

One of the world's 7,000 distinct languages disappears every 14 days, an extinction rate exceeding that of birds, mammals or plants.

Los Angeles Times, 2007

DEAR FRIEND,

If you are like me the statistic above is both unbelievable and eye-opening. Even more shocking is the fact that National Geographic's Enduring Voices Project recently named Oklahoma one of the world's hotspots for language extinction. Right here, on our very doorstep, bits of our cultural heritage are slipping through our fingers.

The Tulsa City-County Library's American Indian Resource Center, in conjunction with the Euchee Tribe and Sac & Fox Nation, is proud to provide to you the enclosed math/native language worksheet sets for early childhood learners. It is simple to use in a regular classroom setting yet detailed enough to use in an immersion situation. We hope by providing these tools to educators, the next generation will never know that these languages were once on their way to becoming extinct.

Sincerely,

Teresa Runnels

THE PURPOSE OF THE LANGUAGE CURRICULUM PACKET

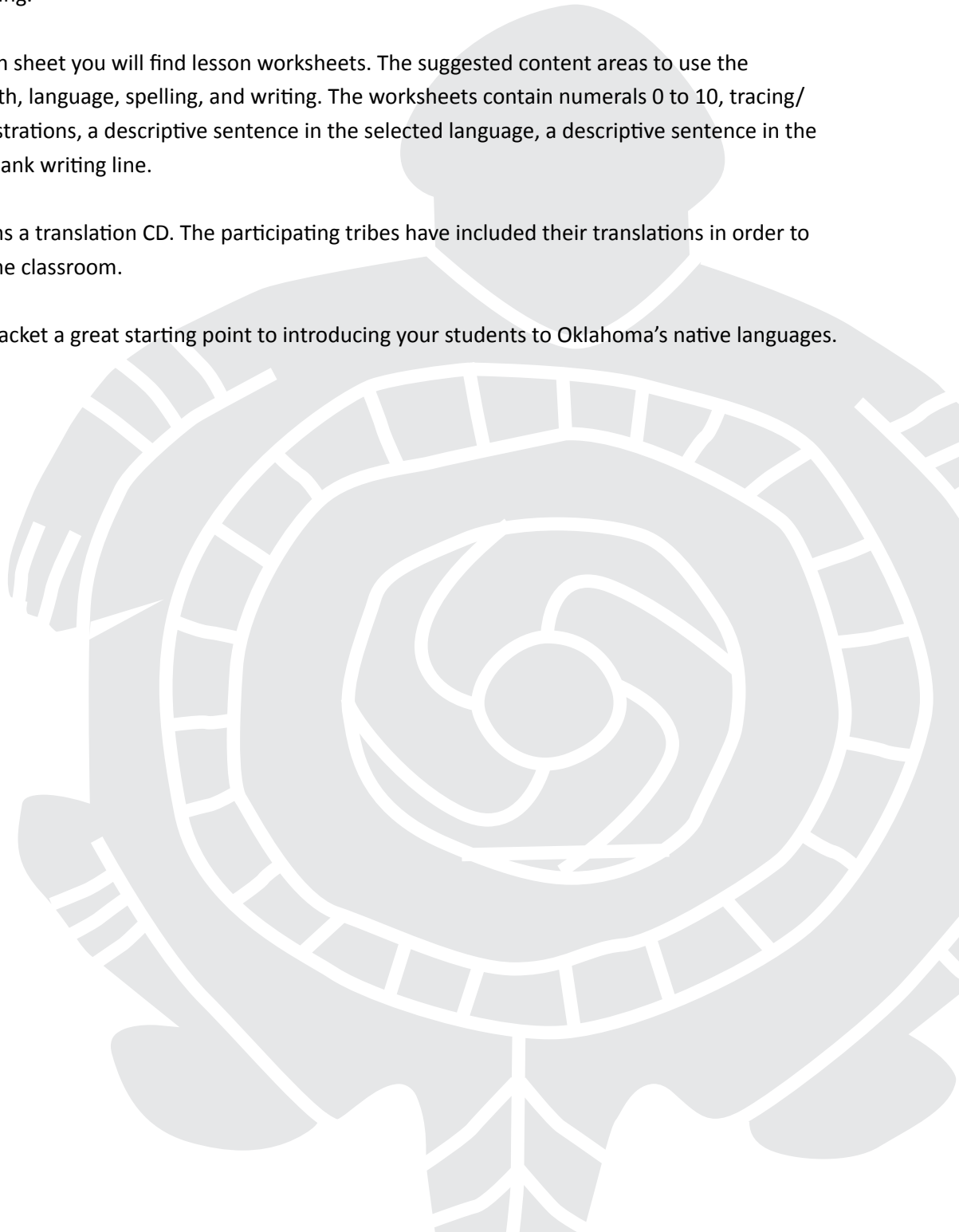
(LCP) is to expose language learners to basic words of the selected native language. This packet consists of two sets of lesson worksheets, a translation sheet, and a translation CD and was designed for the Early Childhood learner.

First, a translation sheet in the selected language presents the pronunciations used for the worksheets. The translation sheet provides simple explanations of how sounds are to be used in the language and is designed to foster learning.

Following the translation sheet you will find lesson worksheets. The suggested content areas to use the worksheets include: math, language, spelling, and writing. The worksheets contain numerals 0 to 10, tracing/ writing lines, lifelike illustrations, a descriptive sentence in the selected language, a descriptive sentence in the English language, and blank writing line.

Each packet also contains a translation CD. The participating tribes have included their translations in order to speak the language in the classroom.

We hope you find this packet a great starting point to introducing your students to Oklahoma's native languages.



AMERICAN INDIAN RESOURCE CENTER

The American Indian Resource Center provides cultural, educational and informational resources, activities and services honoring American Indian heritage, arts and achievements. The center provides access to more than 7,000 books and media for adults and children by and about American Indians, including historical and rare materials, new releases, videos and music compact discs. These resources are located in the American Indian Resource Center at the Central Library and throughout the Tulsa City-County Library. Subjects include American Indian languages, art, culture, fiction, genealogy, history and religion.

PRESERVING NATIVE LANGUAGES

To promote, revitalize and preserve our native languages, the American Indian Resource Center is building its collection of print and audio resources, offering hands-on language classes, and enhancing activities for the young and the elderly who are the future and past of our native languages.

AMERICAN INDIAN FESTIVAL OF WORDS

Tribal elders, storytellers, craftsmen, dancers and musicians share the history and traditions of North America's native people during the American Indian Festival of Words, held annually in March. The free festival celebrates the contributions of American Indians through enlightening family programs. The highlight of the festival is the presentation of the American Indian Festival of Words Author Award and the Circle of Honor ceremony, which alternate each year.



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AMERICAN INDIAN RESOURCE CENTER (continued)

AMERICAN INDIAN CIRCLE OF HONOR

Inaugurated in 2004, the Circle of Honor ceremony honors an American Indian for his/her achievements and contributions that have enriched the lives of others. Induction into the Circle of Honor is a celebration of the honoree's actions in the face of adversity, commitment to the preservation of American Indian culture and legacy for future generations. An individual is inducted into the Circle of Honor in even-numbered years. Inductees receive a \$5,000 honorarium and medallion.

- 2008 • Neal McCaleb
- 2006 • Wilma Mankiller
- 2004 • Charles Chibitty

FESTIVAL OF WORDS AUTHOR AWARD

Inaugurated in 2001, the American Indian Festival of Words Author Award recognizes literary contributions of outstanding American Indian authors. It is the first and only award given by a public library to honor an American Indian author. The award is given in odd-numbered years. Recipients receive a \$5,000 cash prize and medallion.

- 2007 • Carter Revard
- 2005 • Leslie Marmon Silko
- 2003 • Vine Deloria Jr.
- 2001 • Joy Harjo



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EUCHEE LANGUAGE PROJECT

“yUdjEhanAno sonKAnAno” - We, the Euchee people, we are still here”

- Mose Cahwee

Nineteenth century members of the Euchee (Yuchi) Tribe of Indians were force-marched from their original homelands in the southeast to the northeastern area of what became the state of Oklahoma. Despite the hardships of removal and generations of discrimination, the Euchee Tribe has never allowed its ceremonial fires to go out and has kept alive its great heritage of traditions. Within the current population of perhaps 2,400 Eucheers are found elders who still speak our language that has been identified as a language isolate by linguists. Through this Euchee Language Immersion Project we propose to address the most urgent cultural needs of our community by passing the language from our eldest generation of remaining speakers to the young generation of Euchee community members.

The Euchee language has been passed down from generation to generation for thousands of years. Just as the songs at the ceremonial grounds are picked up by each new generation of dancers around the fire, so our language is like a great spiral. The young ones catch the words and rhythms from their elders so that when they mature they can, in turn, teach the language to their children. And now we are in grave danger of losing this most precious gift. At the present time we have only a handful of elders gifted with the ability to speak our language as passed down to them directly from ancient times. This means that the natural progression of passing the language from one generation to the next that has been carried out for thousands of years has now been broken. While we do still have a small group of elder speakers, all in their 80s and 90s except one who is 78, and we also have young community members who are being born into our families, we lack the means to connect them. If we are able to develop fluency before adulthood by working with young children now, then these newly developed speakers will be enabled to use the language with their own future children.

The current status of the Euchee language can be summarized as follows. The Euchee language is spoken very fluently by five of the Euchee people, all of whom are elders, ranging in age from 78 to 88 with one male and four females. The distinctions between the speech of men and women make the availability of a male speaker extremely valuable to the community. The number of somewhat competent speakers is ten. A considerably larger group of Euchee people exist with some ability to speak, of which thirteen can be classified as semi-speakers. The primary places for usage of the language include community functions such as church services, funerals (including a special ritual for the deceased requiring the language), and at the ceremonial grounds.

The goal of the Euchee Language Transmission Project is to work with fluent speakers to transmit the ability to speak the Euchee language to targeted members of younger generations using immersion methods while providing ongoing opportunities for exposure to the richness of our language to the broader Euchee community.

SAUK LANGUAGE MISSION

“If you grow up hearing and talking Indian you will remember it all of your life. The language must be taught to young people. You have to start when they are little, before they go to school.” - Carl Butler, Sauk Speaker

We are here for our language. Our language is a central, necessary and healthy component of our families, communities and Nation. 500 years from now, it will still be all of these things to all of our people.

In order to facilitate Sauk language revitalization we are currently developing the Kîmâchipena Immersion School for pre-school aged children.



Sauk Language Immersion Camp Group Photo

- Immersion is the single most powerful tool we as Sauk people have to increase the cultural and academic levels of our children.
- Immersion means completely surrounding our children in their language, culture and community. It is giving our young people an incredible level of comfort and well-being that will enable them to prosper on all levels.
- Immersion begins with a program for 0-3 year olds who serve as the foundation for creating new fluent Sauk speakers and for expanding learning to other age groups.

Sauk is part of the Algonquian linguistic family and most closely related to the Meskwaki (Fox) and Kickapoo languages. Up until the 1880's all tribal members of the Sac and Fox Nation of Oklahoma spoke the Sauk language. The boarding school policies of the United States government that were implemented in the late 1800's to early 1900's had a major impact on the number of children learning the Sauk language. Children were forcibly removed from their families and placed in residential schools where only English was used and speaking Sauk was severely punished. Within a generation Sauk became a language spoken mostly by older people among themselves and only a few families continued to speak Sauk to their children. The last speakers to learn the Sauk language within the home environment were born in the 1930's-40's. It has been over sixty years since a child has had the opportunity to become fluent in the Sauk language. The rate of language loss among the Sauk people in the past ten years has accelerated rapidly as many older speakers have passed away. A recent survey conducted by Sauk Language Department staff identified only five remaining conversationally fluent Sauk speakers still living. It is clear that the Sauk language is in critical danger of extinction as a spoken language within the next twenty years. The primary goal of the Sauk Language Department is to develop an immersion school where Sac and Fox children can again have the opportunity to become fluent in the Sauk language through interaction with teachers and older speakers.

For more information contact the Sauk Language Department, Rural Route 2, Box 246, Stroud, OK 74079, Phone: 918-968-2583, E-mail: language@nts.sacandfoxnation-nsn.gov.

