



## Teaching Tools for Language Nests

### Activities and Games

#### Activity Ideas for Language Nests

An effective early-childhood language immersion program provides a high level of interaction, physical activity and exploration that supports all areas of child development, as well as language learning. The following are some games and activities that can be used and/or modified for a language nest.

[Language Development Activities for a Language Nest](#)

[More Language Nest Activities](#)

[List of Phrases for Language Nest Activities](#)

#### Wordless Books

Wordless books are a great way to share stories with children in your language. These books do not contain text, only images, so you can tell stories in your language without being distracted by English text. You can create your own wordless books using masking tape to cover up the English text, or you can translate the story and use a label maker to replace the English text in books with your language. Label makers can also be used to make signs and label objects throughout the nest. These visual cues help staff remember to stay in the language and support early literacy development for the children. Find a list of wordless books [here](#).

#### [Create Your Own Wordless Books](#)

Liq'wala Resources for First Nations Language Education Programs has a guide for developing your own wordless book set, using the [Pint Sized Productions](#) website.

#### Handbooks and Guides

#### [First Nations Language Nests: Your Guide to Operating a Successful Immersion Program for the Very Young](#)

Chief Atahm School Curriculum Team, 2009

This resource was created by the Chief Atahm School Curriculum Team for FPCC in 2009 to support new and existing language nest programs. The following sections contain a variety of activities and games for the language nest:

- [Songs, Games and Movement](#)
- [Art and Expression](#)
- [Exploring the Natural World](#)



- [Food Activities](#)
- [Program Planning Forms](#)

### [Authentic First Peoples Resources: For Use in K–7 Classrooms](#)

First Nations Education Steering Committee and First Nations Schools Association, 2012

This guide offers a long list of authentic First Peoples novels that can be used in the classroom. Though these resources are geared towards school-aged children and are primarily in English, it may be possible to adapt them for use in an immersion language nest.

### [In Our Own Words: Bringing Authentic First Peoples Content to the K–3 Classroom](#)

First Nations Education Steering Committee and First Nations Schools Association, 2012

This resource guide for teachers provides sample curricula based on authentic First Peoples materials and resources. While this particular guide is directed at non-Indigenous teachers, many of the lesson plans and activities may be adapted for use in the language nest.

### **Websites**

These websites have a variety of language activities and games that may be adapted for your language and language nest program:

[FirstVoices Kids](#)

[Anishinaabemdaa](#)

[Nitsitapiisinni](#)

[Sealaska Heritage Institute](#)

[Cherokee Learning Center](#)

### **Fonts and Keyboards**

Fonts and keyboards are now available for many Indigenous languages around the world. FirstVoices Keyboards and Language Geek are both great tools that can be used in language nests to develop resources, games and books for teaching the language to children. They are also useful for creating online content to share about the language nest program in social media and in communities.

[FirstVoices Keyboards](#)

[Language Geek](#)

For videos on how to install FirstVoices keyboards, [click here](#). For a video on how to install a Language Geek keyboard, [click here](#).



## **Apps**

These apps can be adapted to support First Nations language learning in the language nest, at school and in the home.

**My PlayHome** is an interactive dollhouse that allows children to explore and use everything in the home. Create characters that can eat, sleep, shower, brush their teeth and more. With this app, learners can practise language associated with the home and daily routines.

[Download on an Apple device](#) or [download on an Android device](#).

**My PlayHome School** is an extension of the My PlayHome app. This app allows children to expand their learning by exploring the school as they play various roles. With this app, learners can practise the language associated with school and the classroom.

[Download on an Apple device](#) or [download on an Android device](#).

**My PlayHome Stores** is an extension of the My PlayHome app. This interactive app allows children to explore four different stores where they can play, build their own ice cream cones, go grocery shopping and more. With this app, learners can practise the language associated with various day-to-day tasks outside of the home and school.

[Download on an Apple device](#) or [download on an Android device](#).

**My Story** allows you to create your own stories. This is a great app for both home and school use. You can make voice recordings so the story can be told using your language. You can also create your own text for the story; if your language has a keyboard app, you can practise reading and writing in the language. Your stories can be imported and exported for easy sharing with others.

[Download on an Apple device](#).

**Bitsboard** makes learning fun using games and flashcards. Certain games cannot be modified and rely on the use of English, but there are selected games that can be customized to support language learning. For example, the flashcard game can be customized to only show images without the language, and there is also the option to record audio. With 25+ games to play with, this app can be a useful tool for language learning and practice.

[Download on an Apple device](#).



## Teaching Tools

### Language Cheat Sheets

“Cheat sheets” are a helpful tool for staff in the language nest. These sheets act as a quick resource for adults to help them stay in the language at all times. The Tahltan Language Nest has created their own cheat sheets that include commonly used words and phrases for staff members to practise.

[Tahltan Colouring and Crafts](#)

[Tahltan Playtime](#)

[Tahltan General Language Nest Phrases](#)

### Resources for Second Language Learners

It is common for staff in the language nest to be second language learners, and many are often learning the language alongside the children. The following are some resources to support second language learners in the nest.

#### [Mentor-Apprentice Language Program Handbook](#)

First Peoples' Cultural Council, 2012

This handbook provides practical information, tools and strategies for individuals who want to use the Mentor-Apprentice Program (MAP) method for learning their First Nations language. The handbook includes a detailed overview of the MAP method, as well as resources to support successful language learning.

See also FPCC's [MAP Toolkit](#) for more MAP language learning resources.

#### [Language for Life: Nourishing Indigenous Languages in the Home](#)

First Peoples' Cultural Council, 2019

This practical handbook was developed to support Indigenous families who want to learn and speak their Indigenous language together in the home. This handbook is also useful for second language learners as it includes tips, strategies and resources for how to use Indigenous languages in everyday settings. Resources include ideas for games and activities to make language learning fun, a guide for claiming spaces for language in the home, templates for setting language learning goals and more.

#### [WSÁNEĆ SEN: I am emerging: An Auto-Ethnographic study of life long SENĆOŦEN language learning](#)

Jacqueline Jim, 2016