


Mentor-Apprentice Language Program Handbook

Second Edition





Authors: Hannah Virtue, Suzanne Gessner, Xway'Waat (Deanna) Daniels and Aliana Parker

Design: iilo Creative Alliance Inc. (iilo.ca)

Illustrations: Elena Sterritt, Gisghaast Graphic Recording (gisghaast.ca)

Cover photos: L-R from top: Jessica Michell and Kathryn Michell, Witsuwit'en; Gary Manson and Adam Manson, Hul'q'umi'num'; Elders' Gathering.

Copyright © 2025 by The First Peoples' Cultural Council. ISBN: 978-1-9990269-9-8

This 2nd edition is a revised version of B.C.'s Master-Apprentice Language Program Handbook (2012).

If you wish to revise this handbook for your own language, please contact us at info@fpcc.ca.

Acknowledgments

The Master/Mentor-Apprentice model is described in detail in the book *How to Keep Your Language Alive: A Commonsense Approach to One-on-One Language Learning* by Leanne Hinton with Matt Vera and Nancy Steele (2002). This handbook is a summary of the main principles outlined in the book and is designed to be used as a quick reference. When starting the program for yourself, it is recommended that you read all of *How to Keep Your Language Alive*.

We thank Dr. Leanne Hinton, Nancy Steele and the Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival (AICLS) for their ongoing assistance and support in the development of the British Columbia Mentor-Apprentice Program (MAP). They originally developed the Master-Apprentice Program in California, and their work has been a huge inspiration. Dr. Hinton and Nancy Steele have led training sessions for the B.C.

teams using the Mentor-Apprentice model and we are very grateful for their experience and expertise.

The B.C. program was originally named Master-Apprentice and the program continues to be called that elsewhere, but in B.C. it is now called Mentor-Apprentice to better reflect the nurturing role of the mentor.

Thank you to Mandy Na'zinek Jimmie who provided significant feedback and input on the development of the 1st edition.

Hundreds of teams have participated in FPCC's Mentor-Apprentice Program. We are extremely grateful to the B.C. mentor-apprentice teams who have reported back to us on successes, challenges and best practices. We have seen apprentices make great progress in their language learning and we are very proud of all the B.C. MAP teams who are working to revitalize their languages.

We respectfully thank and acknowledge funding for the first edition of this handbook and early support of the Mentor-Apprentice Program from the New Relationship Trust and from the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation. We are grateful for ongoing funding and support for the program from the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation and from Canadian Heritage, Government of Canada.



About the First Peoples' Cultural Council

The First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC) is a First Nations–directed provincial Crown Corporation formed in 1990 to support the revitalization of B.C. First Nations languages, arts and cultural heritage. The FPCC is supported by legislation: the *First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Act*.

FPCC provides leadership to strengthen and rebuild systems disrupted by cultural genocide through the revitalization of First Nations languages, arts and cultural heritage. We do this by:

- Empowering communities to reach their goals by offering opportunities for skill development, coaching, grant funding, resources and models of success
- Honouring the knowledge of First Nations people by providing funding for them to develop, share and transfer their knowledge
- Providing leadership through subject matter expertise, innovative technologies, best practices and knowledge sharing
- Practicing a community-based approach by partnering with communities to deliver successful language, arts and cultural heritage programs
- Advocating for increased recognition and support for the inherent value of First Nations languages, arts and cultural heritage



The First Peoples' Cultural Council

Located in the village of WJOLÉEP, Brentwood Bay, B.C.

Phone: **250-652-5952**

Fax: **250-652-5953**

Email: **info@fpcc.ca**

www.fpcc.ca

For more information on our funding, please see our Annual Report: **fpcc.ca/annualreport**.

Purpose

This handbook is intended to be a practical tool for individuals who want to use the Mentor-Apprentice Program as a language learning method. The purpose of this handbook is to serve as a resource from which communities and individuals can gather ideas and guidance for planning and carrying out the Mentor-Apprentice Program in their own community. Please note that many examples in this handbook are given in English. These examples are provided to help generate ideas and are not intended for translation into First Nations languages. Concepts from one culture are not easily adapted to another. Often direct translations are impossible, and one language cannot express meanings from another language in exactly the same way.



Table of Contents

Quick Start Section: Key Points	5
Introduction	6
Getting Started	9
Set Language Learning Goals	12
Sample Language Learning Goals	13
Ten Points for Successful Language Learning	15
Immersion Language Sessions	20
Mentor-Apprentice Typical Session	22
Tips for Immersion Language Sessions	24
Play Games in Your Language	25
Evaluating Your Progress	26
Roles of Panel Speakers and Mentor-Apprentice Team	28
Challenges and Solutions	30
Conclusion	33
References	34
Appendix A: Sample Immersion Language Sessions	35
Appendix B: Sample Games	56
Notes	59



Quick Start Section: Key Points

This handbook contains all the information you will need to do the Mentor-Apprentice language learning method yourself. You do not have to read it all at once. To jump to the section you need quickly, here is a quick start guide.

If You Want To:	Go To:
Get a general overview of what the Mentor-Apprentice Program is about	Introduction: page 6
Find out what to do before getting started	Getting Started: page 9
Understand the main points of the program <i>It will be good to review this section often!</i>	Ten Points: page 15
Look at a roadmap (outline) for each time you get together	Immersion Language Session: page 20
Get ideas for what to do	Tips for Sessions: page 24 Appendix A: page 35 <i>There are lots of ideas here!</i>
Get ideas for games to play together	Play Games: page 25, 56
Figure out how to tell how much you're learning	Evaluating Your Progress: page 26
Find more books and websites	References: page 34

Introduction

What is the Mentor-Apprentice Program (MAP)?

The Mentor-Apprentice Program is a method of learning a language where a fluent speaker of the language (a mentor) teaches a language learner (an apprentice) through language immersion.

The goal of the program is to have apprentices increase their fluency in speaking and understanding their language. While reading and writing are valuable skills, an apprentice must be able to speak and understand to become fluent. This is the focus of the Mentor-Apprentice Program.

As each apprentice becomes more fluent, they can teach others the language, creating a ripple effect in the community.

The mentor and apprentice must agree to spend a lot of time together, usually at least 10–15 hours per week, or about 50 hours per month.

During their time together (immersion language sessions), they “live life in the language” (language immersion) by doing everyday activities using only their First Nations language, with no English.



L-R: Udzistalis John Speck, Hereditary Chief, Tlowitsis, and Hi?liqila?gelis Natasha Green

“The MAP program has fostered a deep relationship with my mentor and given me the confidence to make other connections within my community, such as speaking to Elders in the language when I see them at community events. By passing the language down to my children, I am able to change cycles of language loss and colonization into a cycle of growth and language resurgence, grounded in decolonial love.”

— Nigel-Baker Grenier, Cree / Nēhiyawēwin

This method is similar to the way we learned a language as babies, listening to the language spoken around us as our parents went about their daily activities. Our parents didn’t “teach us” our language with grammar lessons; instead we learned our language by being constantly immersed in it.

History of the Master/Mentor-Apprentice Program

The Master-Apprentice Program started in California. Julian Lang, a Karuk speaker, suggested the original idea, and Leanne Hinton, Nancy Richardson, Mary Bates Abbott and others initially created the program (Hinton 2001). They developed the program specifically for Native American languages, but the method can be used to learn any language.

In 2007, FPCC developed and launched the B.C. Mentor-Apprentice Program, with the support of Dr. Leanne Hinton, Nancy Steele and the Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival (AICLS) who originally developed this model.

In the first group, 12 teams from 11 different B.C. languages participated in the program. The goal for each team was to complete 900 hours of immersion in their language (3 years of 300 hours per year).

These 12 teams showed great success and all of the apprentices became more fluent in their languages. Their experiences have helped us in the development of this handbook.

FPCC has been offering this program annually ever since. In addition to providing grants for mentor-apprentice teams, FPCC also provides ongoing support in the form of resources, training, coaching, program planning and development.



L-R: Char Crocker and Marion Underwood, Hul'q'umi'num'

"Our Elders are always saying that we need to know who we are and where we come from. During my time with my mentors, I have learned so much about our old ways, and our family history — through learning the language. It has been a very meaningful experience for me."

— Char Crocker, Hul'q'umi'num





Visual Model of the Mentor-Apprentice Program

This Visual Model of the Program is a Cycle and Includes:

- A mentor and an apprentice speaking only their language — no English.

Strategy and Approach

- setting **language goals** and a schedule to spend time together speaking only the language for at least 50 hours per month.

Goal

- **oral communication**, being able to speak and understand the language.

Activities

- **everyday activities**, cultural knowledge activities and language games make up the bulk of time that the mentor and apprentice spend together. Language learning should be natural and fun and should include learning to speak about culturally relevant topics and topics related to daily life.

Assessment Activities

- **self-assessment** to see how much language you have learned and what areas you need improvement in.
- a **presentation of learning** to show speakers, Elders and/or community members how you have progressed. It is important to get input on your progress from community members who are knowledgeable about the language.

Repeating the Cycle

- re-setting language goals and revising your schedule if necessary. It's important to always look for ways to improve your learning and get the most out of your time spent together.

Getting Started

As you get started with your Mentor-Apprentice Program, it's important to work out the details of who will be involved, as well as when, where and how you will carry out the program. This section provides some background information for sorting out the details of your Mentor-Apprentice Program.

Choose the Mentor and Apprentice

A Mentor is

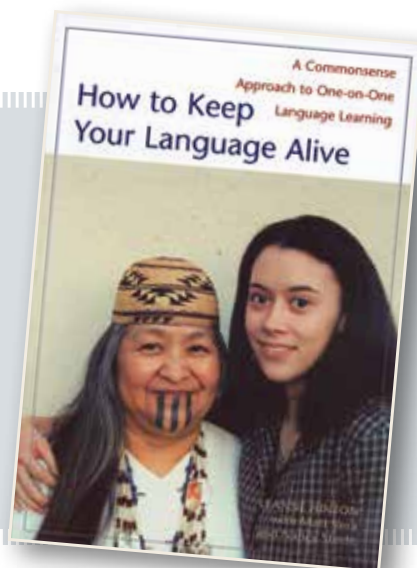
- a fluent speaker of the language.
Usually a mentor spoke the First Nations language as a child and as a mother tongue. The mentor does NOT have to be a language teacher. Knowing how to speak the language is all the expertise needed.
- patient and has an understanding of the language learning process. Language learning is not a quick process and it takes a lot of time and repetition for the apprentice to “pick up” language.
- willing to spend a lot of time with the apprentice **speaking only the language**.

- willing to overcome any fears, inhibitions or negative feelings about speaking and sharing the language. These feelings are understandable and very common due to the effects of the residential school experience, but it is important to create a positive space for the language to grow.
- open to learning and using different techniques to pass on the language to the apprentice.

An Apprentice is

- either a semi-speaker (knows some of the language) or a total beginner. Either way is OK!
- patient and has an understanding of the language learning process.

For Getting Started, You Will Want to Read: *How to Keep Your Language Alive: A Commonsense Approach to One-on-One Language Learning*, by Leanne Hinton with Matt Vera and Nancy Steele (2002). This handbook summarizes the main principles outlined in the book and is designed to be used as a quick reference, but when starting the program for yourself, it is recommended that you read all of *How to Keep Your Language Alive*.





L-R: Rae Anne Claxton and Sarah Modeste, Hul'q'umi'num'

- willing to spend a lot of time with the mentor speaking only the language. In addition to the time spent together, many apprentices spend extra time on their own listening to recordings and reviewing.
- deeply committed to learning the language.
- committed to making the most out of the time spent with the mentor.
- responsible for guiding the language learning process by choosing what they want to learn.
- willing to take risks and overcome fears of making mistakes in the language.
- interested in and committed to passing on what they learn to others.

“Language learning and ancestral language reclamation is a lifestyle and I am making daily efforts to keep my learning going.”

— Yola, Kwak'waka

Set a Schedule

Decide on a schedule and stick to it. Find a schedule that works for both mentor and apprentice, at least 10–15 hours per week, for a total of at least 50 hours per month.

Remember: you don't need to stop doing what you would usually do. For example, if you choose Saturday, and Saturday is your laundry day, you can still do your laundry — you will just do it together, talking about what you're doing in the language as you do it.

CALENDAR						
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Can You Have More Than One Mentor or More Than One Apprentice?

While some teams have had more, we find that in most cases it works best to have just one mentor and one apprentice. Having just one apprentice on the team allows for more focused attention from the mentor and provides more time and opportunity to speak and learn. As the apprentice becomes more fluent, it will be helpful to interact with other speakers, so you may want to include other mentors and involve other speakers from the community as you go on.

Sample Schedules

These samples are meant to give you ideas — it’s important to choose a schedule that works best for you. You can choose one of these or you can make your own combination.

Sample Schedule #1: Evenings and One Weekend Day Per Week								
	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total Hours
Week 1		7-9:30pm		7-9:30pm		7-9:30pm	12-5pm	12.5
Week 2		7-9:30pm		7-9:30pm		7-9:30pm	9am-2pm	12.5
Week 3		7-9:30pm		7-9:30pm		7-9:30pm	12-5pm	12.5
Week 4		7-9:30pm		7-9:30pm		7-9:30pm	9am-2pm	12.5
Total Hours Per Month								50.0

Sample Schedule #2: Evenings Only								
	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total Hours
Week 1		7-10pm	7-10pm	7-10pm	7-10:30pm			12.5
Week 2		7-10pm	7-10pm	7-10pm	7-10:30pm			12.5
Week 3		7-10pm	7-10pm	7-10pm	7-10:30pm			12.5
Week 4		7-10pm	7-10pm	7-10pm	7-10:30pm			12.5
Total Hours Per Month								50.0

Sample Schedule #3: Lunch Hours with Some Evenings and Weekends								
	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Total Hours
Week 1		12-1pm	12-1pm	12-1pm	12-1pm	12-1pm	9am-4:30pm	12.5
Week 2		12-1pm	12-1pm & 7-9:30pm	12-1pm & 7-9:30pm	12-1pm & 7-9:30pm	12-1pm		12.5
Week 3		12-1pm	12-1pm	12-1pm	12-1pm	12-1pm	9am-4:30pm	12.5
Week 4		12-1pm	12-1pm & 7-9:30pm	12-1pm & 7-9:30pm	12-1pm & 7-9:30pm	12-1pm		12.5
Total Hours Per Month								50.0

Set Language Learning Goals

Language goals can be related to topics that the apprentice would like to learn about.

The apprentice is responsible for coming up with language goals for the time spent with the mentor each month. Of course, it is important for the apprentice to discuss the language learning goals with the mentor and revise them as necessary.

Language and culture are interconnected.

When setting your language learning goals, remember that language is used in all day-to-day activities that make up a culture (i.e., food, clothing, art, songs, dance, family, friends, relationships, technology and spirituality). Your language learning goals can be related to any of these topics, or anything else relevant to your life.

"We did language walks and hiking. It was good to get out on the land and speak in the language. We enjoyed working on storytelling with some important traditional stories. We held a Zoom tea party with other language speakers to speak in the language."

— Lisa Orton, Secwepemctsin

Language is Culture

All parts of daily life (i.e., family and community, food and health, art, songs and dance, language, spirituality and values, history and the land) interact with one another to make up a culture.



Sample Language Learning Goals

The apprentice needs to think about why they want to be part of the Mentor-Apprentice Program. This gives them something to work towards. Here are some examples.

Language Learning Personal Internal Goals

I already know my culture but I want to speak my language. This will be done by:

- learning the language with ease, communicating in my language with ease and being able to switch back and forth from one language to another.
- understanding what is being said to me and using appropriate language when speaking.
- retaining the language when I hear new vocabulary, phrases, etc.
- sounding like a natural speaker in all aspects of language when I speak to my mentor and other fluent speakers.

For more information on setting goals and what you can expect to learn, refer back to Chapter 3 of *How to Keep Your Language Alive* (Hinton 2002).

Language Learning External Goals

- working comfortably with cultural applications, concepts, significance and influences within my language.
- being able to abandon the English way of thinking when I am learning my language.

It is also a good idea for the mentor to come up with their own goals. What do they want to achieve by mentoring an apprentice in the program?

"[MAP] has strengthened my connection to my language, culture and identity in ways I didn't expect. Learning Bak'wamk'ala has been about more than just words; it's helped me understand the traditions and values embedded in the language. Using the language has made me feel closer to my community and heritage, and it's given me a deeper sense of pride in who I am as a Bak'wam. This program has been life-changing for me. It's given me the tools and confidence to use Bak'wamk'ala in my daily life and to share it with others."

— Apprentice in FPCC's Mentor-Apprentice Program

Create a Work Plan

At the beginning of each month, the mentor and apprentice should develop a work plan together for the entire month.

The work plan will give you a chance to set some goals for what the apprentice would like to learn. To guide your planning, think about the following questions:

- What kinds of topics do you want to learn about? The learning must be natural to you and where you live.
- What do you want to learn in the next 50 hours?
- What kinds of activities can you do together to help accomplish your goals?
- Are there other language/culture experts in the community you would like to involve?

Set specific language learning objectives or outcomes and try to be as specific as you can in planning your monthly activities. During your activities, you will learn new words and practice using them in phrases.

For example:

- Learn about cooking, the kitchen, eating and food. Have a meal together.
- Learn about housework such as doing laundry, washing dishes and cleaning.
- Learn about fishing. Learn to talk about the different kinds of fish, fishing techniques and equipment.
- Learn to say prayers in the language and learn the related protocol for ceremonies and gatherings.

- Learn to talk about your family. Learn to talk about the history of your relatives and how you are related to them.
- Learn about place names by taking trips by car or on the bus. Visit traditional sites and everyday places that are a part of your life.
- Learn a new skill by inviting a different cultural expert who is fluent in the language to work with you.
- Unplanned or unstructured immersion: You do not have to plan every minute of your time together. Sometimes it is really useful to just sit, relax and talk to each other about anything that comes to you, as long as you continue to use the language. How much the apprentice contributes will depend on their level of fluency, but you can have a pretty good conversation with the apprentice adding whatever they can. For example, you can talk about what happened that day, the latest news from the community, your family, etc.

These samples of general language learning goals are to give you ideas — it's important to choose goals that work best for you.

Keep your work plan realistic.
Don't try to do too much.



Ten Points for Successful Language Learning

After you have figured out how to get started with your Mentor-Apprentice Program, it's important to be clear about how you will learn and teach the language. Here are some important points to remember when learning your language.

1. Leave English Behind. Communicate using Only Your Language

Resist speaking English even though it would be much easier in many situations.

Think of English as a habit you are trying to break. If you catch yourself using English, switch right back into your own language. This may happen quite regularly at first but keep reminding each other to use your language only.

In the beginning learn basic questions and phrases in the language so that you don't have to use English.

These 10 points are adapted from Chapter 2 of *How to Keep Your Language Alive* (Hinton 2002).

For example:

- *How do you say _____?*
- *Could you repeat that please?*
- *Could you say it more slowly?*
- *I don't understand.*

- *What is this? What is that? What is this called? What are those?*
- *What am I doing? What are you doing? What should I do now?*
- *Am I correct? Am I right?*

Learn some phrases in the language to help each other stay in the language. Some of these phrases may need to be reworded to fit with your language.

For example:

- *Please speak to me in our language.*
- *Now say that in our language.*
- *Tell me a traditional story. Tell me about an event.*
- *Tell me what's in this picture or photo (or some other visual object).*
- *What is happening here (pointing to the picture)? Tell me what is happening in this picture.*



2. Make Yourself Understood with Non-verbal Communication

Instead of switching to English, use actions, gestures, facial expressions, pictures and objects to show what you are trying to say.

For example:

- Actions: act out what you are trying to say.
- Gestures and facial expressions: point to things you are talking about and use facial expressions that show what you are thinking and feeling.

Use pictures, photos, books and magazines as well as objects around you to help make yourself understood and to talk together about what you see.

The apprentice could develop a personal collage of events or things they want to learn (family, relationships, family events).

For example:

- Use a photo album to talk about your family.
- Use a children's storybook to tell a story in your language.
- Use a fashion magazine to talk about clothing and what people look like.
- Use a home magazine to talk about food, furniture or houses.
- Use stuffed animals or puppets to act out stories.

3. Use Full Sentences

Hearing words in the context of full sentences will help the learner remember and understand their real meanings. Words on their own don't have as much meaning and are more difficult to remember than words in full sentences.

For example:

- When teaching the word for "cup," instead of just pointing at the cup and saying the word, you can say things like:

Here is a cup. This is a cup. That is a cup.

It's a blue cup. It's a large cup.

My cup is red. Your cup is black and white.

Where is your cup?

Do you want a cup?

Now I am going to pour some tea into the cup.

Now I am going to give you your cup.

Here is a cup. Here is your cup.

The cup is hot!

Give me your cup.

- Follow the 20x20 rule. To learn a new word or phrase, an apprentice needs to hear/see/say it **20 times in 20 different situations.**



4. Use Your Language for Real Communication

Try to do everything in your language. Don't think of your language as something you do only during lessons, but as the everyday language of your community.

Learning a language means learning to communicate. The best way to learn is by using real communication in the language.

An apprentice needs many opportunities to practice and ask questions in the language during real-life activities.

A mentor and an apprentice can talk about washing the dishes as they are actually doing the dishes. This will give the apprentice the opportunity to see, feel, touch, hear and speak about the topic.



5. Languages are Unique and Represent a Culture

Your language is not just a translation of English. Some ideas, phrases and thoughts we say in English may be impossible to say in exactly the same way in your language, and some things in your language may be impossible to say in exactly the same way in English.

Each language expresses unique ideas and thoughts. It is important to keep this in mind and to be willing to put your “English ideas” aside.

It may not be polite or proper protocol to talk about some things in your language that we usually talk about in English. It's important to listen to the mentor and not try to force them to talk about certain topics. The apprentice needs to learn these things, too.

For example:

- In some languages and cultures it is only appropriate for one gender (male or female) to make certain speeches and tell certain stories.
- In some languages, it is only appropriate to talk about things in certain ways, such as by being humble.
- It may be impolite to ask certain questions in your language.
- Some stories may be restricted to a certain time of year.

6. Focus on Listening and Speaking

Some mentor-apprentice teams are eager to focus on reading, writing and the grammar of their language. Although this can sometimes be helpful, your **main focus needs to be on listening and speaking** in order to become fluent in your language.

The apprentice does not need to learn to write to learn the language. They can learn the language just by hearing and speaking it.

Writing can slow down pronunciation and fluency. Learning to write adds a whole lot of work and time to the language learning process.

The apprentice can record the new sentences and write them down later when reviewing or practicing the phrases on their own. Keep your time together for listening and speaking, not writing.



7. Learn and Teach the Language through Activities

The best way to learn to speak a language is through activities using real communication in the language. This is exactly how all babies learn language, through real-life communication and activities.

Hands-on daily activities will keep the apprentice actively learning and interested. This will allow the apprentice to better remember what they learn. An apprentice can learn the language by watching, listening and practicing activities.

There are many good ideas on pages 16–17 of *How to Keep Your Language Alive* (Hinton 2002).

For example:

- Instead of trying to learn about berries from a book at home, the apprentice will learn and remember more if they go out to pick berries and talk about it in the language with the mentor.

Live your daily life together. Don't think of this time together as outside of your normal patterns of living.

For example:

- If you have to cook supper, do it, and talk about what you're doing in your language. Talk about the various steps of the activity as you do them.



8. Use Audio and Video Recording

Recordings are useful to help the apprentice practice, and they create a record for the mentor as well.

Although the apprentice needs to hear the repetition many times, it is exhausting and sometimes frustrating for the mentor to repeat things over and over again. An audio or video recording is the perfect solution! The apprentice can take the recording away from the session and play it as many times as they like whenever they want to.

Recordings can be kept for the families of the mentor and apprentice and for the community to use as a language learning resource.

Recordings can be shared and used to teach others.

Recordings can be played back at any time. The apprentice can listen to recordings on a walk, in the car or at home.



9. Apprenticeship should be an Active Learner

The mentor is the language expert but they do not have to take charge of deciding what, how and when to teach. The apprentice should help guide their learning experience as much as possible.

The apprentice can choose what they would like to learn.

For example:

- The apprentice can tell the mentor what they would like to know or just ask questions and suggest activities.

The mentor-apprentice team should be a true partnership rather than the mentor “teaching” the apprentice language “lessons.”

By actively learning and taking responsibility for learning, the apprentice will remember more, enjoy the immersion language sessions more and get more out of the time spent with the mentor.

“My favourite things to do with my mentor is to help her wherever she needs. ... I like helping her clean in the language, do yard work and to cook. I like to do hands-on language lessons; that is what works best for me to learn language and I find when I am at home I do my own actions in the language while I am cleaning, doing yard work or cooking.”

— Danielle Saddleman, Nsyilxcan

10. Be Sensitive to Each Other's Needs and Feelings

Be aware of each other's feelings. Language learning can sometimes feel overwhelming for both the mentor and the apprentice. This is normal and it is important to give yourselves a break. Change the topic, do something fun, play a game or tell a joke!

The mentor is working hard to pass on the language by repeating things many times, slowing their speech and spending a considerable amount of time with the apprentice. The apprentice must keep this in mind and try to make things easier for the mentor whenever possible.

The apprentice is also working very hard to learn the language. It is not quick and easy. The mentor must be patient and kind to the apprentice even when learning is going very slowly and it seems like little progress is being made.

If you get discouraged, remember that you are doing the best you can. Each small step towards revitalizing a language is extremely valuable. The mentor and apprentice each have a unique relationship to their language that is influenced by their own life experiences. Speaking and learning language can bring up strong emotions related to past experiences. The Mentor-Apprentice Program can also create pathways for new positive experiences going forward.

"One of my favourite things about this year is that we are joking more in the language. I enjoy laughing with my mentor and teasing her in St'át'imcets."

— Lia Wilson, St'át'imcets

Immersion Language Sessions

The time your mentor-apprentice team spends together using only your First Nations language is what we call immersion language sessions. Each time you meet, we encourage you to immediately abandon English and carry out full immersion. This section provides some tips for making your time together successful.

Set a routine for your sessions together.

Each time you get together, follow a similar schedule so that both of you are prepared and know what to expect.

Greetings and routines. Start each session together with a regular routine of small talk in your language. Once the apprentice has learned the phrases needed for these activities, it will be a familiar and comfortable way to start each session without using any English.



L-R: Lia Wilson and Linda Redan, *Sí áłimcets*

Use greetings in your language, talk about the weather or make tea or coffee.

- **Plan the session.** Spend a little time at the beginning of every session talking about what you are going to learn that day. Discuss what kind of activity you are going to do and talk about what kinds of words and phrases you will need to learn to do that activity.
- **Start immersion.** Once you have decided what activities and conversation topics you are going to do that day, start the session using complete immersion. Use no English during this time, and if the apprentice gets stuck, they will have to use actions or ask questions in the language to get help.

For more information, see Chapter 4 of *How to Keep Your Language Alive* (Hinton 2002).

- **Take a short break if needed.** Discuss how the session is going. At this point the apprentice might ask questions about what they don't understand. But try to continue using the language as much as possible even during your breaks, such as by doing a familiar activity.

During your breaks, the apprentice can ask questions, make small talk, prepare a snack or have a cup of coffee.

- **Evaluate the session.** How did it go? At the end of your session, take a few minutes to discuss how it went and how you can improve your next session together. The apprentice can also ask questions about what they didn't understand.



Drum making. Photo by Winter Hawk Studios

Mentor-Apprentice Typical Session

What should a typical session look like? There is a basic roadmap to follow each time you meet. This sample session here is approximately 1.5 to 4 hours, depending on how much time you spend on each part.

Description	Example Activities	Time Est.
Greetings and small rituals	<p>In your language:</p> <p><i>Hello, how are you, how are you feeling today? Is your husband still sick?</i></p> <p><i>It is raining! Do you think it will rain tomorrow?</i></p> <p><i>Do you know what I did this morning?</i></p>	5-10 min
Planning for immersion sessions	<p>If you are more advanced, you should do this in your language. If not, you can use English for this part:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about what you are going to do today and how you will do it • Discuss words and phrases you want to learn • Make sure the mentor agrees with the plan 	5 min
Immersion set	<p>In your language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the activity you decided on • Do not use English! Use gestures, actions or your survival phrases to help you instead of resorting to English 	10-30 min
Debrief	<p>In English:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about the immersion session • Discuss things the apprentice could not understand • Talk about how to improve for next time 	5-10 min
Break (small ritual)	<p>In your language:</p> <p>Have coffee or tea & snacks — this will soon become a familiar part of your routine, and it will be easy to stay in the language.</p>	20 min

Description	Example Activities	Time Est.
Review	In your language: Repeat activity from before the break or review an activity you learned a previous time.	10-30 min
Unstructured Immersion	In your language: Spend time just talking or doing a fun activity like a game or reading a book. The apprentice can use the opportunity to use phrases they already know and ask how to say things they don't know.	10-30 min
Plan for next session	In English OR in your language (if possible): Talk about what you would like to do next time.	10 min
Farewells	In your language: <i>Thank you! Have a good day! See you tomorrow!</i>	5 min



L-R: Cecelia DeRose and Kristy Palmantier, Secwepemctsin

This chart is based on Chapter 4 in *How to Keep Your Language Alive* (Hinton 2002).



Tips for Immersion Language Sessions

Here are some tips and suggestions for conversation topics and activities you might want to try.

- Simple everyday activities are excellent for language learning.
- Use pictures to learn words and phrases.
- Practice words, phrases and conversation together as you do each activity. Get up out of your chair and get busy!
- Get a dollhouse so you can act out household activities while sitting at the table.
- Use learning strategies in addition to your planned outings and activities.



For example:

- Play act: put yourselves in pretend situations and use the language to act them out.
- Have immersion gatherings, such as a camp.
- Visit other speakers together.
- Think of situations you'd like to learn, such as storytelling or talking about the weather, then practice them. Don't just learn single words, because learning only words (numbers, colours, etc.) will not take you very far in speaking.
- Teach what you learn to someone else.

Remember: Repetition is needed. Apprentices need to hear, practice and say each word and phrase many times in many different situations to remember them.



L-R: Murphy Patrick and Jesse Fairley, Witsuwit'en

Chapters 5 through 10 of *How to Keep Your Language Alive* (Hinton 2002) contain lots of ideas for activities for the immersion language sessions. It's also a good idea to come up with your own ideas.

Play Games in Your Language

Playing games is a great way to have fun while learning and practicing useful phrases in the language. Find games that you both enjoy playing and work out all of the words and phrases you will need to play the game.

Playing a game is a great way to break up immersion sessions or help you stay in the language when you are stuck for conversation ideas. Here are some examples of games you may already know how to play.

Card Games	Dice Games	Other Games
Crazy 8s	Backgammon	Dominoes
Cribbage	Poker Dice	Charades
Hearts	Yahtzee	Pictionary
Gin Rummy		I Spy with My Little Eye...
Poker		Hang Man
Black Jack (Twenty-One)		Memory
High-Low		

Some sample games and how to play them are listed in **Appendix B**.



Evaluating Your Progress

It's important for the mentor and apprentice to evaluate the apprentice's progress. You should not think of evaluation as a "test" or something to get stressed out about. Rather, it's an opportunity to see how much the apprentice has learned and feel proud of the work that you've both done.

The First Peoples' Cultural Council has developed report forms for teams funded through our Mentor-Apprentice Program to help track their progress. Anyone is welcome to use these forms — please contact us at map@fpcc.ca.

Self-evaluation

There are several things the apprentice can do to evaluate their own progress. For example:

- **Keep a journal.** After each session, it helps to use a journal to keep detailed notes of the activities you've done and the things you've learned. It is OK to use English in your journal to remind yourself of meanings. Keeping track of your activities will be very useful when you want to go back to review what you've learned.
- **Keep track of your feelings about your language learning as well.** It may be frustrating at times, and it may seem to progress slowly in the beginning, but when you look back at your notes and impressions from earlier sessions, you will be amazed at how much you've learned.
- **Make recordings.** It can help to record the immersion language sessions. The apprentice can play the recordings later for practice, and much later, they will also be a helpful resource to review

how much progress has been made. Recordings can also be uploaded to a computer to make copies for other family members or the community.

"My nan is a great mentor. She reminded me at the end of multiple sessions that we are doing good work, not only for ourselves but for our entire nation. This feels really reassuring that the work is important."

— *ḥakał, nuučaañuł*



L-R: *Fidelia Haiyupis and ḥakał, nuučaañuł*

Apprentice Presentation of Learning

The apprentice presentation of learning is a fundamental part of the Mentor-Apprentice Program. After every 100 hours of work, the mentor-apprentice team and a panel of at least three fluent speakers of the language gather together so the apprentice can present what they've learned. The apprentice presentation of learning should be carried out completely in the language — **100% immersion**.

The panel of speakers does not work with the mentor-apprentice team on a day-to-day basis, but they do play a key role in the program by providing support, encouragement and an objective point of view in evaluating the apprentice's language learning progress every 100 hours.

Purpose of Apprentice Presentation Learning

The main purposes are as follows:

- Allow mentor-apprentice teams to check in with a community of speakers (panel) to show them what the apprentice has learned and get their feedback on their language fluency improvements.
- Involve speakers outside of the program to act as unbiased support and objectively evaluate the apprentice's language learning.
- Help nurture the apprentice's language learning by providing a safe place to hear and speak the language with a variety of speakers who will provide honest feedback.

- Make the work of the Mentor-Apprentice Program more meaningful and relevant by using the language in a natural setting that also involves the wider community.
- Provide an opportunity for the mentor-apprentice team to demonstrate and record the apprentice's improvements in language fluency.
- Build the apprentice's confidence in the language by providing an encouraging setting in which to speak and learn.

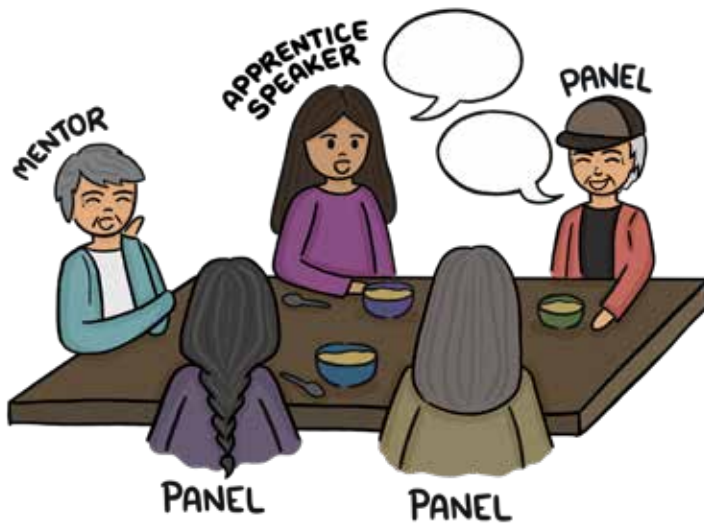


Jaskwaan Bedard, Xaayda Kil

"I have been immersing myself in language for the past three years. The most amazing thing about this year in particular is one-on-one opportunities IN PERSON, not online. Being in the same environment as fluent speakers, helping to create the space for them, has been paramount in my language learning journey."

— Dm Syl Haaytk Gyibaaw, Sm'algyax

Visual Model of the Apprentice Presentation of Learning



The environment and setting for the presentation should be as follows:

- Friendly and happy
- Comfortable, casual and relaxed
- Family-like between the panel of speakers, apprentice and mentor
- Learning experience for the apprentice using 100% immersion
- The apprentice presentation of learning is **not a test or classroom-like exam**. Make it a social event like lunch together, for example.

Roles of Panel Speakers and Mentor-Apprentice Team

Apprentice

- Decide what you will do to demonstrate your improved fluency at each stage of the program. Be creative and have fun!
- The presentation of learning can be done by speaking in the language about what you have learned, telling a story, making a speech, acting out a short story or skit, having a conversation with the panel, having the panel ask questions about the topic learned, etc.
- Try not to use notes during your presentation. Remember, the Mentor-Apprentice Program is about developing your ability to speak and understand your language and not just read from a set of prepared notes.
- Props and/or real life objects can be used to help demonstrate.
- Try not to rely on the mentor to help you. This is your time to show what you know.
- Use the valuable feedback and input from the panel of speakers and incorporate it into your next 100 hours of immersion work.

"There are no English words to describe how full and complete my heart and soul feel learning my language."

— Nita X^wús-x^wás-tinek, Nte?kepmxcín



L-R: Rosalie MacDonald and Brian Lacerte, Nedut'en

Mentor

- Help introduce and explain to the panel what the apprentice learned during the last 100 hours of the program, then let the apprentice do the rest by sharing what they have worked on in the language.
- Observe and listen to the apprentice as they show their improved language fluency.
- Provide moral support during the presentation and help with the demonstration, if needed.
- Allow the apprentice to do the speaking. Don't direct or lead the apprentice.
- Incorporate the panel's feedback into the next 100 hours of work with the apprentice.

Panel of Speakers

- Listen to the apprentice's demonstration.
- Ask questions in the language. Remember that the apprentice is learning the language, so use the language at an appropriate level.

- Evaluate how well the apprentice has met their language goals for the 100 hours and notice if the apprentice:
 - speaks with clarity and fluency
 - uses correct language pronunciation and forms
 - can comprehend the language
 - can communicate in the language
- Evaluations should be as friendly, non-threatening and as supportive as possible.
- Give hope, motivation, feedback, support, advice and encouragement.
- Look for improvements over the long term (every 100 hours and each year).
- Provide feedback on the apprentice's language learning and suggestions for improvements.
- **Avoid "testing" the apprentice's knowledge of the language.**

Although at first most apprentices are very nervous about the panel, it usually becomes something they look forward to.

For the mentor and apprentice who spend so much time together every week, it can be hard to see that the apprentice is making much progress. For the panel members, on the other hand, the difference they see after 100 hours of language learning can be quite significant.

The comments from the panel members are usually very positive and provide good feedback for the apprentice on their progress.

Challenges and Solutions

The Mentor-Apprentice Program is a successful way to create more speakers of First Nations languages. It is also fun and rewarding. However, mentor-apprentice teams often face some common challenges.

This section includes challenges faced by mentor-apprentice teams and some possible solutions based on their work and FPCC language program experience.

Challenge: Staying in the Language (Complete Immersion)

Possible Solutions



- Learn how to say these survival sentences (or something like them) in your language:
 - *I don't understand.*
 - *I forgot [how to say it].*
 - *Say it again.*
 - *Say it a different way.*
 - *Show me what you mean.*
 - *How do you say _____ in the language?*
 - *Please speak slower.*
- Learn words that allow you to express your frustration in your language. As Leanne Hinton suggests: *"It's OK to get mad at each other, so long as you get mad in your language!"*
- Gently remind each other (in the language) to *"please speak our language."* Or *"remember, we are to speak our language."*
- Plan immersion sessions in English **before** beginning. Have a good idea what you will talk about and what you expect to learn.

- Use short **time-outs** if necessary. If total immersion is becoming too challenging, take a quick break to rest and get ready for going back into total immersion.
- Draw a quick sketch of an idea or object that you'd like to learn how to say.
- Use non-verbal communication.

For example: point, gesture or use body language and facial expressions.

This section is based on Chapter 12 of *How to Keep Your Language Alive* (Hinton 2002), the experiences of past and current mentor-apprentice teams, and FPCC Language Program experience.



L-R: Tess Ned and Kecia Prevost, Halq'eméylem

Challenge: Getting Bored or Running Out of Ideas

Possible Solutions

- Review something that you learned a while ago. (This is where the journal comes in handy!)
- Invite another speaker into your session to liven things up.
- Remember that you are trying to make the language a part of your daily life, so if there is something you need to do (a chore or errand, for example) make it into a language activity.
- Find ways to play in the language and have fun!

For example:

- Do crafts (e.g., make hand puppets); play a game (e.g., UNO, Guess Who, What am I doing?); be active (e.g., act things out and guess what they are); look at pictures and books and talk about them.

- Use conversation cards. Randomly draw a conversation/ topic card and talk about it.
- “Read” wordless picture books. Talk about what’s going on in the pictures.
- Watch TV with the sound turned off and talk about what’s going on.
- Go for an outing or a walk and talk about everything you are seeing and doing.
- Learn a song or a story.

“I love using the language every day. It really fills my heart and spirit.”

— Kecia Prevost ta'ta, Halq'eméylem

Challenge: Not Enough Time for the Program

Possible Solutions

- Is the schedule not working? Sit down together and try to come up with a new one.
- Be flexible with the schedule but remember to put in the time. Apprentices say that they always see the difference in their learning when they put in the time required.
- Keep reminding yourself of the reward — speaking your language!

Challenge: Feeling Discouraged with Language Learning

Possible Solutions

- Keep in mind that learning a language is not quick and easy and remind yourself about how far you have come since you started.
- Develop some language routines that you do every day so that it becomes automatic, enjoyable and relaxing for you, such as serving coffee or talking about the weather.
- When learning challenging new language, give yourself a break and talk about stuff you know you are good at already.

Challenge: The Apprentice Doesn't Speak Much

Possible Solutions

- Have the courage to make mistakes. That's how you learn.
- Talk! Even if you're making lots of mistakes. Your mistakes will never get corrected if you don't make them. For example: Tell a story, describe a picture or have a conversation.

"My favourite things to do were to get out on the land and fish and trap. In order to keep my language going, I ask a lot of questions in my language and use my survival phrases A LOT!"

— Angela Hocken, Tse'khene

- Repeat the words and phrases you are learning after your mentor says them. Make that a habit.
- Change roles — instead of having the mentor do most of the talking, the apprentice should do and say more. The mentor can be there to guide you, provide corrections, help you say things and assist with pronunciation.
- Ask questions all the time in the language and use survival phrases.

Challenge: Apprentice reaches a Plateau in Their Language Learning

Sometimes language learners reach a certain level of fluency in the language and then find it difficult to go further and learn more. In other words, learners can get stuck in their comfort zone.

Possible Solutions

- Do something out of the ordinary.

For example:

- Pick a topic that you have never talked about or do an activity that you have never done together and try to talk about what you are doing.
- Try more complicated and longer language. Take what you know in the language and add to it. For example: Speak in longer sentences or tell a story in more detail than before.
- Learn to talk about what you are doing in the language.

For example:

- Don't just learn a song — learn to talk about the process of learning a song. Learn phrases such as *“let's learn a song,”* or *“the first part goes like this...,”* or *“repeat that part three times,”* or *“let's sing it again!”* etc.
- Work on storytelling using your own words. Reciting a story word-for-word shows memorization, not fluency. A real demonstration of fluency is to be able to tell a story using your own words. Stories may be short and simple at first, but with practice the apprentice will be able to tell more detailed and longer versions of stories.
- Measure your progress: spend some time planning what you want to learn and set a timeline. At the end of the time reflect and assess whether or not you have met your goals.
- Let the mentor know what you want to learn — NOT a detailed script, but a plan. This way the mentor can help you achieve your language goals.



Roxanne Dool with her family, Halq'eméylem

Conclusion

B.C.'s mentor-apprentice teams have shown that they can learn to speak their languages using the Mentor-Apprentice method. The teams that have experienced the best results are those that maintained their schedule of 10–15 hours per week of solid immersion hours. Many of the apprentices are now teaching others. This gives us great hope for the future of B.C.'s First Nations languages.

If you are planning to use the Mentor-Apprentice method yourself, please feel free to contact the First Peoples' Cultural Council if you have any questions, or if you have questions or comments related to this handbook. We wish you great success in your language-learning journey.

“MAP has been amazing in every which way possible... I received the language learning from Elders when I needed it the most. I really believe language has grounded me and has put me on a path that I never knew I was capable of.”

— Teqwotenot (Roxanne Dool), Halq'eméylem

References

- Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival (AICLS): www.aicls.org
- Daniels, Deanna and Hannah Amrhein. 2009. *Language and Culture Immersion Programs Handbook*. Brentwood Bay, B.C.: First Peoples' Heritage, Language & Culture Council.
- Daniels, Deanna and Hannah Amrhein. 2010. *Culture Camps for Language Learning: An Immersion Handbook*. Brentwood Bay, B.C.: First Peoples' Heritage, Language & Culture Council.
- First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC): www.fpcc.ca
- Hinton, Leanne. 2001. "The Master-Apprentice language learning program." *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice*. Ed. Leanne Hinton & Kenneth Hale. San Diego: Academic Press.
- Hinton, Leanne, Matt Vera, and Nancy Steele. 2002. *How to Keep Your Language Alive: A Commonsense Approach to One-On-One Language Learning*. Berkeley: Heyday Books.
- Illustrations created by Elena Sterritt, Gisghaast Graphic Recording: gisghaast.ca
- Poser, William J. (Compiler.) 2000. *Saik'uz Whut'en Hubughunek (Stoney Creek Carrier Lexicon)*. Vanderhoof, B.C.: Saik'uz First Nation.



Top L-R: A. Jean William, Kristy Palmantier; Bottom L-R: Chance Palmantier and Ryder Doerfling, Secwepemctsin

Appendix A: Sample Immersion Language Sessions

The following sample sessions can help give you ideas when you run out of your own things to talk about.

It's important not to just translate these examples from English into your language. The structure of First Nations languages is quite different from the structure of English, so if you start with English and translate into a First Nations language, chances are it won't sound correct or natural or make sense.

Instead, when you're looking for ideas, you should read through one of these idea pages and then put the handbook away and build the same idea in your own language from scratch, **rather than translating word-for-word from English.**

As an example, here is a short dialogue on food in the Dakelh (Carrier) language spoken in British Columbia. You would do the same in your own language using the ideas in these sections.



Reference: *Saik'uz Whut'en Hubughunek (Stoney Creek Carrier Lexicon)*. 2000. William J. Poser, Compiler. Vanderhoof, B.C.: *Saik'uz* First Nation.

Person A: Adi. Hoonust'i hoozainya.	Hello. I am glad you (one person) came.
Person B: Adi. Snachadindlih.	Hello. Thank you (for saying that).
A: Ndaningui ih? / Nye'ilt <u>s</u> 'ul ih?	Are you hungry?
B: A, sdaningui.	Yes, I am hungry.
A: Nye'oosyi.	I will feed you. (I am going to give you some food.)
A: Mai ka'nin <u>z</u> un ih?	Would you like some berries?
B: A mai ka'nus <u>z</u> un.	Yes, I will have berries.
B: Mai unzoo!	The berries taste good!
A: 'Uyoocha ka'nin <u>z</u> un ih?	Would you like some more?
B: 'Awet soousja. 'Unes <u>d</u> ai.	I've had enough. I am full; I have eaten to satisfaction.
B: 'Awet si natoosja.	I will go now.
A: Nanyoost'en si!	See you again!

Daily Conversation Sample Immersion Language Session

Simple everyday conversation is a great way to start each immersion language session.

Example conversation and phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT

Hello! Goodbye

Good morning / afternoon / evening.

How are you today?

I'm fine, and you?

How do you feel today?

I'm tired / well / happy /sad, etc.

Did you have a good sleep last night?

Yes, I did.

No, I didn't. I'm tired.

Oh, why? What happened?

What is this?

What is that?

What is this for?

What colour is this?

Where is the _____ ?

How do you say _____ ?

What is this called?

What are you doing?

Are you hungry? Did you eat?

Yes, I'm very hungry. No, I'm not hungry.

How was your day yesterday?

It was good!

I had a bad day.

Oh, why? What happened?

What's the weather like today?

The weather is good / bad today.

It's hot / cold / windy / warm /
rainy / snowy, etc.

It is a _____. This is a _____. It is a _____.

That is a _____.

It is for _____. It is _____.

This is called a _____.

Remember: Repetition is needed. Apprentices need to hear, practice and say phrases many times in many different situations to remember them.

Making Tea Sample Immersion Language Session

Simple everyday conversation is a great way to start each immersion language session. You can practice the phrases and conversation together as you make tea.

Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT	Example mini-conversations:
<p>Let's have tea. / We should have tea.</p> <p>Do you want some tea?</p> <p>Do you prefer tea or coffee? I will make tea.</p> <p>You will make tea.</p> <p>She/he or they will make tea.</p> <p>Boil the water.</p> <p>Plug in the kettle. / Turn on the stove.</p> <p>Pour the water on the teabag.</p> <p>Stir the tea.</p> <p>Pour the tea.</p> <p>It's too hot.</p> <p>It's too cold.</p>	<p>Do you want some tea?</p> <p>Yes, I do want some tea / coffee. No, I don't want any tea / coffee.</p> <p>Do you prefer tea or coffee?</p> <p>I like tea. Tea is more suitable for me/for my heart.</p> <p>I like coffee.</p> <p>Do you like sugar in your tea?</p> <p>Yes, I do.</p> <p>No, I don't.</p> <p>What is this? What is that?</p> <p>This is a _____. That is a _____. It's a spoon.</p> <p>It's a cup.</p> <p>It's a kettle.</p>



About Me Sample Immersion Language Session

Everyday conversation about yourself is excellent for language learning.

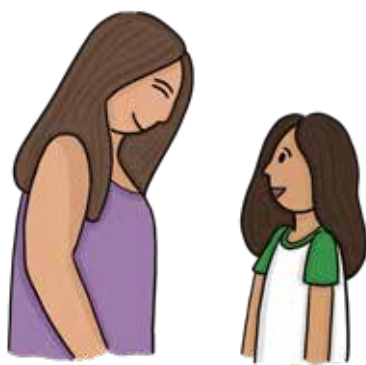
Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT	Example mini-conversations:
<p>My name is _____.</p> <p>My mother's name is _____.</p> <p>My father's name is _____.</p> <p>My grandmothers' names are _____.</p> <p>My grandfathers' names are _____.</p> <p>My mother's family is from _____.</p> <p>My father's family is from _____.</p> <p>I am from _____.</p> <p>I have _____ brothers and _____ sisters.</p> <p>My husband's / wife's name is _____.</p> <p>I have _____ children.</p> <p>My oldest child is _____ years old.</p> <p>My youngest child is _____ years old.</p> <p>I am _____ years old.</p> <p>I work at _____.</p> <p>I live in _____.</p> <p>In my spare time I like to _____.</p>	<p>What's your name?</p> <p>My name is _____.</p> <p>Who are your parents?</p> <p>My father's name is _____. My mother's name is _____.</p> <p>Are you married?</p> <p>Yes, I am.</p> <p>No, I'm not. I'm single. / I'm divorced.</p> <p>Do you have any children?</p> <p>Yes, I have _____ children.</p> <p>No, I don't have any children.</p> <p>How old are your children?</p> <p>My oldest child is _____ years old.</p> <p>My youngest child is _____ years old.</p> <p>Where do you work?</p> <p>I work at _____.</p> <p>I work at home.</p> <p>I don't work.</p> <p>Where do you live?</p> <p>I live in _____.</p>



Body Sample Immersion Language Session

It's important to be able to describe yourself and others.

You can practice telling each other to do these simple actions.	Talk about what you look like:
<p>Touch your nose / ear / foot. Smile. Stick out your tongue. Raise your eyebrows. Close / open your eyes. Close / open your mouth. Raise your hand. Turn your head. Stretch your legs / arms. Turn around. Stand up. Sit down. Cross your arms / legs. Lift your right / left arm.</p>	<p>What colour is your hair? My hair is brown / grey / red / blonde, etc.</p> <p>How long is your hair? My hair is very short. My hair is long. My hair is medium-length.</p> <p>How tall are you? I am _____ tall.</p> <p>Talk about your family and friends: What does your husband / wife look like? What does your child look like? She has _____ hair. He is _____ tall. They are tall/short.</p>



Health/Sickness Sample Immersion Language Session

It's important to be able to talk about how you are feeling and your health.

Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT	Talk about how you are feeling:
<p>I have a headache.</p> <p>My throat is sore.</p> <p>I have a cold / fever / cough / stomach ache / toothache.</p> <p>My chest hurts.</p> <p>My neck / back is sore.</p> <p>I have a bruise / cut.</p> <p>It is painful.</p> <p>I am taking some medicine.</p> <p>I need medicine.</p> <p>I am unhealthy / healthy.</p> <p>I feel well / unwell.</p> <p>My body hurts.</p> <p>I need to get more exercise.</p> <p>I feel great!</p>	<p>How are you feeling today?</p> <p>I'm great!</p> <p>I'm not feeling well.</p> <p>I feel sick.</p> <p>I think I am getting a cold.</p> <p>Talk about how your family is feeling:</p> <p>How is your family?</p> <p>_____ is not feeling well today.</p> <p>My daughter / son has a stomach ache.</p> <p>My mother / father has high blood pressure.</p> <p>My wife / husband has the flu.</p> <p>They are vomiting.</p> <p>I feel good now, but last week I was sick.</p>



Clothing Sample Immersion Language Session

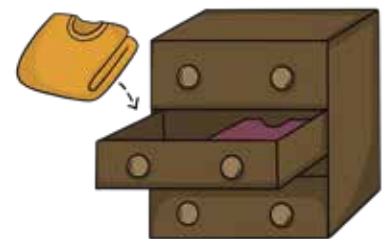
Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT:	Talk about what you are wearing:
<p>Get dressed. Put on your shoes. Take off your shoes. Tie your shoes. Untie your shoes. Unzip your jacket. Zip up your jacket. This is my favourite shirt. My socks match. My shirt is too big / too small. I'm cold. I'm hot.</p>	<p>I have a _____.</p> <p>I'm wearing a sweater / jacket / shirt / jeans / socks / shoes, etc.</p> <p>Talk about what colour your clothing is: My shirt is red / blue / brown / white / pink / green / yellow / black / orange, etc. My shoes are brown / black / white, etc.</p> <p>Talk about parts of your clothing: My sweater has a hood / zipper / buttons / snaps / pockets, etc. My boots have laces / heels, etc. My sandals have buckles / velcro / straps, etc.</p> <p>Talk about hot/cold weather and what you are wearing: It's hot today. I am wearing shorts. It's cold. I need a warm sweater. I'm wearing a big jacket.</p>



Doing Laundry Sample Immersion Language Session

Do laundry together as you talk about it. Note: this may be advanced for beginners; you may need basic vocabulary first.

Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT:	Talk about doing laundry:
<p>Dirty clothes Clean clothes Put the laundry in the basket. Empty the pockets. Fill up the washing machine. Put the clothes in the washing machine. Separate the light and dark clothes. Measure laundry soap. Pour laundry soap. Turn on the washing machine. Put the clothes in the dryer. Turn on the dryer. Shake out the clothes. Hang up the clothes. Iron the clothes.</p>	<p>How often do you do laundry? I do laundry every day. I do laundry once a week.</p> <p>Talk about measuring and pouring laundry soap: How much laundry soap do you need?</p> <p>Talk about drying the clothes: Do you hang your laundry to dry? Do you use a dryer? How long does the dryer take?</p> <p>Talk about hanging, folding and ironing the clothes.</p> <p>Talk about different clothing and laundry: Sweater / jacket / shirt / T-shirt / pants / socks / shorts / skirt / dress / towel / sheet / pillowcases / blanket, etc.</p>



Living Room Sample Immersion Language Session

Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT:	Example conversation:
<p>This chair is comfortable / uncomfortable. This is a good chair for reading. The coffee table is big / small. The lamp is bright / dim. What's your favourite TV show? I like to watch Turn the TV on / off. Is that this week's newspaper? Do you like this magazine? The shelves are dusty. The carpet was vacuumed. Don't trip on the rug. Open / close the curtains / window. Turn the stereo on / off.</p>	<p>Person A: Please sit down. Would you like something to drink? Person B: Yes, please. I would like tea. A: You can sit here. B: OK, thank you. This is really comfortable. That is a nice couch. A: It is new. It is very comfortable, too. B: It is getting dark. A: I will turn on the light. Do you want to watch TV? B: No, I watch too much TV. A: Can we listen to music instead? B: Yes, what kind of music do you like? A: I like rock / country / classical / traditional music. B: I'm cold. Can I have a blanket? A: Sure, my grandma made this one. B: Thank you.</p>



Bedroom Sample Immersion Language Session

Simple everyday routines and activities around the house are excellent for language learning.

Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT:	Talk about your bedroom:
<p>Make the bed. Fold the blanket. Fluff the pillow. Fold the clothes. Put the clothes away. Open / close the closet. The dresser is open / closed. I'm tired. I woke up early this morning. I went to bed late last night. I did not sleep well last night. Turn on / off the lamp. Open / close the window. Open / close the curtain.</p>	<p>I sleep in a big / double / queen-sized / king-sized bed. I use _____ blankets. I only use one blanket. I like lots of pillows. I only use one pillow. My mattress is firm / soft / medium, etc. My bed is comfortable. There is a window in my bedroom / near my bed across from my bed. I have a small / big closet.</p> <p>Talk about your bedtime routines: I like to stay up late. / I usually go to bed early. I watch TV / read before I go to sleep.</p> <p>Talk about your morning routines: I wake up early / late. I drink coffee in bed before I get up. I get up before / after my kids.</p>



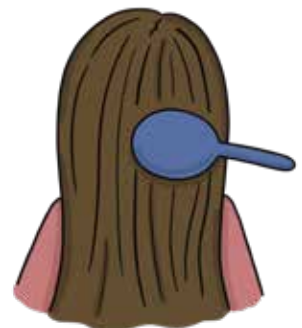
Kitchen Sample Immersion Language Session

Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT:	Example conversation:
<p>Time to make supper!</p> <p>Shall I set the table?</p> <p>Wipe the table first.</p> <p>The vegetables are in the fridge.</p> <p>The stove is hot! Don't burn yourself!</p> <p>Can you pass me a spoon / fork / knife?</p> <p>Too many cooks in the kitchen!</p> <p>Dinner's ready! Let's eat!</p> <p>Can you say the prayer?</p> <p>The kitchen is a mess.</p> <p>We have to wash the dishes.</p> <p>Put the dirty dishes in the sink.</p> <p>You wash and I'll dry.</p>	<p>Person A: I love to cook.</p> <p>Person B: Let's start cooking.</p> <p>A: What should we have?</p> <p>B: I feel like fish today.</p> <p>A: Great! I love to eat fish.</p> <p>B: Should we bake it, fry it or boil it?</p> <p>A: Let's make soup with it. What else should we put in?</p> <p>B: Onions, potatoes and celery.</p> <p>A: Sounds good. Can you cut up the vegetables?</p> <p>B: Yes, but I need a knife.</p> <p>A: They are in this drawer.</p> <p>B: This knife is not sharp. I will use that one instead.</p> <p>A: I will boil the water.</p> <p>B: How long does the soup take to cook?</p> <p>A: One hour.</p> <p>B: Good, I'm hungry.</p>



Bathroom Sample Immersion Language Session

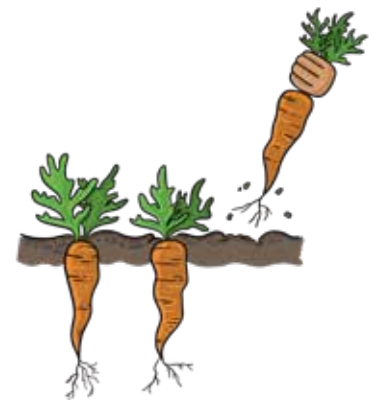
Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT:	Example mini-conversation:
<p>Where is the bathroom? I have to go to the bathroom. Your hands are so dirty. Wash your hands! My hands are clean. I like to shower every day. Do you like to shower or bath? Brush your teeth! That is too much toothpaste. Here's a tissue for your nose. We need more toilet paper. It's all gone. Comb your hair before bed. The medicine is in the bathroom cabinet. Flush the toilet. I need to clean the bathroom. There is hair in the sink. It's plugged. There is water on the floor. I like a hot bath. I like a cold shower. I like to sing in the shower.</p>	<p>Person A: Can I use your bathroom? Person B: Sure. It's down the hall. Conversation to practice with little kids: Person A: Time for your bath! Person B: Yay! Bath time! A: Do you want bubbles? B: Yes, please, bubbles are fun. A: Here are your bath toys. B: Give me the red boat. A: Try not to splash so much. B: Splashing is fun! A: Here is the soap. Remember to wash your toes. B: That tickles! A: I need to wash your hair now. B: No, I don't like it. Don't get soap in my eyes. A: Don't worry, I'll be careful. Keep them closed. B: I'm done. A: Time to come out then. I'll dry you off. B: I want the blue towel.</p>



Yard / Garden Sample Immersion Language Session

Go out into the yard and practice the words, phrases and conversation together.

Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT:	Example mini-conversations:
<p>Water the plants. Pull the weeds. Rake the grass. Move the rocks. Carry / stack / lift / chop the wood. The wood is heavy. Cut the branches. Dig a hole. Tie the plant up. Cut the flowers. Pick the vegetables / tomatoes / peas / zucchini / raspberries / blackberries / strawberries, etc. Pull the onions / carrots / beets / potatoes, etc. There is a robin / eagle / hawk / hummingbird / butterfly, etc. There are yellow / red / orange / pink / purple / blue flowers.</p>	<p>What kinds of bugs are there? There are ladybugs / mosquitoes / spiders / flies, etc.</p> <p>What kinds of trees are there? There are cedar / pine / hemlock / birch / alder / spruce / fir / maple, etc.</p> <p>Talk about your garden: The soil is dry. It needs water. Let's water the garden. The soil is wet. It doesn't need water. Let's feed the birds. Let's pull the weeds. The plants are growing fast. The zucchini is big. The sunflower is tall. The peas are sweet and delicious.</p> <p>Name all the things you see: Types of birds / animals / types of trees / rocks / types of plants / types of flowers, etc.</p>



Working Sample Immersion Language Session

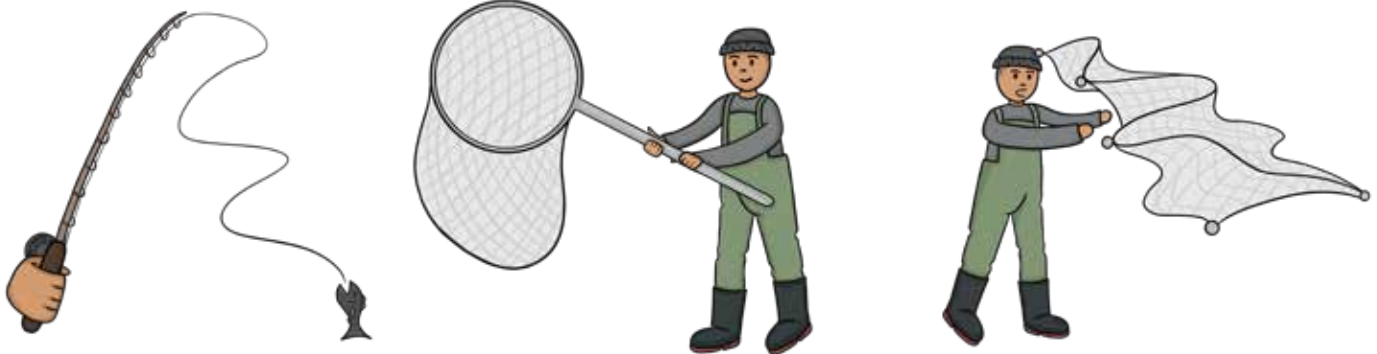
Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT:	Example conversation (somewhat advanced):
<p>I'm late for work. I have to go to work now. I work hard. My son has a good job. Mary is my boss. She's a good boss. I have to go to work early. I worked overtime today. It's time for a coffee break. When do we get paid? When are your holidays? I have lots of friends at work. I have to look for a new job. I have been working since I was 16. I just got a raise. What time do you work? What time do you finish work? Do you have to wear special clothes for work? What time is your lunch break? What's your favourite part of work? Time to go home!</p>	<p>Person A: Where do you work? Person B: I teach at the school. A: What do you teach? B: I teach our language. The children learn quickly. A: How old are the children? B: Ages five to ten. It's a small school. A: That sounds like a fun job. B: It is. Where do you work? A: I work at the band office. B: What do you do there? A: I answer the phone. I work on the computer. B: Have you been there long? A: Yes, two years. / No, only for a month. B: Are there many people working there? A: Yes, it's very busy. B: Do you like your job? A: Yes, I like my job. / No, I don't like my job. B: Do you have good benefits? A: Yes, there is a good pension plan.</p>



Fish Sample Immersion Language Session

Go fishing, cut fish, dry / smoke fish and practice the words, phrases and conversation together.

Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT:	Example mini-conversations:
<p>Go fishing. Catch fish. Fishing net / drift net. Fix the fish net. Pull the line. Tie a knot. Drop the hook. Ride in a boat. Paddle a canoe. Follow the current. Wear a life jacket. Anchor the boat. Cut fish. Cut the fish head / tail fin / gill. Chinook / Sockeye / Coho / Chum / Pink / Steelhead Salmon. Eat the fish / fish eggs / dried fish / dried fish eggs / smoked fish. It's spawning season.</p>	<p>Do you like fishing? Yes, let's go fishing. No, I don't. I feel seasick on the water.</p> <p>How many fish did you catch? I caught _____ fish.</p> <p>Talk about cutting and drying the fish: Let's cut the fish. Let's dry the fish. Cut the salmon thinly. Hang it up like this.</p> <p>Talk about fishing in the past: Did you go fishing when you were a child? Yes, I did. Tell me about it. I used to go with my dad / uncle. No, I didn't.</p>



Go for a Drive Sample Immersion Language Session

Go for a drive and practice the phrases and conversation together.

Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT:	Example mini-conversations:
<p>Put your seatbelt on. Start the car. Drive this way. Go faster. Slow down. Push the brake. Step on the gas. Look out the window. Look at that! Open the door. Close the door. Roll down the window. Roll up the window. Turn on the radio. Turn up the volume. Turn down the volume.</p>	<p>Where do you want to go? Let's go to the beach / to the store / sightseeing, etc. What shall we do there? Let's walk on the beach / see the river, etc.</p> <p>Talk about what you see: There is a mountain / river / rock / curve / big tree / deer, etc.</p> <p>Name all the things you see: Road signs / cars / birds / animals / trees, etc.</p> <p>Make small talk: How long have you been driving? Who taught you how to drive? What have you been doing lately? What do you think about?</p>



Go for a Walk Sample Immersion Language Session

Go for a walk and practice the phrases and conversation together.

Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT:	Example mini-conversations:
<p>Let's take a walk. Take a long walk. Take a short walk. Put your jacket on. It's cold out. It's hot out. Put your shoes on. Let's walk more slowly. Let's take a break. Walk uphill / downhill. Evening / morning walk.</p>	<p>Let's go for a walk! Where do you want to go? Let's go to the beach / to the store / down the road, etc. What shall we do there? Let's walk on the beach / see the river, etc.</p> <p>Talk about what you see and traditional place names: There is a mountain / river / rock / curve / big tree / deer, etc.</p> <p>Name all the things you see: Cars / types of birds / animals / types of trees / rocks / types of plants / types of flowers / houses / people, etc.</p> <p>Make small talk: What have you been doing lately? What do you think about when you walk? What is your favourite place to walk?</p>



Games and Hobbies Sample Immersion Language Session

Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT:	Example conversations:
<p>I like to play baseball / soccer / hockey, etc.</p> <p>I like to watch sports.</p> <p>I like to cheer for my team.</p> <p>Let's go to bingo.</p> <p>It's my lucky day.</p> <p>I have a red dauber.</p> <p>How many daubers do you have?</p> <p>Under the B-9.</p> <p>What do you do for fun?</p> <p>I like to knit / crochet / sew / do embroidery.</p> <p>Do you play cards?</p> <p>What is your favourite card game?</p> <p>I like to play rummy / poker, etc.</p> <p>Deal the cards.</p> <p>Your turn to deal.</p> <p>Shuffle the deck well.</p> <p>Diamonds / hearts / clubs / spades / ace / king / queen / jack.</p> <p>I'm lucky at cards.</p> <p>I always win / lose.</p>	<p>Person A: Do you play any sports?</p> <p>Person B: Yes, I'm on a baseball team.</p> <p>A: Are you any good?</p> <p>B: Sometimes we win; sometimes we lose.</p> <p>A: What position do you play?</p> <p>B: I pitch / throw the ball.</p> <p>A: I'm a good catcher. I would like to join your team.</p> <p>B: Sure, you can do that.</p> <p>Person A: Where did you get that dress?</p> <p>Person B: I made it. I love to sew. My mom taught me.</p> <p>A: You can sew well. The dress is beautiful.</p> <p>B: I can sew something for you.</p> <p>A: Yes, I would love to have a new skirt.</p> <p>B: OK, what colour would you like?</p> <p>A: I would like purple.</p> <p>B: What size are you.</p> <p>A: I wear a size 12.</p> <p>B: OK, I will make that for you.</p> <p>A: Thank you so much!</p>



Shopping Sample Immersion Language Session

Phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT:	Example conversations:
<p>We need groceries!</p> <p>I need to make a shopping list.</p> <p>We have no milk!</p> <p>I am going to the grocery store.</p> <p>Can you give me a ride to the store?</p> <p>Bring your own shopping bag.</p> <p>I need to get money before we go shopping.</p> <p>I need to buy milk, eggs, bread and apples.</p> <p>I love to buy cookies!</p> <p>Where is the laundry soap?</p> <p>The lettuce looks fresh.</p> <p>The pears look unripe.</p> <p>The plums are too ripe.</p> <p>The meat is too expensive.</p> <p>There's a sale on blueberries. They are cheap!</p> <p>How much does this cost?</p> <p>There's a long line! I don't like to wait.</p> <p>I just came back from the grocery store.</p> <p>I bought lots of food.</p> <p>Now I can cook supper.</p>	<p>Person A: I need to go shopping for groceries. Do you want to come with me?</p> <p>Person B: Yes, I need milk, so I will come, too.</p> <p>A: Great! Let's go.</p> <p>B: There is the grocery store. Let's go in.</p> <p>A: Do you want a cart?</p> <p>B: Yes, I will take a cart. / No, I don't need one. I will take a basket.</p> <p>A: Do you need bananas? There's a sale.</p> <p>B: How much do they cost?</p> <p>A: Two for the price of one.</p> <p>B: Sure, I'll take some.</p> <p>A: I need strawberries.</p> <p>B: Here's the milk!</p> <p>A: Get some for me, too. Make sure you check the date. I want fresh milk.</p> <p>B: Let's go pay. The line is shorter here.</p> <p>A: It costs a lot of money!</p> <p>B: OK, let's take the bags to the car.</p> <p>A: Put them in the trunk.</p> <p>B: Let's go make supper.</p>

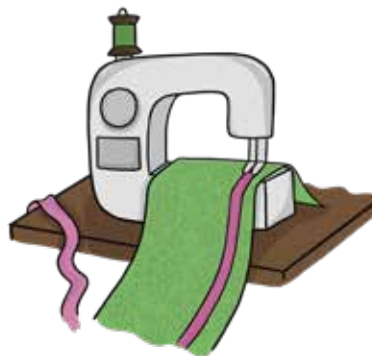


Arts and Crafts Sample Immersion Language Session

Learners can express themselves through creating crafts and art in their First Nations language. The step-by-step process of learning skills and actions in the First Nations language is extremely valuable for language learning.

Teach each other to do arts and crafts projects. As you create projects, talk to each other about what you are doing and use only your language.

Phrases and words to learn, practice and REPEAT:	Example projects:
<p>Cut the cloth / thread, etc. Sew the cloth / edge, etc. Pull / push the needle, etc. Tie the thread / wool / knot, etc. Pull / hold it tight. It's too loose.</p> <p>loop through open close even uneven</p>	<p>Example mini-conversations:</p> <p>Which colour do you want to use? I like this colour. I need red / black / blue / yellow / orange / green / purple, etc.</p> <p>How big should it be? It should be much smaller / bigger.</p> <p>How many do you want? I want _____ .</p>



Traditional Activities Sample Immersion Language Session

Many more language sessions could be based on doing traditional activities together, such as fishing, hunting and picking berries.

Words and phrases to learn, practice and REPEAT:

Let's go _____.
Who should we invite to come?
Where should we go?
What do we need to bring?
Are you ready?
OK, let's go!
Which way are we going?
Hey, I found a _____.
Hey, I see a _____.
Stop, let's _____.
Do you want to _____?
Let's go home.
We had a good time.
We were lucky.

For each traditional activity, you can create lots of conversations based on the specific details of the activity.

For example, if you go berry-picking you can talk about:

- names of all the berries
- uses of different berries
- where to find different berries
- ways to prepare berries

If you learn to tan a hide in the language you can talk about:

- names of all the tools for the process
- different action words used (i.e., shaving the fur, scraping the skin, pulling the hide tight)
- how long each part of the process takes
- what to use the hide for when it is ready

If you plan to attend a feast you can talk about:

- everything you will see on the way to the feast
- who will be at the feast
- kinds of food that will be served at the feast
- prayers that will be said



Appendix B: Sample Games

Play UNO in Your Language

Do you know these words and phrases? If not, learn them together.

Numbers:	The Four UNO Colours:
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0	red yellow green blue

Some Useful verbs:	Grammar:
<p>to gamble, to play cards to shuffle (cards), to deal to discard to win, in gambling to pick up / to draw a card / to skip to reverse</p>	<p>Be able to give commands such as “deal,” etc., and learn to use past, present and future, such as “I’ll deal,” or “You won!,” etc.</p>

Uno Instructions

- Use a special UNO deck of cards.
- Deal each player seven cards and place the remaining cards face down in the middle of the table. This is the draw pile.
- Turn the top card of the draw pile over to form the discard pile.
- Take turns beginning with the player to the dealer’s left and go clockwise around the table.
- Place one of your cards on the discard pile when it’s your turn. Your card must have the same number, colour or wording as the top card of the discard pile — or be a wild card. **YOU MUST SAY SOMETHING EVERYTIME YOU LAY A CARD**, such as the number and colour of the card: “I’m playing/setting down a red seven!” This is excellent practice and repetition.
- If you cannot play a card, draw another card from the draw pile. Play the drawn card if you can.

This outline was developed by Leanne Hinton and the Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival and adapted by FPCC for use in B.C.



- If you can't, it's the next person's turn.
- You can play a wild card any time it's your turn and can name any colour you wish. Announce the UNO colour of your choice when you place a wild card on the discard pile: "I want blue. / I'm changing this to blue."
- Announce a colour when you place a Draw Two card on the discard pile.
- Follow the directions of a word card that is played on the discard pile by the player before you.
- This may mean that you have to draw two cards, skip a turn or even draw four cards.
- Say "UNO," which means "1," when you have one card left in your hand. If you forget to say "UNO" and another player catches you, you must draw two cards and keep playing.
- The winner is the player who lays down all of their cards first.

"For my mentor and I, our favourite language learning activities are anything that involves laughter. Thank goodness we can laugh at each other, and thank goodness I can laugh at myself. Playing card games and dramatically reading children's stories became our favourite activities to do together."

— ikawegi'lakw Deanna Nicolson (Apprentice) and k'ix̱ s̱is̱ las Gloria Nicolson (Mentor), Kwak'waka



Play Go Fish in Your Language

Do you know these words and phrases? If not, learn them together.

Numbers:	Card Ranks
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	Jack Queen King Ace

Some Useful Verbs:

to gamble

to play cards

to shuffle (cards)

to deal

to discard

to win

to pick up / to draw a card a pair (of cards)

four of a kind / go again

my / your turn

Do you have a ____?

Yes, I do.

No, I don't.

Go fish!

- If the player you ask has any cards of the requested rank, they must give all of their cards of that rank to you. In the example, Barb would have to give you all of her 9s.
- If you get one or more cards from the player you ask, you get another turn. You may ask any player for any rank you already hold, including the same one you just asked for.
- If the person you ask has no relevant cards, they say, "go fish." You then draw the top card from the draw pile.
- If you happen to draw a card of the rank asked for, show it to the other players and you get another turn. However, if you draw a card that's not the rank you asked for, it becomes the next player's turn. You keep the drawn card, whatever rank it is.
- When you collect a set of four cards of the same rank, immediately show the set to the other players and place the four cards face down in front of you.
- Go Fish continues either until someone has no cards left in their hand or the draw pile runs out. The winner is the player who then has the most sets of four.

Go Fish Instructions

- Use a standard 52-card deck.
- The dealer deals 5 cards to each player (7 each if only 2 players). All remaining cards are placed face down in the centre to make a draw pile.
- The player to the dealer's left starts.
- On your turn, ask another player for a specific card rank. For example: "Barb, do you have a 9?" You must already hold at least one card of the requested rank.



For more information please contact:

The First Peoples' Cultural Council (FPCC)

Located in the village of W̱JŌŁŁŁP,
Brentwood Bay, B.C.

Phone: **250-652-5952**

Fax: **250-652-5953**

Email: **info@fpcc.ca**

www.fpcc.ca



FIRST PEOPLES'
CULTURAL COUNCIL