions of putting on hat, gloves, pants, shirt, coat, and socks with students. Students can practice with partners and commanding one another to put on the clothing item. They could use the word at home when getting ready for school the next day.

**Assessment:**

Are students able to pronounce the days of the week? Are they incorporating the words used in compounding? Can they pick out the morphemes in a compound word? Do they understand the meaning of future conditionals?

## WEEK 10 TOPIC: The Aspect of Tense and Articulation of Time

**Outcomes:** Students will:

- identify the role of tense
- identify six animal terms and use in sentences
- continue to engage in real communication while learning vocabulary

**Materials/Resources:** Prepare images of target vocabulary words. Have journals and handbooks ready to work on.

### Target Vocabulary:

atim – dog	mōswa – moose	pōsīs – cat
sīsīp – duck	piyēsīs – bird	kinosēw – fish
wiyas – meat	wāwa – eggs	pahkwēsikan – bannock
kohkōsowiyās – bacon	napatākwa – potatoes	mīcimāpoy – soup
Mahti kisīpīkinikī ēkwa? – Why don't you wash clothes now?	Wayawītimihk ni-wī akocikān. – I am going to hang the wash outside.	Matwān cī ta-kimowan – I wonder if it will rain.
Mwāc wī-miyokīsikāw ōma. – No it is going to be nice.	sīpīkinikī – wash clothes	Kahkīyaw ayiwīnisa wīpāwa. – All the clothes are dirty

### Warm-up Activity:

Drill and practice the sound chart. Do a dictation and use the following dictation words

(see Appendix 6 for a list of dictation words and translations):

1. pīwāpisk	2. cīmān	3. kīsikāw	4. kīsīhtā	5. pītos
6. minōs	7. piminawaso	8. pīpon	9. mispīton	10. simākanis

Review vocabulary words students are still having a difficult time in understanding. They should write these down in their handbook as well.

**Presentation:**

Students will continue to work on comprehension of the vocabulary words. They will use the example given below that describes past, present, and future tenses using focus on form, which is explained on page 7.

To indicate the past or future tense a tense indicator is inserted after the person indicator in the verb phrases.

- Example: independent mode
- ni-pimohtān* – I walk
- ni kī pimohtān* – I walked
- ni ka pimohtān* – I will walk
- ni wī pimohtān* – I will walk (iffy and tentative)

Read the examples written on the table below. Find out if students can determine what tense is on each one.

The following worksheet is adapted from the focus on form activities created by Strang, Czaykowska, McIvor, and Marinakis (2012). An example of one done in their language can be found in their article. I will read the series of sentences and the students will figure out when the action takes place. They will follow along with their own worksheet. Students should have comprehension of these phrases and they will determine if it is past, present, or future.

	Translation for instructor	Past	Now	Future
Atim kī pimipahtāw	The dog ran	kī		
Atim pimipahtāw	The dog runs			
Atim ta pimipahtāw	The dog will run			ta
Atim wī pimipahtāw	The dog is going to run			wī
Ī-wī pimipahtāt atim	The dog is going running			wī
Ī kī-pimipahtāt atim	The dog was running	kī		
Ī-pimipahtāt atim	The dog is running			
Ni kī itohtān otēnahk	I went to town	kī		
Ni wī itohtān otēnahk	I intend to go to town			wī

Ni ka itohtān otēnahk	I will go to town			ka
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The morpheme /kī/ is used to express the past tense and it is placed after the person indicator.

The morpheme /wī/ is used to express the future intentive tense. This tense is used in situations where a person is not definite about what is going to happen. This tense is often used with weather terms: It is going to rain – *Wī-kimiwan*. The morphemes /ka/ and /ta/ are used to express the future definite tense and translates to mean “will” in English. This tense is used when one knows that something definite is going to happen. An example is: It will be Tuesday – *Ta-nīso kīsikāw*. The morpheme /ka/ is used in the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1P, 2I, and 2P paradigms of verb conjugation. Example: 1<sup>st</sup> – *Ni-ka-mīcison* – I will eat. The morpheme /ta/ is used in the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 3P: *Ta mīcisow* – He/she will eat.

### Suggested Activities:

Practice the target vocabulary sentences and test students to see if they could pick out the tenses and the root words. The following are more sentences to practice with. You could substitute with any animal, bird, insect, or fish.

*Ki-kī-wāpamāw cī atim?* – Have you seen the dog?

*Ki kī wāpamāwak cī atimwak?* – Have you seen the dogs?

*Kīkwāya māka ōki?* – What are these? (Show pictures of various animals that they have been introduced to such as fish, duck, moose, dog, cat, bird; refer to target vocabulary.)

Use words such as *Tāniwā* and *Tāniwī* to ask students where certain things are. Animate words are girl, boy, man, woman, stone, spoon, bannock, dog, cat, bird, moose, fish, bird. For example, *iskwēsis awa* (this is a girl). Inanimate words are chair, book, plate, fork, knife, cup, window,

door. For example, *tēhtapiwin ōma* (this is a chair). This is a review of pronouns introduced in Week 6.

Review: Is this a \_\_\_\_\_? Is this a \_\_\_\_\_? (Show images).

Dialogue: *Kīkway kā wī mīciyan anohc?* (What will you be eating today?)

- a) *Wiyās ēkwa pahkwēsikan* (meat and bannock)
- b) *Wāwa ēkwa kohkōsowiyās* (eggs and bacon)
- c) *Napatākwa ēkwa wiyās* (potatoes and meat)
- d) *Sīsīp mīcimāpoy* (duck soup)

**Assessment:**

Can students tell me what the tense indicators are and if they mean past, present, or future? Will they ask why there are two ways to indicate the future in the independent mode? Are they able to recognize the animal terms and use them in sentences?

## WEEK 11 TOPIC: Body Parts and Expressing Feelings

**Outcomes:** Students will:

- role play and express two ailments
- begin to use accurate sentence patterns
- compose and read simple sentences

**Materials/Resources:** images of body parts and ailments, The File Hills Qu’Appelle Tribal Council application for a list of body parts.

**Target Vocabulary:**

mistikwān – head	matay – stomach	micihciy – hand
miskāt –leg	mihcakāsa – hair	mitōn – mouth
misit – foot	Nikisōwāskatān – I have diarrhea	Nitahkosin – I am sick.
Nimiyoyān – I am well	Ni-wīsakihtīn natay. – I have a stomach ache.	Nicīstikwānān – I have a headache
Takahki nākwaniwa kihcakāsa – Your hair looks good.	Ka-kī-paskwahamowin cī? – Will you be able to cut my hair?	Namoya sēmāk ka-kī-paskwahamātin. – I can’t cut your hair right now.
Tānispikh kā-kī-atisaman kihcakāsa? When did you dye your hair?	Wīpac nīsta ī-wī-atisaman nihcakāsa – I’ll be dying my hair soon as well.	Ki-ka atisīhamatin wāpahki. – I can dye them tomorrow.
Ki-ka paskwahimātin wāpahki. I can cut your hair tomorrow.	ōhō – owl	sīpikhwāw – blue
piyēsīs – bird	pōsīs – cat	sikāk – skunk
ayisīniw- person	itōta- to do	

**Warm-up Activity:**

Drill and practice using the sound chart. Do a dictation and use the following dictation words (see Appendix 6 for a list of dictation words and translations):

1. āmow	2. ātiht	3. kāsīha	4. wāpikwaniy	5. sākahikan
6. ayīkis	7. atāwī	8. asapāp	9. ahāsiw	10. sakahikan

Encourage students to open up the i-phone Cree app to listen to the audio about the body parts.

**Presentation:**

Begin by reviewing the common body parts such as head, hair, stomach, mouth, hand, and foot. Teach these terms using the action and image-based methods. Next use these terms in meaningful sentences using actions, role playing, and images. Play a game of Simon Says, *itwēw*, to help students point to the body parts begin presented.

**Suggested Activities:**

Form groups of four and instruct students that they are going to be involved in role plays with various scenarios. It is up to the students to create the dialogue and to find appropriate words to use during the dialogue. Some of the words are included with the target vocabulary list.

**Scenario One:** *(refer to target vocabulary for Cree translations)*

Person 1 is looking for someone to cut his/her hair. He/she is admiring a friend’s hair.

Person 1: “I like your hair” “Can you cut my hair”?

Person 2: “I am busy and can’t cut hair right now.”

Person 3 asks person 4: “When did you dye your hair?”

Person 4: “I dyed it a few days ago.”

Person 3: “I want to dye my hair soon”

Person 2: “I could dye your hair tomorrow”; to Person 1 “I can cut your hair tomorrow as well.”

Below are sentences that can be used:

*Kikiskīmāw cī awiyak ta nihtā paskwahamakūt?* (Do you know of anyone that can cut hair well?)

*Ni wī nitawi paskwahamān wāpahki* (I'm going to get my hair cut tomorrow.)

**Scenario Two:**

Person 1 is not feeling well.

Person 2 asks Person 1: "How are you feeling now"?

Person 1: "I have a stomach ache"

Person 3 notices that person 4 does not look well and asks "How are you feeling"?

Person 4: "I have a headache"

The following sentence can be used to carry on with the role playing.

*Tānisi kā itamahcihoyan anohc?* (How are you feeling today?)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| a) <i>Nitahkosin</i> (I am sick)           | c) <i>Nimiyoyān</i> (I am well)                     |
| b) <i>Nicīsikwānān</i> (I have a headache) | d) <i>Ni wī sakihtīn natay</i> (My stomach is sore) |

The following two sentence starters are meant for students to read and begin to recognize verb phrases.

*Kīkway anohc kā itōtaman?* (What did you do today?)

- a) *Ni kī kanācihcikān* (I cleaned up)
- b) *Ni kī nitawi kiskinwahamāson* (I went to go and learn)
- c) *Ni kī-nitawi nācikān* (I went to go and pick up things, e.g., as in shopping)
- d) *Ni kī wīci mītawīmāwak nōsisimak* (I played with my grandchildren)

*Tānitahto tipahikan anohc kā waniskāyan?* (What time did you get up?)

- a) *Nikotwāsik tipahikan* (6 o'clock)

- b) *Apihtākīsikaw* (noon)
- c) *Ayinānēw tipahikan* (8 o'clock)
- d) *Tēpakohp tipahikan* (7 o'clock)

Show visuals that show birds and other things and ask questions:

1. *Tānitahto piyēsīsak ki wāpamāwak ōta?* (How many birds do you see here?)
2. *Mīcisowak ci?* (Are they eating?)
3. *Tānisi isi kisikāw wayawītimihk?* (What is it like outside? Students describe the weather.)
4. *Awīna ōta kā apit?* (Who is sitting here?)
5. *Taniwēhkāk atimwak?* (Where are the dogs?)
6. *Pōsīsak cī ōta ayāwak?* (Are there cats here?)
7. *Sīpihkawāw ōma* (show something in the image that is blue)
8. *Sikāk cī awa?* (Is this a skunk?)
9. *Tānisi ōki ayisīniwak ī-itōtahkwāw ōta?* (What are these people doing here?)

**Assessment:**

Are students able to correctly identify 6 body parts? Are student able to read the sentences given? I will know by observing students as they read. I will go from group to group while they are involved in role playing. Were students able to figure out the scenarios in order to do the role play?

## WEEK 12 TOPIC: Routines, Worldview, and Review

**Outcomes:** Students will:

- review main content and vocabulary
- prepare an activity plan and teach from it
- participate in a discussion on the concept of the Cree worldview

**Materials/Resources:** various images, artifacts concrete objects. Remind students to have their journals and handbooks on hand.

**Target Vocabulary:**

Wāsēskwan – clear and sunny	Yikwaskwan – It is cloudy	sīsīp – duck
mīcisowin – food	atim dog	kohkōs – pig
piyēsīs – bird	mostos – cow	ōhō – owl
wāpaht – see the ____	kipaha – close ____	

**Warm-up Activity:**

Drill and practice using the sound chart. Do a dictation and use the following dictation words (see Appendix 6 for a list of dictation words and translations):

1. maskwa	2. sōniyāw	3. sīkwan	4. apwānāsk	5. sōmināpoy
6. ospwākan	7. pwātisimo	8. kwāskohti	9. kwāskwīpitīw	10. mistikwān

**Presentation:**

The presentation will be in three parts: Part One will be the review of the routine activities such as the greeting, weather words, and calendar questions. Part Two will be the traditional meaning of the word “education.” Part Three will involve providing time to update the handbook and the journal. Students can consult with the instructor in order to prepare for their presentations on Week 13.

### **Part One:**

Present the weather words learned thus far and have students match the weather word with the image. Ask yes or no questions. Show a calendar and ask: What day is today? What day is tomorrow? What day was yesterday? Ask random questions such as: What time did you wake up today? Where did you go last night? Have you eaten? What did you eat? Will you be going to work tomorrow?

Ask someone to stand up, walk to the door and close it, *kipaha iskwahtēm*

Ask someone if they have seen the dog, the pig, the bird, the cow and the owl.

*ki kī wāpamāw cī atim, ki kī wāpamāw, ci kohkos,* and so on.

Refer to the target vocabulary for the Cree words and review animal terms. Show students an image taken from the book *When the Trees Crackle with Cold*. It shows people cooking and camping out, children playing on swings, teeter totters, and slides.

### **Part Two:**

The word “education” is a powerful word in the Cree language. *kiskinohamātowin* means education. I found this word and its teachings in Ratt’s (2001) book called, *A Woods Cree Grammar and Workbook*. The verb *kiskinohtahā* means to show someone the way. The teaching that is included in the book takes the word “education” apart. In the following teaching, each morpheme has a purpose. This word was not taken lightly in pre-contact times. It meant that education is learner-centered and involves all members of the community working together. The following is a parsing of the word *kiskinohamātowin*.

*ki- ski- noh- ha- mā-to- win* – The word education broken down in morphemes.

*/ki/* – indicates teacher and learner; ***kiya*** means you

*/ski/* – comes from earth, ***askiy***

*/noh/* – to nurse a baby; in this context meaning nurturing

*/ha/* – this morpheme shows up in words that need a human force to be carried out; for example: *kipaha*, close it, *wīpaha*, sweep it, *pakamaha*, hit it

*/ma/* – refers to the great spirit, **Manitow**

*/to/* – morpheme that shows reciprocal movement; *wīcihitok* to help each other and *māmawīnitok* embrace each other.

*/win/* – nominalizer that makes verbs into concrete nouns.

There are many more words that could be parsed in the same way in order to get to the root of the language. Initiate a discussion with students about what could happen if the Cree language was lost. Analyzing words and getting to the traditional meanings helps us to understand what can be lost if we lose our languages. The root of the culture is in the language. Many of the teachings have been forgotten already and now is the time to revitalize our languages. Have a quick review of all the unique features of the Cree language. This could be a brainstorm activity to test student's knowledge of what they have picked up from the language thus far. What are their future goals, thoughts? Provide time to write responses in their journal.

### ***Part Three:***

Provide time for students to form groups and to prepare a set of eight words and phrases of new vocabulary that they will teach each other. The wordlists provided to students are divided into genres, such as people, animals, clothing items, body parts, foods, colours, seasons, and weather. Some of these words will come from the wordlists that they have gathered in their handbooks. Review teaching strategies that I have used throughout. Refer to the introduction and Appendix 5 for ideas on how to present. They may want to use a card game BINGO game, relay, or any other activity to teach their set of words.

**Assessment:**

Were students responsive to the review? How many are speaking in phrases? How many are correctly identifying the word? Determine the participation level on the discussion on the future of the Cree language. Was there a feeling of concern? Were a few students able to make goals? Did they reflect in their journal? Did students make use of class time and did they ask for help with words?

## WEEK 13 TOPIC: Presentations and Review

**Outcomes:** Students will:

- teach one another vocabulary and phrases
- choose a technique to teach the words to their classmates
- review all content and complete a self- reflection
- participate in classmates presentations

**Material/Resources:** Students will let me know beforehand what material is needed.

**Target Vocabulary:** Students will participate in their own dialogues, scenarios and activities.

Words will be provided as needed. Target is to hear at least 50% of the language in the next three hours.

**Warm-up Activity:** Songs, teach the animal song *Ni kī wāpamāw atim* (I saw a dog).

**Presentation:**

This week will be divided into two parts. Part One will be student presentations and Part Two will be a self-reflection and wrap up.

**Part One:**

Students will teach vocabulary words and phrases to the rest of the class. They will work in groups of three or four, depending on the enrollment. It is their job to present the words in meaningful ways. They will use images or actions to get the meaning across. Then they will plan an activity for everyone to be involved in.

## ***Part Two:***

The last hour will consist of a continuation of the review from the previous week. Students will complete a self-reflection and will hand in their journals and completed handbook of common words and phrases handbooks. Thank everyone for participating and for giving the provisional try in learning another language.

### **Assessment:**

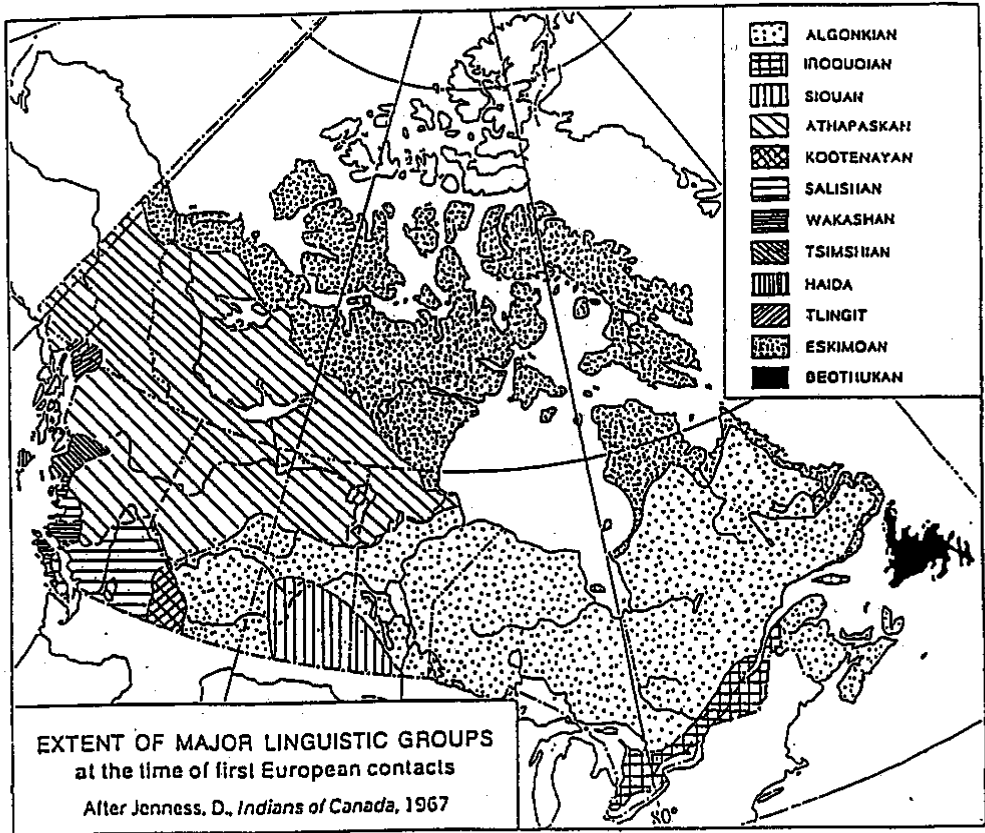
Formative assessment will be used throughout. Criteria according to the course goals and outcomes will need to be communicated at the beginning of the course. Observe students and give feedback throughout the 13 weeks.

Presentations: Are they saying the word loud and clear? Do they show the image so that everyone can see? Do they repeat the word at least three times? Are they going too fast, too slow? A checklist will be used with the criteria stated. Suggested ways to grade is provided in Appendix 7 and the following are further examples:

1. Journals – marks for clarity and growth in learning
2. Handbook – How many sections are there? Is it user friendly?
3. Presentation on weather/calendar/image and action-based teaching
4. Role-play activity on a scenario of student choice
5. Language pod activities – Does the student stay in the language?

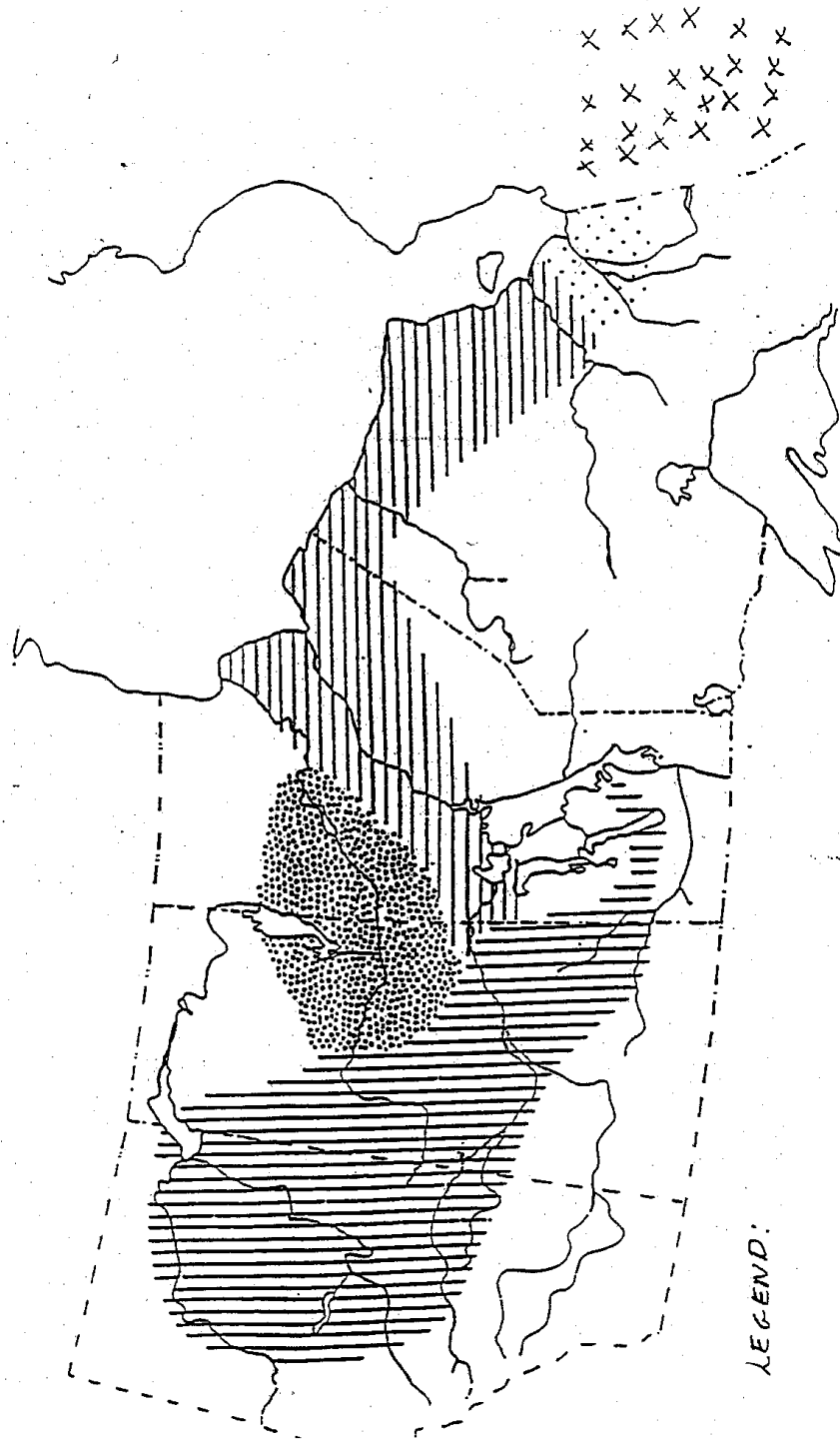
Appendix 1

Canadian Language Families  
(adapted by Dr. Jan van Eijk, used with permission)



Appendix 2

The Major Dialects of Cree



Appendix 3

Cree Sound Chart

ē	ī	i	ō	o	ā	a
pē	pī	pi	pō	po	pā	pa
tē	tī	ti	tō	to	tā	ta
kē	kī	ki	kō	ko	kā	ka
cē	cī	ci	cō	co	cā	ca
mē	mī	mi	mō	mo	mā	ma
nē	nī	ni	nō	no	nā	na
sē	sī	si	sō	so	sā	sa
wē	wī	wi	wō	wo	sā	wa
y	yī	yi	yō	yo	sā	ya
h	hī	hi	hō	ho	sā	ha

## Appendix 4

### Songs

#### Number Song

Piyak, nīso, nisto, nēwo, niyānan, nikotwāsik, ēkwa tēpakohp,  
ayinānēw, kīka mitātaht mīna mitātaht  
ēkota iskohk nihtā-akihcikān.

Repeat this song about three times. Each time add something like clapping, or sitting up and down, just to get the adults moving about.

#### Hello Tānisi Song

Instructor says the first line and then student repeats each word after teacher says.

Hello	Hello	Tānisi	Tānisi
How are you?	How are you?	Tānisi kiya	Tānisi kiya
I am fine	I am fine	Namoya nānitaw	Namoya nānitaw
Come on in	Come on in	Pihtokwī	Pihtokwī
Sit down	Sit down	Api	Api
Have some tea	Have some tea	Maskīkwāpoy minihkwī	Maskīkwāpoy minihkwī
Tāpwē miywāsin ī pī kiyokawiyān		It sure is nice that you came to visit me	
Tāntī ī kī itohtiyān		Where have you been?	
Mahti ācimo kīkway ī osihtāyan		Tell me all the things you have been doing	
Mahti ācimostawin.		Yes please tell me.	

## **Nimosōm-Nohkom**

*1<sup>st</sup> verse:*

Nimosōm mahti ācimostawin

Tānisi ōma kā kā pī- ispayik

Nimosōm mahti wihtamawin

Kīspin ī-kī pī ayimahk kayās

*Chorus:*

Kī pī wīcimosināwāw

Kī pī wīcihitonāwāw

Kī- āsotamātonāwāw mīna

Kī māmaw ayamihānāwāw

Napīwak cī kī kisātamwak

Oh oh Nimosōm mahti ācimostāwin

*2<sup>nd</sup> verse:*

Nohkom mahti ācimostawin

Tānisi kā kī isi pimātisiyēk

Nohkom mahti wihtamawin

Kīspin ī kī pī mōcikhk kayās

*Repeat chorus again.*

## **Grandpa-Grandma**

Grandpa, please tell me a story

about how things came to be

Grandpa please tell me

Were things difficult long ago

You all had friends and partners

You all helped each other

You all promised each other

You all prayed together

Did the men stay close

oh oh Grandpa please tell me a story

Grandma please tell me a story

of how your ways of living were

Nohkom please tell me

was it fun in the past

## Appendix 5

### Activities and Games

#### 1. BINGO – with variations

BINGO games should be image based since the use of images and actions allow the meaning to transfer without translation. Students will be forced to make connections and make meaning of the vocabulary. In the beginning when I first started teaching Cree, I purchased ready-made BINGO cards for teaching numbers up to 20, for telling time, and for picture BINGO. These come in handy since they are ready made and quick to organize. Another way to organize BINGO is to engage the students in deciding the words to use and the visuals to either draw or symbolize. Step-by-step instructions will need to be clear at the beginning.

**Directions:** It takes approximately 30 min. to play three games.

1. Prepare a blank table of nine squares so that it looks like table below. Use the space bar to enlarge the squares so that it covers an 8 x 11 area.
2. Students will suggest words and phrases that they are having difficulty remembering or understanding (there needs to be at least 20 words/phrases in order to play with 9 squares)
3. Students will choose 9 out of the possible 20 words that have been posted on the board and made into calling cards.
4. Students will draw the images filling up all the 9 spaces on their BINGO card.

windy	it is a nice day	reading
hello how are you	running	go for a walk
what is your name	it is cold	playing

5. Play BINGO at least six times in a 13-week course. Students could call out *Nōtahowān*, I won. Saying the winning words in Cree is also a good practice.

## 2. Simon itwēw – Simon Says

Incorporate the game Simon Says whenever there is a need to improve listening skills or to energize the group. Directions: Teacher introduces the game as Simon itwēw. Teach the word *itwēw* (says) using actions. Begin by saying Simon *itwēw mīciso* (Simon says eat), Simon *itwēw nipā* (Simon says sleep), Simon *itwēw pimohtī* (Simon says walk), *masinahikī* (write) and if they perform the writing action then they are out. This game could be played if you want them to touch or point to the vocabulary word learned. Example: Simon *itwēw sāmīna kistikwān*, Simon *itwēw sāmīna masinahikan*, Simon *itwēw sāmīna kisita*, Simon *itwēw kitōn*.

## 3. Memory

Have students make up their own memory card games for homework and then exchange the set of flashcards with another group and practice matching up.

## 4. Charades

Make up some cards that show actions and animals. For example, *sikāk mīcisow* (the skunk is eating), *mostos minihkwēw* (the cow is drinking), *atim mikisimow* (the dog is barking), *mistatim pimipahtāw* (the horse is running). Put the cards in a container and students can come up one at a time and act out the phrases. Other topics such as washing dishes, fishing, and all vocabulary words that they know can be included.

## Appendix 6

### Dictation

#### Week 5

nīpin – it is spring	pīsim – sun
mīnis – a berry	kīspin – if
wīwa – his/her wife	mīci – eat it
wīyās – meat	cīki – close/near
sīsīp – duck	kīmōc – secretly

#### Week 6

wāpos – rabbit	mitās – pants
wākās – banana	pakān – nut (noun)
pātos – until	sāsay – already
wāwa – eggs	māka – but
māto – cry	kāsō – to hide (verb)

#### Week 7

pōsis – cat	mostos – cow
mitōn – mouth	takosin – he/she/it arrives
ōsih – boat	astotin – hat
kōna – snow	mikot – nose
pōna – make a fire	kotak – another

#### Week 8

nisis – my uncle	nahapi – sit down
niska – goose	nahāpi – to see clearly
tipiska – to have a birthday	papāsi – in a hurry
atim – dog	nakata – to leave behind
mistik – a stick	kayās – long time ago

#### Week 9

pētā – bring it	mēkwāc – presently
tāpwē – truly	cēskwa – wait
sēmāk – right away	iskwēw – woman
kinēpik – snake	napēw – man

tēpwē – yell	piyēsīs – bird
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Week 10

pīwāpisk – iron	minōs – cat
cīmān – canoe	piminawaso – cook
kīsikāw – day	pipon – winter
kīsihtā – complete it	mispiton – arm
pītos – different	simākanis – cop

Week 11

āmow – bee	ayīkis – frog
ātiht – some	atāwī – to buy
kāsiha – wipe it	asapāp – thread
wāpikwaniy – flower	ahāsiw – crow
sākahikan – lake	sakahikan – nail

Week 12

maskwa – bear	ospwākan – a pipe
sōniyāw – money	pwātisimo – pow wow
sīkwan – it is spring	kwāskohti – jump
apwānāsk – smoke rack	kwāskwīpitīw – fishes them in
sōmināpoy – grape juice	mistikwān – head

## Appendix 7

### A Suggested Assessment Plan for the Entire Course

<b>What is used to test</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Quiz 1 – sound system, comprehending verb roots, matching nouns to images	5%
Quiz 2 – testing other vocabulary such as numbers and weather terms	5%
Oral interview and dialogue	10%
Journal – develop a checklist with criteria	10%
Handbook – organized into sections so it is easy to find the words needed	20%
Teaching each other vocabulary – activity where students work in their own groups of four and teach each other a set of sequenced vocabulary words (up to 16). Pronouns and other details can be included.	10%
Participation – language pods, role play	10%
Self-assessment	10%
Summative evaluation – evaluate each student and how they met the outcomes throughout. Some universities request that you give a final exam but the exam could be made up in a variety of ways to test the outcomes throughout.	20%

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