

# WALKING TOGETHER

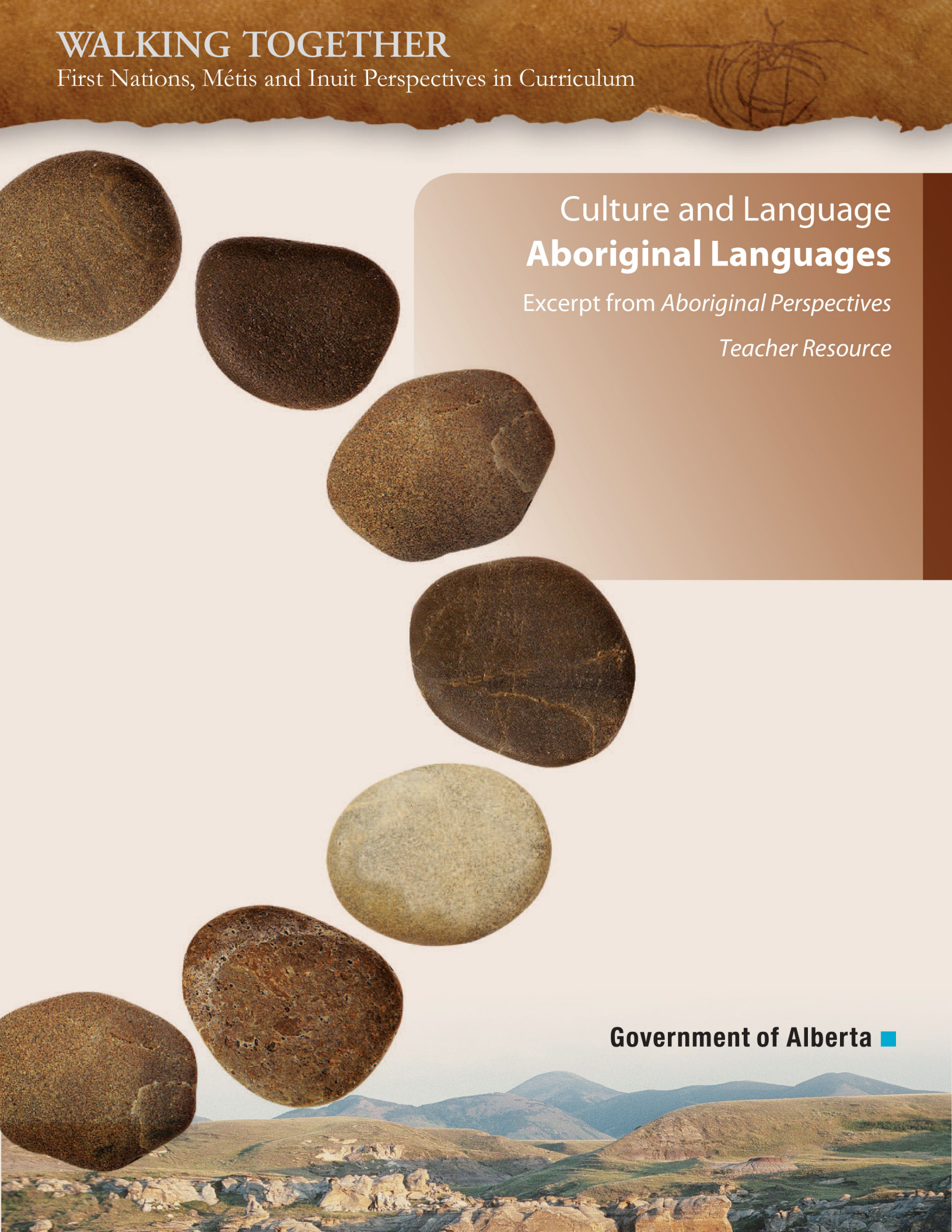
First Nations, Métis and Inuit Perspectives in Curriculum

## Culture and Language **Aboriginal Languages**

Excerpt from *Aboriginal Perspectives*

*Teacher Resource*

Government of Alberta ■





## **ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES**

Excerpt from *Aboriginal Perspectives Teacher Resource*

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### **ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE VOCABULARY USED IN ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVES**

One of the keys to a culture's survival is the preservation of its language. Only through the language of a culture can the deeper concepts, understandings of the heart, and spirituality be truly expressed.

Vocabulary from many Aboriginal languages is used in *Aboriginal Perspectives*. It is important to try to give students a good approximation of how each word is pronounced. Some schools may be able to access speakers of an Aboriginal language; that, of course, is the ideal way to present the language. Another source for hearing examples of spoken languages is the Internet. Many sites offer sound files of fluent speakers. A number of such sites will be listed below.

Words and phrases present in the textbook are listed here, under each specific language, in the order in which they appear in the text, along with the page number on which each word or expression is located.

A brief description of pronunciation guidelines is provided below for some languages. Use these guidelines to practice speaking the vocabulary before you present it to students.

### **BLACKFOOT**

#### **Pronunciation Key**

This pronunciation key is based on one prepared for the Blackfoot language courses developed by Duval House Publishing in conjunction with the Kainai First Nation. The sounds are described in terms of English sounds. Remember that Blackfoot is its own language; the English sounds are only an approximation of true Blackfoot sounds.

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This excerpt on Aboriginal languages ©Nelson Education Ltd. *Aboriginal Perspectives Teacher Resource*, Toronto, ON, 2004, pp. 489–499.



### Vowels and Vowel Combinations

a	sounds like <i>a</i> in <i>father</i>	<i>apinakosi</i>	tomorrow
aa	a dragged <i>a</i> sound	<i>Aakitapoowa.</i>	He/She will go there.
i	sounds like <i>i</i> in <i>it</i>	<i>Nitaakitapoo.</i>	I will go there.
ii	sounds like long <i>e</i>	<i>niistowa</i>	me
o	sounds like <i>o</i> in <i>look</i>	<i>pokon</i>	ball
oo	o dragged <i>o</i> sound	<i>Aakitapoowa.</i>	He/She will go there.
oii	sounds like <i>we</i>	<i>nohkoiikso</i>	my sons
ai	sounds like <i>a</i> in <i>apple</i>	<i>Aisimiwa.</i>	He/She drinks.
aai	sounds like <i>a</i> in <i>lake</i>	<i>naiikopoto</i>	sixteen
ao	sounds similar to <i>ow</i> in <i>arrow</i>	<i>Aotahkoiinamma.</i>	It is orange./It is an orange.
aoo	a prolonged <i>oo</i>	<i>Aooyiwa.</i>	He/She eats.

### Consonants

*m, n, s, w,* and *y* have the usual English sound.

*k, p,* and *t* are unaspirated (clipped, with no use of the voicebox and no puff of air)

*k* as in *skin*

*p* as in *spin*

*t* as in *stop*

### Double consonants

<i>nn</i>	prolonged sound	<i>ninna</i>	my father
<i>ss</i>	prolonged sound	<i>lsspommookit.</i>	Help me.
<i>mm</i>	prolonged sound	<i>lssammis.</i>	Look at him/her.
<i>kk</i>	glottal stop	<i>ksikksinattsi</i>	white
<i>pp</i>	stop	<i>kiipippo</i>	100
<i>tt</i>	glottal stop	<i>siksinattsi</i>	black

A glottal stop is a break in the flow of the word in which all sound stops for a moment.

ks	<i>x</i> sound before consonant	<i>Aikskimaa.</i>	He/She is hunting.
ts	<i>ts</i> sound before consonant	<i>Nitssapi ...</i>	I looked . . .
ps	<i>ps</i> sound before consonant	<i>Aipstomaahkaa.</i>	He/She comes in.

### Consonant combination before another consonant

kssa	<i>Nitaakssammawa.</i>	I will look at him/her.
tssa	<i>Kitssaaki.</i>	You washed dishes.
pssa	<i>kitaaka' pssammawa.</i>	You will look for him/her.

### Glottal Stop

A glottal stop is indicated by an apostrophe (').

*ni' sa*

*Aii' poyiwa.*



**Gutteral Fricative**

There is a different sound when *oo, o, aa, a, ii,* and *i* precede an *h*.

<i>ooh</i>	prolonged sound	<i>koohkatsi</i>	your foot
<i>oh</i>	sounded very quickly	<i>Nohowa.</i>	He is my son.
<i>aah</i>	prolonged sound	<i>Saahkomaapiiwa.</i>	He is a boy.
<i>ah</i>	sounded very quickly	<i>Omahkinaawa.</i>	He is an old man.
<i>iih</i>	prolonged sound	<i>piihkssso</i>	nine
<i>ih</i>	sounded very quickly	<i>Ainihkiwa.</i>	He/She sings.

**Voiced and Voiceless Syllables**

The syllable *wa* at the end of most words is barely audible. It is pronounced but not heard (voiceless).

<i>Aooyiwa.</i>	He/She eats.
<i>Aiyimmiwa.</i>	He/She laughs.
<i>Siksinattsiwa.</i>	It is black.

In names and questions, *wa* is voiced.

Name:	<i>Mamiwa aakao' toowa.</i>	Fish is here.
	<i>wa</i> in <i>Mamiwa</i> is voiced.	
	<i>wa</i> in <i>aakao' toowa</i> is voiceless.	
Question:	<i>Aisimiwa naa Tsaan?</i>	Is John drinking?
	<i>wa</i> in <i>Aisimiwa</i> is voiced.	

**Difficult Sounds**

<i>Tsi</i>	as in <i>Tsimaa?</i>	Where?
<i>Ts</i>	as in <i>Aissksinima' tstohkiwa.</i>	He/She is a teacher.
<i>tss</i>	as in <i>ootsskoiinattsi</i>	blue
<i>ksi</i>	as in <i>omiksi</i>	those
<i>ks</i>	as in <i>aikskimaa</i>	hunter
<i>kss</i>	as in <i>Aokssksinima' tstohkiwa.</i>	He/She is taught in a bad way.

**BLACKFOOT WORDS APPEARING IN THE TEXT**

**Page Words Appearing in the Text**

viii – ix		Aboriginal names
ix	oki	hello
17		names of the months
18	iiní	buffalo
	Akóka' tssin	the time of all people camping together
	pisskan	buffalo jump
	Aamskaapipikani	South Piikani
24	Niitsítapi	Real People, Blackfoot



28	ksisskstaki	beaver
	ponokáómitaa	horse
	aahkiohsa' tsis	canoe
	iimitaohkipistaa	dog team
39	âkaitapiitsiniksi	oral tradition, literally "stories from people who lived before us" or "ancestral stories"
41	Omahkitapii	Elders
47		story "Naapi and the Rock"
67	Móókoanssin	Belly Buttes
74	aisspommootsiiyio' pa	"helping one another"
87	Ookáán	important ceremony held as part of some Sundances
90	mâmma' pis	tipi rings
	a' kihtakssin	cairn or
97	Akóka' tssin	Sundance
98	passkaan	powwow
104	aohko' tsimaawa	provider
	ninaawa	clan leader
	ninaakiiwa	wife of the clan leader
	Pookaiksi	children
	aiksimstatoomiaw opaitapiiwahsowayi	"thought out their lives"
108		sample Alberta clan names
109	Kanáttsomitaiiksi	Brave Dog Society, Police Society
	Máoto' kiiksi	Buffalo Women' s Society
		quote from Siksika Les Buckskin Jr.
121	Issapoomahksika	Crowfoot

#### USEFUL WEBSITES

[www.native-languages.org/blackfoot.htm#language](http://www.native-languages.org/blackfoot.htm#language)

[www.fp.ucalgary.ca/blackfoot/phonetics/phonetics.htm](http://www.fp.ucalgary.ca/blackfoot/phonetics/phonetics.htm)

[www.schoolnet.ca/aboriginallaudiosaml/blackfot/black-e.html](http://www.schoolnet.ca/aboriginallaudiosaml/blackfot/black-e.html)

#### CREE

##### Pronunciation Key

##### Consonants

Ten consonants are used to write Cree in the Roman alphabet: *c, h, k, m, n, p, s, t, w, y*

All are pronounced like in English except for *c, k, p,* and *t.*

<i>c</i>	sounds like "ch" in <i>chalk</i>	<i>cêskwa</i>	wait
<i>k</i>	unaspirated like <i>k</i> in <i>skin</i> .	<i>kiyâm</i>	It doesn' t.
<i>p</i>	is unaspirated as the <i>p</i> in <i>spit</i> .	<i>pîyisk</i>	eventually
<i>t</i>	is unaspirated as the <i>t</i> in <i>Stan</i> .	<i>timîw</i>	It is deep

Unaspirated means making a consonant sound without a slight puff of air.



## Vowels

There are four long vowels and three short vowel sounds.

### Short Vowels

a	sounds like <i>u</i> in <i>but</i>	<i>apisís</i>	a little
i	sounds like <i>i</i> in <i>pit</i>	<i>iskwêw</i>	a woman
o	sounds like <i>oo</i> in <i>book</i>	<i>wâpos</i>	a rabbit

### Long Vowels

To make vowels long in written Cree, a bar or a circumflex(^) is added above the vowel.

â	pronounced like <i>a</i> in <i>father</i>	<i>âmôw</i>	a bee
î	pronounced like <i>e</i> in <i>be</i>	<i>mînis</i>	a berry
ô	pronounced like <i>o</i> in <i>ore</i> or <i>oo</i> in <i>too</i>	<i>ôta</i>	here
ê	pronounced like <i>ay</i> in <i>say</i>	<i>pêyak</i>	one

## CREE WORDS APPEARING IN THE TEXT

Page	Words Appearing in the Text	Aboriginal Names
viii – ix		Aboriginal Names
ix	tán' si	hello
2	How the People Hunted the Moose	opening in Cree
17		names of the months
21	wetaskiwin spatinow	the place where peace was made
24	Nehiyaw	Real people, Cree
28	paskwâw mostos	buffalo
	amisk	beaver
	mistatim	horse
	cîman	canoe
	otâpahastimwewin	dog team
	toboggan	dog sled
35		Interview of Glecia Bear
38	âcimostakewin	a regular story about everyday events
	âtayohkewin	sacred story
	mamâhtaw âcimôna	stories that relate a miracle or extraordinary experience
39	opwanîw âcimôna	sacred stories that emerge through a spirit quest
41	Kihteyaya	Elders
63		quote from Emma Minde
65		part of the story told by Bernie Makokis
70	manito sâkâhikan	Lake of the Spirit (Lac Ste Anne)
76	atâmaskîw asinîy	centre rock that holds Mother Earth together
79	pimiy	oil
81		listing of Cree words for types of moose



82		words for relatives in Plains Cree
87	Okâwimaw Askiy	Mother Earth
	miyowicihiwewin	having good relations
88	wahkohtowin	the laws governing all relations
	miyowicehtowin	the laws concerning good relations
	Mâhtâhitowin	Give-Away Dance
	pesowew	bring it (for animate items)
	petâw	bring it (for inanimate items)
	pesowewospwâkan	bring the pipe
96	mâskisimowin	round dance (Woodlands Cree)
	pîcicîwin	round dance (Plains Cree)
	matotisân	Sweat Lodge
97	Pâhkwesimôwin	Sundance
98	pwat' simowin	powwow (literally Lakota Dancing)
103	oskapiyos	a helper
107	nîstaw	brother-in-law (spoken by a man)
	nîtim	“brother-in-law” (spoken by a woman)
	niciwâm	parallel cousin
108		sample Alberta clan names
109	Okihcihtâwak	young men who were part of the Warrior society
161	omikewin	smallpox (literally, scabbing)
192	otawâsimisimâwak	children of the Creator
220	atihkamek	whitefish
231	Pahkahkos	Flying Skeleton, a Cree spirit
	Nohkom Atayohkan	Grandmother of the Legends
	nicimos	girlfriend/boyfriend
	nitotem	my relative

USEFUL WEBSITES

<http://www.native-languages.org/cree.htm>

<http://lalibert.sasktelwebsite.net/saycree/>

<http://collections.ic.gc.ca/tales/Cree.htm>

<http://www.sicc.sk.ca> (Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre)

**VARIOUS DENE LANGUAGE WORDS APPEARING IN THE TEXT**

Page Words Appearing in the Text

viii – ix		Aboriginal names
ix	edlâneté	how are you? (Dene Suline)
	neeah	welcome (Dunne-za)
17		names of the months, (Dene Suline)
24	chatay	Beaver People (Dunne-za)
25	Dené	person, people
26	Dené Tha'	simple people (Dené Tha' )
	Tsa Des	river of beaver (Dene Suliné)



28	ejere	buffalo (Dene Suliné)
	Haiklcho	buffalo (Dené Tha' )
	kaymoe hukgree	buffalo (Dunne-za)
	tsa	beaver (Dene Suliné)
	tsa	beaver (Dené Tha' )
	cha	beaver (Dunne-za)
	tjco	horse (Dene Suliné)
	k' licho	horse (Dené Tha' )
	klaynchook	horse (Dunne-za)
	tsi	canoe (Dene Suliné)
	e-la	canoe (Dené Tha' )
	ala	canoe (Dunne-za)
	k' ljdedeya	dog team (Dené Tha' )
	klayzha woosloozhy	dog sled (Dunne-za)
39	wodih	stories, lectures, or news (Dené Tha' )
40	tonht' onh wodihé	stories of long ago
41	Detiye	Elders (Dené Tha' )
96	dawots' ethe	dance, Tea dance (Dené Tha' )
	shin	songs (Dené Tha' )
108		sample Alberta clan names
161	kedzowoti' hi	tuberculosis, literally sickness of the chest (Dené Tha' )

USEFUL WEBSITE

<http://collections.ic.gc.ca/tales/Dene.htm> *Dene stories told by Elders*

**INUKTITUT**

Page Words Appearing in the Text

viii – ix		Aboriginal names
ix	atitu	hello
14	tuttu	caribou
15	inuksuk	likeness of a person
53	Nunam-shua	Woman Who Dwells in the Earth
85	iquluit	place of fish
126	isumataq (or ihumataq)	leader; literally, one who thinks
127	mauliqtuq	breathing holes; winter sealing technique

**NAKODA**

Page Words Appearing in the Text

viii – ix		Aboriginal names
ix	abawăstet	good day
27	isgabi	people of the Paul and Alexis band
	lyethkabi	people of the Morley band





28	tatanka	buffalo
	coba	beaver
	shortă	horse
	wa dah	canoe; literally, log carved into boat
	shŭga cushahă	dog sled
41	ishaween	Elders
53	wabasoka	Saskatoon bush, literally “tree spreads out”
98	wagicibi	powwow; literally dancing

USEFUL WEBSITE

[www.sicc.sk.ca](http://www.sicc.sk.ca) (Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre)

**ANISHINABÉ**

Page Words Appearing in the Text

viii – ix		Aboriginal names
ix	ânîn	Hello, how are you? (Saulteaux)
28	miskotê-pisihki	buffalo
	amihk	beaver
	mištâtîm	horse
41	w’ daebawae	telling the truth
168	pimatziwin	long life and well-being

USEFUL WEBSITE

[www.sicc.sk.ca](http://www.sicc.sk.ca) (See Nakawe)

**TSUU T’ INA**

Page Words Appearing in Text

viii – ix		Aboriginal names
ix	da ni t’ a da	How are you?
27	Tsotli’ na	Earth People, Tsuu T’ ina
28	hani tii	buffalo
	mi cha di ko di	beaver
	ist/i	horse

**MICHIF**

Page Words Appearing in the Text

viii – ix		Aboriginal names
ix	tânishi	hello
28	boefloo	buffalo
	kastor	beaver
	zhwal	horse

131	canoh	canoe
147		quote from Mary Wells, Elizabeth Settlement sentences in Michif

USEFUL WEBSITE

[www.saskschools.ca/curr\\_content/creelangllanguagelindex.html](http://www.saskschools.ca/curr_content/creelangllanguagelindex.html)

**SUGGESTED RESOURCES FOR FURTHER READING AND RESEARCH**

- Anderson, Anne. 1997. *Dr. Anne Anderson's Metis Cree Dictionary*. Edmonton: Duval House Publishing.
- Fleury, Norman. 2000. *La Lawng. Michif Peekishkweewin. The Canadian Michif Language Dictionary (Introductory Level)*. Winnipeg: Metis Resource Centre and Michif Language Program of the Manitoba Metis Federation.
- Fleury, Norman, Rita Flamand, Peter Bakker, and Lawrence Barkwell. 2002. *La Lawng: Michif Peekishkweewin. The Heritage Language of the Canadian Metis*. 2 vols. Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications.
- Frantz, Donald G., and Norma Jean Russell. 2000. *Blackfoot Dictionary of Stems, Roots, and Affixes*. 2nd ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- LeClaire, Nancy, and George Cardinal. 1998. *Alberta Elders' Cree Dictionary*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press and Duval House Publishing.