



CHIPPEWA OF NAWASH

NAWASH ANISHINAABEMOWIN INCENTIVE LEARNING PROJECT

FUNDS PROVIDED BY COLDWATER TRUST

PRESENTED BY CHIPPEWAS OF NAWASH SOCIAL SERVICES & PROJECT
INSTRUCTORS AND PARTICIPANTS.

BRIEF HISTORY

- In 2023 the Chippewas of Nawash Golf Tournament along with Chief and Band Council sponsored and fundraised to provide a pilot project within Nawash to incentivize learning Anishinaabemowin overseen by Social Services.
- Classes were conducted once per week for two different groups and the response was overwhelmingly positive and enthusiastic.
- With letters of support from past learners, we applied to the Coldwater Trust to provide a more formalized process and were successful in securing the funding for instructors and learners alike.
- Two instructors were recruited, and 26 spots were given to community members for incentivized learning however the desire to learn was so great that our instructors graciously took on more learners in unpaid spots.



PROGRESS

We are currently on week 8 of 18 weeks that will end in a weeklong immersion camp style format.

Online format allows participation regardless of location

Our instructors will be consulting with learners on how to conduct the immersion camp at the end of the project

• PARTNERING PROGRAMS

- Social Services
- Adult Learning Center
- Ontario Native Literacy Coalition
- Employment Supports
- Addiction Initiative Worker Program
- Nawash Language Nest (provides bursaries upon application for resource materials)
- Coldwater Trust (supporting our project financially)

Learners are from all over Canada

“

Our Learners say

Language is a means of communication and the cornerstone of our cultural identity. Taking the language class has been a transformative experience, helping me build a deeper understanding of the language and my Anishinaabe worldview. As a beginner, I've not only learned from Mitch but also from some of the more advanced speakers, which has supported my learning journey. Our language reflects our shared values, traditions, and beliefs and provides us with the tools for transmitting this knowledge. Chi miigwetch for this opportunity!

Peggy

”

The Language Incentive Project has been amazing, providing both a motivating incentive and also childcare support that allows me to fully dedicate myself to the classes, which wouldn't be possible otherwise. Learning the language has become so important to me, not only for my own growth but also for passing it down to my children and hopefully future generations. Reclaiming this part of my culture feels deeply rewarding and I am truly grateful for this awesome opportunity.

-Louise Solomon

After many university courses and language classes this language session has me more confident in building sentences and using Anishnaabemowin more than ever before. Chi miigwech

Amy

"The program is very informative and fun. There is a lot of interacting and participation in the classes. Mitch is a great teacher who relays the info in a concise and accessible way. "

Participant's Honorarium

Honorarium: Modest financial assistance for personal expenses related to class attendance in the amount of \$25.00 per hour of class instruction

Commitment: Participants sign a letter outlining expectations and responsibilities.

BENEFITS OF THIS PROJECT

- **Cultural Preservation:** Language is a key component of culture. By teaching Anishinaabemowin, we help preserve and promote rich cultural traditions that may otherwise, be lost.
- **Identity and Self-Esteem:** Learning one's ancestral language can foster a stronger sense of identity and improve self-esteem. It can provide individuals with a deeper connection to their heritage and a better understanding of their place in the world.
- **Community Cohesion:** Shared language fosters a sense of community and belonging. It can strengthen community bonds and encourage cooperation and mutual support among members.

Cognitive Benefits: Learning a language has been shown to have cognitive benefits, such as improved memory and problem-solving skills. It can also lead to better academic performance in other areas.

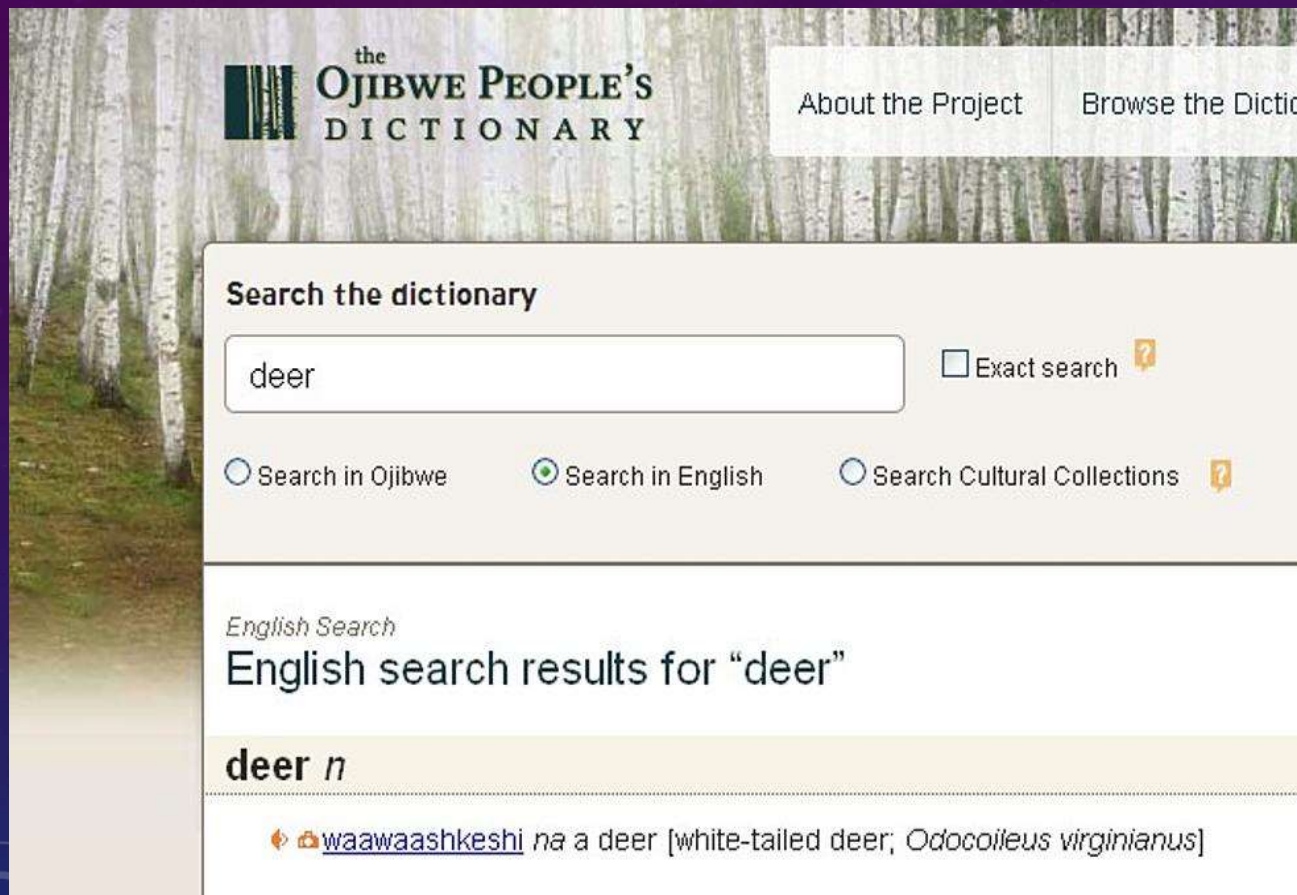
Economic Opportunities: Proficiency in Anishinaabemowin can open up new economic opportunities. For example, it can lead to jobs in teaching, translation, and cultural tourism.

Intergenerational Connection: Language classes can facilitate the sharing of knowledge and traditions between generations. This can strengthen intergenerational bonds and ensure the survival of cultural practices.

Healing and Reconciliation: For many Nawash members, learning their ancestral language is an important part of healing from the effects of colonization and working towards reconciliation.

***Preservation of Indigenous Knowledge:** Our language often contains unique concepts and worldviews. By preserving these languages, we also preserve this valuable knowledge.*

Learning to use online resources to the best possible outcomes



The screenshot shows the homepage of 'the OJIBWE PEOPLE'S DICTIONARY'. The background is a photograph of a forest with white-barked trees. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'About the Project' and 'Browse the Dictionary'. Below the header is a search interface. A search box contains the word 'deer'. To the right of the search box is a checkbox labeled 'Exact search' with a question mark icon. Below the search box are three radio buttons: 'Search in Ojibwe', 'Search in English' (which is selected), and 'Search Cultural Collections' with a question mark icon. Below the search options, the text 'English Search' is followed by 'English search results for "deer"'. A result is shown for 'deer n' with a definition: 'waawaashkeshi na a deer [white-tailed deer; *Odocoileus virginianus*]'.

the
OJIBWE PEOPLE'S
DICTIONARY

About the Project Browse the Dictionary

Search the dictionary

deer

☐ Exact search ?

☐ Search in Ojibwe ☒ Search in English ☐ Search Cultural Collections ?

English Search

English search results for "deer"

deer n

🔊 📖 waawaashkeshi na a deer [white-tailed deer; *Odocoileus virginianus*]

We are taught how to use the online Ojibwe People's dictionary for one. Utilizing the tool to it's full potential.

This empowers learners to continue their journey during the project and persisting for a long time afterwards.

Our Esteemed Instructors



Mitchell Akerman –is a full-time language professor with Georgian College and has provided online language learning for Nawash previously.

“It is the ultimate goal of most language programs to produce functional speakers, and not just participants who can repeat words and phrases”. Mitch assures learners that they will be speaking in sentences at the end of this project. When not teaching language, Mitch enjoys land-based learning, photography, sailing and his beautiful cat who makes an appearance now and again during classes



Robert has Bachelor’s degree in Indigenous Studies and English, as well as a Master's degree in History. After graduating with his Bachelor’s, he taught Anishinaabemowin briefly at the Kikendaasogamig Elementary School in Neyaashiinigmiiing before returning to complete his Master's degree and celebrating the birth of his first child. He enjoys spending time with his family and speaks to his new son in Anishinaabemowin.

Robert has started teaching an adult beginner class through Kenjgewin Teg in M'chigeeng, which will be conducted entirely online. Robert is an active band member of the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation.

Both instructors are accomplished and fluent speakers of Anishnaabemowin

2025 Nawash Anishinaabemowin Learning Incentive Budget

We requested \$144,102.40 from Coldwater Trust, with our in-kind contribution being \$4,320.00.

We are so very pleased to report that Coldwater funded our entire project this year.

Cost Categories: Wages, consulting costs, materials, project management, equipment costs, childcare support, honouraria, and the full week-long immersion camp among other expenses.

Questions?

We would like to thank everyone for listening to our presentation and hope that we are able to continue this project so that every band member who wishes to converse in our Mother Tongue can learn with the support of each other.