

Curriculum (OLC) and Program of Study



Government of
Northwest Territories





Message from the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment

I am pleased to announce that as part of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment's effort to support strong Indigenous languages and education programs, we have fulfilled an important commitment through the final development and implementation of the Northwest Territories (NWT) Indigenous Languages Curriculum: *Our Languages*.

Indigenous languages are the foundation of identity, pride and community within which values and beliefs are expressed. They communicate wisdom, traditions and customs, and must be protected for the future generations. The nine NWT official Indigenous languages carry within them the worldviews of the people of this land, including knowledge about the unique histories, stories, and cultures.

This new curriculum is built on the premise that *our languages* can survive and even thrive when schools and communities join together to make language learning a priority. As NWT residents, we have a shared responsibility to strengthen, revitalize and promote Indigenous languages. The *Our Languages* curriculum is written for Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 core Indigenous language instruction; however, the curriculum also includes a section devoted to language revitalization efforts within the whole school and within communities. The curriculum motto is *Together We Can Grow Our Languages*, which reflects the viewpoints of Elders, families, educators and community. This motto was coined by the Regional Indigenous Language Coordinators, who represent the NWT regional Indigenous governments. It is also important to note that the two foundational curricular documents, *Dene Kede* and *Inuuqatigiit*, guided the development of the *Our Languages* Curriculum.

I want to thank the many contributors from around the territory and beyond that helped to write this groundbreaking new curriculum. In particular, I want to thank all of the dedicated Indigenous language instructors who continue to make tremendous efforts to teach our languages in schools; the loyal language partners in our communities for their continued support; and the Elders and traditional knowledge keepers for sharing their languages and understandings of Indigenous ways of knowing, being, doing and believing.

Through the development and implementation of the *Our Languages* Curriculum, we recognize the importance of traditional knowledge and commit to moving forward to preserve the NWT languages and worldviews.

Mársi, kinanāskomitin, Haǰ', Quana, Qujannamiik, Quyanainni, Máhsi, Máhsi, and Mahsi,

Honourable R.J. Simpson

Minister, Education Culture and Employment

Dene Kede and *Inuuqatigiit* are the foundational curriculum documents that all NWT teachers use within our culture-based education system. *Our Languages* curriculum should live side-by-side with these two documents to help support the intent and wisdom of the Elders and wisdom keepers who devised the critical knowledge base of these two curricula.



Language is viewed by the Dene as a gift from the Creator to enable us to reach back into our past and our history in order that we can go forward toward survival. The Dene languages help us to establish good relationships with the spiritual world, other people, the land and ourselves.
Dene Kede, pg. xxviii



All of Inuit history, knowledge, values and beliefs were passed on from generation to generation by word of mouth. The information was contained in both songs and stories, repeated to children by their parents and grandparents as they grew.
Inuuqatigiit, pg. 19.

.....
*All bolded words within the document can
be found in the glossary.*

*All italicized words are for major published
work or legislation.*

*All underlined words are added for
emphasis.*

*Please note: Some words may use a number
of conventions to fully explain their meaning*
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our Languages was not born from the solitary work of one or two individuals. Instead, it reflects the collective wisdom of all who have contributed over many years. This group is as diverse as the languages we serve and each individual brought with them a passion for reviving our Indigenous languages, and with this, a dream to once again hear our many languages spoken loudly and proudly throughout our land. Their contributions have spanned almost five decades of work in support of our northern Indigenous languages.

It is not possible to name all those dedicated individuals who have helped shape the long journey towards *Our Languages*. Their names are inscribed on the reams of correspondence, resources, books and committee studies that preceded this curricular work.

We are indebted to the many Elders and teachers whose names appear in *Dene Kede* (1993) and *Inuuqatigiit* (1996) the cultural curricula of the Dene and Inuit, which helped lay the foundation for *Our Languages* curriculum.

Some curriculum development work occurred within the regions as regional language groups and school divisions and others became even more active in producing documents as well as teaching tools and resources to support Indigenous language instruction. We are very grateful for the work the regions did in support of Indigenous languages throughout the north. Much of this work became the blueprint upon which *Our Languages* is based.

In the spring of 2014, a committee consisting of regional representatives met to review the past work of our northern language leaders, consider the curricular work of other language groups from around the north, Canada and the world to create an Indigenous language curriculum that reflected the contemporary understandings about language learning. The goal was to develop a curriculum that paired the efforts of the community and the home with that of our schools, recognizing that it will take a community to revitalize a language.

As the writing phase draws to a close, it is important also to acknowledge the long list of dedicated Indigenous language instructors, teachers and community workers who have worked tirelessly in support of our northern languages, often without the gratitude they deserve.

Finally, thanks must be given to those who inspired this curriculum – the proud individuals who still speak their ancestral language. Through their incredible efforts, foresight and passion for maintaining the traditions and knowledge of their ancestors they have protected and preserved their language as a cherished gift.

As a part of the dream to hear our many languages spoken proudly throughout our Northern land, the publication of *Our Languages* curriculum – a northern Indigenous language curriculum moves us all one step closer to this possibility.

| Mársı | Masi | Mahsi | Quana | ᑭᓄᓐᓇᓂᓐ
| Quyanainni | kinanāskomitin | Merci |
Thank you

Introduction



Indigenous Worldview¹

The education of children is the primary way by which a culture passes on its accumulated knowledge, skills, and values. At the centre of this education is a perspective or set of fundamental assumptions about the relationship of humankind to its cosmos. When the traditional education of Indigenous children was displaced with education from European cultures, it was not merely the particular knowledge, skill, and values that were supplanted but, more importantly, Indigenous people's foundational worldview.

From the earliest period of formal education in the NWT, Indigenous people have attempted to communicate their unease with the inherent contradictions they have faced with schooling. They have been clear and persistent in calling for a respectful recognition of their **worldview**, while acknowledging the knowledge, skills, and values required to participate in the new technologies and economies. It was to these voices to which Indigenous people turned, and listened, in order to overcome these contradictions.



Margo McLeod and her daughter Ocean enjoy each other's company while plucking ducks.

Identity Terminology

For many people who live in Indigenous communities and have deep and grounding roots within them, identity can be, at least in some ways, straightforward. They identify themselves within a particular family or nation and may prefer to use the traditional terms and names that locate them within those circumstances. When situating themselves, people might identify themselves in relation to their parents, grandparents, and more distant ancestors, or by the traditional name of their community or nation.

Within this curriculum several terms are used for referring to the First Peoples of Canada. In general, the terminology used at the time of reference will be used. For example, when referring to the **Official Languages Act**, which was adopted in 1984, the term Aboriginal will be used. All newer references will use either the specific name of a local nation, or when speaking globally the term Indigenous will be used.

When speaking with someone or referring to someone, ask them the terminology that they prefer.

¹ Adapted from, *The Common Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs*, Kindergarten to Grade 12. *Western Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education*, Governments of Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories and Saskatchewan, 2000.

Indigenous Worldview - (continued)

From the Creator, our Elders, ancestors, and families, we gained in-depth knowledge about some key principles underlying the philosophy and worldview that are part of all Indigenous languages. We learned that fundamental spiritual principles cross all domains of knowledge and are expressed as sacred laws governing our behaviour and relationship to the land and its life forms. The basic concepts contained within each language make no separation between language and culture; these remain a unified whole.

Because relationships are understood to be based on a foundation of integrity, what we do and say, by extension, imply a personal commitment to the sacred. Some key concepts defining these relationships are:

- kinship (respect in relationships)
- protocol (conduct in ceremonies and social interaction)
- medicine (personal habits and practice in relation to health and spiritual gifts)
- ceremonies (roles and conduct)
- copyright (earning the right to knowledge)
- oral tradition (expression of knowledge, its forms, and ownership)

Learning an Indigenous language, therefore, means absorbing the very foundations of Indigenous identity. As students begin to learn their language, they acquire basic understandings that shape their ways of knowing, doing, being and belonging. The Elders tell of the power of language to generate change and a sense of direction within the learner. Learning the language becomes a powerful source of one's personal commitment to being, becoming and believing as a capable person. Learning the language helps to inspire respect for self, for others, and for all facets of nature, and this in turn strengthens our human capacity to stand together. The Elders point out that principles, such as love and sharing, are consistent with the central purpose of teaching: to develop a capable person who understands why we do what we do.

**The Elders stress
“Our way is a valid way
of seeing the world.”**



Henry Beaver guides his helpful grandson Niska when putting up the migawap or tipi.

Together We Can Grow Our Languages

Guided by the wisdom of the Elders, energized by the dedication of our community language leaders, parents and teachers, and inspired by the hopes and dreams of our youth, the *Our Languages* curriculum (OLC) offers a pathway towards a bright future... a future that holds great hope for the nine Indigenous languages in the Northwest Territories (NWT). It is a shared responsibility— student, educator, parent and community—to take ownership of their language and use it on a day-to-day basis as the means of communication (NWT Indigenous Languages Framework, 2017).

The *Our Languages* curriculum strives to help students on their journey of being, knowing, becoming and believing as capable people. Students are given ample opportunity to develop a skill or concept, and then demonstrate or apply their learning through authentic tasks. Fluency is attained through a lifetime of learning at home, and in the community, and supported at school. Language acquisition is not defined by an end of unit test or assessment, but rather by a student's ability to demonstrate their learning and apply their knowledge of language as they seek to listen, understand, communicate and then converse, explain, discuss, probe, read, write, question and problem-solve in authentic settings, such as homes, stores, community centres, and on-the-land camps and with authentic audiences.

Our Languages is designed to challenge the student to explore their Indigenous language across all dimensions of language use — listening, speaking, reading, viewing and writing. The early emphasis in any effective language acquisition program must always be on listening (acquiring) and speaking (expressing), but the language acquisition process continues to develop with reading and writing to support and consolidate learning.



In 2017-2018 a group of dedicated Indigenous language teachers with support from regional coordinators and ECE staff, piloted the first draft of Our Languages curriculum. Back row: Ty Hamilton, Scott Willoughby, Justin Heron, Paul Boucher and Brent Kaulback, Judy Whitford, Holly Carpenter, Denise MacDonald, Kim Hardisty and Sally Drygeese, Mary Joan Lafferty, Gladys Alexi, Shirley Lamalice, Madline Pasquayak, Gina MacLean, Mindy Willett and Gayle Strikes With A Gun

The *Our Languages* curriculum recognizes the need for quality, effective instructional strategies, designed to engage language learners and inspire them towards a lifelong love for their language. To promote a whole-school approach, several sections of this curricular document have been devoted to the topic of classroom instruction, as well as the role of administrators. Promising practices from northern language classrooms are described, references to pertinent research are made, and a wealth of ideas to bring life and vibrancy to classroom instruction is shared.

Why We Call it *Our Languages* Curriculum

There are challenges with trying to establish a language curriculum that must respect the 9 official Indigenous languages and many dialects in the NWT.

The word *Our*, within the title, can be changed by each language group to describe their language when they refer to the curriculum. But as our motto states, “*Together We Can Grow Our Languages*”, thus the document was called *Our Languages* curriculum.

As one example of the challenge for a detailed scope and sequence in each of the languages, consider the command “sit down.” The Indigenous languages use a different word if the command is said to one person, two people, or more than two people.

The External Working Group, made up of language speakers and regional language consultants, agreed that while not ideal, the curriculum would be written in English so that it was accessible to all users.

# of persons	English	Inuvialuktun	South Slavey	Cree
1 person	sit down	ingittin	theneda	apo api
2 people	sit down	ingittittik	thaake	apo api
more than 2	sit down	ingittitchi	daahtth'i	kahkiyaw apo api

What Do Language Leaders Say?

I speak as much as I can in the community. When I meet people I stop and I say a few sentences and I ask questions. It’s joyful and like music when I hear our language. Our language is still alive if we use it – it’s up to all of us who have it, to share it.

Betty Elias, Tuktoyaktuk

Inuit Language Example:

In the Inuit languages, the words that a girl uses for “older sister” and “younger sister” are different than when spoken by a boy. Numerous other examples could be given.

For this reason the lists of vocabulary and phrases specific to each language are the responsibility of the local community. This example also shows the importance of relationships to Indigenous languages.

Dene Language Example:

Another example would be with action words (verbs). Dene languages express a lot of ideas in one action word. For example, to say “I like X”, in a Dene language you say, “me-for it-is-good”. This requires learning the pronoun *se* “me”, the postposition *-gha* “for” (in English “for” is a preposition and separate word), and the verb *nezu* “it is good.” *Segha nezu*.

Cree Language Example:

In Cree, there are concepts like “animate and inanimate” that have to be addressed. Your choice of words is affected by the “animacy” of the object you are speaking about. The concept of “animacy” does not match the English concept of living versus non-living, so a whole different way of thinking—an Indigenous way—has to be taught as part of the language teaching process.

What Do Language Leaders Say?

As a child I heard my language spoken all the time in my grandmother’s home. I was never fluent but I sort of understood enough to get me by. Now as an adult, I think of the words she said and the terms she used in life and it is very comforting. I try to speak as much as I can to my children and hopefully they will know enough to speak it to their children someday.

This is who we are, this is what we are made of. I don’t want to think of it as a lost or dying language because it feels very much alive inside of who I am.

Priscilla Haogak, Sachs Harbour

To use any of the Northern Indigenous languages fluently means that the speaker observes and interacts with their environment. They are relational languages.

The connection between the speaker, their actions and the environment speaks to a worldview where relationships are important – relationships with self, others, the land and one’s spirituality.

It will be at the local and regional level that the units will be developed in the language of the community. Guidance for how to do this is covered within the document.



James Pokiak demonstrates that he is quviahuktunga Inuvialugama — proud to be Inuvialuit — with Brianna and Belinda Lavallee as they play a traditional game together.

School and Community Together

A unique feature of *Our Languages* curriculum is the addition of a section devoted to language revitalization efforts within NWT communities. This curriculum is built on the premise that languages can survive and even thrive when schools and communities come together to make language acquisition a priority for all.

The sections titled *Promising Community Practices* (numbered 1A – 5A) and *Holistic View of Outcomes* (numbered 1B – 5B) are designed purposely to be viewed side by side.

The promising community practices in this section were proposed by community language leaders, and also include innovative and exciting initiatives found in the literature on Indigenous language revitalization. These suggestions complement the learning outcomes listed at each proficiency level and

were written together with the Indigenous governments' Regional Indigenous Language Coordinators (RILCs).

The curriculum emphasizes effective pedagogy—or how a curriculum is best taught by teachers and taken up by students and supported by the community. A significant body of language learning research suggests that as students learn to speak they will acquire the grammar through listening and speaking, rather than through explicit teaching of grammar (see the *Evolution of Language Pedagogy in Schools* on pg. 12 for more details). Thus, within this curriculum you will not find a list of vocabulary or specifics around when and where certain language rules are taught. The important components of any language are to be learned by the student through their experiences with the language.



The right side of the page opens up to a spread that describes the role of the school while the left side of the page opens up to a spread that describes the role of the community. Ideally, communication between parents, teachers, administrators, Regional Indigenous Language Coordinators (RILCs), Indigenous governments, the NWT Literacy Council and all other language partners will be open so that together all learners will create opportunities to grow from Emergent to Capable speakers.

Role of Our Youth

Young people have an important role to play in language growth and revitalization. Indeed, they have the most to gain. *Our Languages* curriculum is designed to foster leadership qualities among learners. Learning outcomes across all proficiency levels challenge the students to connect with Elders, attend, and even organize, community language events to demonstrate their learning with others both publicly and with pride. *Our Languages* is built on the premise that the desire for learning comes from the learners and it is their ownership over their own learning that must be encouraged and developed. This is true of any curriculum or learning. It is the students' ownership of their learning that fosters deeper, further learning.

Role of Our Family and Community

Obviously, family members and community leaders also play a critical role in the revitalization of languages. However, the success of this curriculum and, arguably, the hopes for our languages, rest with the school community and in particular the Indigenous language instructors. What takes place in the classroom may well determine the extent to which our youth engage with their language and assume ownership over its future. Instruction that inspires, excites and motivates may well develop the language champions our communities seek, and put all of our languages on a trajectory towards sustained growth and revitalization.

What Do Youth Say?

I would like to thank our Ancestors, Elders, and people for paving the way for language revitalization. In 2015, the Gwich'in Language Revival Campaign #SpeakGwichinToMe was created, as a social media platform initiative started on Facebook. In less than two years #SpeakGwichinToMe grew to over 2,000 supporters across six different social media platforms locally, nationally, and internationally attracting the attention of youth, academics and linguists alike. Language learning, teaching, and speaking is so vital to not only our culture but for our identity. If we don't know who we are, how do we know where we are going?

Jacey Firth-Hagen, Gwich'in youth and language advocate



Jacey Firth-Hagen promotes language as a way of life: at work, at home, online, with her peers, and in community.

NWT Official Languages Overview

The NWT is the only jurisdiction in Canada that names nine (9) official Indigenous languages alongside English and French through its *Official Languages Act*. The Indigenous languages belong to three (3) language families: Athabaskan (Dene), Inuit and Algonquian (Cree).

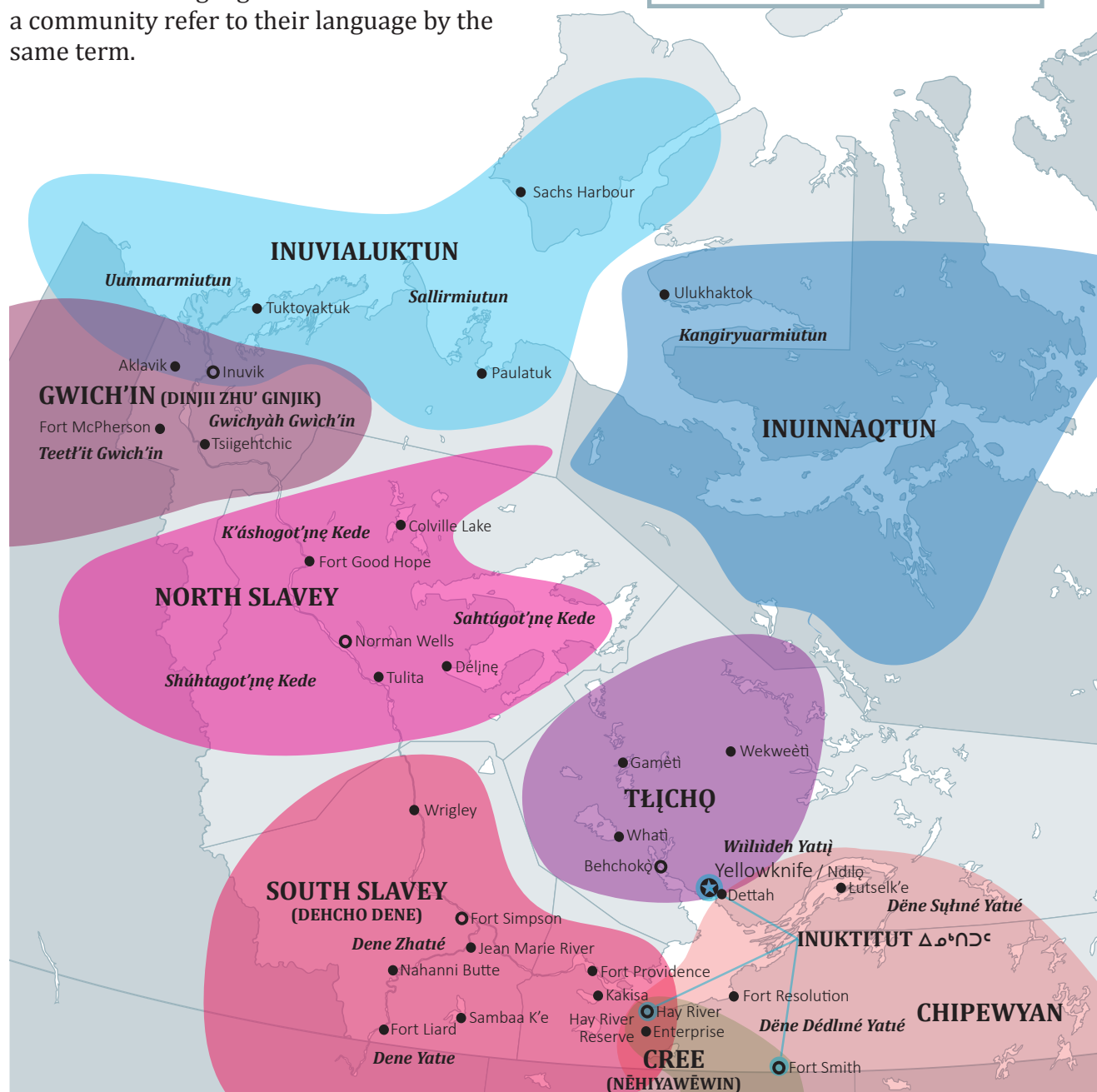
Each community has distinct dialects and subdialects. It is most appropriate to ask the community members how they wish to refer to their language as not all members of a community refer to their language by the same term.

LEGEND

- Official languages are shown in **ALL CAPS**
- Dialects are shown in *italics*

Please note that language and dialectal distinctions vary across communities.

The names appearing here represent widely used and agreed upon designations as of the printing of this map, and may evolve over time.



The following summary reflects the 9 NWT official Indigenous languages. This does not reflect the various dialects within each language.

The five (5) Dene – Athabaskan languages are:

- Chipewyan (Dëne Sų́hné Yatı́é): *Spoken mainly in Łutselk'e, Fort Resolution, Hay River, Fort Smith and Dettah*
- Gwich'in (Dinjii Zhu' Ginjik): *Spoken mainly in Aklavik, Inuvik, Tsiigehtchic, and Fort McPherson*
- North Slavey (Sahtúqt'ı́ne): *Spoken mainly in Colville Lake, Fort Good Hope, Norman Wells, Tulit'a, Délı́ne*
- South Slavey (Dene Zhatı́é): *Spoken in Sambaa K'e, Fort Liard, Nahanni Butte, Kakisa, Fort Providence, Jean Marie River, Wrigley, Hay River, K'atl'odeeche, and Fort Simpson*
- Tłı́chǫ Yatı́: *Spoken in Gamètı́, Wekweètı́, Whatı́, Behchokǝ́, and the Wı́lłı́deh dialect, spoken in Ndı́lǫ́ and Dettah*



The NWT is rich with diverse languages, cultures and landscapes.

The three (3) Inuit languages are:

- Inuvialuktun: *Spoken mainly in Sachs Harbour, Paulatuk, Tuktoyaktuk, Aklavik, and Inuvik*
- Inuinnaqtun: *Spoken mainly in Ulukhaktok*
- Inuktitut: *Spoken mainly in Yellowknife and regional centres*

The one (1) Algonquian language is:

- Cree (nēhiyawēwin): *Spoken mainly in Fort Smith and Hay River*

NOTE: In the nēhiyawewin capitalization is not recommended. The capitalization comes from the western writing. In the nēhiyaw culture and language no one is higher or more important, and that is why people refrain from the use of the capital.

What Do Youth Say?

The other day when I was visiting my grandparents my Aunty was also there. She asked me to go get her phone for her and I reminded her that she needs to ask me in Tłı́chǫ. She then repeated the request and said “wet’a gots’ede saı́nchı́”. I really want to learn Tłı́chǫ so I’m happy when adults speak to me in Tłı́chǫ.

Lydia Judas, age 13, Wekweètı́

History of Indigenous Language Program Delivery in the NWT

In the NWT, approximately half of the population and two-thirds of the student population are of Indigenous ancestry. For many years, schools in the NWT have been teaching the Indigenous languages and cultures of these groups through a variety of approaches ranging from language classes of varying lengths per day to full immersion.

In many cases, the focus has been on cultural activities in the school and occasional seasonal culture camps on the land. Although teaching an Indigenous language through cultural activities is usually acknowledged as the most appropriate method, many of these activities require language skills that have not yet been acquired, especially by younger learners. Often the language has not consistently been incorporated into these activities, nor into the classroom to an extent that has allowed students to become fluent speakers of their ancestral languages.

.....

“Too often in our schools we found the same language content being repeated from grade to grade so that by the time students completed 8 or 9 years of language classes they were unable to carry on or understand rudimentary conversations. As well, cultural activities, inside or outside the classroom, were all being implemented in English and did not range beyond some arts and crafts, a few songs, or the occasional fishing trip”.

Inuvialuktun and Gwich'in 2nd Language Curriculum, pg. 4

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The *Official Languages Act* of the NWT, adopted in 1984, designates all of the Aboriginal languages as “official languages” along with English and French, and requires all institutions of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), including schools and education bodies, to maintain and revitalize the use of Aboriginal languages.

The *Education Act* of the NWT has contained clauses governing the teaching of Aboriginal languages for several decades. In 2004, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) issued the *Ministerial Directive on Aboriginal Language and Culture Based Education* (ALCBE) to all NWT education bodies and schools outlining in general terms how Aboriginal languages and cultures are to be taught.

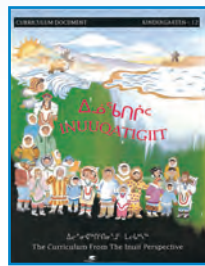
The ALCBE Directive’s purpose was to give direction for:

- Funding allocated for K-12 Aboriginal language and cultural programming;
- School system supports that reflect Aboriginal languages and culture-based education.

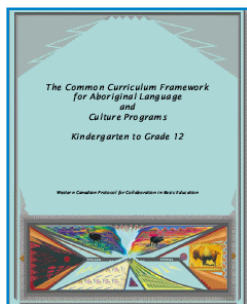
In 2017/18, as part of the JK-Grade 12 Education Renewal and Innovation (ERI) process, ECE renewed the 2004 ALCBE Directive to clarify and update the role that schools have in Indigenizing education within the Northwest Territories (NWT).

The *Northwest Territories (NWT) Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 (JK-12) Indigenous Languages and Education (ILE) Policy* replaced the *ALCBE Directive*.

Documents Contributing to *Our Languages* Curriculum



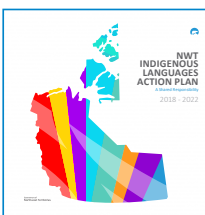
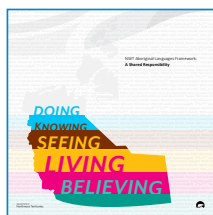
In the 1990s, ECE, with extensive input from Elders and experienced Aboriginal educators, produced the *Dene Kede K-9* (1993 and 2002) and *Inuuqatigiit K-12* (1996) curriculum guides, which serve as rich and invaluable resources for teachers. These documents contain descriptions about first and second language expectations; however, they do not fulfill the need for a detailed language curriculum and program that provide students with the functional language competencies.



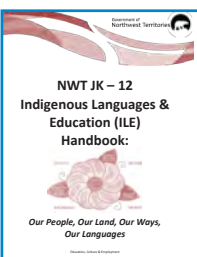
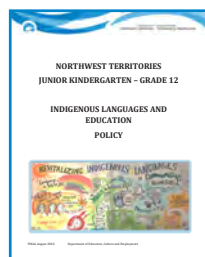
In June 2000, the *Common Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs K-12* was released by the *Western and Northern Canadian Protocol* (WNCP) working group, establishing detailed, standardised goals for these programs in the western provinces and three territories. Elders and educators from the NWT and Nunavut were involved in this undertaking, but the *Framework* is generic and does not include specific NWT Indigenous language content.



In 2003, in an attempt to address these needs, the Beaufort-Delta Education Council supported the Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre and the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute's proposal to develop a curriculum and program for teaching Inuvialuktun and Gwich'in as a second language. In the southern regions of the NWT several education bodies worked together on a *Dene as a Second Language Curriculum*. An unpublished draft of the curriculum was completed, however, a pilot was not. All of the work accomplished by a diverse group of Northerners up to the present day has laid a solid foundation for *Our Languages* curriculum.



In 2017, ECE updated and launched a renewed *NWT Aboriginal Languages Framework: A Shared Responsibility* which was followed in 2018 by the release of an *NWT Indigenous Languages Action Plan*. Together these documents act as a blueprint and strategy for revitalizing and improving access to services in all nine official Indigenous languages.



The 2018 ILE Policy and the draft ILE Handbook are in place to support ECE and education bodies in welcoming all students within learning environments that centre, respect and promote the Indigenous worldviews, cultures and languages of the community in which the school is located.

The Evolution of Language Pedagogy in Schools²

The approaches to how Indigenous languages have been taught has evolved over time. Instructors and teachers within the schools have done the best they could at teaching the language in the way they have been taught. However, our children have not become fluent speakers and thus an honest look at different approaches needs to take place. While change is difficult, we must work together to shift our pedagogy to give our children the best chance to revitalize their language. The following is a summary of the different approaches used in second-language teaching over the years including:

- Grammar Translation
- Audio-Linguistic
- Communicative
- Action-Oriented
- Neurolinguistic
- Combined

What Do Language Leaders Say?

To summarize, teaching orthographies, grammar and ALM (audiolingual method) have not produced fluent speakers. Furthermore, if speaking is the overall goal, then a vastly different approach to teaching is needed if the goals of Indigenous (or others) peoples are to maintain and or revitalize their languages.

*Hishinlai' Kathy R. Sikorski,
Gwich'in language professor at
University of Alaska Fairbanks*

Grammar Translation Approach

In the Grammar Translation approach, teachers presented vocabulary lists with the translation in both languages. Students were asked to repeat the words and the grammar rules were explicitly taught. The grammar rules were usually explained in English. In this method, students may have acquired the ability to read and write but generally did not acquire oral communication skills. It was used for many years here and elsewhere in Canada and has proven to be ineffective.

Audio-Lingual Approach

Many years ago educators recognized that with the Grammar Translation approach students were not able to communicate and started putting a greater influence on oral elements. Emphasis was placed on pre-selected phrases. A typical classroom had students memorize short, scripted conversations, the morning prayer or even a play but students might not have understood what they were saying (Lightbown & Spada, 2006) and could not transfer the language used in the classroom into the community. With the use of recorders (tapes and cassettes), the Audio-Lingual approach supported developing pronunciation skills. However, studies of the use of Audio-Lingual and grammar-based approaches in the classroom have found little evidence to suggest that they lead to language comprehension, fluency, or communicative competence.

²Adapted from: Ontario, A Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools, K-12, 2013.

Communicative Approach

In this approach, instruction focused on providing learners with opportunities to use the language in a meaningful way. Supporters of this approach hold that errors are a natural part of the language-learning process and that communication of meaning should be central, with less emphasis on language form (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). In short, getting the message across rather than linguistic accuracy is the priority. Classroom activities are often organized around such communicative activities as asking for information, expressing emotions, likes and dislikes, describing, inviting, and leading class routines. Contextual cues, props, and gestures are used to support communication of meaning. Grammar rules are learnt in the context of how they help to express meaning appropriately (Canale & Swain, 1980).

Although the communicative approach highlights the value of listening to and producing language as a way to develop oral proficiency, some argue that it does not fully meet the diverse needs of language learners (Puren, 2006).

When people engage their physical self they are more likely to retain the language being used.

Action-Oriented Approach

The Action-Oriented approach focuses on learning functional language related to accomplishing real-life tasks.

Teachers adopting an Action-Oriented approach may present language activities to students that closely mimic tasks they might face in everyday life. The tasks are therefore open-ended and require the use of a variety of skills and knowledge, often requiring oral and/or written interaction between two or more students. Grammar is viewed as a tool to enhance oral and written communication skills, and as such is taught in a relevant context. Activities engage learners in meaningful communication that is clearly related to their personal needs and interests and to life beyond the classroom.



Neurolinguistic Approach

The Neurolinguistic Approach (NLA) to second-language acquisition, developed in the late 1990s, provides a new paradigm for the acquisition of communication skills in a second language in a classroom setting (Netten & Germain, 2012). Based on brain research, the NLA proposes the development of both *implicit competence* (acquired through use and re-use of language orally) and *explicit competence* (learning how to read and write) in a second language. It follows a natural sequence of language acquisition, starting with oral skills (listening and speaking) and, once a certain amount of language has been acquired, moves on to reading and writing (one reads and writes what one has acquired orally). This mirrors the way the dominant language, in most societies, has been acquired. Language acquisition is fostered by meaningful activities related to the students' lives.

In a 2005 study documenting the relationship between teaching strategies and student learning outcomes, authors Netten and Germain define *highly effective teaching* as “the use of strategies which focus on language use (modeling, using and correcting) in spontaneous communication throughout the lesson, without previous practice of vocabulary or forms” (p. 198).

Jake Basil learned how to use a *yáth ká hékóth* (snowsnake) he made from a *ts'u* (spruce tree). Importantly for language development is the use of phrases that go along with this hands-on experience that can be transferred to other experiences such as, *we are playing, and mine went fast and I enjoyed that*.

Educators who employ *highly effective teaching* methods have been found to be more successful in developing students' skills in spontaneous communication.

In 2015, Pierre Demers, a researcher and language-learning specialist with the Cree School Board in northern Québec, provided a comparison between the neurolinguistic approach and the Indigenous worldview of the Cree with whom he was working³. Generally, the neurolinguistic approach respects the characteristics of Indigenous traditional teaching, including:

- Importance of time needed to acquire learning (learning through observation and practice)
- Importance of oral language
- Encouraging group work
- Encouraging concrete (hands-on) learning
- Importance of the practical applications of learning

For further explanation of the Neurolinguistic Approach refer to pages 70-75 in the appendix.



³ Extract from: Pour un enseignement efficace des langues aux Autochtones, Alice Allain, Pierre Demers and France Pelletier; in Cahiers Dialog, no. 2013-03, Montréal, 2013. Translation from the French by David Macfarlane, June 2015.

Combined Approaches For Diverse Needs

The preceding descriptions are mostly from European language research. There is little published about best practices in Indigenous language teaching methods (Johnson, M. 2017). What we do know is that teaching and learning an Indigenous language has different issues and challenges than with teaching and learning 'foreign' or 'majority' languages (Hinton, 2011). Based on several years of piloting and research to date, this curriculum has laid out the foundation for core language teaching and learning.

As outlined, Indigenous language teaching approaches have evolved over time. What we now know is that basing classroom teaching on one approach will not meet the needs of all learners nor all teachers. Given the diversity of learners needs, learning styles as well as the diversity of teachers' strengths we must be open to the many ways of knowing and being and doing. The *Our Languages* curriculum suggests using a combination of approaches to meet these diverse needs with the **emphasis on the Communicative, Action-Oriented and Neurolinguistic approaches.**



Nevaeh Beaver from Fort Smith, practices her phrases on her tablet for homework. She uses these phrases with her parents to help facilitate the family learning together.

What Do **Youth** Say?

My language is important to me because it's my culture. I'd like to keep it going like my grandparents before me. To keep it going I'm going to ask people who know the language to teach me and work my hardest at home, on the land and in class.

*Mercedes Ashley Tobac Proctor,
age 14, Fort Good Hope*

Strategies for Effective Language Teaching and Learning



.....
*First cohort of Indigenous language teachers and instructors to use the
Our Languages curriculum (2018-2019).*
.....



Each of the strategies summarized in the rays of the sun are promising practices, shared by our language teachers, gleaned from research, and founded on principles from *Dene Kede* and *Inuuqatigiit*. When applied in a core language program, together with a whole school approach, the strategies give Northern children the best chance of learning their ancestral language within a school context. These 10 strategies are further outlined in the following pages with illustrative examples and wisdom shared by parents, leaders, teachers and students.

Language Play

Students experience joy as they learn to play in and with the language to enable them to have deeper conversations.

Description

Language Play is critical to language development of all people. A baby's first word is often uttered through play, mimicking the exaggerated sounds and facial expressions of a vocal and joyful parent or caregiver. It is often a word for mother or father, and is cause for celebration. This first word marks the beginning of a time of accelerated learning for babies as they begin a lifelong journey of attaching meaning to a massive set of words, phrases and sentences and connecting with family and community through language.

Babies progress through distinct language acquisition phases, using experimentation, observation, and interaction to build their language knowledge. Children talk, sense the listener's response, and then adjust their message. A baby communicates needs and feelings during real life events and authentic activities.

Language learning should be fun and vibrant, where laughter, cooperative play, challenging situations, and engaging activities are connected with real world experiences for students of all ages. Encouraging and promoting *Language Play*—play in the language and play with the language—can make school-based and on-the-land language classes dynamic places of learning.



What Do Language Leaders Say?

When children are having fun in their language, they are learning the most and want to learn more. Have fun learning your language.

*Tammy Steinwand,
Th̓chq̓ Community Services Agency, Behchok̓*

Using a game like Twister to help students learn their colours and body parts is a lot of fun. At first, the teacher leads with, 'put your right hand on the red circle' but then the students take over the spinner to be the leader.

What Does the Research Say?

Some researchers equate *Language Play* to the developmental stages of the language acquisition process of babies. Immersed in playful interactions with their families, babies respond to positive emotional reactions to their acts. Babies progress through distinct phases as they begin to play with vocal sounds (baby talk), and then to experiment with more complex word meanings, word order, rhymes, and finally to play with speech conventions (Garvey, 1984). Playing with the language helps a learner unravel the mysteries of human speech. Through play they learn to combine sounds (**phonology**), parts of words (**morphology**), whole words (**semantics**), and grammar (**syntax**) to enable them to communicate.

Although the learning environments may differ, the learning stages of any successful language learner mirror those of babies interacting with their parents. Children first need to hear the language spoken to acquire an “ear” for the sounds (phonological awareness). Then they can begin to experiment and play with the language to construct and convey varied, meaningful messages.

Literature on language acquisition also presents another dimension of *Language Play*: for a child to play in the language. Here the research talks about the importance of embedding play, fun, novelty, and positive emotions in an immersive language acquisition process⁴.

Play, by its very nature, necessitates the production of language as a child learns to engage the attention of the other person, negotiate and interact, and express needs and desires to be a full participant in the playful activities.

A successful learning environment combines both aspects of *Language Play*: playing in and with the language. Our brains thrive on challenge, novelty, fun, play and positive reinforcement. A language instructor must be attentive to both the developmental phase of children’s linguistic growth as well as their need to be engaged in the learning process through fun and playful activities. Learning must be meaningful, authentic, and presented in the context of broader learning goals, such as being able to play a game in the language at recess, or being able to converse with an Elder while gathering berries.



⁴ Weisberg, D., Zosh, J., Hirsh-Pasek, K., Golinkoff, R., *Talking It up: Play, Language Development, and the Role of Adult Support*. American Journal of Play, 2013.

What it Looks Like: Playing with the Language

Providing opportunities for play with the language can enrich the language classroom experience. *Language Play* may involve the use of chants, songs, and rhymes. Young children, in particular, love rhymes and simple songs, often repeating them over and over again for the pleasure of hearing the words. Repetition helps to lock the vocabulary, intonation, and sentence patterns in the mind of the learner and associates pleasurable emotions with the hard work of learning a language. This play reinforces children's overall language acquisition.

Language Play evolves as a learner matures and acquires greater experience with the language. Older students may enjoy playing with syntax or semantics by changing the word order or substituting words. These students may take personal delight in creating unique sentences and conversational scripts that challenge their peers, teachers, and parents.

Playful activities such as Word Duels (student says a word starting with the last sound of their opponent's word) and Sentence Builders (student changes one word or adds a new word in an opponent's sentence and passes it on to another) can elicit both intellectual joy and laughter. Here too, a student associates pleasurable memories with the language learning experience.

Experimental play helps to consolidate a growing vocabulary and set of grammatical rules, which in turn prepares the students for more complex conversations with more proficient speakers. In essence, through this play with the language the rules of conversation are revealed to both a young child and a student learner.



What Do Parents Say?

We spend a lot of time at home quizzing my children and asking them daily what new words and phrases they have learned. My younger child is constantly asking his older sister how to say different sentences in Chip such as, "There's a squirrel on my face" or "I need to buy a pink phone in Hay River". And my 14 year old daughter is able to help her brother with his crazy requests... Our kids are speaking the language at home and we, the parents, are learning to speak Chip with our kids.

Lisa Beaulieu, Fort Resolution

Reinforce vocabulary and key phrases through games like Scrabble, Go Fish and Concentration can make the Indigenous language fun.

What it Looks Like: Playing in the Language

To make playing in the language the heart of a lesson serves a dual purpose: both engaging a learner's interest, and embedding functional vocabulary in complete sentences that are relevant to students' lives. The challenge is to add spark and novelty to the language learning experience and make lessons that students enjoy.

But *Language Play*—play in the language—should not be restricted to the classroom. The goal of any language class is always to teach and promote functional dialogue that is relevant outside of the classroom: in the gym, at home, on the playground, and on the land. Successful teachers embed game-play into their lessons by teaching vocabulary to play these games while immersed in the language. Language play helps to reinforce connections between home, community and school.



Games like Tag, Hide 'n Seek (you're it, got you, counting to 20, ready or not here I come, I'm home), Rock, Paper, Scissors, and even Hockey (pass me the puck, over here, shoot) can all be played in the language. If students first learn to play these games in the Indigenous language, then they will use the language when they play and will use expressions like 'high five' in the language to celebrate.

What Do Language Teachers Say?

I teach my students to play in their language on the playground. In the springtime, I give them sidewalk chalk and they draw and label pictures in the language and it's not uncommon to hear my students using chants in my language as they skip and swing.

Angie Fabien, Deninu School

What Do Language Teachers Say?

My younger students love to sing. I have translated "If You're Happy" and a counting song into Dëne Sųłné and we sing almost every day. They love to take the lead. Often when my students are doing seatwork, someone will start to sing and soon all the others have joined in.

*Elizabeth Catholique,
Lutsel K'e Dene School*

Language Immersion

The school and classroom environment immerses the students in the language and engages all the senses.

Description

In a full **immersion** program, ideally, all activities and learning, except for English Language Arts classes, are in the Indigenous language. Immersion programs are offered, in the early grades, in a few communities in the NWT.

The *Our Languages* curriculum is for **core** language programs in the NWT. In core Indigenous language programs, children learn their Indigenous language as a specific subject. The goal is to become capable, but without the support of family and community, it is unlikely a child will become fluent in a core program.

However, the best chance for children to become capable within a core program is to take best practices from full immersion programs and to provide the students as much time in the language as possible.

This means that there should be very little translation happening within the language classroom. It also means that throughout the school, staff and students use the language in daily routines and that all the senses are engaged. Teachers of other subjects such as physical education, science and social studies or even school activities like cooking are also encouraged to incorporate as much language as possible. Ideally, this will increase the children's exposure to the language and increase their opportunities for using the language.

What Do Language Leaders Say?

Staying in the language is hard. I used to translate for my students as I didn't like to see them frustrated and I thought I was helping them. Over the last two years, I've really tried to stay in the language and it is really working. My students are becoming more fluent and it is really rewarding for all of us.

Corrine Sassie, Fort Liard



Language immersion begins at home.

What it Looks Like: Staying in the Language

One of the main principles of a concentrated approach to language instruction is the expectation that the Indigenous language instructor and the students will stay in the language in all classroom interactions. Staying in the language requires discipline on the part of both instructors and students. High expectations for all will result in greater language learning. Instructions, explanations, commands, directions, praise, questions and responses must all be spoken in the language with techniques such as **Total Physical Response (TPR)**. TPR is a language teaching approach that focuses on developing comprehension skills using actions. Pictures and illustrations without words can also be used (Dick-Billy et. al, 2007).

Working in a concentrated language environment places rigorous demands on the students and may at first generate a lot of confusion as they struggle to understand the new phrases and respond appropriately. This is an intended outcome and an important part of the learning process. The confusion forces the brain to work harder to seek meaning and by working harder, new neural pathways are formed just as in a baby's brain. In essence, through this confusion and struggle the brain is preparing itself for input offered in a new language and mapping out a pathway towards understanding. Over time, the sounds, words and grammar of that language will be internalized, meaningfully categorized, and understood. The student must first acquire language through listening and deep thinking but will soon respond with spoken words.

This is the heart of language acquisition, even within a core language program – the flooding of the senses with language input and forcing the brain to think and respond in that language. The powerful benefits can only be realized through a firm commitment on the part of the language instructor to stay in the language throughout the entire class.



Teachers in the Tłıchǫ region make a 'T' symbol with their hands when they notice each other speaking English. This is a gentle reminder to speak in Tłıchǫ. Although it's very hard to stay in the language they are reminding each other to do so.

If instruction shifts between English and the Indigenous language, the benefits are reduced significantly (Netten, J. and Germain, C., 2012). In this scenario, the brain no longer has to work at understanding the Indigenous language. Instead, meaning can be derived from the English translation that is sure to follow and the new language will not embed itself in the brain. When deep thinking and hard work are part of language learning, growth and fluency in the language flourishes.

The brain is designed to respond to challenge and seek order and meaning from the world around it. Placing the students in well-prepared cultural situations where the language is used provides them with the greatest opportunity to begin to think and speak in their ancestral language.

What Do Language Leaders Say?

With short classroom periods, the students don't have enough time to interact meaningfully. You just get going, and the class is over. It would be better to have longer periods, even every second day. This is especially true starting in Grade 4 or 5. That way, students have more than two or three minutes each to build on their language skills.

*David Macfarlane,
Second language consultant*

What it Looks Like: In the School

Language reinforcement begins at the very doorstep of the school when students are greeted in the language. Signage welcoming them with the date and the weather should be visible when they enter. All classroom teachers have a role to play in doing their very best to use the language for classroom routines, including snack time. Within the specific Indigenous language classroom teachers should have a signal or routine that prompts the students for the experiences that await them. One Dene Elder has called this “putting on their Dene ears.”

Successful Indigenous language instructors have firmly established entry routines that help focus student attention on their language. These routines might be a greeting in which students welcome one another, or in a dialogue where students share some detail about their personal life such as how they are feeling, what they ate for dinner last night or a description of the weather. These routines may sound simple but they reinforce the language and also provide the opportunity for the instructor to introduce new phrases.



At snack time the children ask for their snack in Wiilìideh. Keysha Delorme has asked next for a green apple by saying, “Jìecho it’òq nehwhò,” which translates to “apple-green-I-want”, showing she knows the proper word order in her language.

Other routines may involve a song, a prayer or even a game that signals a start to the class.

Ideally, the dialogue, questions, and responses within the routine will vary during the year. This ensures that the students are not just parroting a learned response but actually thinking about the questions posed and providing a meaningful and authentic response. This simple routine helps consolidate language learned and also prepares them to start thinking, listening, and speaking in their language as the class begins.

Music plays a critical role for auditory learners. Rotating displays of pictures, signs, brochures, maps, cultural artifacts and real-life objects not only brighten classroom walls but they may also heighten interest in both language and culture, particularly if these artifacts serve as props in classroom dialogue and role-playing scenarios.

What Do Language Leaders Say?

To encourage all of our teachers to learn more of the language and also to help with relationship building, I asked my Aboriginal language teachers to work with one teacher each to build lessons together. One group picked physical education and the children were taught how to use the language associated with sport. Because it was physical, the children were engaged and enjoyed using the phrases as they played the games. It helped with Aboriginal language retention for both the student and the teacher. This was an excellent opportunity for both teacher and student to be learners together. That is what teaching and learning Aboriginal language is all about!

Velma Illasiak

Principal at Moose Kerr School, Aklivik

What Does the Research Say?

The benefits of full immersion are well documented in research and literature and there are many shining examples of successful immersion programs and schools around the world. One often cited example is the immersion program used to teach the Hawaiian language. These schools have reported remarkable success, noting that in the 1980s when immersion was first introduced fewer than 50 children spoke the Hawaiian language and now, thirty years later, more than 4,000 children have been assessed as fluent in their language (McCarty, 2014).

These are results that many educational jurisdictions seek to replicate and already there is movement in this direction in the Northwest Territories, with Indigenous language immersion programs now operating in primary grades in Fort Providence and Behchokò as of 2018. Yet not all communities have the capacity to offer a full immersion program and these communities must optimize the effectiveness of core language programming.

Using immersion methods can bring great benefit to any language program, particularly if the school administrators are committed to the time allocation and scheduling needed and teachers are committed to staying in the language and have high expectations that the students will do the same. Here too, there are several successful schools in the NWT that offer immersion style approaches in core programs. Assessment in language ability confirms that the students in these classes are also on a firm path towards becoming capable speakers.

What Do Parents Say?

My son came home sharing different words and phrases he's learned in his language class. He and his brother were trying to talk to each other in Dene Zhatié and he even made up a quiz for me. My son said he wishes these classes didn't have to end. This new approach is engaging my son much more than how they learned in the past. It is giving me hope for the language.

Teresa Vandell, Fort Providence



The Immersion program in Behchokò is a choice for parents of children in Kindergarten to Grade 2.

Active Learning

Students take turns in sharing a lead role as they learn through active involvement in real and purposeful tasks.

Description

In traditional times, a child's education or learning was under the guidance of a parent, grandparent or trusted Elder. They involved the child in real life tasks, often with authentic tools. Learning occurred through demonstration and action as the child watched and modelled the movements and activities of a caregiver and then tried the task. Real and purposeful tasks filled a child's day—picking berries, cleaning fish, sewing moccasins or collecting firewood. Learning was real and purposeful.

'Traditionally, education was not schooling. Learning for survival happened during all the waking hours, each and every day, and all life long. Learning occurred through life experience—not in abstraction or set apart from on-going life activities.'

(Dene Kede [K-6], 1993, p. xxvi)

Although this approach may still be found within families, there is still room for improvement within our schools. Acquiring a language, like all learning, is not a passive endeavour: it must be active, engaging and purposeful.

In this way, OLC is consistent with other efforts being made in the NWT to renew our approach to all learning. For more information see NWT Key Competencies on page 60.

What Do Language Leaders Say?

We teach our language and culture through activities like an evening sewing group. When the youth participate they hear the language and are encouraged to use the language. Phrases such as, 'Daitı k'ata' bet'á ıts'éwé tá kó kets'erélu' or, 'Use a square needle to sew moosehide slippers' connects to home as they hear the language around sewing from their mothers and grandmothers.

Maryann Vital, Regional Indigenous Language Coordinator, Délıne



The late Philip Zoe shared knowledge of where a moose had traveled with Shelinda Eyakfwo of Gamètì.

What it Looks Like: Setting the Conditions for Active Learning

Engaged listening plays a critical role in language learning, but so too does speaking. The critical question in a language classroom is “who is doing the talking?” Is the classroom primarily focused on teacher-talk? Or is the classroom dynamic and active, with the students learning to take command of the conversation, practicing dialogue with their classmates, playing games that consolidate new vocabulary and even leading the many and varied learning experiences? It is critical for educators to realize that the people doing most of the talking are the people doing most of the learning; thus students need to have many opportunities to practice using the language!

A general rule for good classroom design is a 70:30 ratio with 70 percent of the classroom instructional time devoted to the learners as they practice new skills, by working together and teaching each other these new skills. The remaining 30 percent of the time is set aside for full class activities and teacher-led instruction. For example, each time a new centre is introduced the teacher would set the conditions for the learning by teaching the new phrases and vocabulary. Some strategies proposed by the Neurolinguistic approach (NLA) for introducing new phrases are described on pages 70-75. Once the new sentences have been introduced, it is important that the students use them in meaningful and engaging ways.

Some teachers use a learning centre approach with the students rotating between centres designed to teach and reinforce specific language skills with challenging and engaging games and activities. Each centre is managed by a student leader who acts as surrogate teacher within the group.

In the learning centre approach, the teacher serves as guide, encouraging and challenging students to use their language, modeling correct sentence usage and pulling small groups together for some guided instruction focused on a particular learning outcome. The approach is student-focused, active and intended to encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning.



*Sally Drygeese plays the different **barrier games** in her language class in Dettah. Students are active in their learning and each take a lead role in the games. Notice also that the classroom teacher is learning along with her students.*

What it Looks Like: Shared Learning Experiences

Planning for a purposeful task is a critical component for language learning (Paradis, 2009). It involves planning with an end task that challenges the students to display or demonstrate their learning and their growing language skills. Another component is that they display their learning to an authentic audience. Children really put in the extra effort when it is for someone other than their teacher. An audience may consist of parents, Elders and community leaders, other teachers or classes, community members, a pre-school group, or a video uploaded on social media or even the press. Technology also eases the possibility for students to link with students of similar ability in other communities.

It is important to introduce the end-task at the beginning of the unit so that the students know what they are working towards. All the planning can go into building the language needed around the task. Some final project ideas include an oral autobiography at a school assembly, presenting a puppet play to a pre-school group that includes singing songs, hosting an Elders' tea and preparing conversations ahead of time to have with the Elders on select topics, having a fashion show, or other creations such as a class collection of poems, skits, speeches, songs or comedy routines at a school assembly or public gathering.

What Do Our Language Leaders Say?

Unnagiami atauhingmi numiyuittut, kihimi unnagiatq tamaat. They didn't just dance for one night, but every night. Huqulayuq pihingmik anittillayuq inuit maliktaat. When a singer started a song, everyone else joined in. Ulaamniliraangat ihuaqhitiqattaqhugu. If the singer mixed up the words, they corrected him.

Akoakhion, 2005



After the unit (found in the accompanying teacher's guide) on their favourite activities, the students can put on a fashion show where they introduce themselves, their favourite activity and what clothes they need to wear and equipment they need to have.

What Does the Research Say?

Many studies have examined the nature of the task in promoting student engagement. Even before the terms active and project-based learning became common phrases spoken by educators, Newmann (1992) speculated that learning would be greatly enhanced in classrooms where the student assumed ownership through tasks that were authentic, collaborative and fun. He went on to conclude that schools would be infinitely more successful, and students much more engaged, if such active and project-based tasks were ingrained into everyday practice.

Skilled Indigenous language instructors throughout the North are rediscovering the roots of traditional learning and incorporating elements of active learning into their classroom practice. Activities and tasks that may be fun or deeply challenging provide opportunity for the students to practice their language skills, deepen learning, and build confidence and strengthen independence. More importantly, NWT experience suggests that as students become part of the community of language speakers their sense of identity is strengthened.

What Do Researchers Say?

I developed the walking and storytelling method...after reading about the value of effortful recall (Brown et al., 2014): the higher the effort, the greater the learning value. It has great value in reviewing stories....After a story is reviewed in class using audio and images, the students stand up in pairs, walk outside...telling each other the story from memory....because they are at the same level, they find this exercise safe and fun. It is a joy...hearing pairs of students speaking, laughing, struggling to remember, and supporting each other.

*S7ímla?x^w Michele Johnson,
Syilx Langage House*

When students go out snow-shoeing there is an opportunity for the Elder to share knowledge about snow, what clothes to wear and what to do if they get lost. The teacher needs to prepare both the Elder and the students ahead of time regarding the types of language to practice so that they find success and can stay in the language.



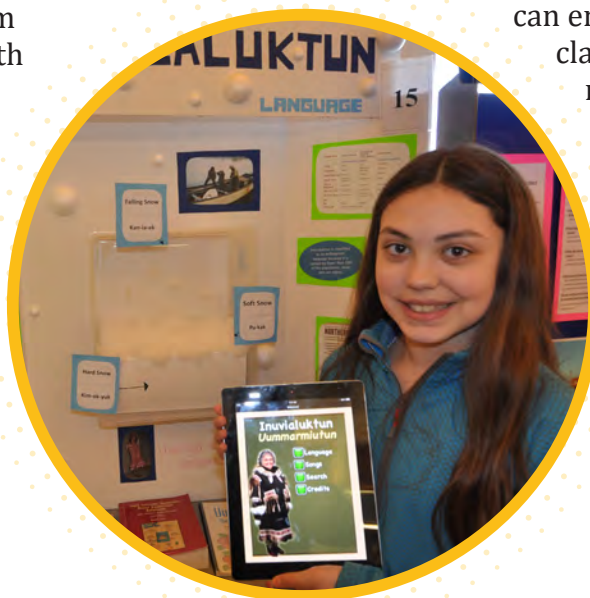
Use of Technology

A wide variety of digital tools are available to motivate learners and promote language use.

Description

Teaching has changed dramatically with the rise of digital technology. Devices such as digital cameras, tablets, smart boards and digital social networks have opened up new possibilities for innovative classroom instruction. These tools can transform how we interact with content and with others. Many learners are already skilled with technology, creating content for peers, family, and community alike. Using digital technology tools builds on students' pre-existing strengths and interests, reflects cultural resilience in a time of change, and develops skills relevant to modern workplaces.

The *Use of Technology* can be a big boost to the language classroom. Teachers can enhance their instruction by infusing new technology into lesson plans with clear language learning outcomes. Using technology can enliven a language classroom by motivating students to communicate in creative and familiar ways while they express their cultural identity.



What Do Language Leaders Say?

I was one of the first teachers in our school to get a Smart Board in my classroom. It is a great tool for a language class and I used it to display and talk about pictures, write stories together and play vocabulary games. The students thought I was the coolest teacher and they loved coming to my Chipewyan Language class. It really helped to add excitement to my classes.

Eileen Beaver, retired teacher, Fort Smith

Simple, accessible, and interactive language apps are available for each official Indigenous language in the NWT. Olivia Iatridis shares how the Inuvialuktun app provides thematically arranged vocabulary resources to support independent learner practice. For her Heritage Fair project she demonstrated how students can hear a word or sentence spoken by a fluent speaker, see its written form, connect it to an image, and are then prompted to repeat the word.

What Does the Research Say?

Aside from its appeal to students who are already ‘tuned in and turned on’, using technology in thoughtful ways can address the varied learning styles of language learners and help build confidence and motivation—critical to the success in any language classroom (Lacina, 2004).

Viewing and producing multimedia content (sound files, videos and pictures) enables students to acquire vocabulary, practice sentence patterns, and create meaningful presentations for local or territorial audiences.

Fun, familiar, and sensory rich apps, when used responsibly, allow learners to interact freely—listening, speaking, reading, writing, participating in cultural activities, and expressing identity.

Social media is highly accessible to students on their own time. With a device children are able to construct knowledge ‘anytime, anywhere,’ learn-by-doing, and share their knowledge with an authentic audience such as a grandparent in another community (Stager, 2017). Social media is all about creating content for themselves. Diverse tools allow educators to authentically engage students as they encourage involvement, discussion, communication, collaboration and creativity (Sheninger, 2012).



Students demonstrate ownership of their language when they are able to interact creatively with others. They appreciate being able to use digital tools like audio recorders to conduct inquiry-based learning, and express their cultural identity in personalized online settings.



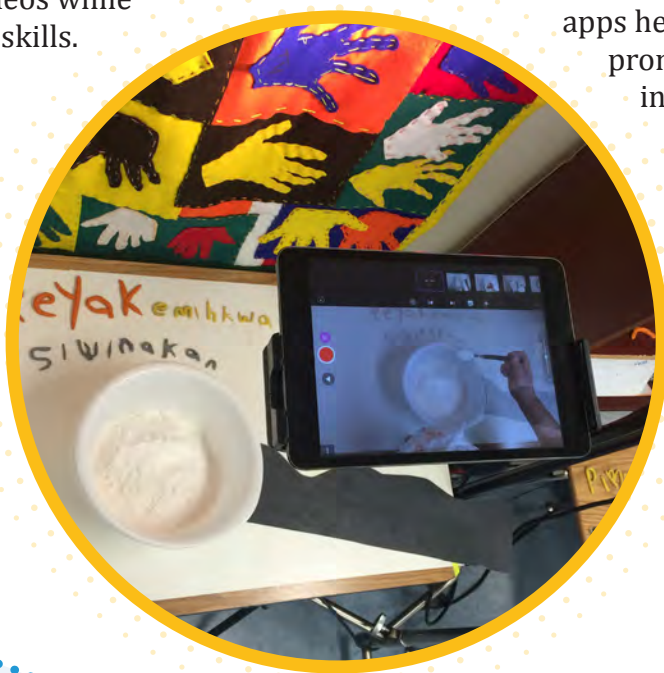
Violet Jumbo and her daughter Natasha text each other in Dene Zhatié. Even when they are not in the same community they can keep using their language. They don't worry about mistakes because it's about communication not perfection.

What it Looks Like: Technology in the School

While technology comes in many forms, the most effective technological resources allow learners to create content. Every day, new technologies are made available and teachers and students are encouraged to use what makes sense in their learning environment. The following are some examples:

Students can use video production programs to write, produce and star in videos while building greater conversational skills. Simply demonstrating the use of a tablet or mobile phone to film a student conversation can inspire other students to create authentic content on their own devices. Students can then experiment with dialogue and re-record the exchange until they are satisfied with the flow, pronunciation, and intonation.

Programs which provide tools to document, preserve, enhance, and share authentic experiences can assist with learning. Pictures of a community event can be imported and enhanced by narrated dialogue, music, and animation. Creative projects showcase student learning and reveal the function, adaptability, and cultural vibrancy of language to communities. Other apps help develop pronunciation and intonation when learners read along.



What Do Language Teachers Say?

I have set up centres in my classroom, each with games and activities designed to review and reinforce new vocabulary and conversations. Each centre is led by a student-leader. One of my centres is set up with an iPad and the Dene Yatie Language App. The students work as a group to practice the words, both listening to and repeating the new words and then they test their skills and memory using one of the many games offered in the app.

Diana Pellissey, Diamond Jenness Secondary School, Hay River

Digital devices like tablets are possible tools for vocabulary rich multimedia projects. In Vance Sanderson's Cree class in Fort Smith, the students made a 'how to make bannock' video using Claymation animation. Other students and their peers can watch it whenever they want. It can be shown at an assembly, or be shared with students within their region on social media. The digital tool helps to reinforce their language skills and build an online language identity.

What it Looks Like: Technology outside the School

Literacy can be reinforced by teaching sentences suitable to type into a social media post so students can participate in a territorial #SpeakMyLanguage viral video challenge. As students expand the range of language skills they use online and learn to use new keyboards and fonts designed specifically for our languages, they develop broader communicative skills. On social media, students can connect with peers in other communities, discuss language issues, practice conversation, and promote the importance of using language in all its forms. As they progress, students can conduct a rap contest, film an Elder's story project for the Heritage Fair, or consult online resources like the Th̓chq̓ Dictionary.



Many of the stories, written by NWT Indigenous authors, are available digitally. When students listen and follow along to the stories it enhances their language skills.

Teachers should select devices, programs, apps, and resources that benefit learners with varied needs and interests, and design technology-enhanced activities that lead to language learning outcomes.



*Teachers in Tuktoyaktuk recorded phrases using a **QR code** app and put pictures around the school and town. Any phone user can download the free app and listen to the phrase.*

What Do Language Teachers Say?

My students interviewed Elders from our community and filmed them as they told stories from the past. The stories were shared in Dene Yatie. The students then illustrated them and put everything together in a video which we shared at a community gathering. The students were proud of their productions and learned so much about their language, their culture and technology. It was an awesome experience for everyone.

*Diane Tourangeau, Chief Sunrise
Education Centre, K'at'l'odeche First
Nations Reserve*

Whole School Approach

Administrators and all staff use language throughout the whole school and model language learning at all times.

Description

Schools with successful **core Indigenous** language programs have broadened the reach of the classroom: students receive concentrated, **functional** instruction in the language, but also hear and use the Indigenous language in routine, conversational interactions with other staff and students throughout the school. Language learning in these environments involves everyone in the school community including administrators, staff, students, and family members. School-wide core Indigenous language programs that provide students with sustained multisensory language input help them to achieve increased fluency. Improving students' Indigenous language skills needs to be a whole school responsibility—not only led by Indigenous language instructors but also championed together with their colleagues and supervisors.

A *Whole School Approach* to Indigenous language learning can improve student growth in all subject areas, foster professional development and team-based planning for all teachers, model learning and advocacy among administrators, and involve parents in learning. When everyone makes Indigenous language use a professional and personal responsibility, the languages are sure to thrive.



What Do Parents Say?

My children come home speaking their language and teaching me new words every day. My youngest daughter goes over to my elderly mother and speaks the language to her and the smile that my mother makes is just breath-taking.

*Ruth Mandeville,
Parent, Fort Resolution*

The South Slave District Education Council (SSDEC) is a leader in promoting functional language use by all staff, publishing books in Indigenous languages, and collaborating with local community to produce innovative cultural resources like a multilingual feature film based on the graphic novel, Three Feathers.

What it Looks Like: The Role of Administrators

Broadening the scope of an Indigenous language program requires inspired and committed leadership to facilitate shifts in attitude, program focus, and behaviour in all stakeholders. This shift cannot take place without principals – they are the critical leaders. Along with school superintendents who set broad strategic direction, the principals set the school tone. They also identify school priorities, distribute resources, assess teacher efficacy, assign staff to projects, and guide professional development.

Simple changes such as including language in signage and daily announcements can have a huge impact. Administrators can prioritize timetabling and space allocation decisions that ensure dedicated classrooms and adequate planning and instruction time for Indigenous language instructors.

Principals already have the responsibility to ensure that all teachers use *Dene Kede* and *Inuuqatigiit*, but culturally responsive schools truly flourish when Indigenous languages receive whole school support. Mindful of staff capacities, principals monitor language programs, set high expectations for all staff, and involve themselves in student assessments. As instructional leaders, they should learn about language instruction best practices, and support all instructors to design and implement an engaging and effective, cross-curricular language program.

Principals strengthen institutional relationships with community by learning to use the language. The late Kate Powell was principal in Fort Resolution and modeled language learning by using it in the morning announcements.



What Do Language Teachers Say?

At K'alemi Dene School, we identified common phrases. "Take your pencil" and "May I get a drink of water?" are just two examples. We practice these sentences (and variations for number and person) with our students and staff. Then we make posters so everyone has visual cues to support their use of these common phrases. Once the use becomes habit, we add more phrases.

A school is such a busy place that the use of the local language tends to fade unless it is constantly emphasized and encouraged. We have been most successful when we reinforce language use through regular staff P.D., fun language contests, and by including Wìlìdèh Yatì content in other curricular areas. Teachers need to attend language classes with their students so that they know the same vocabulary and can remind each other to use Wìlìdèh Yatì all day.

*Ty Hamilton,
Indigenous Language and Culture Coordinator,
K'alemi Dene School, Ndilo*

What it Looks Like: The Involvement of All Staff

Student language proficiency improves when all staff embed Indigenous language into daily instruction, including greetings and functional dialogue about school routines. Reversing roles, students also meaningfully apply their knowledge by becoming language tutors for others.

Staff members may collaborate with Indigenous language instructors and/or use the language apps to learn functional phrases or embed vocabulary that enriches teaching topics in their subjects, such as the parts of a caribou in Experiential Science, or oral history about constellations. Physical education instructors can give coaching instructions in the Indigenous languages of the community. It is equally as important for Indigenous language instructors to design their lessons around what is taught in other subjects. When the learning is embedded both ways there is more chance for acquisition.

Learning about language also supports learning in the language. For example, in Northern Studies, instructors can lead classroom discussions about the *Official Languages Act* or support conversations about dialectical diversity in the NWT. English Language Arts instructors can provide support by teaching about standardized orthographies as one example of how language systems function and change. Most importantly, teachers can encourage children to recognize the influence the English language has had on their Indigenous language.

Coordinating curricular themes, vocabulary, learning outcomes and student assessments requires advanced planning.

New teachers can begin their language journey by learning how to introduce themselves, and by incorporating language goals into their professional learning and teaching plans.



What Do Teachers Say?

In my junior high class I was doing a unit on water systems. I wanted to incorporate the two languages spoken in Aklavik, Gwich'in and Inuvialuktun. I worked with the language teachers and they taught me the names of the rivers and lakes around the area and the names of all the fish. They came into my class when I was teaching the unit to support me. The students really enjoyed it and learned language that will help connect them with their family members. Also, the process helped me get to know my colleagues better too.

Shane Douglas, Moose Kerr School, Aklavik

Nimisha Bastedo, a teacher at Deh Gáh School in Fort Providence, has immersed herself in Dene Zhatié. She is able to share her language skills with students through conversation and music, and her personal connection to the community is evident by the smiles she receives when greeting people in the language.

What it Looks Like: Connecting School and Family

Partnering with members of the broader community is a critical component to the whole school approach, which is also an important step towards reconciliation. While mindful of inter-generational trauma and the stages of healing, schools can work with Elders, parents, caregivers, and local language workers to support the specific learning outcomes of Indigenous language classes and broader school-wide activities.

The language itself can serve as the bridge between home and school. If students are taught conversational dialogue that can be used in a home and community setting, they will be excited about sharing their language learning with others. Taking the language home and into the community should be the expectation of students in all language classes.



In Nahanni Butte, all caregivers are welcome to participate in Cathryn Bertrand's language class. The coffee is on and snacks are available. Not all parents are speakers, but those who are help model the language, and those who are learning alongside their children also model what good language learners do—like take risks in class.

What Does the Research Say?

When the language class is “liberated from its regular 2 hour time slot on the timetable and expanded into other areas of the curriculum it provides a more authentic context for learning”. The language program also benefits from “principal support, positive reinforcement, improved staff attitudes and enhanced status” (Jones, 1995, p. 156).

*Jane Jones,
Language Scholar*

What Does the Research Say?

School principals strongly influence the likelihood of change at a school since “their actions serve to legitimate whether a change is to be taken seriously” (2016, pg. 76).

*Michael Fullan,
School Reform Researcher*

In the Community

Learning flourishes when language moves through the home and school, onto the playground, up the street, and on the land.

Description

The collective responsibility of all community members to raise healthy, capable Northerners is at the heart of the statement “It takes a village to raise a child.” Similarly, “it takes a village to raise a language.” *Our Languages* curriculum is designed with this premise in mind – for the school and community to work together in revitalizing Indigenous languages.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRCC) recognized the importance of community in leading language revitalization efforts, stating in its *Calls to Action* that “the

preservation, revitalization and strengthening of Aboriginal languages and cultures are best managed by Aboriginal people and communities” (Call to Action # 14.iv, 2015, p. 3).

Schools play a critical role supporting the goals that are integral parts of local and regional strategic plans for language revitalization. The goals ensure that the whole school language experiences are closely connected to community situations and have life and vibrancy beyond the classroom door.

What Do Language Leaders Say?

The land and the language are one. When children learn on the land it is totally different. There are no distractions so they are more interested and focused. It’s easier for Elders to stay in the language as they have all the visuals around them. When preparing to go on the land, the teachers need to plan with the Elders so that they can pre-teach some of the phrases they know the Elders will be using. This makes it easier for the students to be awake to the language as they will find familiarity in some of what the Elders are saying.

*Violet Jumbo, Regional Indigenous Language Coordinator,
Dehcho First Nations*



Students in Kakisa are learning phrases about traveling and the place names of where they will soon be going for an on-the-land trip.

What Does the Research Say?

Researchers have explored the interconnection between the language spoken in the community and the language taught in the classroom. Each context prepares students to participate fully in both the community and the school as they become more fluent.

Krashen (2013) has studied the reciprocal relationship between school and community in terms of language acquisition and language learning. He points out that language is acquired naturally through authentic real-world experiences, but only if learners understand the context and have some language knowledge to refer to; schools must prepare students to be active participants. He wrote that the classroom is no substitute for the outside world—its goal is to “bring

the students to the point where they can use the outside world for further acquisition, to where they can begin to understand the language used on the outside” (p. 59).

Krashen goes on to say that classroom instruction is valuable because it presents language material in a comprehensible form—which often is not the case where a conversation between two fluent speakers may be almost incomprehensible to a new learner. Language teachers are trained to sequence language learning, talk more slowly to enunciate all parts of the language, and use simpler vocabulary to guide new learners toward understanding. Schools are a bridge between the language needs of students and the rich experiences that await them outside the classroom door.



Students in Sachs Harbour share the Inuvialuktun phrases for, ‘it’s windy’ and ‘it’s sunny’ with a visiting scientist who was in Sachs to talk about solar and wind power. Innovative schools can always find a way to imbed the language at every opportunity.

What Do Language Teachers Say?

The best part of being a language teacher is listening to the students tell stories in Inuinnaqtun. They learn to connect the words and phrases that we’ve worked on in school while they are out on the land hunting with their parents. When they use the Inuinnaqtun language they get to see what it means to our Elders.

*Jean Epilun Ekpakohak,
Language Instructor,
Ulukhaktok*

What it Looks Like: Community Experiences

One goal of any language program is to develop communicative competence: to understand and be understood. Seeing, hearing, and using language with other speakers in the community helps also to build a sense of belonging. The language itself is a repository of knowledge and some things just cannot be translated. To help students become part of the community of speakers, schools need to focus on teaching learners the dialogue of the community.

Reaching out and engaging the learners in the community to be a part of contests, challenges, programs and activities that are organized outside the school help to connect the school and community. This provides a fertile ground for language learning and demonstrates the relevance of the language to the lives of the students, which in turn provides them with a purpose for learning, and helps motivate them.



Community experiences provide an authentic learning context and immediate rewards when language is used. Before a community celebration, students can practice useful sentences, such as, “Let’s get up and jig together.”

What Do Language Leaders Say?

When the Elders of Fort Resolution were first approached about participating in a community dictionary project, their only request was that the meetings take place in the school. The Elders wanted the students to see them working on their language and this also provided the students with the opportunity to be involved. The dictionary project became a school-wide project.

*Brent Kaulback, former Assistant Superintendent of Education,
South Slave District Education Council*

What it Looks Like: In the School

Reinforcing vocabulary and communicative phrases around common home items and shared experiences such as dinner time conversations, answering the phone, greeting visitors and bedtime routines are a good start. As proficiency improves, so too should the depth of conversation as students become better able to express thoughts and opinions, share experiences, discuss events and wonder aloud. All of these connect to real-life community experiences.



Many groups print community cookbooks featuring treasured traditional food recipes from local families. One innovative group extended this idea by producing a series of in-the-language cooking shows that were posted to social media. Giving students the functional language necessary to use the cookbooks at home with their families is the role of the school.

What Do Language Teachers Say?

I had contacted some community members and guests before they came to visit my class. I had wanted them to be aware of my students' language skills and areas of interest. I had shared with them all the sentences my students learned for the unit. That way I hoped they would speak with my students within the range of language they could understand. I wanted my students to experience success.

*Sharon Allen, Dene Zhatié Teacher,
Fort Simpson*

Connecting with Elders

Students and Elders share their language and culture while learning together.

Description

Elders have always held a special status within Northern communities. They are highly regarded as leaders, healers, hunters, storytellers, sacred ceremonial practitioners, and traditional teachers. Elders also play a dominant role in preserving and passing on the language, culture and history of their communities. It can be said that Elders are our professors, and the land a university.

Indigenous communities have been resilient as they recover their languages and traditions from the disruptive legacy of residential, boarding, and

day school systems. Many Elders today still speak the words of their Ancestors, and are actively involved in language revitalization as teachers, advocates, researchers, mentors and conversation partners for learners of all ages. To ensure that Indigenous languages thrive in the generations to come, we must renew the traditional educational connection between young learners and Elders, tapping into Elders' irreplaceable knowledge, gifts, skills, and talents.



What Do Language Leaders Say?

How does generation after generation replace one another? It is possible only through teaching one another.

*Jimmy B. Rabesca,
Rae Edzo (Dene Kede, p.xxiv)*

Many Elders maintain a special relationship with youth, ensuring that language, oral history, and culture are passed on from one generation to another. Returning to Ulukhaktok from an on-the-land trip, Darla Evyagotailak receives a welcome hug from Elder Mary Kudlak.

What it Looks Like: Reciprocity with Learning

Communication, learning, and contribution work both ways. The presence of Elders in classrooms provides an opportunity for students to showcase their growing skills as speakers, practice meaningful conversation, and validate their learning in a safe and supportive environment. Teachers and students should also look for ways to be immersed in the language by doing everyday activities like grocery shopping, cleaning and stacking wood with and for a fluent speaker. Elders in turn gain from the social interaction, mental stimulation, and physical activity of being involved in schools. Reciprocal activities strengthen the bond between Elders and youth and actively bridge their learning into the community.



Authentic land-based activities provide excellent opportunities to enrich and validate the Indigenous language program. Elders should be encouraged to speak only in their ancestral language when interacting with learners. Margaret Vandell is speaking with her granddaughter Mikaela.

Students and Elders alike will need preparation, guidance, and follow-up by teachers and administrators to support language learning outcomes. Most schools in the NWT already have meaningful ties with community Elders who attend classes regularly to share stories. Elders frequently participate in on-the-land programs to teach students to hunt, trap, fish, tan hides and sew. Elders also contribute to Indigenous language learning; however, they do require support from the teachers. They need to have their health and well-being looked after and they also need to be aware of the language proficiency of the students so that they can speak to them at the appropriate level.

What Do Language Leaders Say?

The Elders often speak to the children in English to ensure the children understand important cultural teachings. As administrators, we need to schedule the cultural content during all school programming so that during the language lessons the children are hearing the language one hundred percent of the time. We need to help the Elders stay in the language.

Lois Philipp, Principal, Deh Gáh School

What it Looks Like: Awakening the Language

Elders have so much to share about the language itself. As keepers of the language, they may be aware of the **sleeping words** of their language—words and phrases that refer to activities and items that are not commonly used in today’s society and have fallen into disuse. As fluent speakers, they may speak an older form of the language and may be willing to share information with more advanced students about what words and phrases used to mean. This knowledge must be preserved and passed on to students who will, in time, assume roles as Elders, capable and confident to pass on the teachings and the language to the next generation. Students learn to follow community protocols about intergenerational interaction that reaffirm respectful relations between youth and Elders in Indigenous communities.

Elders have special knowledge to share on a whole host of topics. A project on plants and animals is truly complete when an Elder goes walking with students to share animal legends or explain the healing qualities of plants to students in the language. Inviting Elders to come to have tea and bannock with students

authentically culminates a unit on food and dinner-table conversation. Elders who share stories related to their childhood on the land enrich a unit study and catalyze further student learning. With an Elder’s permission, classes can record these stories and publish them as illustrated books, movies, or interactive webpages. In this way, the words of Elders can be shared over and over again—in class and at home.



What Do Language Teachers Say?

When I was speaking with an Elder, Charles Tizya, he said to me, “Our language is not dying... where do you think it came from in the first place?” He then pointed to the sky. This gives me hope.

Anna Pingo, Inuvik

Nahanni Butte language Instructor Cathryn Bertrand took a group of students for a walk to practice descriptive sentences. Students described the flowers they picked. Lana made her Elder very happy when she picked a bunch and said, ‘here are purple flowers for you’.

What Does the Research Say?

Studies from around the world about Intergenerational Learning (IL) show there is mutual benefit in connecting Elders and youth. Youth who interact meaningfully with respected Elders attend more classes, improve their academic achievement, and are subject to less discipline (Friedman, 1999). Elders enjoy improved health, self-esteem, and feelings of productivity (Newman and Larimer, 1995). Communities also benefit holistically from physically active, socially engaged residents who take part in Intergenerational Learning (IL) (Price-Mitchell, 2016).

Strengthening relationships between Elders and youth can change perceptions and commitment towards shared language revitalization goals. Prolonged, repeated, and goal-orientated interaction between Elders and youth, such as collaborative learning about language loss, or situationally authentic language practice changes attitudes and builds momentum to revive languages (Zeldin et al., 2000).



Spiritual development goes hand in hand with what we learn at school. Language teachers should collaborate with Elders to prepare and practice culturally authentic, ceremonially functional, and level-appropriate dialogue that links to curriculum such as feeding the fire, which is an important spiritual ceremony practiced by most Dene.

What Do Language Teachers Say?

I use my Dëne Dédliné Yatié dictionary, *zereht'íscho*, in class every day. I call it, “Sets'ı zereht'íscho,” a similar phrase for the bible as it contains the genuine words of the wise Elders. I want the Dëne Dédliné Yatié students to see, to hear and to speak these words as shared by the Elders of my birth community, Denínu Kuę.

Steve Lafferty, Fort Smith

Authentic and Functional

Students learn through authentic tasks and use functional language that connects to their lives.

Description

Functional language is language that is needed to understand and be understood in a particular situation. The term authentic has a broad meaning – it can mean authentic to the culture of a place – and can also mean authentic to students' lives. Elders speak passionately and with great authority about the need to embed language learning in authentic land-based activities. As a team of northern researchers noted while interviewing Dene Elders, they regarded language as a means of renewing relationships with and knowledge about the land (McGregor, Bayha and Simmons, 2010).

While Indigenous language instructors are challenged to replicate such authentic land based tasks on a regular basis they can also

find authentic tasks within a school-based program. 'Authentic' in a classroom and school based program essentially means real and purposeful to the children's lives. Students

who have the functional language necessary to perform an authentic

task, such as purchasing what they want at the grocery store, is one example of how they might connect language learned at school to their life.



What Do Language Leaders Say?

Long ago before the white people came, our people used to teach each other.

We taught the children by telling them stories and having them watch the adults work.

John B Zoe, Strong Like Two People, November 1990

Land-based experiences not only provide opportunity for the student to learn essential skills, but also through the language, they are better able to understand the relationships between the task and the cultural values and traditions. This is of huge value as the children are learning their ancestral or heritage language and much of the vocabulary and protocols are embedded in land-based experiences.

What it Looks Like: Preparing for Land Learning

Most Northern schools honour the wisdom of the Elders by offering on-the-land programming. Some have developed intense week-long camps where the students are immersed in traditional activities attuned to the seasons, such as fish camps and hunting camps. Others offer an array of day trips or class excursions to expose the students to traditional activities such as picking berries, settings snares or gathering medicinal plants.

For language learning, it is important to prepare all students,

regardless of their proficiency, by learning the functional language and protocols that will allow them to fully engage with the Elders and others who will be sharing their skills and knowledge in this authentic land setting.

As active learners engaged in purposeful tasks, students should be prepared to listen, think and speak—listen with intent, think to find meaning, and speak with confidence and pride. The Elders themselves should also be aware of the language proficiency of the students so that they can adjust the speed and complexity of their conversation to the ear of the learner.



The camping edukit (available to sign out for free from the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre) has all the materials needed to set up an indoor camping play space.

Students should practice the conversations they are likely to have with the Elders ahead of any interaction. Elders should be aware of the language levels of the students so they can help to encourage usage at the appropriate level. In Behchokò, Edwin Adzin and Jack Betsidea practice the sentences they would use when sharing a meal with the Elders. The classroom is set up to mimic the camp itself, complete with tent, tools and items students will use when out on the land. Students will need to be mindful of Elders' health.

What Do Language Teachers Say?

I plan language lessons to prepare my students before they go on the land. For example, when we do our rabbit snaring the children learn all the phrases using pretend sleds and snares in the classroom. That way, when they go out and set the snare they can say things like, 'today I am setting a snare' and 'I snared a rabbit'. We also plan projects to extend the learning such as a community feast after we've harvested. At the feast the students can practice their phrases such as, 'would you like some rabbit soup' or, 'it's hot'.

Renie Koe, Chief Paul Niditchie School, Tsiigehtchik

What it Looks Like: In the School

Camps and out-of-class experiences are not the only opportunities for authentic tasks and functional dialogue. With some ingenuity, the classroom itself can provide a suitable setting to practice functional dialogue in authentic ways.

Some innovative teachers have set up their classrooms to replicate different community locales: a home complete with a dining area, living room and bedroom; a store with cash register and shelves of produce or even a restaurant with the table, place settings and menus. Students play the roles of child, parent, store clerk or waitress and learn functional language that allows them to communicate with confidence in these settings. Using and reusing is the key to acquiring functional language, but by doing so in this enriched classroom environment, the language learning experience is much more authentic and engaging.

Balancing the teaching of functional language with opportunities to use and expand upon this language through authentic tasks and activities is key to effective instruction. Together, they support the student and help build the confidence and fluency students need to engage with others in natural conversation.



What Do Language Leaders Say?

The language taught in the classroom must be more than just school-talk or lists of memorized words. It must be connected to the kinds of activities and experiences that captivate our students for the majority of their time – functional dialogue that enables them to interact with others on the playground, in our stores, on the land and in our homes.

Shirley Snowshoe, Principal, Fort McPherson

Students use functional conversation while they cook moose stew in their foods class, connecting to authentic on-the-land activities and home routines, and reinforcing dialogue and vocabulary they learn in the language classroom.



Students in Ulukhaktok host a radio program in Inuinnaqtun. They practice what they say with the teacher prior to the show. Elders and other speakers love to hear the youth speaking and the authentic audience provides motivation for the students to practice and learn.

What Does the Research Say?

Engaging the students in authentic tasks and activities helps to focus them on the act of communication (Hinton, 2002). Instruction disconnected from authentic dialogue and opportunities to practice this in real tasks can limit success and prevent the learners from achieving the competence that they seek and strive to achieve.

The use of authentic resources has also been found to be very useful in learning a language. The literature describes these resources as visual materials (signs, pictures, photographs, and paintings), printed materials (newspapers, signage, menus, and maps), audio clips (television, radio, social media) and realia (real world objects such as hunting supplies, kitchen utensils). Studies have found that using these kinds of resources increases motivation, stimulates interest and helps to contextualize language learning, focusing the students' attention on the content and meaning rather than the language itself (Oura, 2012).

What Do Parents Say?

I am a parent of a Deninu student who is in kindergarten, and he amazes me daily with what he has learned in his Chipewyan class. He has also brought the Chipewyan language back into our home. He takes the time to teach his two year old sister and myself different words and phrases found around the house and that can be used in everyday talk. I am very proud that my son will continue on with his language and it won't be lost the way it was in my generation.

Brandie Mersch, Fort Resolution

Safe and Caring Spaces

Students, staff and community members feel a sense of belonging and optimism in the school and classrooms.

Description

Students of all ages learn more effectively when they feel cared for and safe. To improve language learning outcomes and to ensure quality teaching and leadership, we must intentionally create warm, welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2015). A learning environment of trust and nurture reflects Indigenous holism, where all parts of a human being are valued, and our emotional, social, physical, and intellectual selves fit within our communities.

For Elders, teachers, and youth recovering from the intergenerational effects of residential schools, language classrooms can sometimes be unsafe places where trauma, philosophical differences, and personal disagreements resurface. Educators, students, and community visitors all share equal responsibility in maintaining

positive, uplifting classroom environments that encourage learning.

A positive atmosphere and optimistic staff make students and visitors alike want to come to the school and take part in as much as they can. This type of warm welcoming atmosphere happens when families and visitors are greeted in the community's language both upon entrance into the school and the classrooms. In this

way, parents will want to come to the school to share and to learn and to witness their children learning.



What Do Language Leaders Say?

Everyone born is a miracle... beautiful mind, gentle heart... The child has everything, and he will have everything if he is respected and respects.

Elizabeth Mackenzie (Dene Kede, xxv)

Meaningful involvement meets parents where they are on their teaching and learning journey and gives them resources, skills, and self-esteem to help their child and to participate in language learning themselves.

What Does the Research Say?

Dr. Leroy Little Bear (2009) says that “the most important aspect of human learning is the language. It acts as a repository for all of the collective knowledge and experiences that a people, a society, or a nation has” and that “social healing and progress will occur only when Aboriginal people again think in sacred modes via their languages, hence the importance of Aboriginal languages as a major component of curricula” (p. 22). People who speak their language, nurture their community. The central Indigenous philosophies in both Dene Kede and Inuuqatigiit highlight establishing good relationships with the land, each other, ourselves, and the spiritual world—our schools and language classrooms need to exemplify this philosophy. Indigenous teachings are carried through the words and traditions of our languages, and realized in our everyday interactions inside and out of the classroom.

What Do Researchers Say?

Our languages guide us in our relationships, so we see that the chaos that is presently engulfing our communities is primarily due to the suppression of our language.

*Dr. Leona Makokis
Blue Quills University
St. Paul's, AB*



*Pricilla Moses at Chief Julian Yendo School in Wrigley is kind and patient, allowing her young students to count and sort wooden blocks at their own pace. She models counting phrases and responds to their attempts with positive reinforcement.
Nezı duyé!*

What it Looks Like: In the Classroom

Learner attitudes, self-esteem, and good mental health are critical to human learning. Students, staff and community members need to develop an understanding that learning involves laughter and fun along with hard work. When this balance is achieved, students leave the classroom in a good frame of mind and heart. Feeling good about the hard work that learners do together is just as important as being playful and forgiving about their mistakes.

Students learn best when they are actively supported through caring and guiding phrases, through gentle and constructive teacher talk in the language, and through lessons designed for a variety of learning styles and holistic strengths. In

this way, students are better prepared to process the emotional and physical demands of language acquisition. Students should be reminded of respectful behaviors and taught phrases for disagreeing respectfully, and advocating for their learning needs or personal safety. Administrators and staff should assist language teachers to include and support students of differing abilities appropriately in language classrooms. Children should also be encouraged to practice speaking their language outside the classroom.



What Do Language Leaders Say?

Making mistakes when learning a language is a natural and important part of the language acquisition process. It is critical for teachers to create safe and caring environments for language learning where mistakes and taking risks are encouraged, and learners will not be embarrassed or ridiculed for mispronunciations, odd turns of phrases or mix-ups. Teachers should remember that everyone must laugh together and have fun during the language learning process. An important rule of language education: never take away the dignity of a language learner when blunders occur.

*Dr. Angela James,
Director of Indigenous Languages
and Education Secretariat, GNWT*

Elder and language teacher at P.W. Kaeser High School in Fort Smith, Eileen Beaver, shares the teachings of the medicine wheel. She doesn't share everything at once; rather what each child needs at that time—in simple sentences that match their proficiency. She is always thinking about the students' physical, emotional, spiritual and intellectual health as she conducts her lessons.

What it Looks Like: In and Outside the School

Children bring their experiences with the language in the community into the classroom and these connections should be sought. Teachers and administrators should welcome parents into the school to witness their child's progress. It would also be beneficial for the language instructors to provide phrases for children to practice at home. Elders and community members will leave the school with smiles on their faces, knowing they have shared cultural knowledge and built positive memories with youth.



Biographies, photos, books, and artwork of Indigenous Northerners that display individual and collective accomplishments in the language can be showcased throughout schools.

As observers, what community members see in the school and classrooms ought to be extended into community learning and celebrations of progress.

Lucy Yakeleya is teaching Kaona Paulette how to sew. Elders and other community members who are sharing their traditional skills may need help in using positive and supportive phrases in the language that encourage learners. Students can be mindful hosts, offering seating, walking assistance, activity introduction, tea or coffee, using hospitality phrases they have practiced beforehand.



The land can also be the classroom. Indigenous language knowledge is critical to the recovery and transformation of our communities while we build holistic, diverse and respectful communities together.

Ways of Knowing

Working with students to help them know their strengths and areas where they need to grow leads to new and engaging lessons and activities designed to improve fluency.

Description

In NWT Indigenous cultures, as expressed by Angela James, “One’s wholeness (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual) that forms identity was developed and strengthened by those around the child. Whether they were immediate family, extended family, or community members, long ago one’s people and culture helped to develop one’s sense of self and identity. The Elders agreed that a strong identity positively linked with all facets of cultural and community knowledge, understanding and learning. These were the relational influences that shaped “promise, joy, love, pride and respect” in the growth and development of “a capable person” (2016, p.240).

In the Western education system, assessment has historically been based on what you know and very little attention was paid to other facets of being and doing as described by many Indigenous and Western scholars. The world of education is changing and its effects can be felt in schools and communities throughout the North and around the world. One area of change is the focus on better assessment practices. The call for greater accountability has also intensified.

In its simplest terms, assessment data is a collection of the evidence of learning — a way of knowing what the students have or have not learned. Assessment can be categorized as either **summative** or **formative** in nature. If the assessment is intended to pinpoint student learning at a single period in time (end-of-unit, year-end), the assessment is regarded as summative: a summary of all that the student has learned. If the assessment is designed to monitor student learning and provide feedback that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning, the assessment is more formative in nature:

it informs teaching and learning.



*The pillars of **formative assessment** — monitoring student learning, offering timely and supportive feedback and providing opportunities for repeated practice — closely match the practices used by Elders to support learning.*

What Does the Research Say?

We assess what matters to us. The success of our programming hinges on teachers knowing what their students know and do not know – their strengths, talents and needs as language learners. Quality and ongoing assessments provide this knowledge and enable the skilled instructor to adjust and adapt instruction quickly and strategically. Grant Wiggins (2006), remarked, “the more you teach without finding out who understands the information and who doesn’t, the greater the likelihood that only already-proficient students will succeed” (p. 2).

The positive impact of formative assessment on student learning cannot be understated, but this must not tarnish the value of summative approaches towards assessment. Given the fragile state of daily use of our Indigenous languages, there is value and purpose in assessing the health of our languages from a more systemic perspective.

Starting with this baseline data, plans can be made to improve results on a systemic or community-wide basis. Without this data, it will be difficult to truly determine, with accuracy, the value or impact of our initiatives and programming.



⁵The scales are based on the American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL), the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), and the New Brunswick Middle School Second Language Proficiency Scales.

What Do Language Leaders Say?

Our division has been using summative assessments for a number of years to measure base fluency rates of our students. Although the testing program was greeted with hesitation at first, most Indigenous language instructors have grown to see the value of this year-end testing program.

*Kim Hardisty,
RILE Coordinator, Dehcho Education Council*

During the pilot phase of the OLC comparative data, in two regions in the NWT, pointed to gains in fluency rates among the students using this method. The Indigenous language instructors view this as affirmation of the effectiveness of their instructional strategies and their personal commitment to their language. Assessment and evaluation takes hard work and planning but collecting the data is important for determining if any language growth is happening.

An important element is assessing the students’ language proficiency. For this reason, oral, reading and writing proficiency scales have been devised⁵. If possible, a speaker other than the students’ teacher, should be trained to use the scales and assess the students twice a year.

What it Looks Like: Assessment in the Language Classroom

The *Our Languages* curriculum provides a set of curricular goals stated as competencies and learning outcomes. These provide a structure to the learning journey, but it remains the responsibility of the instructor to bring life to these outcomes through tasks and assignments carefully designed to develop the knowledge, skills and values of the language learner.

Each task, assignment or learning activity must be connected to curricular outcomes and the criteria for successfully meeting those expectations. Sharing information that will be used to measure progress and define success provides students with the tools they need to examine their own progress and set their own goals.

Evidence of learning can be drawn from a variety of sources. Skilled instructors listen as their students enter their class and greet others. They monitor their students' willingness to take risks when confronted with new challenges. They watch and listen as students speak in an active language game. They engage with students in the hallways of the school and in the store and prompt responses.

Every single learning experience and interaction provides evidence of learning and this information can be used by the skilled instructor to design new tasks and activities that enhance learning and provide the information for improved instruction.



Students in Délı̄nę play Guess Who as their teacher, Albertine Aya, monitors their ability to ask and respond within the language. This active language game allows her to reflect on students' confidence and ability to apply their knowledge of the language.

What Do Language Teachers Say?

The students love using technology to help learn the language. We use the tablets to record conversations and presentations. It is also a great idea for our portfolios. The recordings are used by the individual students to see their own progress and to have fun sharing their learning.

Mary Joan Lafferty
Wiilhideh language teacher
École Sir John Franklin High School,
Yellowknife

The *Our Languages* curriculum is structured to engage students through authentic practice and real-life tasks that immerse our students in a language-rich environment, and so assessment practices must match. Research literature has coined the phrase **authentic assessment**. This is a process where students have multiple opportunities to improve a skill, product or presentation based on the feedback received. Wiggins (2006) defined authentic assessment as simply "... performances and product requirements that are faithful to real-world demands, opportunities, and constraints. The students are tested on their ability to 'do' the subject in context, to transfer their learning effectively" (p.2). From the perspective of both language development and traditional learning, this **spiralling** approach towards proficiency is exactly how we acquire language.



Student Ownership

The *Our Languages* curriculum is designed to foster and encourage student ownership of their learning. Setting personal language learning goals, learning one's own strengths and struggles, serving as lead in the classroom activities and even organizing language events are all behaviours that signal a growing commitment to one's own language needs.

One way to encourage student ownership is to have learners track their own work in a language portfolio. *Our Languages* has modeled 'Can Do' checklists on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) with further ideas found within the *First Nations Languages Curriculum Building Guide* (Ignace, 2016).

Students who have internalized an intense love for their language and who passionately use and advocate for their language in public settings will become the language champions of our communities. Through them, the hands of the Elders can stretch into the future comforted with the understanding that their language has been passed onto the next generation.

What it Looks Like: Ways of Knowing, Doing, Being, and Believing

A strong belief within most northern cultures is that all children are born with special gifts and talents given to them by the Creator. Under the right conditions, these talents will grow and flourish. These gifts may be an aptitude for storytelling, making medicine, teaching, hunting, leadership, sewing or even the gift of laughter. The respected and trusted Elder's role as mentor is to recognize these gifts within the child - **ways of knowing** - and provide experiences that will help bring them to the forefront - **ways of doing** - as an integral part of who they are - **ways of being** and by honouring the values and beliefs of the community - **ways of believing**.

Feedback forms the core of learning experiences, with children guided to revisit a task or activity to improve upon their own skill and practice. In time, the experience or activity will reveal all that it has to offer and the children will move forward onto new tasks, applying their newfound

skills, advancing towards mastery and independence.

This patient and nurturing approach to teaching and learning are grounded on truly knowing the child and understanding his or her strengths, unique talents and needs. Indeed, the essential skills, practices and knowledge necessary for survival moved unabated from generation to generation over many millenniums. Researchers and teachers of today are revisiting these time-honoured practices and rediscovering the wisdom of the Elders.

As students engage in real tasks and activities designed to nurture talents, feedback is provided through kindly advice. Modeling a skill or sharing a life lesson through storytelling are two ways to help a learner grow.

What Do Language Leaders Say?

Educational Renewal and the *Our Languages* curriculum feel right to me. It's like all the pieces of the puzzle are coming together and the system is finally starting to see the value in our Aboriginal perspectives and our ways. I'm so impressed because it's holistic and conducive to our way of being, knowing and belonging. We have always educated our children to be capable people and from where they are at we encourage them to grow and reciprocate their learning to others.

The late Alex Illasiak, former BDEC Chair



Orientation to the Curriculum



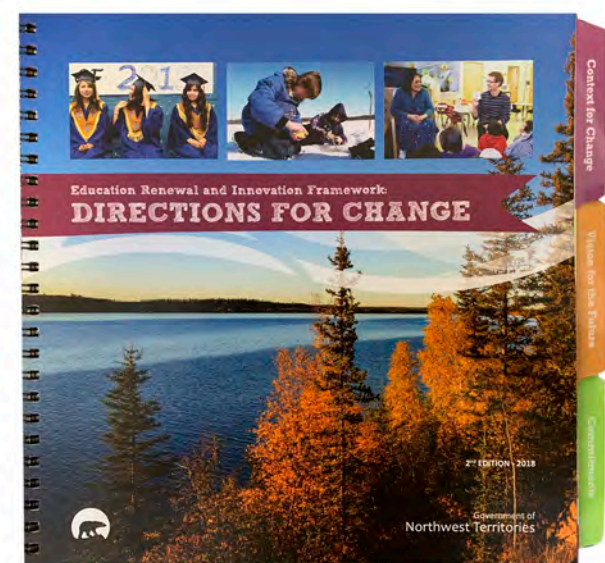
.....
*Second cohort of Indigenous language teachers and instructors to use the
Our Languages curriculum and regional leaders (2019-2020).*
.....

THE NWT EDUCATION SYSTEM

Directions for Change

The NWT's *Education Renewal and Innovation Framework: Directions for Change* (2013) is the guiding framework that outlines the vision, goals, and commitments for education in the NWT. The purpose of the framework is to determine how the NWT education system can be improved for all learners so that they can meet the challenges of today as capable northern citizens.

Understanding how the brain learns and how to best foster that learning is being challenged world-wide, as such, so is the model for teaching in a world that is filled with easy to access information. Previous approaches to teaching were focused on learning specific content, relied on individual subject areas, required students to be sorted by age, and resulted in learning a specific set of skills or knowledge. Research and experience now point to the need for a more ecological understanding of the needs of learners, and of increased learner inquiry, ownership and choice.

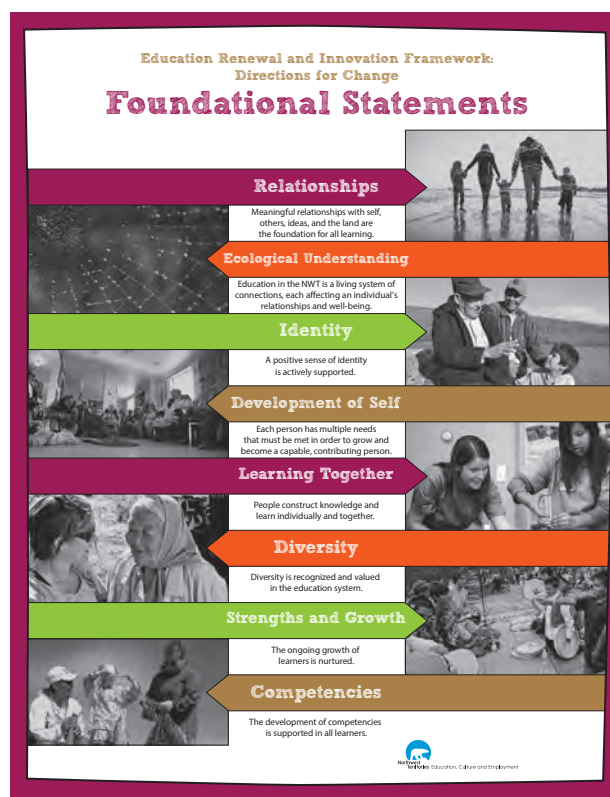


Education, Culture and Employment, GNWT. (2013). *Directions for Change*. Education Renewal and Innovation Framework.

Foundation Statements

To support the shift in teaching and learning, the Framework identifies eight NWT Foundational Statements which are in place to guide all education programming in the NWT, and set the conditions for a positive learning environment.

The NWT Foundational Statements represent the learning environment that allows learners to flourish. Learning happens throughout life, in response to changes within each other, and within the world. Learning is active, beginning when a common interest or need prompts people to collaborate. It requires a sense of belonging and safety which allows learners to flourish.



NWT KEY COMPETENCIES

Being and Becoming an NWT Capable Person

Being and becoming an NWT capable person is the goal of all learning in the NWT education system. A capable person is ready, willing and able to learn and contribute to their communities. A capable person is motivated to act, can recognize what is relevant to draw on and knows how to do so appropriately. The people of the NWT have pointed to what is necessary in a world where people are challenged to use knowledge, not just remember it.

What are the NWT Key Competencies?

Competencies emphasize the connectedness of knowledge, skills and values. ‘Key’ competencies are the broad capabilities that people have, and need to develop, across a lifetime and in all kinds of environments. They work together and influence each other.

Key competencies are developed so that people can live, learn, work and contribute at school, in the community, at home and

on the land. By reflecting and setting goals, individuals strengthen themselves and their communities. The NWT Key Competencies describe the people of the NWT at their fullest potential at any given time in their life.

NWT Key Competencies in Schools

NWT Key Competencies require students to consider how their learning contributes to the values, skills and dispositions that will allow them to live and learn well, today and in the future. It requires that students notice what they are learning, and to set goals. The NWT Key Competencies belong to an individual person, so they should not be measured by the teacher or reported on in student report cards with a grade. The NWT Key Competencies should be self-assessed in conversation with teachers, parents and others.

BEING AND BECOMING AN NWT CAPABLE PERSON

NOTE: There is no hierarchy or preferred order in the competencies.



Key Competencies and Their Components

NURTURE WHO I AM AND WHO I WANT TO BE

- Pursue personal wellness
- Deepen close relationship with self, the spiritual world, people, and the land
- Belong to communities that enrich my identity
- Assess and take risks
- Adapt to people and places
- Share my gifts, act on my rights, fulfill my responsibilities

CONSTRUCT WAYS OF BEING & LIVING WELL TOGETHER

- Collaborate for a shared purpose and future
- Take technology and globalism into account
- Address bias and perspectives
- Encourage and support people to belong
- Assume leadership when needed and trust others in their roles
- Reconcile histories

ENGAGE IN THE COMPLEXITY AND DIVERSITY OF PERSONS AND IDEAS

- Make sense of diverse signs, landmarks, symbols, and languages
- Consider without judging
- Maintain a spirit of investigation
- Co-construct knowledge
- Analyse and synthesize
- Create and innovate

NEGOTIATE CHANGE & CHALLENGE

- Find my way with the roles I have to play
- Understand power and respond
- Build resilience
- Advocate and create opportunities for success
- Envision and work towards sustainability
- Act ethically

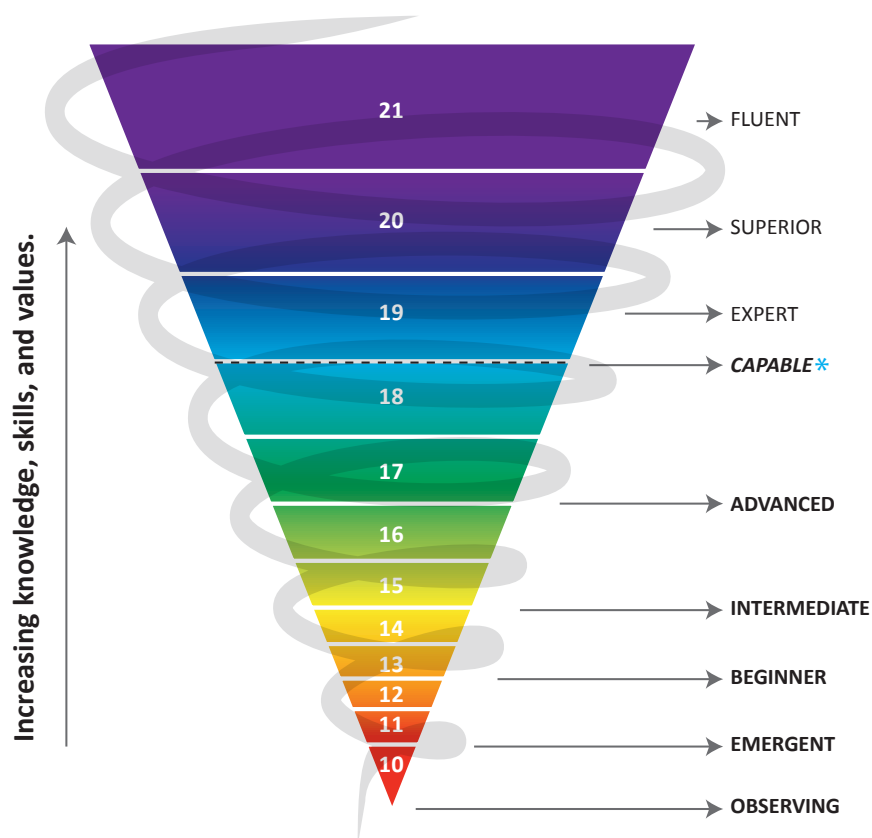
CURRICULUM DESIGN

Growing Our Languages

Language growth depends on many factors, including personal motivation, time allocated within a school to language classes, and family and community involvement. Language learning is developmental in nature and cannot be easily segmented according to grades and ages. The levels for *Our Languages* were developed for students within the NWT JK - 12 school system⁶. Within this curriculum there are five levels of language proficiency including; *Emergent*, *Beginner*, *Intermediate*, *Advanced*, and *Capable*.

Spiral Learning: Moving from one language level to the next is not linear, rather it is like a cone. A learner will typically progress from *Emergent* to *Beginner* faster than from *Beginner* to *Intermediate*. The progress from one level to a higher one requires more time spent exposed to the language. It also spirals through time, meaning that students will learn what they are ready for, learning more complex language skills and gaining more understanding as time goes on. As they hear and use language, they must also reflect.

Proficiency Scale



*If learners are also exposed to the language at home, and the school has optimum conditions, the intent is that learners will reach *Capable* by the end of High School.

⁶The descriptors have been adapted from those of various other language scales, in particular the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) and the New Brunswick Middle School Oral Proficiency Scale. The Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks and the scales within A Language Teacher's Guide To Assessing First Nations Language Proficiency were also considered.

5 Proficiency Levels

As described, the five proficiency levels are not paired to grade levels. Although it is generally expected that young children will start at the *Emergent* level and progress through to the *Capable* level, there will always be exceptions. Children have different types of exposure to their ancestral language. Likewise, even after several years of language acquisition, students may demonstrate varying degrees of proficiency. The *Our Languages* curriculum was designed to be flexible enough to allow for differentiation based on the students' strengths and challenges.

The goal of reaching *Capable* by the time a student graduates takes into account that the *Our Languages* curriculum will be used within a core language program. However, to reach *Capable*, a learner will also need support from the family and community.

Summary Descriptor of the Proficiency Scale:

Capable 18	Able to speak with confidence and ease on a wide range of topics with fluent speakers. Demonstrates control of basic structures and generic vocabulary. On occasion, able to provide supported opinions using simple structures. Can read and understand a variety of text. Can write for diverse audiences.
Advanced 16-17	Able to communicate in unscripted conversations on familiar topics with some confidence in many social situations. Able to explain meaning when searching for a word. Can read and understand text. Able to narrate and describe in all time frames orally and in writing.
Intermediate 14-15	Able to initiate conversation and show signs of spontaneity. Able to sustain general conversation as well as express meaning. Is able to provide a short narration or summary description. Can read and write short, simple texts using known language.
Beginner 12-13	Able to satisfy basic survival needs. On very familiar topics, can ask and answer simple questions. Creates in and experiments with the language. Reads and writes known words or phrases.
Emergent 10-11	Able to communicate minimally by using a number of isolated words, key phrases or memorized simple sentences and modeled conversations. Uses gestures to support oral communication. May use illustrations to show comprehension of a simple text or story.

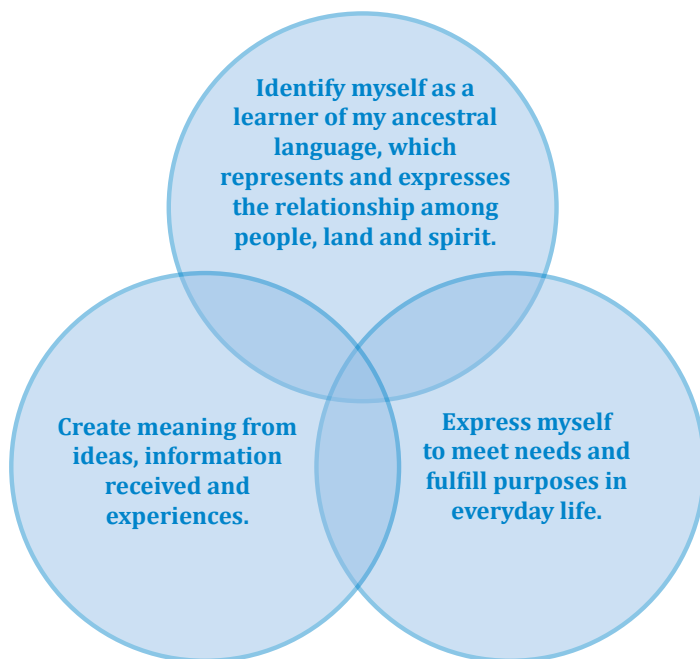
Notes: The level descriptors refer to the highest performance at that level.

The scale continues on past *Capable* to *Fluent* however, to obtain fluency learners must be immersed in the language at home and on the land. The numbers listed refer to the numbers on the proficiency scale.

3 Disciplinary Competencies

All new curricula in the NWT are based on the Key Competencies. Each discipline in turn develops its own disciplinary competencies.

The *Our Languages* curriculum is framed by three overarching disciplinary competencies. They are:



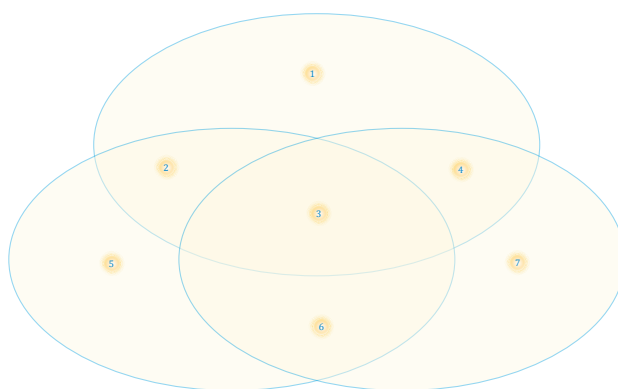
The three disciplinary competencies define the goals of the language program – connecting the learners to their cultural community and providing them with the knowledge of their language to enable them to function as capable individuals, proud and confident learners and speakers of their language. The three disciplinary competencies will continue to grow throughout the learners' life.

The diagram intends to represent that the disciplinary competencies are interconnected. When three circles are integrated in a Venn diagram they make 7 overlapping shapes. These shapes each represent the following 7 components.

7 Components

Complementing the disciplinary competencies are seven sub-competencies which are called components in this curriculum. The components are also life-long.

The interconnected shapes are an attempt to illustrate the integrated nature of the components and the interplay between and among them and the disciplinary competencies.



The seven components are:

- 1 Students adapt as their language learning strengthens their identity.
- 2 Students apply their community's traditions and worldview.
- 3 Students experience emotional, physical, spiritual, and intellectual enjoyment.
- 4 Students display their sense of belonging to the community of language speakers.
- 5 Students recognize, understand and confirm meaning.
- 6 Students acquire their language through personal, family, community, school and cultural experiences.
- 7 Students produce a message and validate it for themselves and others.

Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes are listed under each of the seven components for the five levels of language proficiency. Each outcome is coded for easy reference with the first two letters of the level serving as an identifier.

EM = Emergent

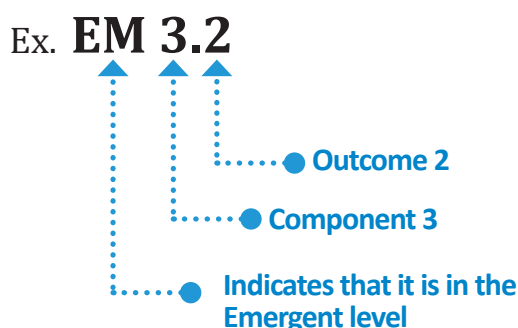
BE = Beginner

IN = Intermediate

AD = Advanced

CA = Capable

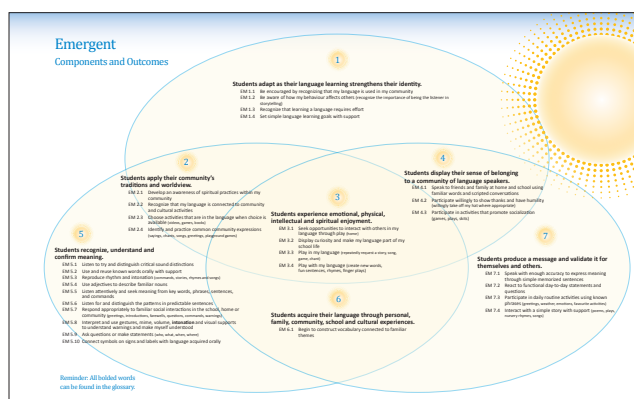
The numbers that come after the letters indicate which component and which learning outcome.



The outcomes are not meant to be taught sequentially within each proficiency level. In fact, in a single lesson, the Indigenous language instructor might be collecting evidence of learning from a number of different outcomes.

Holistic and Linear Views of the Outcomes

There are two different versions of the outcomes displayed within this curriculum. The holistic views represent the profile of a typical learner at each of the 5 proficiency levels. So there are 5 holistic views within the curriculum, one for each of the Emergent, Beginner, Advanced, Intermediate and Capable levels. The linear views show the progressive development within each of the 7 components across all five proficiency levels. So there are 7 separate documents for each of the 7 components. No matter which view you prefer the number of outcomes doesn't change. They are simply re-organized.



Holistic View of outcomes for Emergent Level

Component 1 Students adapt as their language learning strengthens their identity.				
COMPONENT FOCUS	EMERGENT	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
Strengthen identity through conversation	EM 3.1 Seek opportunities to interact with others through play in my language (own)	BE 1.1 Use the language as a tool to express my basic needs, desires and emotions	IN 1.1 Use the language to express myself and make myself understood (own, mine and me)	AD 1.1 Initiate and engage in conversations that help build my identity and confidence through authentic experiences
Strengthen identity through advocacy	EM 1.1 Be encouraged by recognizing that my language is used in my community	BE 1.3 Make connections with the language used in my home and community (own, my, mine)	IN 1.3 Seek out opportunities to build links with youth outside the community who speak the language (own, mine)	AD 1.3 Research and explore the use of social media in sharing stories and reflections through points of a personal and cultural significance
Strengthen identity through effort and change	EM 1.2 Be aware of how my behaviour affects others (recognize the importance of being honest to myself)	BE 1.4 Adapt behaviours to support and encourage others	IN 1.4 Model behaviours that demonstrate a commitment to my language and identity	AD 1.4 Collaborate the social and emotional benefits in speaking my language
Strengthen identity by reflecting on my learning	EM 1.3 Recognize the strategies of a successful language learner (own, mine, mine, mine)	BE 1.5 Recognize the strategies of a successful language learner (own, mine, mine, mine)	IN 1.5 Model the strategies of a successful language learner (own, mine, mine, mine)	AD 1.5 Refine and permeate the strategies to realize a successful language learner
	EM 1.4 Set simple language learning goals with support	BE 1.6 Identify strengths and challenges to my personal goals	IN 1.6 Discuss progress as a language learner and describe the skills that need to be further developed	AD 1.6 Discuss the personal language goals and the plan for achieving those goals
				CA 1.1 Initiate and engage in conversations that demonstrate my identity and commitment to my language
				CA 1.2 Seek out opportunities to express my thoughts and share my identity in public settings with intent and authenticity
				CA 1.3 Advocate for my language by understanding and acting upon my rights and responsibilities as a language learner (own, mine, mine)
				CA 1.4 Reflect and notice over time that using my language is worth the effort
				CA 1.5 Describe a plan for continuing language learning as a life-long process

Linear View of Outcomes for Component 1

CHARACTERISTICS OF A LEARNER

LEVELS	GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A LEARNER	STAGES OF THE LEARNER
Emergent Comfort level is different amongst all new learners.	<p>Emergent learners come in all ages. They begin by having little or no knowledge of the Indigenous language. They do not understand or speak the language, but may have had some exposure to the sounds and situations of language use in the home or community.</p> <p>Emergent learners get tired easily. It is really hard work to stay in the language. They may feel lost and frustrated because they don't have the language skills to say what they want to, but working through the frustration lays the groundwork in their brains where language skills take root and grow. Language learning is limited when translations are provided.</p>	<p>The first stage may be a silent stage as learners may have words they understand but they are not yet speaking. This is also the biggest language acquisition stage. The emphasis at this early stage is on engaged observing, actively listening and absorbing the language. Learners begin to communicate with non-verbal expressions such as facial expressions, gestures or drawings. This stage can last for quite a while, depending on how much time learners hear the language each day, and how actively they participate in their language acquisition.</p> <p>Next comes the parroting stage where learners repeat everything you say. Learners will make many mistakes. At the higher level of the Emergent stage, learners can pronounce short, memorized language chunks, although these may not always be correct.</p>
Beginner	<p>Beginner learners may still be nervous about speaking in front of groups. While learners need to spend a lot of time actively listening and thinking, they should also be encouraged to speak—consistently using and re-using the phrases they hear, in different situations.</p>	<p>Beginner learners are in the early production stage, speaking one or two word phrases, experimenting, and listening closely to the speech of mentors, teachers, and peers. There will be many errors in this early production stage. Learners will develop an active vocabulary of about 60 words and a receptive vocabulary of about another 60 words.* At this stage, learners begin to create with language and are able to communicate their own thoughts in a very simple manner.</p>

* The suggested word count in each of the levels should be taken very generally as it is possible to know a number of words, but perhaps not be able to communicate. For example, does the learner simply know a lot of nouns or can they form sentences and communicate basic needs? There is also a challenge in how you count words when Indigenous languages usually have grammar systems that build complex concepts by adding parts on to a word. Is the new word one longer word or a phrase with many words? How would that be counted?

However, a guideline can be helpful in knowing where a learner is at and to provide a goal. The 1996 Tłıchǫ Yatıı Enıhtł'è dictionary has approximately 6,000 words. This total far exceeds the number of words used in everyday communication. In all languages, speakers rely on high-frequency words and these are the words that teachers and learners should focus (Ignace, 2016).

LEVELS	GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A LEARNER	STAGES OF THE LEARNER
Intermediate	<p>Intermediate learners may have interference. This is when English continues to influence the Indigenous language in unintended or undesirable ways. For example, English word order rules may interfere with the target grammar.</p> <p>Learners still experience frustration and make grammatical errors. They still rely heavily on context clues and are comfortable only in familiar topics and settings.</p>	<p>Intermediate learners are entering an Interlanguage Stage. In this stage, the internal rewiring and internalization of language rules take place inside learners' brain. The brain is developing a new pathway for Indigenous language and syntax. It may not be conscious, but shows development at work.</p> <p>Learners can produce language on a regular basis and have about 300* words that they understand and 250 that they use. They can survive in the language for day-to-day needs but aren't yet able to carry out meaningful conversations.</p>
Advanced	<p>Advanced learners spontaneously take risks with the language. They are aware of the power and limits of their existing knowledge and can expand on or compensate for it as situations require.</p> <p>Advanced learners may use code-switching to produce meaningful speech—inserting English words into Indigenous sentences to make uninterrupted conversation. When they are at loss for a word, they are often able to use other words to explain what they are trying to say.</p>	<p>Advanced learners are at the Production Stage. Their speech becomes more frequent and the sentences are longer and more complex.</p> <p>Advanced learners understand and use about 750 - 1,000* words and are able to produce a sequence of sentences on one topic. Written language has errors, but efficient.</p>
Capable	<p>Capable learners are comfortable using the language skills they already possess to contribute to their community and model language learning. They consistently use effective language learning strategies in their personal lives and are prepared to continue independent language learning. Capable learners can enquire about cultural meaning, speak about a growing range of topics, meet their personal needs, and help others.</p>	<p>Confident speaking stage: This is the crucial stage when learners begin to be able to talk about abstract concepts, which builds their speaking proficiency. It's an important distinction between the Capable and the other levels, since, at the lower levels, language use is usually confined to what we term "concrete" needs. Learners are not fluent but can converse in most settings and typically have a vocabulary of as many as 2,500* words.</p>

Promising Community Practices

A unique feature of the *Our Languages* curriculum is the inclusion of a section devoted to language revitalization efforts within our communities. This curriculum is built on the premise that our languages can survive and even thrive when schools and communities join together to make language learning a priority for all.

The *Promising Community Practices* sections appear as pull-out spreads at each proficiency level – living side by side with the holistic view of the competencies. The idea is that the community and the school and the learner work together to grow the language.

These suggestions were gathered from promising practices shared by community language leaders, including the Regional Indigenous Language Coordinators (RILCs) for each Indigenous government as well as innovative and exciting initiatives found in the literature on Indigenous language revitalization around the world.

These suggestions complement the learning outcomes listed at each level of proficiency and it is in a spirit of hope that community language leaders feel that this curriculum is also their curriculum: that while a huge responsibility rests on the school, it is shared by all members of the community.

Holistic View of Outcomes

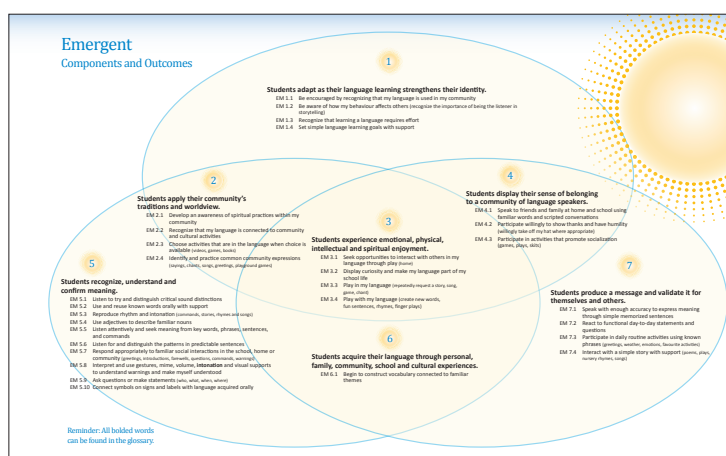
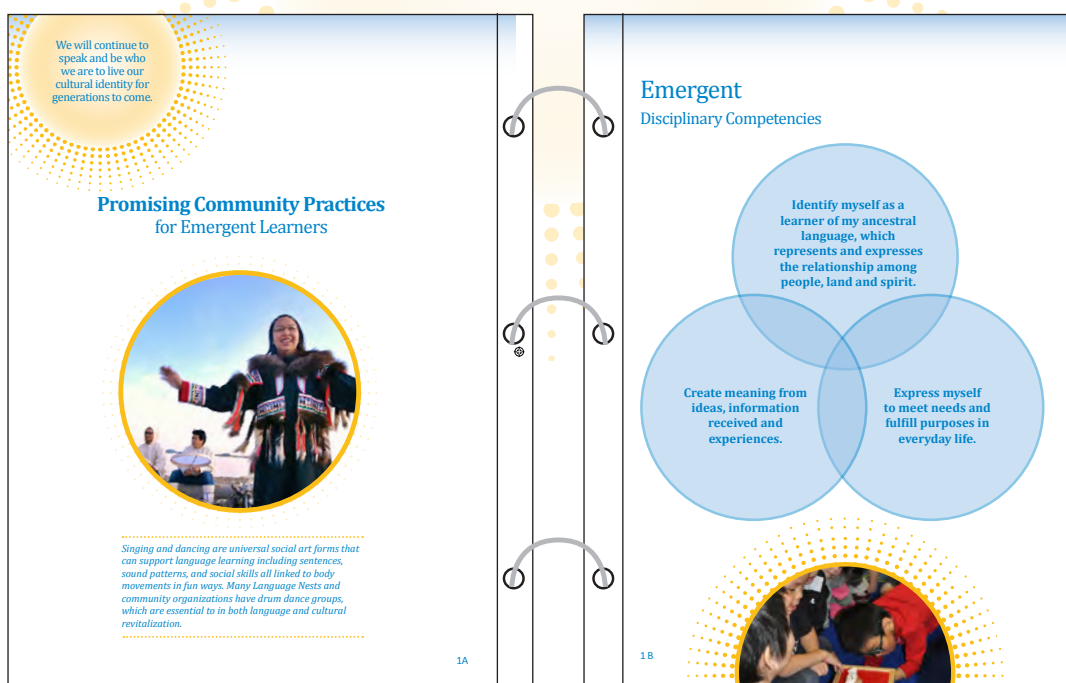
The holistic view represents the profile of a typical learner at each level of language proficiency but takes into account that individual students may exhibit a range of abilities across the levels. A student may, for example, demonstrate considerable strength in specific outcomes at the intermediate level but be working on beginner level outcomes in another component.

It should also be noted that within the holistic view, learning outcomes may merge and intersect with each other within the same class or experience. Any one class, project or activity may be building language knowledge, skills and concepts across a variety of different competencies. This integration, as in traditional learning experiences, is an indicator of a vibrant and effective learning environment.



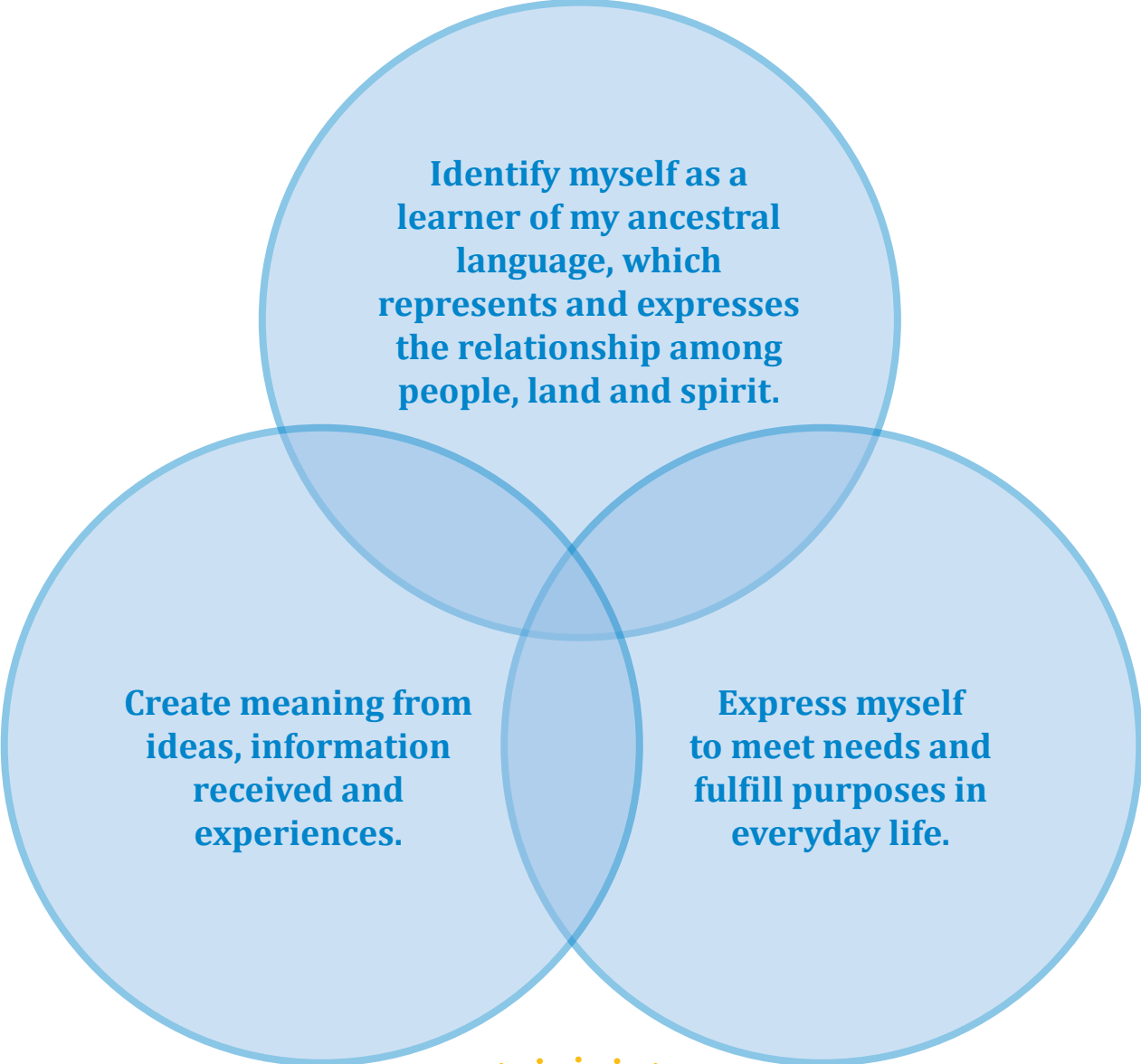
Sometimes children are shy or reluctant to read aloud. One strategy employed by Corinne Sassie of Fort Liard is to have the children read to a puppet.

Holistic View of Outcomes and Promising Community Practices



Emergent

Disciplinary Competencies



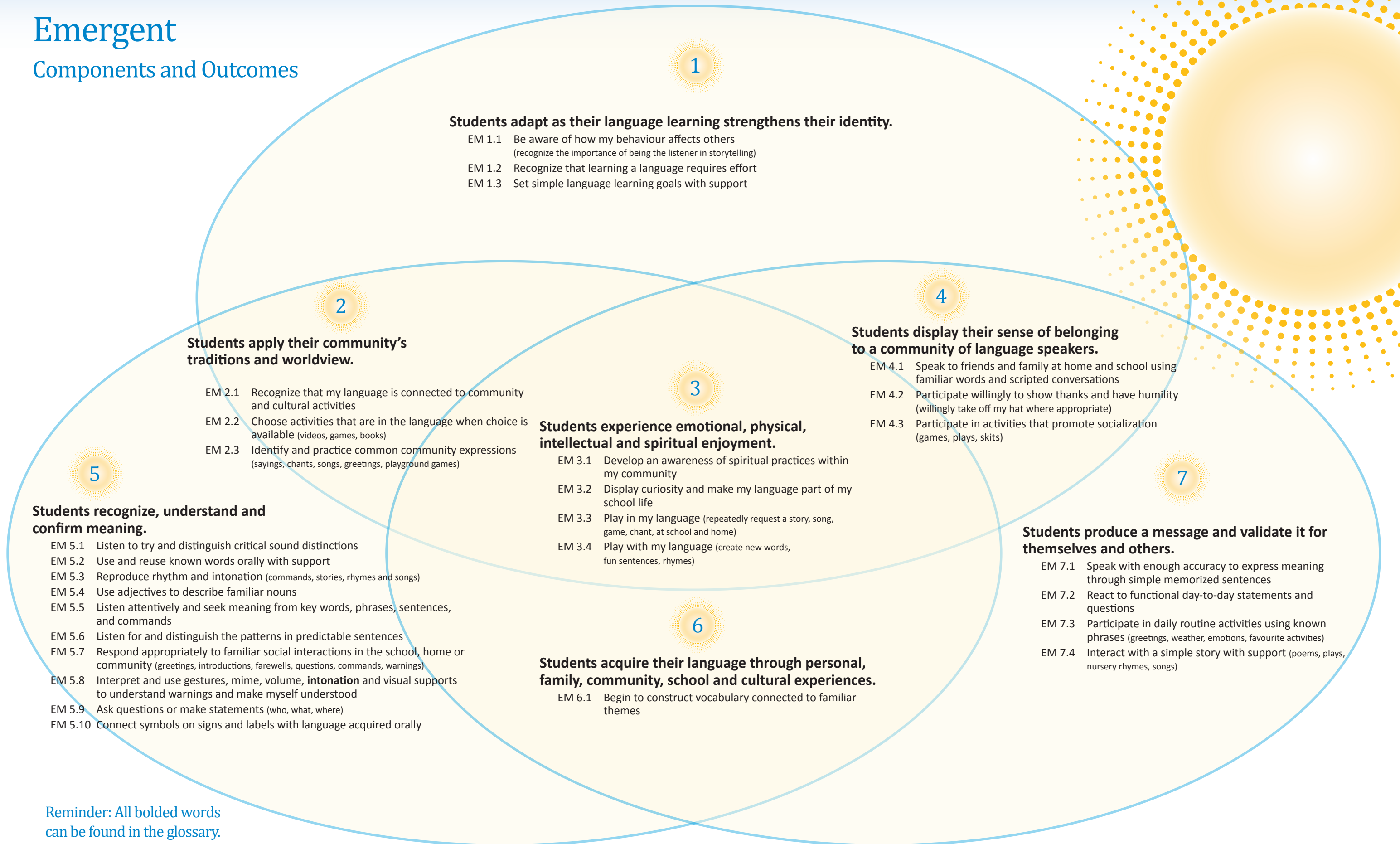
These amazing Elder puppets were made by Kim Lea and Trish Laye of Hay River. There are sets in almost every school in the NWT. Here, Geleah Moosenose and Ethan Mackenzie Nitsiza from Whatì are having a conversation through the puppets.

Remember, these Elder puppets only speak their Indigenous Language!



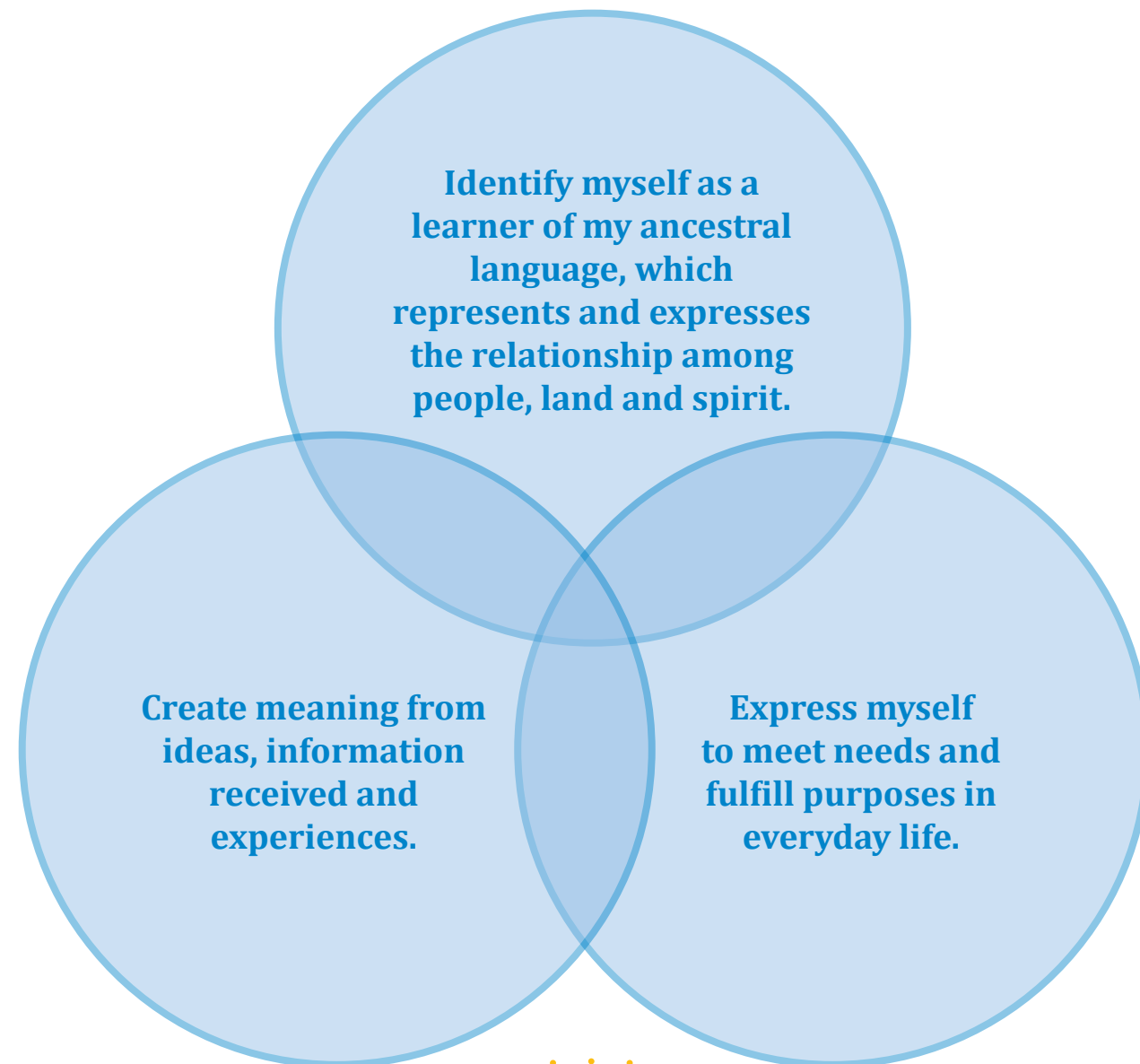
Emergent

Components and Outcomes



Beginner

Disciplinary Competencies

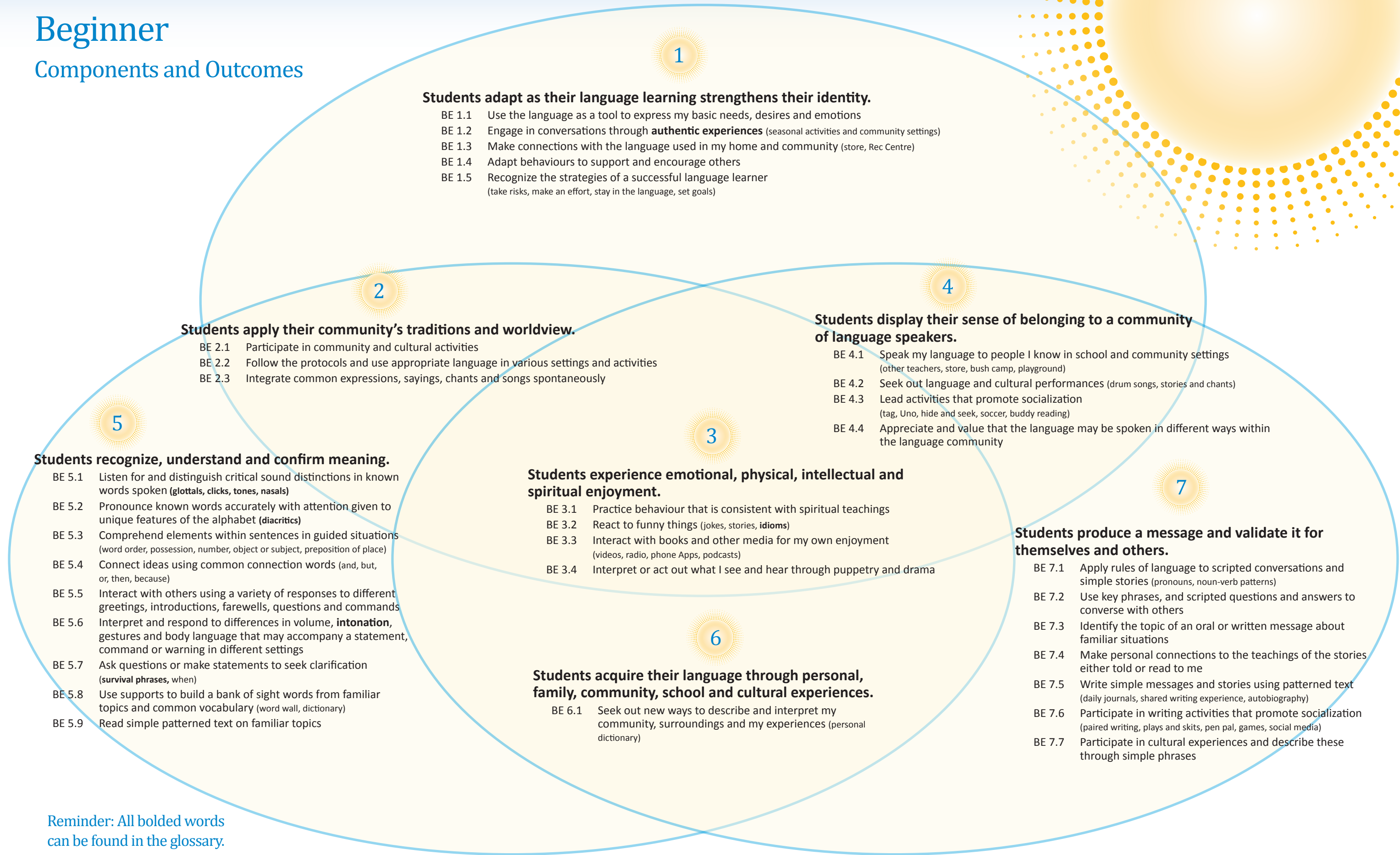


Linda Manual from Colville Lake uses Alison McCreesh's northern pencil cases in a game similar to 'Where's Waldo'. She can ask questions such as, 'where is the raven?', find something black, find something that swims, find something you wear'. Here she's asked the kids to find three words that start with the t sound.



Beginner

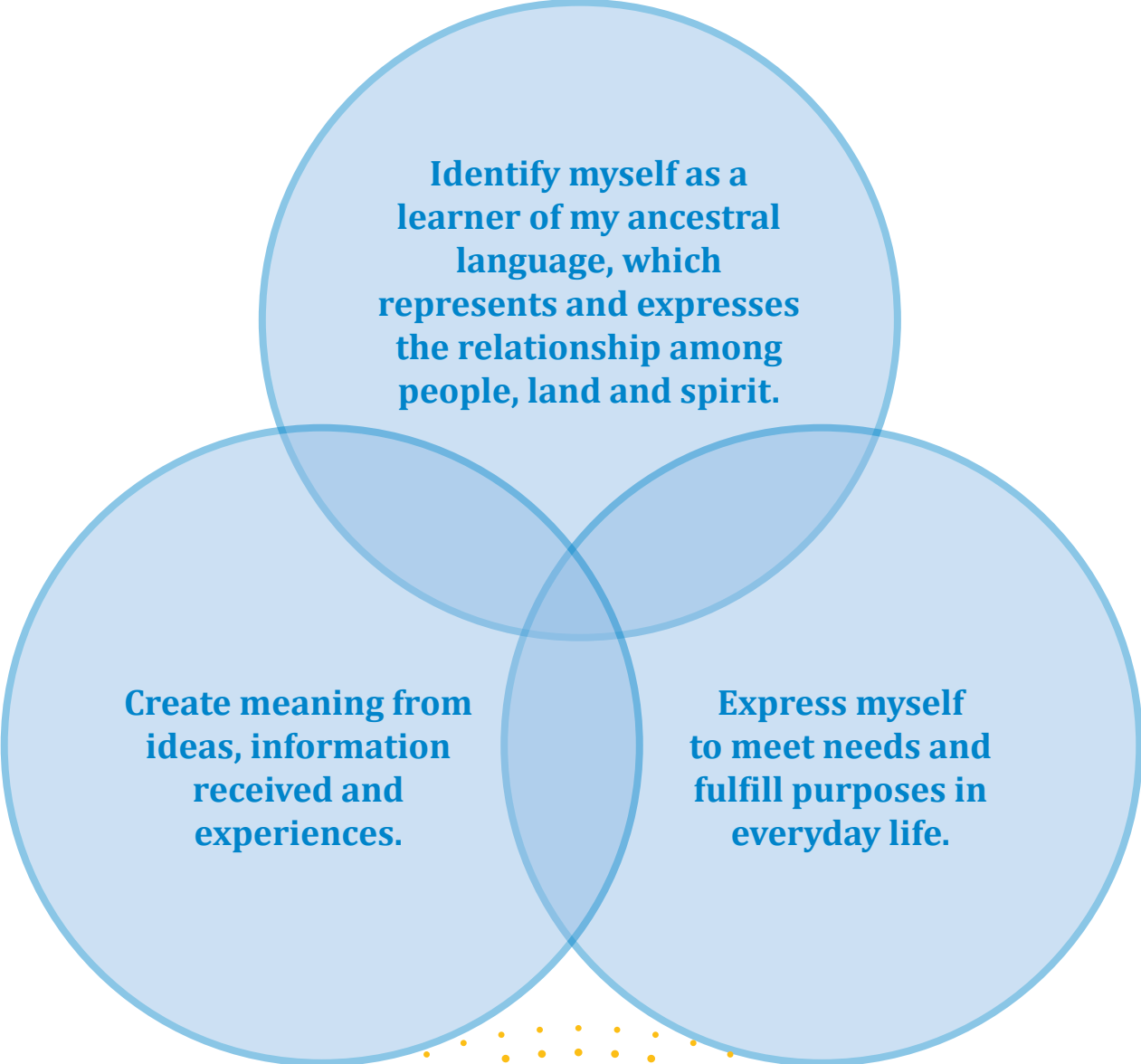
Components and Outcomes



Reminder: All bolded words can be found in the glossary.

Intermediate

Disciplinary Competencies



What Do Language Leaders Say?

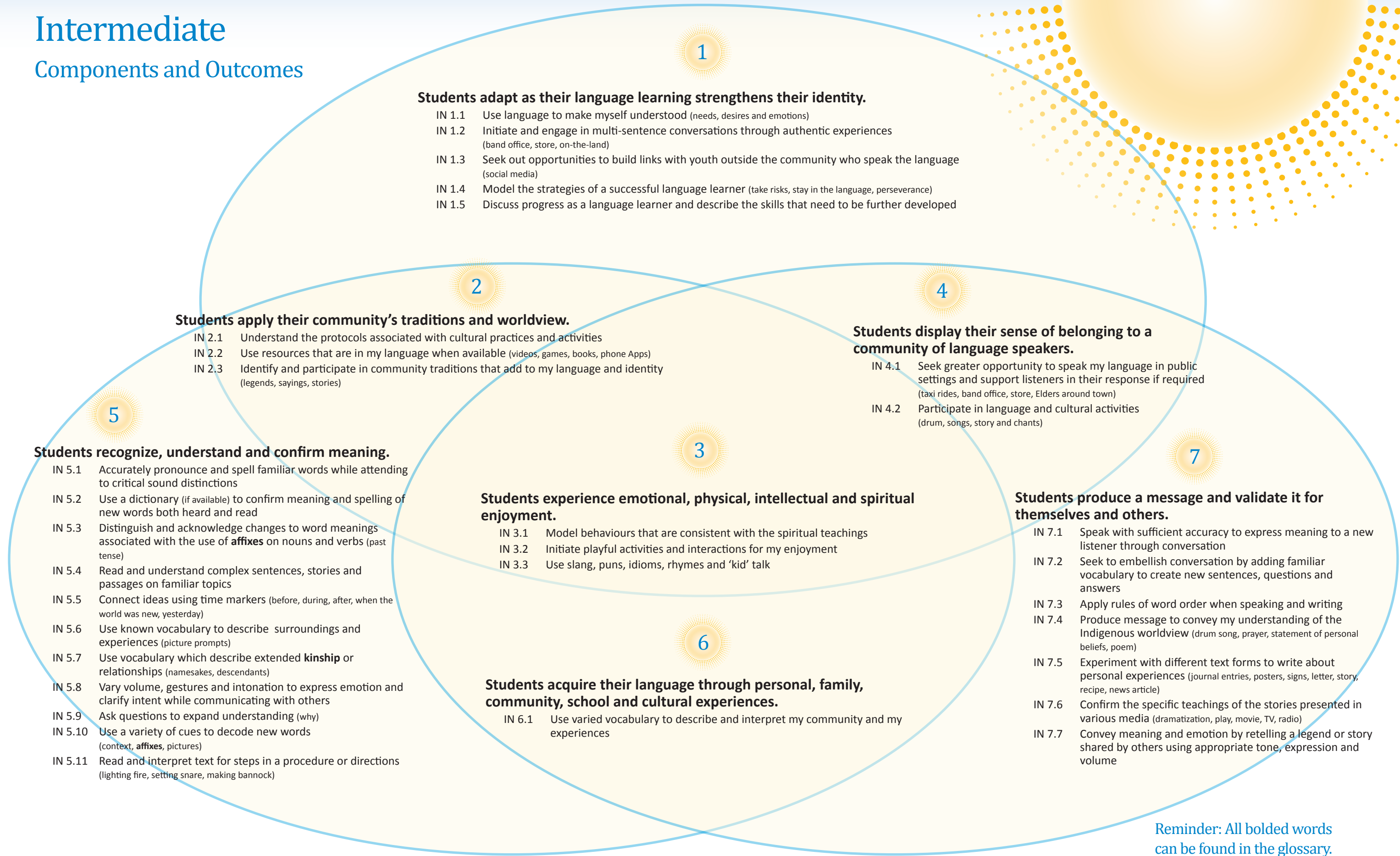
As an Indigenous learner of my own ancestral language... I was constantly being put down for attempting to speak and learn Gwich'in. In speaking to many other Indigenous language learners (not only Gwich'in), they related the same experiences of being laughed at and hearing merciless remarks from fluent speakers. Having this type of experience is enough for an Indigenous learner to give up, even if their goal is to understand and speak with, for instance, their grandparents.

Hishinlai' Kathy R. Sikorski, Gwich'in language teacher, University of Alaska Fairbanks



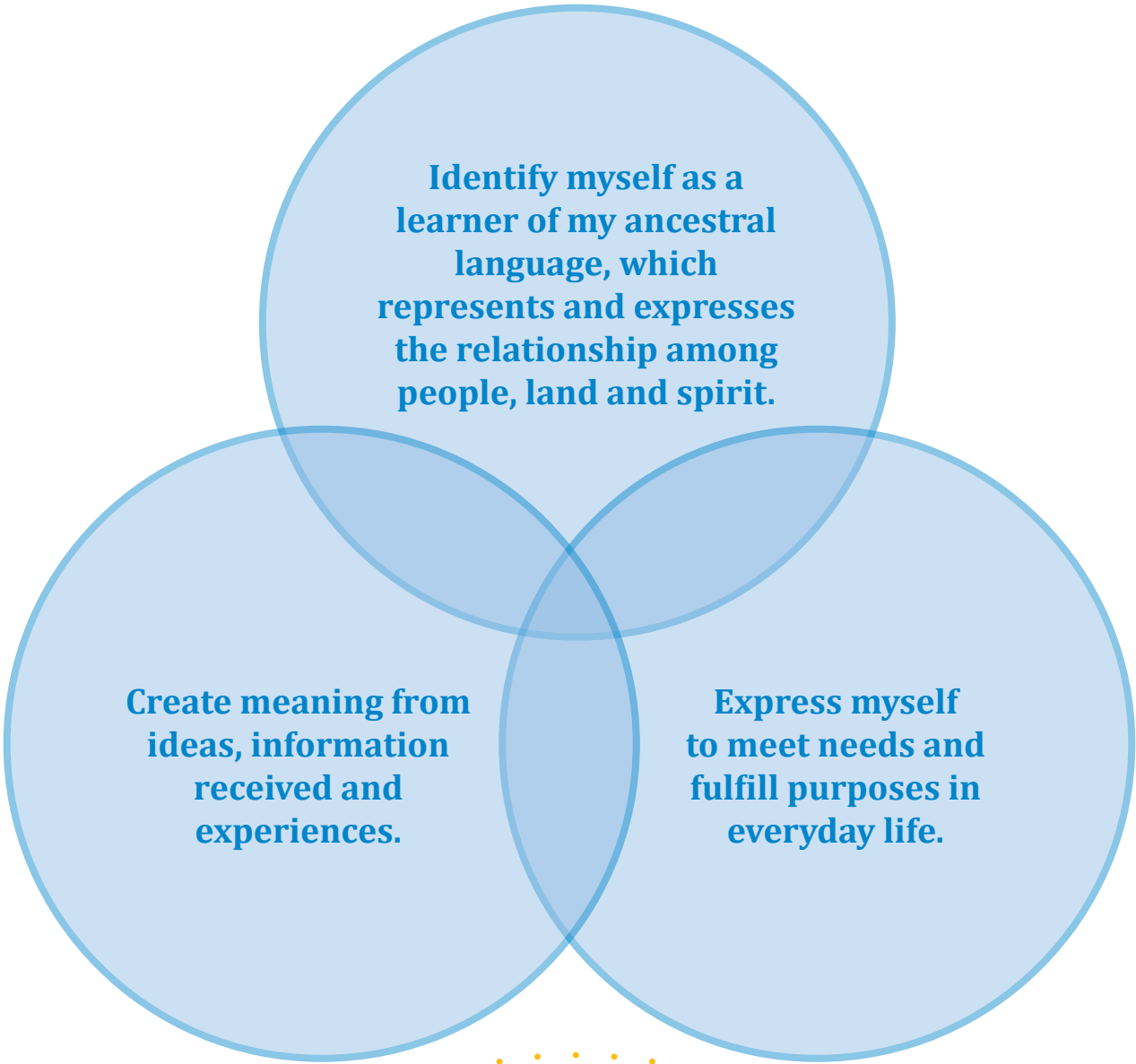
Intermediate

Components and Outcomes



Advanced

Disciplinary Competencies



The Gwich'in worldview is embedded within the Gwich'in language, *dinjii zhuh gijnjik*. What my ancestors valued and believed and how they saw the world can be understood by knowing the language. So if I truly want to live the Gwich'in way then I must learn to speak *dinjii zhuh gijnjik*.

Jolene McDonald
Teetl'it Gwich'in
Teetl'it Zheh, NT

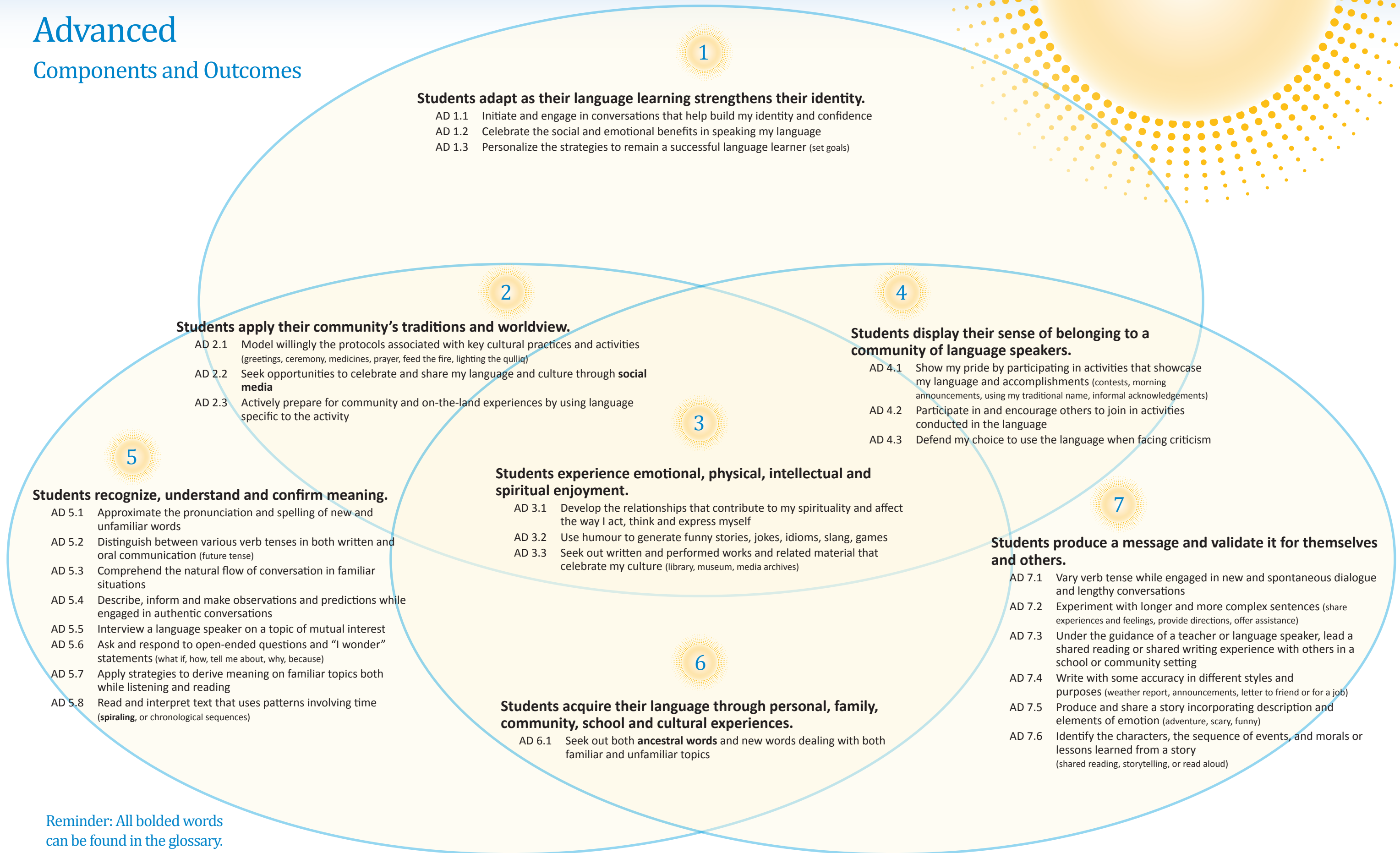


Jolene and her daughter are growing in their language skills together.



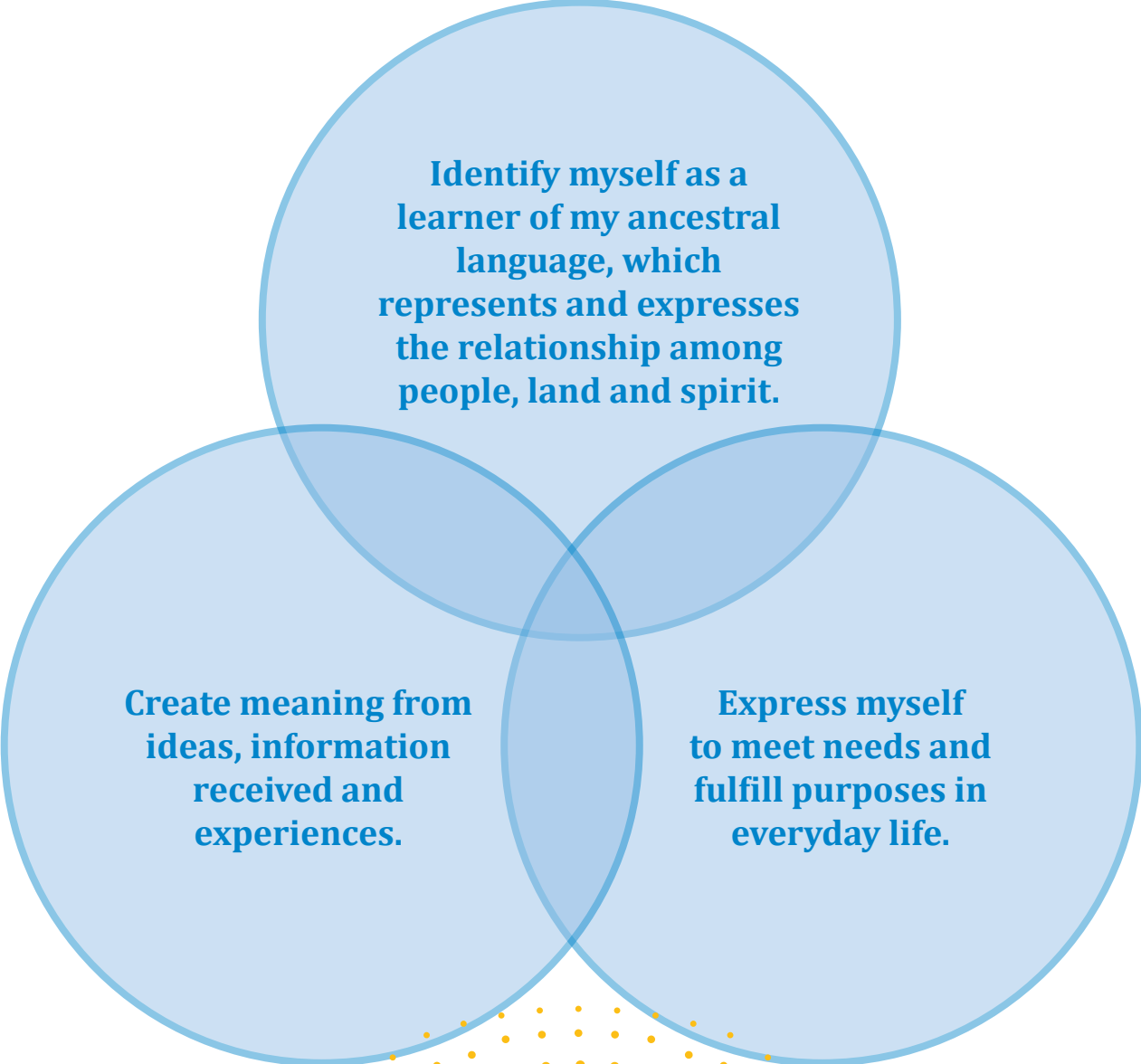
Advanced

Components and Outcomes



Capable

Disciplinary Competencies

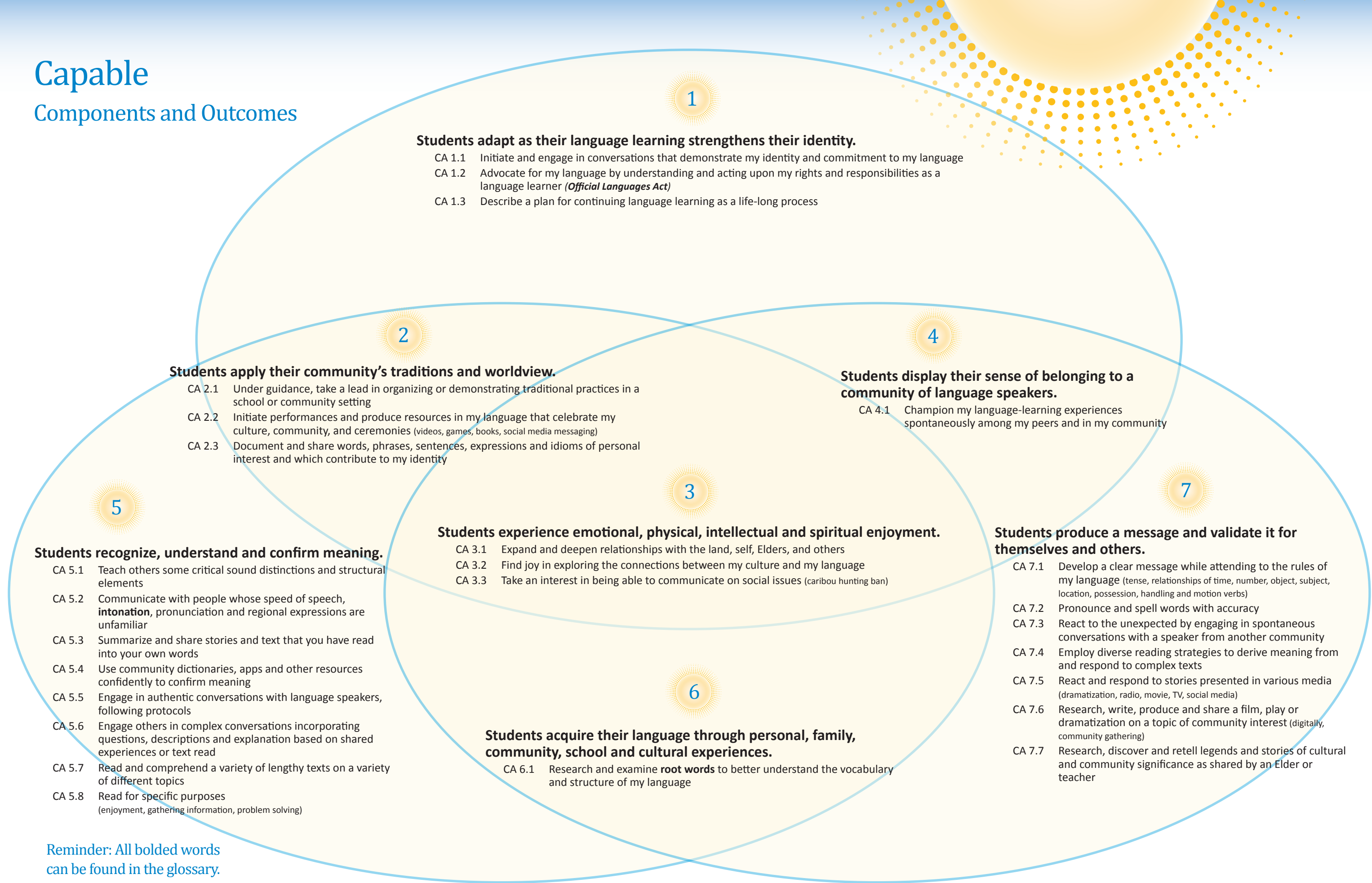


Mollie Oliktoak, Inuinnaqtun language teacher in Ulukhaktok, teaches the children how to tell stories using ayaraaq or string game. This string game, modeled by Mollie and imitated by Sarah Kimiksana, makes the picture of a kuvyaq or fish net.



Capable

Components and Outcomes



Component 1

Students adapt as their language learning strengthens their identity.



“The Frostbite Wiłłideh Word films are fun because we get to write a script and create films teaching our language. It’s cool to teach other people our language.”
Maalea, age 12

“I like the Wiłłideh Word films because they are funny. People who like Frostbite can learn new words and sentences.”
Denaze, age 11

“The Frostbite Wiłłideh films are part of how our school is supporting a whole-school approach to learning the Wiłłideh language. It’s incredible to see how our students have taken ownership over this project and the thought and care that they put forth to share their language with the wider world. It’s so exciting!”
Lea Lamoureux, Principal

Component 1

Students adapt as their language learning strengthens their identity.

COMPONENT FOCUS	EMERGENT	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	CAPABLE
Strengthen identity through conversation	EM 4.1 Speak to friends and family at home and at school using familiar words and scripted conversations	BE 1.1 Use the language as a tool to express my basic needs, desires and emotions	IN 1.1 Use language to make myself understood (needs, desires and emotions)	AD 1.1 Initiate and engage in conversations that help build my identity and confidence	CA 1.1 Initiate and engage in conversations that demonstrate my identity and commitment to my language
		BE 1.2 Engage in conversations through authentic experiences (seasonal activities and community settings)	IN 1.2 Initiate and engage in multi-sentence conversations through authentic experiences (band office, store, on-the-land)		
Strengthen identity through advocacy	EM 3.2 Display curiosity and make my language part of my school life.	BE 1.3 Make connections with the language used in my home and community (store, Rec Centre)	IN 1.3 Seek out opportunities to build links with youth outside the community who speak the language (social media)	AD 4.3 Defend my choice to use the language when facing criticism	CA 1.2 Advocate for my language by understanding and acting upon my rights and responsibilities as a language learner (Official Languages Act)
Strengthen identity through effort and change	EM 1.1 Be aware of how my behaviour affects others (recognize the importance of being the listener in storytelling)	BE 1.4 Adapt behaviours to support and encourage others	IN 1.4 Model the strategies of a successful language learner (take risks, stay in the language, perseverance)	AD 1.2 Celebrate the social and emotional benefits in speaking my language	CA 3.3 Take an interest in being able to communicate on social issues (caribou hunting ban)
	EM 1.2 Recognize that learning a language requires effort			AD 1.3 Personalize the strategies to remain a successful language learner (set goals)	
Strengthen identity by reflecting on my learning	EM 1.3 Set simple language learning goals with support	BE 1.5 Recognize the strategies of a successful language learner (take risks, make an effort, stay in the language, set goals)	IN 1.5 Discuss progress as a language learner and describe the skills that need to be further developed	AD 3.1 Develop the relationships that contribute to my spirituality and affect the way I act, think and express myself	CA 1.3 Describe a plan for continuing language learning as a life-long process

Note: Shaded boxes denote repeated outcomes from a different component.

Reminder: All bolded words can be found in the glossary.

Component 2

Students apply their community's traditions and worldview.



Shirley Lamalice, Indigenous language teacher at Princess Alexandra School in Hay River, uses learning centres in her large class of 26 students to ensure the children are doing most of the talking.

Component 2

Students apply their community’s traditions and worldview.

COMPONENT FOCUS	EMERGENT	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	CAPABLE
My language is rooted in the land and the traditions of my community	EM 2.1 Recognize that my language is connected to community and cultural activities	BE 2.1 Participate in community and cultural activities	IN 2.1 Understand the protocols associated with cultural practices and activities	AD 2.1 Model willingly the protocols associated with key cultural practices and activities (greetings, ceremony, medicines, prayer, feed the fire, lighting the qulliq)	CA 2.1 Under guidance, take a lead in organizing or demonstrating traditional practices in a school or community setting
		BE 2.2 Follow the protocols and use appropriate language in various settings and activities			
My language allows me to live my culture and explore traditions	EM 2.2 Choose activities that are in the language when choice is available (videos, games, books)	BE 7.4 Make personal connections to the teachings of the stories either told or read to me	IN 2.2 Use resources that are in my language when available (video, games, books, phone Apps)	AD 2.2 Seek opportunities to celebrate and share my language and culture through social media	CA 2.2 Initiate performances and produce resources in my language that celebrate my culture, community, and ceremonies (videos, games, books, social media messaging)
I build my language through experience	EM 2.3 Identify and practice common community expressions (sayings, chants, songs, greetings, playground games)	BE 2.3 Integrate common expressions, sayings, chants and songs spontaneously	IN 2.3 Identify and participate in community traditions that add to my language and identity (legends, sayings, stories)	AD 2.3 Actively prepare for community and on-the-land experiences by using language specific to the activity	CA 2.3 Document and share words, phrases, sentences, expressions and idioms of personal interest and which contribute to my identity

Reminder: All bolded words can be found in the glossary.

Component 3

Students experience emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual enjoyment.



What Do **Parents Say?**

I love to listen to my daughter saying her bedtime prayers in our Slavey language.

It makes me so proud.

Rachel Durocher
Parent,
Harry Camsell School,
Hay River

Component 3

Students experience emotional, physical, intellectual and spiritual enjoyment.

COMPONENT FOCUS	EMERGENT	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	CAPABLE
My language expresses my spirituality	EM 3.1 Develop an awareness of spiritual practices within my community	BE 3.1 Practice behaviour that is consistent with spiritual teachings	IN 3.1 Model behaviors that are consistent with the spiritual teachings	AD 3.1 Develop the relationships that contribute to my spirituality and affect the way I act, think and express myself	CA 3.1 Expand and deepen relationships with the land, self, Elders, and others
I learn best when learning is playful and fun	EM 3.2 Display curiosity and make my language part of my school life	BE 3.2 React to funny things (jokes, stories, and idioms)	IN 3.2 Initiate playful activities and interactions for my enjoyment	AD 3.2 Use humour to generate funny stories, jokes, idioms, slang, games	CA 3.2 Find joy in exploring the connections between my culture and my language
I make connections in my language	EM 3.3 Play in my language (repeatedly request a story, song, game, chant, at school and home)	BE 3.3 Interact with books and other media for my own enjoyment (videos, radio, phone Apps, podcasts)	IN 7.4 Produce message to convey my understanding of the Indigenous worldview (drum song, prayer, statement of personal beliefs, poem)	AD 3.3 Seek out written and performed works and related material that celebrate my culture (library, museum, media archives)	CA 2.2 Initiate performances and produce resources in my language that celebrate my culture, community, and ceremonies (videos, games, books, social media messaging)
I build my language through experience	EM 3.4 Play with my language (create new words, fun sentences, rhymes)	BE 3.4 Interpret or act out what I see and hear through puppetry and drama	IN 3.3 Use slang, puns, idioms, rhymes and ‘kid’ talk	AD 2.3 Actively prepare for community and on-the-land experiences and using language specific to the activity	CA 3.3 Take an interest in being able to communicate on social issues (caribou hunting ban)

Note: Shaded boxes denote repeated outcomes from a different component.

Reminder: All bolded words can be found in the glossary.

Component 4

Students display their sense of belonging to a community of language speakers.



What Do Youth Say.
Translating the poem was kind of tricky but it was fun working with Miss Renie to learn new words and ways to put them together. It makes me feel proud to be able to share my writing talents in my own language for my peers and community. I think it would be really cool to be able to sit down and write creatively entirely in my language. The words are so meaningful.

*Connor Van Loon,
Tsiigehtchic*

Grade seven student, Connor Van Loon, reads an original poem based on the novel Two Old Women written by Velma Wallis. Connor wrote his poem in English and then worked with language teacher Renie Koe to translate it into Gwich'in. Here he is reading his poem to his classmates during morning circle as a celebration of this accomplishment.

I am Sa'

Vits'atinihjih st'at duuleh nilii
I wonder why I have lost my skills
I hear life all around me,
tsiivii goonlih nilin.
I want to go back to my tribe.
Vits'atrinihjih st'at duuleh nilii.

Zhuu uu'an t'idi'in vitaii goonlih
I feel **vadzaih dhoh**
I touch the **geh viida'al**
Gadiinjihshadhat we won't survive.
iitre' because I miss my **shizhehk'oo**
Vits'atr'inihjih ts'at duuleh nilii.

I understand we will die soon
I say we will die trying
Gashiinlyaa shizeh k'oo hanilnya
Guk'a gwihihndal nin
Googwandaii
Vits'atrinihjih ts'at duuleh nilii.

Component 4

Students display their sense of belonging to a community of language speakers.

COMPONENT FOCUS	EMERGENT	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	CAPABLE
My language grows as I connect with my community	EM 4.1 Speak to friends and family at home and school using familiar words and scripted conversations	BE 4.1 Speak my language to people I know in school and community settings (other teachers, store, bush camp, playground)	IN 4.1 Seek greater opportunity to speak my language in public settings and support listeners in their response if required (taxi rides, band office, store, Elders around town)	AD 4.1 Show my pride by participating in activities that showcase my language and accomplishments (contests, morning announcements, using my traditional name, informal acknowledgements)	CA 3.1 Expand and deepen relationships with the land, self, Elders, and others
I share, celebrate and perform in my language	EM 4.2 Participate willingly to show thanks and have humility (willingly take off my hat where appropriate)	BE 4.2 Seek out language and cultural performances (drum songs, stories and chants)	IN 4.2 Participate in language and cultural activities (drum songs, stories and chants)	AD 4.2 Participate in and encourage others to join in activities conducted in the language	CA 2.2 Initiate performances and produce resources in my language that celebrate my culture, community, and ceremonies (videos, games, books, social media messaging)
	EM 4.3 Participate in activities that promote socialization (games, plays, skits)	BE 4.3 Lead activities that promote socialization (tag, Uno, hide and seek, soccer, buddy reading)			
I value my language	EM 3.2 Display curiosity and make my language part of my school life	BE 4.4 Appreciate and value that the language may be spoken in different ways within the language community	IN 3.1 Model behaviours that are consistent with the spiritual teachings	AD 4.3 Defend my choice to use the language when facing criticism	CA 4.1 Champion my language-learning experiences spontaneously among my peers and in my community

Note: Shaded boxes denote repeated outcomes from a different component.

Reminder: All bolded words can be found in the glossary.

Component 5

Students recognize, understand and confirm meaning.



What Do Youth Say.

My language is important to me because it's part of my identity and culture.

*Sheena Yakinneah-Sabourin,
Chief Sunrise School,
K'atłodeeche First Nation Reserve*

Component 5

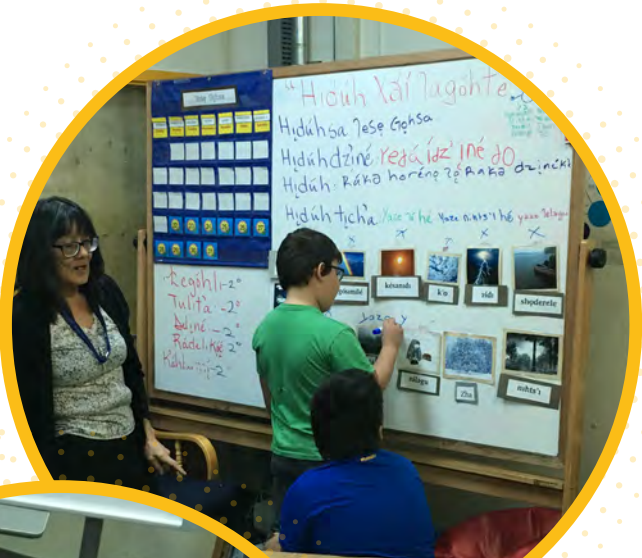
Students recognize, understand and confirm meaning.

COMPONENT FOCUS	EMERGENT	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	CAPABLE
I acquire meaning by understanding the structure of my language (phonetic and grammatical)	EM 5.1 Listen to try and distinguish critical sound distinctions	BE 5.1 Listen for and distinguish critical sound distinctions in known words spoken (glottals, clicks, tones, nasals)	IN 5.1 Accurately pronounce and spell familiar words while attending to critical sound distinctions	AD 5.1 Approximate the pronunciation and spelling of new and unfamiliar words	CA 5.1 Teach others some critical sound distinctions and structural elements
	EM 5.2 Use and reuse known words orally with support	BE 5.2 Pronounce known words accurately with attention given to unique features of the alphabet (diacritics)	IN 5.2 Use a dictionary (if available) to confirm meaning and spelling of new words both heard or read	AD 5.2 Distinguish between various verb tenses in both written and oral communication (future tense)	CA 7.1 Develop a clear message while attending to the rules of my language (tense, relationships of time, number, object, subject, location, possession handling and motion verbs)
	EM 5.3 Reproduce rhythm and intonation (commands, stories, rhymes and songs)	BE 5.3 Comprehend elements within sentences in guided situations (word order, possession, number, object or subject, prepositions of place)	IN 5.3 Distinguish and acknowledge changes to word meanings associated with the use of affixes on nouns and verbs (past tense)		
I build my language by experimenting with words and sentences	EM 5.4 Use adjectives to describe familiar nouns	BE 5.4 Connect ideas using common connection words (and, but, or, then, because)	IN 5.4 Read and understand complex sentences, stories and passages on familiar topics	AD 6.1 Seek out both ancestral words and new words dealing with both familiar and unfamiliar topics	CA 5.2 Communicate with people whose speed of speech, intonation , pronunciation and regional expressions are unfamiliar
			IN 5.5 Connect ideas using time markers (before, during, after, when the world was new, yesterday)		CA 5.3 Summarize and share stories and text that you have read into your own words
I acquire meaning through attentive listening, collaboration and conversation	EM 5.5 Listen attentively and seek meaning from key words, phrases, sentences, and commands	BE 5.5 Interact with others using a variety of responses to different greetings, introductions, farewells, questions and commands	IN 5.6 Use known vocabulary to describe surroundings and experiences (picture prompts)	AD 5.3 Comprehend the natural flow of conversation in familiar situations	CA 5.4 Use community dictionaries, apps, and other resources confidently to confirm meaning
	EM 5.6 Listen for and distinguish the patterns in predictable sentences			AD 5.4 Describe, inform and make observations and predictions while engaged in authentic conversations	CA 5.5 Engage in authentic conversations with language speakers, following protocols
	EM 5.7 Respond appropriately to familiar social interactions in the school, home or community (greetings, introductions, farewells, questions, commands, warnings)	BE 5.6 Interpret and respond to differences in volume, intonation , gestures and body language that may accompany a statement, command or warning in different settings	IN 5.7 Use vocabulary which describe extended kinship or relationships (namesakes, descendants)	AD 5.5 Interview a language speaker on a topic of mutual interest	CA 5.6 Engage others in complex conversations incorporating questions, descriptions and explanations based on shared experiences or text read
	EM 5.8 Interpret and use gestures, mime, volume, intonation and visual supports to understand warnings and make myself understood	BE 5.7 Ask questions or make statements to seek clarification (survival phrases , when)	IN 5.8 Vary volume, gestures and intonation to express emotion and clarify intent while communicating with others		
I acquire meaning by asking questions and making statements	EM 5.9 Ask questions or make statements (who, what, where)	BE 5.8 Use supports to build a bank of sight words from familiar topics and common vocabulary (word wall, dictionary)	IN 5.9 Ask questions to expand understanding (why)	AD 5.6 Ask and respond to open-ended questions and “I wonder” statements (what if, how, tell me about, why, because)	CA 5.7 Read and comprehend a variety of lengthy texts on a variety of different topics
I confirm meaning by listening, speaking, reading, and writing in my language	EM 5.10 Connect symbols on signs and labels with language acquired orally	BE 5.9 Read simple patterned text on familiar topics	IN 5.10 Use a variety of cues to decode new words (context, affixes , pictures)	AD 5.7 Apply strategies to derive meaning on familiar topics both while listening and reading	CA 5.8 Read for specific purposes (enjoyment, gathering information, problem solving)
			IN 5.11 Read and interpret text for steps in a procedure or directions (lighting fire, setting snares, making bannock)	AD 5.8 Read and interpret text that uses patterns involving time (spiraling , or chronological sequences)	

Note: Shaded boxes denote repeated outcomes from a different component. Reminder: All bolded words can be found in the glossary.

Component 6

Students acquire their language through personal, family, community, school and cultural experiences.



Dora Grandjambe asks students to lead the morning routine. They share what the weather is like in each of the Sahtu communities. She uses the language blocks to reinforce full sentences. For example, children can say, *'today the weather is cloudy in Tulita'*. As students grow in the language she continues to use the language blocks but has the students forecast the weather to use future tense. For example, she challenges them to use their weather knowledge while saying phrases such as, *'tomorrow it will be sunny in Norman Wells'* or to use the past tense such as, *'yesterday it was cold but today it is warm.'*

Component 6

Students acquire their language through personal, family, community, school and cultural experiences.

COMPONENT FOCUS	EMERGENT	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	CAPABLE
I connect to community and school to build my language	EM 6.1 Begin to construct vocabulary connected to familiar themes	BE 6.1 Seek out new ways to describe and interpret my community, surroundings and my experiences (personal dictionary)	IN 6.1 Use varied vocabulary to describe and interpret my community and my experiences	AD 6.1 Seek out both ancestral words and new words dealing with both familiar and unfamiliar topics	CA 6.1 Research and examine root words to better understand the vocabulary and structure of my language

Following the guidance from *Dene Kede* or *Inuuqatigiit*, as well as other local and regional documents, teachers and students will determine the vocabulary necessary to connect to the culture of the community.



Reminder: All bolded words can be found in the glossary.

Component 7

Students produce a message and validate it for themselves and others.



Barrier Games

Barrier games are easy to make. You just need two sets of the exact same materials with a barrier in-between. The learner on one side gives the instructions while the learner on the other listens and tries to do exactly what they are told. When the first learner is finished, remove the barrier to see if both have the same items or picture.

They can be created to target specific language vocabulary such as the type of dishes or animals or higher structures or skills such as preposition of place (on, in, beside). They also give an opportunity for asking questions, explaining, clarifying or giving instructions.



The set of dishes can be used to teach the nouns (plate, cup, fork) as well as colours and phrases such as, 'put the yellow fork inside the blue cup'.

Students generally know the names of the animals. Using the animals can help with word order practice, 'bear, big, brown or bear, small, white' or phrases such as, 'fish swim, raven fly not swim'.

Barrier games can also be used to practice higher level phrases such as, 'put the ski-doo on the ice. Pack the sled with the stove and gun. Put the tent on the left side. The hunter is on the ski-doo'. When the story is finished both pictures should look the same.



Component 7

Students produce a message and validate it for themselves and others.

COMPONENT FOCUS	EMERGENT	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED	CAPABLE
I seek to communicate while attending to the structural elements of my language	EM 7.1 Speak with enough accuracy to express meaning through simple memorized sentences	BE 7.1 Apply rules of the language to scripted conversations and simple stories (pronouns, noun-verb patterns)	IN 7.1 Speak with sufficient accuracy to express meaning to a new listener through conversation	AD 7.1 Vary verb tense while engaged in new and spontaneous dialogue and lengthy conversations	CA 7.1 Develop a clear message while attending to the rules of my language (tense, relationships of time, number, object, subject, location, possession, handling and motion verbs)
					CA 7.2 Pronounce and spell words with accuracy
I convey my message through my non-verbal response and the choice of my words and sentences	EM 7.2 React to functional day-to-day statements and questions	BE 7.2 Use key phrases, scripted questions and answers to converse with others	IN 7.2 Seek to embellish conversation by adding familiar vocabulary to create new sentences, questions and answers	AD 7.2 Experiment with longer and more complex sentences (share experiences and feelings, provide directions, offer assistance)	CA 7.3 React to the unexpected by engaging in spontaneous conversations on a with a speaker from another community
I select useful strategies to understand content in my language	EM 5.9 Ask questions or make statements (who, what, where)	BE 7.3 Identify the topic of an oral or written message about familiar situations	IN 7.3 Apply rules of word order when speaking	AD 7.3 Under the guidance of a teacher or language speaker, lead a shared reading or shared writing experience with others in a school or community setting	CA 7.4 Employ diverse reading strategies to derive meaning from and respond to complex texts
		BE 7.4 Make personal connections to the teachings of the stories either told or read to me			CA 7.5 React and respond to stories presented in various media (dramatization, radio, movie, TV, social media)
I speak, write and produce to document and describe my personal experiences, my culture and my surroundings	EM 7.3 Participate in daily routine activities using known phrases (greetings, weather, emotions, favorite activities)	BE 7.5 Write simple messages and stories using patterned text (daily journals, shared writing experience, autobiography)	IN 7.4 Produce message to convey my understanding of the Indigenous worldview (drum song, prayer, statement of personal beliefs, poem)	AD 7.4 Write with some accuracy in different styles and purposes (weather report, announcements, letter to friend or for job)	CA 7.6 Research, write, produce and share a film, play or dramatization on a topic of community interest (digitally, community gathering)
		BE 7.6 Participate in writing activities that promote socialization (paired writing, plays and skits, pen pal, games, social media)	IN 7.5 Experiment with different text forms to write about personal experiences (journal entries, posters, signs, letter, story, recipe, news article)	AD 7.5 Produce and share a story incorporating description and elements of emotion (adventure, scary, funny)	
I interact with stories to connect with my language, traditions and culture	EM 7.4 Interact with a simple story with support (poems, plays, nursery rhymes, songs)	BE 7.7 Participate in cultural experiences and describe these through simple phrases	IN 7.6 Confirm the specific teachings of the stories presented in various media (dramatization, play, movie, TV, radio)	AD 7.6 Identify the characters, the sequence of events, and morals or lessons learned from a story (shared reading, storytelling, or read aloud)	CA 7.7 Research, discover and retell legends and stories of cultural and community significance as shared by an Elder or teacher
			IN 7.7 Convey meaning and emotion by retelling a legend or story shared by others using appropriate tone, expression and volume		

Note: Shaded boxes denote repeated outcomes from a different component.

Reminder: All bolded words can be found in the glossary.

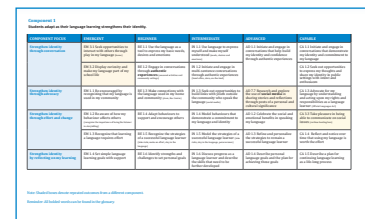
Linear View of Outcomes

Components 1-7

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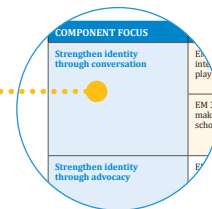
Linear View of Outcomes

The *Linear View* of the learner outcomes contains all the exact same outcomes listed in the *Holistic View*. They are just re-organized. The *Linear View* shows the progressive development within each of the 7 components across all five levels of language proficiency.



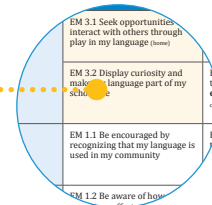
Component Focus

The learning outcomes are purposely grouped and the criterion used for organizing them is described under the label component focus. This organizational feature found only in the linear charts may be particularly helpful to Indigenous Language instructors as they organize activities and manage the learning needs of students in multi-level classrooms.



Shaded Boxes

Turning the holistic view into a linear view posed a few challenges including fitting integrated circles into a chart. To compensate there are shaded boxes within each of the charts. These indicate repeated outcomes. The numbers indicate in which component they are also found.



We will continue to
speak and be who
we are to live our
cultural identity for
generations to come.

Together We Can Grow Our Languages

ʔeł̥a Nuwe Yaʔí Nílye Xadúwíle
mâmwî kîyân̥an kakeh pimâtositanaw kipîkiskwewinew
Nihkhàh Nikhwiginjik Gwindoo Niint'aîi Hàatsah
Havaqqatigiiklutta Atautimut Uqauhiqput Naupqaqtaaqtaaqut
ᑲᑯᑦᑲᑦ ᐱᑭᑲᑦᑲᑦ ᐱᑭᑲᑦᑲᑦ ᐱᑭᑲᑦᑲᑦ ᐱᑭᑲᑦᑲᑦ
Atautchikuarluta Uqautchivut Aglipkarikput
Areyq̣né Dúle Nakeni Sahtúot'ine Yaʔ̣ Gode T'á Ts'enezhe
Efets'áhhídi T'áh Nahe Zhatie Nezheh Gha
Efexè Goyati Denahk'e Wet'à Ts'et'̣ Ha Dìi-le

Promising Community Practices for Emergent Learners



Singing and dancing are universal social art forms that can support language learning including sentences, sound patterns, and social skills all linked to body movements in fun ways. Many **Language Nests** and community organizations have drum dance groups, which are essential to language and cultural revitalization.

Stay in the language: Always stay in the language, otherwise the learner’s brain will disconnect. Brains take short-cuts and if learners know that a translation is coming they will wait for it. This translation does not help the language learner. The ‘brain muscle’ develops better by working through discomfort—similar to how our body hurts a little bit when first starting to do push-ups. Language Nests are ideal for surrounding new learners with our Indigenous language.

Speak slowly: Emergent learners will benefit from those who speak slowly but naturally. This allows the new learner to find something they already know within the phrase or sentence.

Be kind and patient: Emergent learners need to be patient with themselves and they need others to be patient with them. They need kindness and a safe and caring space to take the risk of making mistakes. Wearing a ‘Speak To Me In...’ button in the community identifies you as a patient mentor. Staying in the language may cause the learner to be frustrated, but this is being kind.

Use and re-use: Learners need to use and re-use phrases. This is not the same thing as repetition as it requires the learners to think, not repeat. It is important to have a plan for a variety of settings to use and re-use the phrases you are expecting. Song lyrics linked to real-world activities, community situations, and physical actions are fun ways to reinforce useful phrases.

Stick with a phrase: Select which phrases and sentences that you want the learners to use and stick with them. For example, ‘My name is Sarah’, or ‘People call me Sarah’ or ‘I am Sarah’ or ‘Sarah is how people address me’ all mean the same thing, but a new learner would get confused if each time they heard it a different way. Teachers and language mentors need to be consistent with the phrases they use until students have mastered that concept, then they can add a new way to say the sentence.

Each child is unique in talents and abilities. The role and responsibility for those around the growing child is to provide experiences which will enable the child to become what he/she is meant to be.

Dene Kede (1993)

What Do Language Leaders Say?

I love to sing. People who are happy about the land sing love songs to the land. This shows a connection. If you want to learn the language you have to sing the songs and sit with the Elders and hear their stories about where the songs come from. If you are proud of who you are, show us and sing loud.

Paul Andrew, Tulít’a

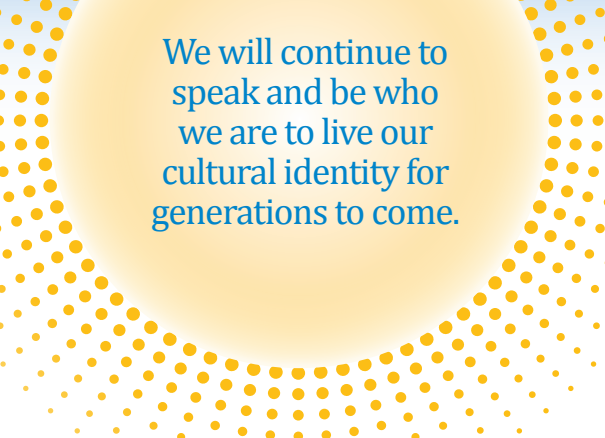
Indigenous Language Nests are located in several communities around the territory. Language Nests are an immersion-based approach where young children acquire their traditional language through being with speakers who use the language. Language Nests create a warm inviting environment for children to learn and experience their local language and culture. Here is Elder Maurice Mendo and Isaac Horassi discussing a book together in Tulít’a at the Sister Celeste Child Development Centre.



The Dehcho First Nations provided “Speak to me in Dene Zhatié” buttons for community language learners and fluent speakers. The colours signify their proficiency level and their desire to talk with others. Fluent speakers were asked to approach, encourage, and talk with learners at their conversational level. The buttons also remind everyone that they all play a role in keeping the language vibrant.



A class-set of different aprons can be made for pre-school, JK/K learners. They could have different sizes of buttons, zippers and laces as well as different materials to touch. The teacher could have children practice doing the tasks while stating each phrase such as, ‘tie it up, zip it up, do up the large, black button, touch the moose-hide’.



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[illegible]

Promising Community Practices for Beginner Learners



Mary Ann Vital with the Sahtu Dene Council made a 'story in a bag' resource. She sewed a bag and filled it full of resources and activities to go with the book written and illustrated by Christal Doherty and Carla Taylor called Dání Tatsó Sa Naaríchú, How Raven Returned the Sun.

Teachers of language programs of all ages can borrow the 'story in a bag' to help develop their active listening skills.

Supportive spaces: Make all learning environments welcome, supportive and open to all who want to learn. Model that it's okay to make mistakes around other people, show how we should react to the mistakes of others, and demonstrate self-care or mindfulness strategies, like getting a drink of water if you need a break from speaking.

Teach learners 'survival phrases' to help them stay in the language: Survival phrases are simple sentences or questions that learners can use to encourage the speaker they're working with to give and get information while staying in the language. Examples of phrases they could use in the language would be, 'Speak slowly'. Or 'How do you say _____ in Tẖchq̱'? Or 'Will you speak Inuinnaqtun?' Or 'I'm trying to learn.'

Motivated learners learn faster: The authentic phrases learners use should be related to everyday life. For example, snack time routines should be done in the language as the motivation is then there for the learners to use phrases such as 'I want two pieces of the red apple'. These phrases help the learners transfer the 'I want...' part of a sentence to phrases like, 'I want a longer fishing line.'

Intentional teaching: Games, songs and other resources need to teach a specific phrase. The game of 'Go Fish' can be used to teach noun vocabulary (such as animal or plant names) but more importantly it teaches the verb, to have. For example, 'Do you have a ____?' with the response being either a positive or negative answer in a full sentence.

Start with short sentences: The speaker should use full short sentences. Ask learners to use full sentences in response. Using full sentences provides the necessary opportunities for the learners' brain to develop internal grammar and fluency.

Introduction of some written tools: The teacher may begin to use text with learners for language that has already been acquired orally. Learners should start with reading before they are expected to write.

Start with a familiar cultural context: Learners are engaged in activities that they have already been exposed to within their community's cultural setting.

What Do Language Leaders Say?

I speak Inuvialuktun as much as I can in the community. When I meet people I stop and I say a few sentences and I ask questions. It's joyful and like music when I hear our language. Our language is still alive if we use it - it's up to all of us who have it to share it.

Betty Elias, Tuktoyaktuk

NOTE:
Reading and writing should only be introduced when the words and phrases have been acquired orally.

Culture is carried through the language. Henry Sabourin explains how to separate parts of a duck, embedding real-world cultural teachings in language for Owen Wellin. Owen was very engaged and actively listening to Henry. Henry is a fluent speaker and he shared these teachings in Dene Zhatié.



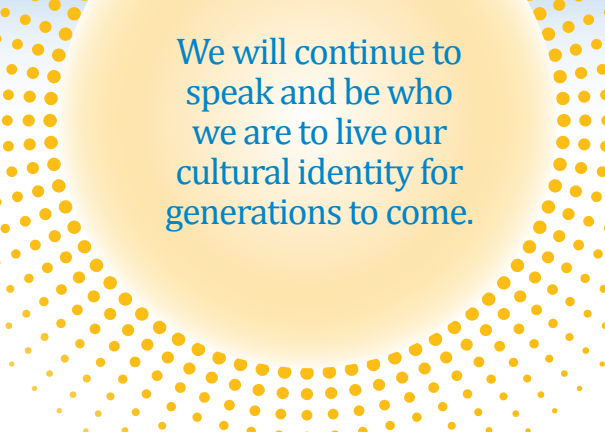
It is best to pick a cultural activity the learner is already familiar with. That way the learner can focus on the language learning and not just the activity.



Access to culturally appropriate books and resources is critical. Even when a book is in English, if the images are appropriate and engaging a teacher can adapt. Holly Carpenter from Tuktoyuktuk adapted a large book to Inuvialuktun.



Engaging greeting cards with diverse messages are a great way to have learners using the language. Try and produce cards with varying levels of language and change the messages regularly.



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Our Languages

ᑭᕐᔪᓂᓗ Nuwe Yaʼı Nílye Xadúwíle
mâmwî kîyânân kakeh pimâtositanaw kipîkiskwewinew
Nihkhàh Nikhwiginjik Gwindoo Niint’aii Hàatsah
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ᑲᑯᑦᑳ ᑱᑦᑳ ᑰᑦᑳ ᑮᑦᑳ ᑬᑦᑳ ᑭᑦᑳ ᑬᑦᑳ ᑭᑦᑳ
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Efets’áhthídı T’áh Nahe Zhatie Nezheh Gha
Eʼexè Goyatì Denahk’e Wet’à Ts’et’ı Ha Dii-le

Promising Community Practices for Intermediate Learners



The Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC) has been working with community members on many initiatives for revitalizing language including the Mentor Apprentice Program (MAP). Here the pairs are learning how to use the wordless books to stay in the language.

Use more complex sentences: Learners need to be challenged with more complex sentences. Start with what learners know and also continue to challenge learners to move beyond basic greetings and lists of nouns.

Model speech patterns: Clearly model target speech patterns in a way that encourages gradual self-correction.

Elders Rosa Pea and Walter Mantla are doing Tłıchǫ yoga with instructor Beatrice Naedzo at the Jimmy Erasmus Seniors Home in Behchokǫ.

For example, the Elders are simulating paddling a canoe. This can be used with children to learn authentic phrases while being physical. Each region could make their own videos using actions with phrases such as, 'split the wood, pick the berries, haul the boat, pound the meat, hang the fish, scrape the hide' while they simulate the movements.

What Do
Language Leaders Say?

The language is a living history, we grow and we add to it as necessary. My mother does not speak English so we communicate in our language. I take it as my personal responsibility to use it at home or in the workplace. I also use the language with my 8 month old son, Cohen, so that he will learn the language and speak with Elders. We need to learn our language, we need to teach it and we need to speak it. We lose much when we do not speak our language.

David Codzi, President, Ayoni Keh Land Corporation, Colville Lake, NT

Learning through volunteering: Learners can learn new language skills while they volunteer in their community. For example, learners could volunteer to serve food at a feast, visit fluent speakers or grocery shop with an Elder.

Beyond the comfort zone: Learners better understand their abilities, limits, and room for growth when they interact informally with others in the community.

Reuse in new situations (20 X 20 rule): Research has shown that learners need to hear and use words and phrases 20 times in 20 different situations in order to remember and use it correctly.

Note: 20 X 20 = 400 different times



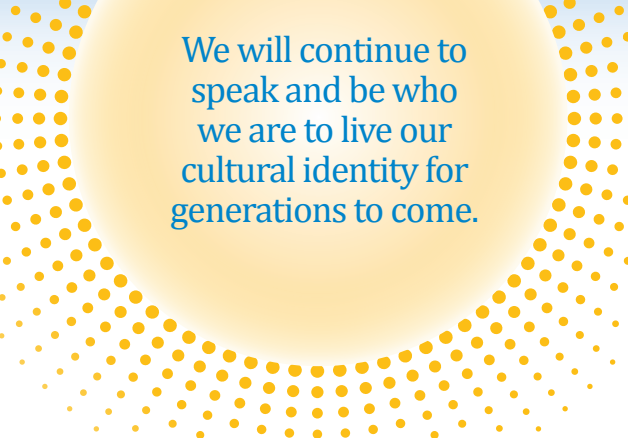
Dahti Tetso (left) is one of 13 graduates of the Dehcho Dene Zhatıé Indigenous Language Revitalization Program, through the University of Victoria. It was delivered in partnership with Dehcho First Nations, the Dehcho Divisional Education Council in the communities of Fort Providence and Fort Simpson. One goal of the program was to create new language speakers and part of that included using a language immersion method known as the Mentor-Apprentice Program – when a fluent speaker, known as the ‘Mentor’, (Violet Jumbo), spends many hours doing hands-on activities while staying only in the language with their ‘Apprentice’.



Visibility of the language is vital—it shows the importance of the language to the community, it reminds people of the language of the land and it helps increase fluency. The community of Fort Smith has been a leader in increasing signage in their three official Indigenous languages on road signs, buildings and within local stores.



The Native Communications Society, plays a vital role in providing Indigenous language programming all across the territory. Here Dēneze Nakehk’o and Eva Beaverho are broadcasting the celebratory proceedings of the 10th Anniversary of the Tłıchǫ Self-government Agreement. Many Tłıchǫ citizens who could not attend the event were able to listen to the words of their leaders. Audio recordings of such special events document community history and are invaluable resources for learners to improve their listening comprehension.



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Together We Can Grow Our Languages

[illegible]

Promising Community Practices for Advanced Learners



Cree Elder and actor Henry Beaver is fishing with two boys on the movie set for Three Feathers. The movie was produced in English, Cree, Dene Zhatié and Dëne Dédłné—so each actor had to deliver their lines in four different languages. The movie is based on a book written by Tł̥chq̓ author Richard Van Camp. Audio and visual materials that are engaging support the language growth of learners and inspire northern audiences.

Assisting others: Advanced learners of all ages can improve their skills by developing teaching materials and using them with learners at a lower level. This helps Advanced learners be more confident about their existing language knowledge. For example, set up buddy reading activities where advanced learners can work with preschool programs or within school classes. The new teaching materials also help the community of speakers, as resources are always needed.

Celebrate achievements: Learners should be provided with regular opportunities to use their language in the community. Invite learners to speak at community events, to share a song or poem, to put on a play or speak on the community radio station.

Training in multi-media: Advanced learners can utilize their existing language and technology skills by making videos and blogs to share online. Learners can also record other speakers to play back when needed to practice different phrases or even full story-telling.

Dictionary updates: Participating in local online dictionary projects develops transcription skills, offers opportunities to review vocabulary and expands technological knowledge.

Hospitality: Give learners an opportunity to plan, prepare for, host, and clean-up after a small-scale event entirely in the language. This provides an opportunity for learners to use their considerable language knowledge in a safe, familiar, and predictable set of interlinked social situations.

The Inuvialuit Cultural Resource Centre is a dynamic place where individuals like Deanna Marie Jacobson and Beverly Amos research, write and record resources for community and school use. They also offer language classes and cultural programming.



The NWT Métis Nation language program based in Fort Smith produced a cooking show which shares traditional food recipes and tips in the Nehiyaw (Cree) language. Learners can watch and re-watch episodes to enhance language skills.



Many communities and Indigenous governments, such as the Yellowknives Dene, offer adult language classes. Maro Sundberg uses some of the same resources that are used in school. Being creative is just as important with the adult population.



Raymond Yakelaya wrote a book called The Tree by the Woodpile. The story is suffused with Newet'sine, the Creator and Spirit of Nature, who brings a message. Although much of the book is in English, there are many phrases within the book in his language, Shutaugot'ine. This is an excellent way to share traditional teachings for advanced language learners.

What Do Language Leaders Say?

Languages in every generation change. It doesn't feel so normal when we are trying to revitalize a language but there comes a time and a place when people realize that the creation of new words and social terminology does not put the language in jeopardy. Different languages and dialects is the norm. Honour and respect everyone's dialect.

*Dr. Lorna Wanostas'a7 Williams
Professor Emerita of Indigenous Education,
Curriculum and Instruction at the
University of Victoria
Lil'wat Nation, British Columbia*

We will continue to speak and be who we are to live our cultural identity for generations to come.

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mâmwai kîyânan kakeh pimâtositanaw kipîkiskwewinew
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Promising Community Practices for Capable Learners



Many regions have recorded the traditional place names and stories associated with important places. Learners benefit from participating in the process as well as accessing the recordings. In this photo Georgina Chocolate is learning from the late Harry Apples during a GIS mapping session organized by the Tłı̨chʔ government in 2014. The place names Harry provided will live on through this work.

One-on-one time with fluent speakers: It takes most learners many years to reach this stage, and then up to 10 years to achieve fluency of their language in all its complexities and nuances. Language learners need ongoing opportunities—everywhere and at all times—to collaborate on real world activities, perform everyday routines, engage in meaningful discussions and express themselves in their language, in order to build and maintain fluency in all situations. One-on-one learning like this is similar to the Mentor-Apprentice model.

Mapping projects: Learners benefit from spending time with fluent speakers on mapping projects where trails are described. Oral history about place names could be recorded and archived in a digital community repository as a resource for future generations.

Mentorship: Capable learners model confident conversation for beginners, and are ready to take on more formalized roles as mentors.

Skills classes and social groups for new parents: New mothers and fathers who are also learners can enroll in parenting skills classes delivered completely in an Indigenous language. After delivery, new parents can cook, craft, and babysit together in language-only social environments.

Self-guided learning: Capable learners should be comfortable using their language skills with fluent speakers and peers to talk about, plan for, self-assess, and demonstrate how their language learning will continue in their personal lives.



Vance Sanderson is texting with his friend Gabe in Cree. It's his main way to communicate with Cree speakers and especially those who don't live in Fort Smith.



What Do Youth Say?

Sadly many of us don't have our language from the history of residential schools. Radio can help. When our Elders come and share stories in our language on the air many people tune in to listen. We want to know our traditional stories and radio is a good way to share. At our station we also have language instructors come in a couple of times a week to give lessons. This can help all of us learn together.

Denise Wolki, Paulatuk Radio Station Technician

What Do Language Leaders Say?

We are excited to have our kids use this new curriculum to learn our language. My wife, Ann, taught the language in the school and she likes what she is seeing in the curriculum and the teacher guide.

Colville Lake District Education Authority, Chair Alvin Orlias



Elder Johnny Blacho and Natanda Oudzi, DEA chair Alvin Orlias and former teacher Ann Kochon-Orlias from Colville Lake were interested to learn about the Our Languages curriculum and how they could support what happens in the school.



The NWT Literacy Council offers training sessions for creating Talking Books. This is an ideal way for speakers of the language to take photos of activities that are important to them and record the text to match the images. The final product allows non-speakers to not only 'read' the books but to also hear the pronunciation of the language.

Noghe
Sane K'ga - 11, 2020

Grah K'ezhka,
Kok'e nide gah daga.
Inee nide gah daga.
Grah nucha-le hini ko zuegno nade.
Wekueeti gah gort.
Grah dechun nade.
Grah nadeh / K'ezhka.
Grah wetse nek'eg.
Hoino diutse di, beeta wetse ha esoh ne-le.

From: hand

Ets'imbaa

Dedi K'iegko nat'ie Fe' He
Dedi e'lie d'oe
Dedi sing-le
Dedi naha
Dedi im ba

Fe' He
Wekueeti
K'ie IV2

3810 Lots!

Yellowknife

XIA 281

Wha

Wha

Nogha

Xela

XIA 28

Diga Kebe

Wekueeti
103.36

Cici Judas, language teacher in Wekweètì, gave her students an authentic purpose for writing. All her students sent a post-card to a learner in another community. The students were excited to get one back written to them in Tłıchǵ.

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The Our Languages curriculum is designed to foster and encourage student ownership of their own learning. Setting personal language learning goals, articulating one's own strengths and struggles as a language learner, serving as an instructional lead in classroom activities and even organizing community language events. All actions that signal a growing commitment to one's own language needs.




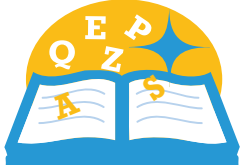
Each morning, an Ikayuqti helper was chosen for the day. Ethen Nasogaluak was the Ikayuqti for the day. He was leading the class in counting the days of the calendar and describing the day's weather in Inuvialuktun. He chose a fellow student, Claire Letendre to help him.

PRINCIPLES OF THE NEUROLINGUISTIC APPROACH (NLA)

The neurolinguistic approach (NLA) to learning language builds networks in the brain that allow learners to develop their language skills naturally. Five principles support the NLA and the approach requires a lot of oral work. Learners are provided with models of sentences (at the beginning, fairly simple sentences) that they need, so that they may communicate in the language in authentic (real) situations (Adapted from Netten and Germain, 2012).




Implications of the 5 Principles

The five principles of the NLA have implications for teaching. Learners must do most of the talking (work) in order for their brains to develop the patterns. Quiet listening is not enough.

PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION	IMPLICATION FOR TEACHING STRATEGY
1) Developing internal grammar 	<p>Activities must allow learners to participate in many oral guided activities. Learners must use and re-use the same phrases until they are embedded.</p>	<p>At first, use only simple sentences. Sentences need to be related to the project and/or learners' life. Always correct learners gently and have them use the correct sentence several times. Teacher needs to allow silence while the learner's brain is working and patience when there are mispronunciations.</p> <p>When correcting learners ALWAYS provide your own answer in the language as a model.</p> <p>NEVER speak English in class, otherwise the learner's brain "disconnects" and takes short-cuts.</p>
2) Literacy-based approach 	<p>Teach language in the following order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen • Speak • Read • Write 	<p>Children should be encouraged to listen and speak.</p> <p>Language should only be read once it has been acquired orally.</p> <p>Language should only be written once it has been read.</p> <p>Writing must have a purpose.</p> <p>First talk about what is going to be read and written.</p> <p>Again, after reading or writing, talk about what has been read and written.</p> <p>Use and re-use.</p>



We assess what we value. If possible, a speaker other than the students' teacher should be trained to use the language proficiency scales developed to accompany this curriculum. The students should be assessed in a safe and non-threatening manner twice a year.

PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION	IMPLICATION FOR TEACHING STRATEGY
3) Planning for an End-Task in Mind 	Having a project motivates learners. They know that they are acquiring sentences as a means of communicating information to others so they work hard to do well. As learners' language skills improve over time, the projects become more complex (in terms of language use).	All activities carried out in the classroom lead to the final project. Once a project has been chosen, the appropriate language must be acquired by the learners. Day-to-day classroom language is also used. Examples include a biography booklet to share at home, a puppet play shared with a younger grade, a Heritage Fair project where they introduce themselves and use the language and a blog they write.
4) Authentic situations 	The brain learns to use language when it is needed. In class, this means that we have to make sure that we provide real situations in which learners will evolve. Language needed to function in the classroom is authentic.	Language that is acquired must be immediately useful (either for class, community, or project) for the learner.
5) Interactive learning 	Learners must speak back and forth with each other. The use and re-use of language in interactive, authentic situations helps the brain to create the pathways that are needed to build up language skills.	All activities must provide many opportunities for learners to interact with each other or persons outside the classroom. Teachers should encourage learners to use the language with them at all times in the school and when they see each other outside of the school.

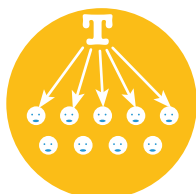
8 STRATEGIES TO INTRODUCE NEW SENTENCES

T = teacher

T models one or two sentences at a time, linked to the theme and to his/her experience

CONSECUTIVE STRATEGIES

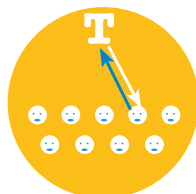
- 1) **T** always begins by modelling a sentence based on personal experiences



For example: *I have a blue sweater. It is blue. The sweater is very soft.* This is done only *orally*, using sentences that are related to theme. (Avoid the use of “What’s this?” – “It’s a...”, as it is not usually an authentic statement (and only checks for vocabulary, not functional competence).

If possible introduce two or more sentences (for example: *Yesterday, I bought a new sweater. It is blue. The sweater is very soft.*).

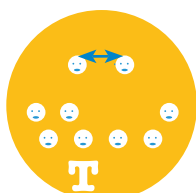
- 2) **T** questions a number of students, who adapt their reply to their personal situation



T asks the same question to a small number of students. Students answer using the sentence that has just been modelled, adapting it to their personal situation (for example: *What colour is your sweater? My sweater is brown.*).

- 3) **A) Students question students**

A small number of students ask the question to other students who answer the question, adapting it to their personal situation.

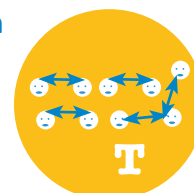


- B) Two students model the task in front of the class**

T then invites two students to model the task that is expected to be performed during the next step, using a “conversational” structure (questions and answers). **T** ensures that the language model is used correctly (both question and answer).

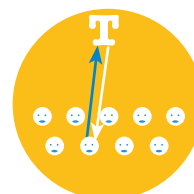
- 4) Students question each other, in pairs (limited time)

Once the task has been modelled, all students, in pairs, ask and answer questions.



- 5) **T** asks questions of some students based on answers provided by partners.

T asks questions of a small number of students, using a natural conversational approach, so that students can report on what their partner has just told them (for example: *What colour is Julie’s sweater? Julie’s sweater is brown.*). Then, **T** continues and asks students questions about the answers that have just been provided.



If necessary, repeat 4 and 5, but ask students to form new pairs. Strategies 6-7 and 8 happen, when needed, at the same time as 1-5

- 6) **T** always requires students to produce full sentences (for fluency)

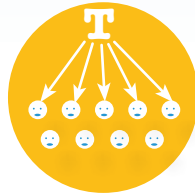
- 7) **T** always corrects errors gently and has students re-use the correct sentence (for accuracy)

- 8) Once in a while, **T** questions a student unexpectedly (to ensure listening, to have a natural conversation and to have the language re-used in meaningful contexts)

8 STRATEGIES TO INTRODUCE NEW SENTENCES

Strategy 1

The teacher models the use of one or several authentic sentences related to the theme and to the teacher's personal situation.



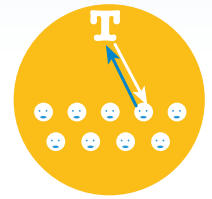
Begin by modelling the language which reinforces that language is used to communicate personal and authentic messages. The principle of authenticity means that the language that one is learning, even when learned in school, is meaningful. By authentic language, we mean the *use* of sentences; in other words, meaningful language structures, in a real context to transmit a real message.

For example, when talking about pets, with the assistance of gestures or illustrations, the teacher could say: *I have a dog. His name is ____* (and the teacher gives the actual name of his dog). If the teacher does not have a dog, he/she can use the example of a learner, or of a relative or friend. The purpose is to help the learner understand how to take part in a conversation in the second language. Consequently, the teacher gives the learners a language model which enables them to engage in a conversation on something that is of interest to them, for example, their pets. We do not start off by asking the learners questions because the learners will not be able to answer without first having been introduced to a language model that enables them to provide their own answer.

Since learners must be given the opportunity to develop new language habits (implicit competence, or internal grammar), it is important for them to use, and re-use, the authentic sentences. It is the repeated use, by the learners, of authentic sentences, focused on their personal interests that creates the language use necessary for the development of implicit competence (Paradis, 2004; 2009). Implicit competence cannot be taught; it must be developed in the mind of the learner by authentic use of language.

Strategy 2

Question learners to have them use the modelled sentences adapted to their own situation.



The teacher asks the model question to several learners.

Ex: *I have three brothers.* He/she can continue by asking the question: *What about you? Do you have a brother?* (prompting, if necessary, with *an older brother? A younger brother?*). Vocabulary words that the learners need in order to communicate their messages are provided **orally**, upon request, by the teacher in an authentic context. For example, if a learner who wants to say that she has a baby sister asks: *How do you say 'sister'?*, the teacher replies in a full sentence: *You have a sister*, after which the learner is encouraged to reply by giving the whole sentence, as adapted to her situation by transforming it: *I have a sister*. The teacher can then reply with the question *What is her name?* Certainly, in order to maintain authenticity, the teacher will watch for the appropriate occasions to present and use certain useful negative forms: *I do not have a sister*. The teacher could then continue by asking the whole class *Who else has a sister?*, thus providing other learners with the opportunity of authentically answering with *I have a sister* or *I do not have a sister*.

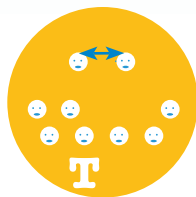
The modelled sentences are not simply repeated out of context. Instead, they are reproduced by the learners in answer to a personal question, and are adapted to express the personal situation of the learner. This strategy shows clearly that language is, in fact, a means of communicating a message with each sentence. As a result, learners are more implicated cognitively in the learning process. Therefore, learners develop creative automaticity (Gatbonton and Segalowitz, 2005), that is, the ability to create, even with limited language, different combinations of the elements in order to express new authentic messages.

8 STRATEGIES TO INTRODUCE NEW SENTENCES

Strategy 3a

Ask some learners to question other learners in order that they use the modelled sentences adapted to their own situation.

Referring back to the example of the discussion of siblings, the teacher asks selected learners to question other learners in the class in order to ensure that they can ask the question and provide the answer correctly.



Strategy 3b

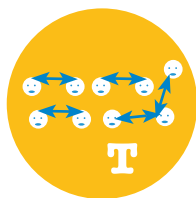
Ask two learners to model the interactive exchange in front of the class using the modelled question and giving their personalized reply.

This step is included in order to give a model of the task, as well as the language to be used, in order to prepare the learners for the successful accomplishment of the interaction that follows (question and answer).

Strategy 4

Have learners interact with each other in pairs to reuse the modelled question and to give their personalized reply.

With a partner, the learners engage in a conversation using the question that has just been modelled. In a limited time period (i.e., 10–12 seconds or less depending on the complexity of the question, so they do not resort to using their first language), the learners ask each other the question and answer it. For example, the first learner asks: *Do you have a brother? (a sister)*, and continues on with another question, such as *What is his/her name?* Then, the second learner follows a similar sequence with the first learner.



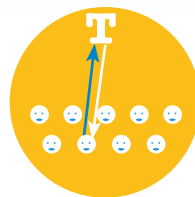
Strategy 5

Question the learners to have them reuse, in an adapted form, the answers of the partner they were working with.

In order to give learners another opportunity to use the modelled phrases in another slightly adapted conversational situation, and also to develop their listening skills, the teacher asks learners questions about what the learners they were working with have said. For example, the teacher asks one learner: *Does Kelly have any brothers?* The learner answers by referring to the personalized answer previously given in Strategy 4. The teacher then follows-up with a new question related to the answer given or with a comment that creates an authentic conversation.

The teacher then repeats Strategy 4 and Strategy 5, but asks learners to interact with a new learner.

For learners just beginning to learn their ancestral language, strategies 4 and 5 are repeated in order to have another authentic conversational exchange using the same sentences, but in a different situation, and therefore, with different adaptations. In this way the use and re-use of the modelled question and answer in different situations is assured, and the development of an internal grammar (neural network) is encouraged.



The following three strategies are also essential, but they occur at the same time as the previous five.

Strategy 6

Use of full sentences to develop fluency

The teacher always uses full sentences when speaking with learners, and insists that learners use a full sentence. This is essential so that fluency can be developed. While it may seem inauthentic, the use of a full sentence provides the necessary opportunities for the brain to develop internal grammar. When speaking it is also important to have clear enunciation and to speak slowly.

Strategy 7

Correcting errors immediately

The teacher corrects the learners immediately if an error is made. The teacher models the answer in the language and has the learners practice while using a full sentence. The insistence on the use of a correct sentence is essential for the brain to develop internal grammar – in other words, speaking correctly becomes an instinct, just as one learns the first language. When correcting remember to be kind and gentle and ensure the learner's dignity is intact.

Example of how to correct:

If a learner wanted to say "I have an older brother" the teacher could support them by and modeling while pointing to his or her self, "I have an older brother". And, if the teacher doesn't have an older brother, he or she could provide the vocabulary necessary for that part of the sentence by saying what is true such as "I have a younger sister. You have an older brother." The idea is that the teacher should never provide the response "I have an older brother" for the student to simply repeat if that is not true for their situation.



Strategy 8

Unexpected questioning, to encourage PURPOSEFUL LISTENING

Purposeful listening is when all learners are listening to their classmates' answers because they know they are expected to know the information. Use of this strategy consists of having the teacher ask a learner for information that has already been given by another learner. The learner questioned is one that has not been the partner of the learner for whom information is sought.

Using a previous example (siblings), in the course of a discussion about extended family members, the teacher can intervene and ask someone in the class: *What is the name of Kelly's brother?* The learner should be able to reply: *The name of Kelly's brother is ___*. If the learner cannot reply, he/she can ask Kelly, or another learner for the information needed in order that he can reply to the question. The use of this strategy encourages learners to listen to the replies of the other learners in the class and helps them to learn how to react to an unexpected question in the course of an authentic conversation.

Adapted from "Teaching Oral Production", C. Germain and J. Netten, n.d

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Glossary

affixes	In general, word forming parts added to the beginning, middle or end of words stems that change the word class and cannot occur on their own. Suffixes, prefixes and infixes are known together as affixes.
ancestral words	Specialized vocabulary that has fallen out of everyday use due to cultural change. See sleeping words .
acquisition	Language acquisition is the process by which humans learn language to communicate. It can happen consciously or unconsciously.
authentic assessment	A form of assessment in which students are asked to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills.
authentic experiences	Occasional events, everyday routines, or important cultural celebrations that are realistic and meaningful to all involved.
barrier games	A barrier game is for two or more players with a barrier between so that players cannot see each other's materials. Every player has the same set of materials (ex. plastic animals). The players take turns giving the other players instructions, without any visual cues. The goal is to have all the players' materials look the same at the end of the activity. They can be adapted for every language level.
clicks	Strong, explosive consonant sounds made by forcefully pushing air out of the throat with the vocal cords. Known formally as ejectives or glottalized consonants .
code switching	Includes the use of complete sentences, phrases, and borrowed words from another language. Fluent bilingual speakers often use code switching to use words and phrases from different languages to express meaning.
competency	The complex 'know act' that encompasses the ongoing development of an integrated set of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and judgments required in a variety of different and complex situations, contexts and environments (OECD, 2005).
core	A core program is one that is within the school day and focuses on the language but students receive instruction for their other subjects in English. Through this immersive core language program students can become capable speakers by the end of grade 12, however, without support from home and community, they will not become fluent.

diacritics	Small written markings added to basic letters that show sound changes in text (e.g. tones, á; or nasals, ą).
dialect	Regional linguistic systems of socially or geographically linked speakers that share similar words or sound systems within a larger language community.
ejectives	Strong, explosive consonant sounds made by forcefully pushing air out of the throat with the vocal cords. Known informally in the North as clicks or glottals .
functional	Practical tasks and projects that are suited to the environment or day-to-day activities required to operate in specific situations or society.
formative assessment	Also known as assessment FOR learning, formative assessment is ongoing assessment by different methods that informs teaching and learning.
glottal stops	Consonant sounds made by simply closing and opening the vocal cords (glottis). (Also called ‘clicks’)
glottalized consonants	Consonant sounds made by simply closing and opening the vocal cords or by forcefully pushing air out of the throat with the vocal cords (glottis).
glottals	Consonant sounds made by simply closing and opening the vocal cords or by forcefully pushing air out of the throat with the vocal cords (glottis). Known formally as glottal stops, ejectives, or glottalized consonants .
glottis	The gap between the vocal cords.
immersion	A Language Immersion program is one with the goal of acquiring the language through instruction and activities that are only (or mostly) in the language being taught. In most language immersion programs students are in the language for all or most of the day and do their other subjects in the target language. In this core program the goal is to stay in the language or, ‘immerse’ the student in the language for the amount of time the teacher has with the students as well as when interacting with the students outside of the classroom.
interference	This is when English influences the Indigenous language. Examples include when a student is reading and they pronounce a word they’ve not seen before using their English ‘brain’ or when they use English grammar rules for word order in the Indigenous language.

intonation	Stress, pauses, tempo, rhythm, or pitch changes to words and sentences.
kinship	Words that describe genealogical categories or extended family relationships (e.g. mother, sister-in-law, cousin).
literacy	The ability to read, write, speak, listen, or interpret symbols, landscapes, and oral or written texts.
morphology	The study of the forms of words.
Language Nests	Language nests are language immersion programs where young children are immersed in a First Nations language. The programs can be for children from birth to five years of age and necessarily include fluent speakers.
nasals	Vowel or consonant sounds made when air escapes through the nose.
<i>Official Languages Act</i>	Northwest Territories law providing citizen access to interpretation and translation for government services as well as other rights.
orally	To present ideas and thoughts verbally.
orthography	The writing system of a language.
personal dictionary	An informal list of words or definitions kept by language learners as a study tool.
phonology	The study of speech sounds and their interrelation.
prefixes	Word forming parts added to the <u>beginning</u> of a word stem that change the word class and cannot occur on their own. See affix .
producers	Artistic leaders who coordinate the financial, artistic, logistic and promotional elements of music, art, or film projects.
root words	The most basic form of a word after affixes have been removed.
semantics	The study of word meaning and expressions.
sleeping words	Specialized vocabulary that has fallen out of everyday use due to cultural change. See ancestral words .
social media	Informal websites, apps, and programs for sharing personalized user content in electronic text, video, photograph, or graphic form.
spiralling	Non-linear and inward circling time pattern, event sequence, text structure, or educational approach.
suffixes	Word forming parts added to the <u>end</u> of a word stem that change the word class and cannot occur on their own. See affix .

summative assessment	Also known as assessment OF learning, summative assessment is a final summary of what a student has learned by the end of a unit.
survival phrases	Simple sentences or questions for learners to better understand and help them stay in the language (<i>e.g. Speak slowly, or How do you say ___ in Tłıchǫ or Speak to me in Inuinnaqtun, I'm trying to learn</i>).
syntax	The study of sentence structure and natural language grammar and word order.
Total Physical Response (TPR)	TPR is a language teaching approach that focuses on developing comprehension skills using actions and pictures which help teachers stay in the language.
tones	Syllable pitch levels within words that are critical to word meaning.
vocal tract	The air passages between the lungs and the openings of the nose and mouth.
worldview	The way a person or group sees and understands the world based on their values and beliefs.

PHOTO CREDITS

Front cover and Page i. Cover pages of *Dene Kede—Education: A Dene Perspective (Curriculum Document: Grades K-6)* (1993) and *Inuuqatigiit: The Curriculum from the Inuit Perspective (Curriculum Document: Kindergarten - 12)* (1996); Copyright Education, Culture and Employment—GNWT.

Tab–Dettah drummers and language teachers, Josie Bishop, Diane Romie and Cecilia Zoe-Martin, during the feeding of the fire ceremony at the end of OLC in-service in September 2018, Yellowknife; photograph by Vincent Ret. Kate Inuktalik lighting qulliq, Kugluktuk; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 1 Margo McLeod and her daughter Ocean, Aklavik; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 2 Henry Beaver and grandson Niska putting up the tipi, Fort Smith; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 3 *Our Language* curriculum pilot teachers, coordinators and ECE support staff at in-service September 2017, Yellowknife; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 5 James Pokiak with Brianna and Belinda Lavallee, Tuktoyaktuk; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 7 Jacey Firth-Hagen, Inuvik; photograph by Kevin Laframboise.

Page 9 Language teacher, Cathryn Bertrand with her students in Nahanni Butte; photograph by Mindy Willett. Roy Inuktalik on land near Ulukhaktok; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 13 Students playing volleyball in Whatì; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 14 Jake Basil using the snow-snake he made, Lutsel K'e; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 15 Nevaeh Beaver uses Dene Dedline app. Ft. Smith; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Tab– Cohort of Indigenous language teachers, RILE and ECE staff at OLC large-scale pilot in-service September 2018, Yellowknife; photograph by Vincent Ret.

Page 18 Students Naomi Haogak and Winnie Lennie playing Twister, Inualthuyak School, Sachs Harbour; photograph by Barb Mameogana.

Page 19 Students Faith Vital and Ciara Konisenta-Vital playing a language game, Charles Yohin School, Nahanni Butte; photograph by Mindy Willett.

Page 20 Playing Scrabble, Fort Smith, photograph by Sarah Pruys.

Page 21 Students Krish Sharma, and Shenise Vittrekwa, giving high five after scoring a basket, East Three Secondary School, Inuvik; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 22 Jessie Campbell with her granddaughter in the baby swing, Tulita; photograph by Reanaa Campbell.

Page 23 Therese Mantla reminding Violet Erasmus-Zoe by using T symbol for Tłıchǫ to stay in the language while working with Nina Mantla in the Immersion class; Behchokǫ; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 24 Students Keysha Delorme and Kayleb Black-Villeneuve with teacher Ashley Deveau at snack time, K'alemi Dene School, Ndilo, photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

- Page 25 Teacher, Therese Mantla, reading to students Maverick Mantla, Nina Mantla, Eli Mantla Fish and Melanie Flunkie, Behchokò; photograph by Mindy Willett.
- Page 26 Late Philip Zoe showing Shelinda Eyakfwo where moose have traveled, Gamètì; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.
- Page 27 Sally Drygeese and her students with barrier games, 2017, Dettah; photograph by Simon Blakeslay.
- Page 28 Students Xander Beaulieu and Taylor Jones, modeling clothing, K'alemi Dene School, Ndilo; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.
- Page 29 (left to right). Students Leo Enzoe, Tyson Marlow, Jonah Deranger, Aidan Laboucan, and Instructor James Lockhart snowshoeing in Lutsel K'e; photograph by Sarah Pruys.
- Page 30 Student Olivia Iatridis displaying Inuvialuktun/Uummarmiutun language app. Yellowknife; photograph by Mindy Willett.
- Page 31 Student Kevin Mackeinzo interviewing Leroy Betsina, K'alemi Dene School, N'Dilo; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.
- Page 32 Cree language Claymation animation project, Fort Smith; photograph by Vance Sanderson.
- Page 33 Students Isaiah Drybones and Sadie Basil Catholique wearing headphones, Łutsel K'e Dene School, Łutsel K'e; photograph by Sarah Pruys.
- Page 33 Instructors' Candace Cockney and Ephraim Warren photos with QR codes in Inuvialuktun. Mangilaluk School, Tuktoyaktuk; photograph provided by Holly Carpenter.
- Page 34 Superintendent Curtis Brown conversing with student Nuni Marlowe, Łutsel K'e Dene School, Łutsel K'e; photograph by Sarah Pruys.
- Page 35 Student Bridgette McKay with the late Principal Kate Powell doing morning announcements, Deninu School, Fort Resolution; photograph by Brent Kaulback.
- Page 36 (visible, left to right). Students Hannah Gargan, Mackenzie Nayelle, Cora Causa, and Zander watch instructor Nimisha Bastedo play guitar, Deh Gáh School, Fort Providence; photograph by Mindy Willett.
- Page 37 (left to right). Student Faith Vital, grandmother, parent Jennifer Vital, and student Sierra Vital playing a card game, Charles Yohin School, Nahanni Butte; photograph by Mindy Willett.
- Page 38 Student with instructors Greg Reardon and Margaret Lacorne looking at a place names map, Kakisa School, Kakisa NT; photograph by Mindy Willett.
- Page 39 Students share Inuvialuktun phrases with visiting scientist, Wade Carpenter; 2017; Sachs Harbour; photograph provided by Wade Carpenter.
- Page 40 Students Peter and Cheyanne Fraser doing a Métis jig, East three Elementary School, Inuvik; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.
- Page 41 Student Trenton McKay pretending to eat dry fish, Weledah Catholic School, Yellowknife; photograph provided by Gina MacLean.
- Page 42 Elder Mary Kudlak sharing a tender moment with Darla Evyagotailak, Ulukhaktok; photograph by Mindy Willett.

- Page 43 Elder Margaret Vandell speaking with her granddaughter Mikaela; Fort Providence; photograph provided by Lois Philipp.
- Page 44 (left to right). Elder receiving flowers from student Lana in Nahanni Butte; photograph by Mindy Willett.
- Page 45 Student Patrick Martel and Elder Celine Buggins participating in a feed the fire ceremony, Chief Sunrise Education Centre, K'atl'odeeche; photograph by Sarah Pruys.
- Page 46 Winter camp, on border between NWT and Nunavut; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.
- Page 47 (left to right) Students Jack Betsidea and Edwin Adzin sitting in a tent pretending to eat traditional foods, Behchokò; photograph provided by Tammy Steinwand-Deschambeault.
- Page 48 Students Devon Beaulieu and Shyowa Kaskamin learning to cook, P.W. Kaeser High School, Fort Smith; photograph by Sarah Pruys.
- Page 49 Student Darla Evyagotailak participating in a community radio program, Ulukhaktok; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.
- Page 50 Parent Gloria Enzoë greeting son Kohlman Enzoë, Łutsel K'e Dene School, Łutsel K'e; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.
- Page 51 (left to right). Student Lenny Pellissey, Instructor Priscilla Moses, and student Sadee Talle counting wooden blocks, Chief Julian Yendo School, Wrigley; photograph by Mindy Willett.
- Page 52 Student Christopher Laviolette learning medicine wheel teachings with Instructor Eileen Beaver, P.W. Kaeser High School, Fort Smith; photograph provided by Tessa Macintosh.
- Page 53 Koana Paulette learning to sew from Lucy Yakeleya, at Heritage Fair, Yellowknife; photograph provided by Tessa Macintosh.
- Page 53 Raymond Taniton walking on the land with grandson Caleb Taniton-Baton, Délı̨ne NT; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.
- Page 54 Children ice fishing with Elders in Trout Lake; photograph by Kim Hardisty.
- Page 55 (left to right). Student being evaluated with the Oral Proficiency Scale from language expert, Eleanor Firth, Fort McPherson; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.
- Page 56 Students Sayth Baton and Paige Louison play *Guess Who*, Ehtseo Ayha School, Délı̨ne; photograph by Gayle Strikes With A Gun.
- Page 57 (clockwise from top left). Teachers Charlotte Canadien, Priscilla Moses and Andy Norwegian playing cards with students Sehdeza Clille, Caroline Pellissey, and Draydon Clille, Chief Julian Yendo School, Wrigley; photograph by Mindy Willett.
- Page 58 (left to right). Elder George Buggins, students teaching on-the-land skills to students Patrick Martel, Benjamin Bushie, and Braiyn Coleman, K'atl'odeeche; photograph by Sarah Pruys.
- Tab– Cohort of Indigenous language teachers, RILE and ECE staff at second OLC large-scale pilot in-service September 2019, Yellowknife; photograph by Vincent Ret.
- Page 68 (left to right). Students Ciara Isaiah and Ryder McLeod reading to their puppets, Fort Liard; photograph by Nadine Downey Chaulk.

Page 1A **Emergent Promising Practices**

James Pokiak and Joe Nasogaluak playing drums with Tessa Dillon dancing, Tuktoyaktuk; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

- (Top Right) Elder Maurice Mendo and Isaac Horassi discussing a book together, Tulita; photograph by Sister Celeste.
- (Middle Left) “Speak to me in Dene Zhatié” Buttons, Ft. Providence; photograph by Violet Jumbo.
- (Bottom Left) JK/K Tactile Apron; photograph by Mindy Willett.

Page 1B **Emergent front** Students playing with mystery box, Tuktoyaktuk; photograph by Mindy Willett.

Page 1B **Emergent back** Students Geleah Mooseneose and Ethan Mackenzie Nitsiza playing with the Elder puppets; Whatì; photograph by Vincent Ret.

Page 2A **Beginner Promising Practices**

Mary Ann Vital with her ‘story in a bag’, Yellowknife; photograph by Mindy Willett.

- (Top Right) Fluent Elder Henry Sabourin teaching Owen Wellin in Dene Zhatié, Fort Providence; photograph by Nimisha Bastedo.
- (Middle Left) Instructor Holly Carpenter engaging with Tuktoyaktuk Students, Mangilaluk School, Tuktoyaktuk; photograph by Mindy Willett.
- (Bottom Left) Greeting cards with diverse messages, Fort Smith; photograph by Vance Sanderson.

Page 2B **Beginner front** Students Amanda and Anna May Niditchie in Gwich’in language class, Tsiigehtchic; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 2B **Beginner back** Linda Manual with her students in Colville Lake; photograph by Gayle Strikes With A Gun. Pencil cases by Alison McCreesh, photograph by Mindy Willett.

Page 3A **Intermediate Promising Practices**

Gwich’in mentors and apprentices practice using wordless books in MAP training including, Chuck Vaneltsi, Mary Effie Snowshoe, Renie Stewart, Frank Gruben, Grace Martin and Merna Vaneltsi; photograph by Tessa Macintosh; Yellowknife.

- (Top Right) Apprentice Dahti Tetso and Mentor Violet Jumbo in Dehcho Dene Zahtíé program, Fort Simpson; photograph by Dahti Tetso.
- (Middle Right) Store signs in the languages, Fort Smith; photograph by Vance Sanderson.
- (Bottom Right) CKLB Radio hosts Dēneze Nakehk’o and Eva Beaverho broadcasting for the celebrations of the 10 year Anniversary of the Tłı̨chǫ Self-government Agreement, Behchokǫ; photograph by Mindy Willett.
- (Bottom Left) Tłı̨chǫ yoga with Elders Rosa Pea, Walter Mantla and instructor Beatrice Naedzo at the Jim Erasmus Seniors Home, Behchokǫ; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 3B **Intermediate front** Instructor Ceclia Judas helping students count in Tłıchq using playing cards, Wekweètì; photograph by Mindy Willett.

Page 4A **Advanced Promising Practices** Elder Henry Beaver fishing with boys on movie set for *Three Feathers*, Thebacha; photograph by Sarah Pruys.

- (Middle Left) Raymond Yakelaya wrote a book called *The Tree by the Woodpile*, Tulita; photograph provided by Raymond Yakelaya.
- (Top Right) Deanna Marie Jacobson and Beverly Amos research, write, and record resources. Inuvialuit Regional Corporation's Cultural Centre, Inuvik; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.
- (Middle Right) Traditional food being cooked over the fire, Fort Smith; photograph by Vance Sanderson.
- (Bottom Right) Maro Sundberg teaching Catherine Lafferty during an adult language program, Yellowknife; photograph by Kevin Laframboise.

Page 4B **Advanced front** Student Emerald Loreen matching pictures with Inuvialuktun phrases, Tuktoyaktuk; photograph by Mindy Willett.

Page 4B **Advanced back** Jolene McDonald with her daughter reading in Gwich'in, Yellowknife; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 5A **Capable Promising Practices** Georgina Chocolate records place names from the late Elder Harry Apples, Behchokò; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

- (Bottom Left) Elder Johnny Blanche and Natanda Oudzi looking at OLC, Colville Lake; photograph by Gayle Strikes With a Gun.

- DEA chair Alvin Orlias and former teacher Ann Kochon Orlias; Colville Lake; photograph by Gayle Strikes With A Gun.

- (Top Right) Denise Wolki, Radio Station Technician, Paulatuk; photograph provided by Denise Wolki.

- (Bottom Right) NWT Literacy Council offers training sessions, Katlo'dechee; photograph by Charlotte Upton.

Page 5B **Capable front** Coby Elanik greets Elder Mrs. Annie B. Gordon in Gwich'in when he arrives to class, Aklavik; photograph by Judy Whitford.

Page 5B **Capable back** Mollie Oliktoak and Sarah Kimiksana making string game of a fish net or kuvyaq, Ulukhaktok; photographs by Tessa Macintosh and Mindy Willett.

Page 1C **Component 1 front** Two young men Adam Inuktalik and Samuel Tutcho playing the Dene drum, Délı̨ne; photograph by Gayle Strikes With A Gun.

Page 1C **Component 1 back** Children with the frost bite puppet from Kaw Tay Whee School including, Brianna Rabesca-Sangris, Jenna Charlo-Lafferty, Cameron Martin and Olivia DeLeary-Cadieux, Dettah; photograph by Lea Lamoureux.

Page 2C **Component 2 front** Rebecca Pokiak sharing beluga meat with her mother-in-law, Agnes Felix and Belinda Lavalée Tuktoyaktuk; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 2C **Component 2 back**, Shirley Lamalice, Sienna Daniels, Kaydence Lockhart, Diesel Beaulieu, Faith Evangelio, David Truong, Bert Buckley and other engaged students in language class at Princess Alexandra School in Hay River; photographs by Sarah Pruys.

Page 3C **Component 3 front** Crystal Cockney with students at K'alemi Dene School, Ndilo; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 4C **Component 4 front** Jennifer Charlo with her children Desiree and Carly picking cranberries, Yellowknife; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 4C **Component 4 back** Connor Van Loon reading his poem to his classmates, Tsiigehtchic; photograph by Erica Thompson.

Page 5C **Component 5 front** Andy Norwegian and Kayden Antoine shaking hands, Wrigley; photograph by Mindy Willett.

Page 5C **Component 5 back** Sheena Yakinneah-Sabourin, K'atlodeeche; photograph by Sarah Pruys.

Page 6C **Component 6 front** Taniton family feeding the fire near Délı̨nę; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 6C **Component 6 back** Dora Grandjame with her students in Norman Wells; photograph by Gayle Strikes With A Gun.

Page 7C **Component 7 front** Teacher Gladys Alexie and student Taylor identifying pictures with phrases, Fort McPherson; photograph by Tessa Macintosh.

Page 7C **Component 6 back**

- (Top) Students Yeeda, Sherard, Koda, playing barrier games, Fort Good Hope; photograph by Regina Lennie.

- (Bottom Left) Billy Goose, Ian Katoayak, Aiden Banksland and Albert Whatte Joss with teacher Mollie Oliktoak, Ulukhaktok; photograph by Mindy Willett.

- (Bottom Right) Students in Fort Good Hope; photograph by Regina Lennie.

Tab-Postcards written by students from Chief Arrowmaker School in Wekweètì; photograph by Mindy Willett.

Page 69 Ethen Nasogaluak and Claire Letendre being leaders of the day at East Three School in Inuvik; photograph by Deana Marie Jacobson.

Page 71 Andy Norwegian doing student assessments, Fort Providence; photograph by Mindy Willett.

Page 74 Students Brylan Minoza, Mackenzie Nayelle, and Xander with instructor Diana Garagan sitting on the floor of a classroom, Deh Gah Elementary School, Fort Providence; photograph by Mindy Willett.

Page 75 Student playing snakes and ladders, Kakisa; photograph by Mindy Willett.