



**Saskatchewan First
Nation Speaking
Project**
www.allanadam.com



Saskatchewan First Nations Language Speaking Project

Vision

To enable individuals, families, organizations and communities to increase speaking ability of First Nation languages in Saskatchewan.

Goal

To develop a method for First Nation language learners to speak a base vocabulary so they can converse with fluent speakers and work towards gaining oral fluency

Principles

- No cost to learn, resources are free
- Accessible to everyone
- Community driven by volunteers
- Oral fluency is most valued
- Minimal resources required to run programs
- Enables Elders to pass knowledge directly to learners
- Focus on learning whole phrases versus grammar and word lists
- Takes advantage of digital technology and internet

Tools

1. First Nations Language Speaking Circle
2. First Nations Language Online Speaking Lessons
3. First Nations Language Audio Lessons

First Nations Language Speaking Circle - The tool to link fluent speakers to learners in one room

In April 2009, the Regina First Nations Language Speaking Circle began. This group began with a group of interested fluent speakers and interested language learners who met once a week for an hour and a half to learn to speak a First Nations language. This group continues to meet and will run sessions until June 16, 2009 and reconvene in the fall of 2009. It is hoped that other speaking circles will form in Regina and other communities.

First Nations Language Online Speaking Lessons - The tool to link fluent speakers to learners globally

Shortly after the Regina First Nations Language Speaking Circle began to meet, the lessons taught at each session were recorded using a digital recorder and uploaded to a website for learners to practice. This allows learners who do not know a fluent speaker to continue to practice speaking daily which is the most effective way of learning. So far there are 800+ files online. By the end of the project, there will be approximately 1000 phrases total in 9 language categories on this website. We already have lessons in Woods Cree, Plains Cree, Nakota, Saulteaux, Dene, and will be adding Ojibway and Dakota soon.

First Nations Language Audio Lessons - For learners without high speed internet access

For communities and individuals with no to high speed internet, the video lessons are inaccessible. We are now working on different way to the digital audio files with others.

We have recently added these files to the web site so people can download them to make their own CD's. We are hoping that communities will create and share copies of these files with others.

The Coordinators

This project is a personal project for Allan Adam and Cathy Wheaton. Allan Adam is a fluent Dene speaker, interpreter/translator and instructor originally from Fond du Lac Denesuline First Nation. Cathy Wheaton is Woodlands Cree from La Ronge Indian Band but wishes to become a fluent speaker like most of her family. Allan and Cathy have spent hundreds of hours January 2009 working on this project. It was initially not anticipated to be this large but it grew very quickly!

Thank You!

We have many friends who have shared with this project in the last couple of months. We are so grateful to the Elders who spent time with us: our Nakota Elders: Fred Spyglass of Mosquito First Nation and Wilma Kennedy of Carry the Kettle. Our fluent speakers were Bill Cook, Bernie Cook, Guy Albert, Reg and Marlene Bugler, Darren Okemaysim, Doreen Oakes, Allan Adam, Natalie Owl, Alice Taysap and many others who attended our weekly Speaking Circles. Jessica Generoux who works at the Albert Library offered free space and program promotion for the Speaking Circle.

Allan Adam donated web site space on his web site for this project. He also records the audio files with Elders and fluent speakers, edits and creates the online videos. Cathy Wheaton compiles the common phrase lists for interviews, organizes the web site content, finds external links, writes the materials, coordinates the speaking circles and uploads files to Youtube. Together we travel to communities to interview and meet Elders on our own expense in our spare time. We encourage others with similar interests to do the same!

Contact:

Allan Adam
(306) 960-5192
(306) 425-3354
allan.adam@sasktel.net

Cathy Wheaton
(306) 425-0488
(306) 425-3354
chimiskwew@hotmail.com