



# Quechan Language Curriculum

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**ORIGIN:** Through the Quechan Language curriculum, we seek to teach **Kwatsáan** conversation while instilling pride, dignity and self-esteem in relation to our origin as Quechan (**Kwatsáan**) people. The studies focus on creation stories, legends, and coyote stories to impart knowledge of traditional roots (Speculative). Where are you from? *Maawii shoopóow-k?* (Family units will examine rational concepts of family and history). Oral history conveys the theory that the original ancestors descended from Avi Kwi me, North of Needles, California and settled in the oasis of the Colorado River delta that is now known as Fort Yuma Indian Reservation. Utilizing historical references, the studies will consider what the people who descended (**Kwatsáan** people) were in pursuit of then, and what are they may be in pursuit of today in this modern world (Theoretical).

## INTRODUCTION:

- ❖ THE THEME, “WITH KNOWLEDGE COMES WISDOM” is developed throughout all the units in the Curriculum. Units I, II, III, and IV
- ❖ The Kwatsan Alphabet sounds are introduced in Unit I through the use of words (nouns and verbs) in stories and songs then are formally introduced in written form in Units II, III and IV.
- ❖ Simple conversation is presented and utilized in Units I and II and becomes more intense in Units III and IV.

## UNIT I ALPHABET/PHONETICS FOR THE EARLY AGE LEARNER AND PRIMARY GRADES.

In Unit I, the familiar topics of family, friends, and relatives are introduced through stories, songs, and legends to stress honor, respect and humor. Family living situations are discussed through audio and visual lessons with the intention of encouraging social responsibility at an early age as was customary in early Kwatsan life.

- Kwatsan sounds of the alphabet are spoken often to the very young and the lessons become more precise as they reach school age and adult age. Simple conversation is modeled through the sharing of animal stories with translations in Kwatsan.
- Colors, numbers, animal words nouns/verbs are introduced with visual learning, games, music, and videos productions.

- Role playing and modeling of the Kwatsan dialect with English translations will teach/reinforce correct pronunciation and meaning to Kwatsan words.
- Listening stations are utilized to reinforce and stabilize the learning through recorded lessons.
- Kwatsan translations of familiar children's stories nursery rhymes such as "The Three Bears," "Jack and Jill," and etc. are shared through reading sessions and at times through dramatization, Cd's and videos when appropriate. The early age themes of Life, Love, and Family are the incorporated with games and fun activities to teach words and sentences.
- The Primary dictionary is used to teach meaning and pronunciation of words. Word games will later be accessed in the computer by learners.

## **UNIT II: ALPHABET, PHONETICS, AND CONVERSATION FOR THE LEVEL II LEARNER**

- ❖ The content builds on the introductory lessons provided in Unit 1 then focuses on conversation in Unit II through such topics as home, family, clans, kinship, family tradition, health, medicine and social life. The thematically flavored lessons of the Kwatsan as River People are designed to serve two purposes: that of teaching conversation and imparting the knowledge that we are created unique as a people of character, responsibility, and discipline. Sharing this distinction of "Kwatsan" is intended to instill pride and delight in our unique Native identity.
- The Kwatsan Alphabet phonetically introduced in each lesson through example, sound, and sight is reinforced with conversation. **á, à** ; aa; and a, are articulated and examples of the sound in words are shared through stories and conversation. When instructors provide the atmosphere for the language to be heard and spoken, students will become familiarized to hearing such sentences as:
  - How are you? (*Kamathótk muuváak?*)
  - Come in. (*Kaxávək!*)
  - Sit down. (*Kanáəkək!*)
  - Drink something. (*Kaawíts kasüm!*)
- Conversation will run throughout all units. Words and sentences are introduced and often mimicked by the student to reinforce the memory through use of the Kwatsan dialect such as in
  - I am hungry (*'Amtsáata*)
  - Are you hungry? (*matsáam ma póoy-k?*)
  - **Eat** (*amáats-k* )
  - Words are reviewed from the previous lesson each time and reviewed often.

- Conversational demonstrations: A vocabulary is presented and/or reviewed with real life situations to incorporate the on-going themes of the curriculum.
  - Example 1: The teacher states the purpose for each lesson: The lesson today is how to make easy bread and you will be encouraged to use and remember the words flour, cup, ½, water, table, spoon and bake.
  - Example 2: Today we want to arouse your interest in a desire to help your family prepare a table for a meal. Included this kitchen experience are, words such as: eat, food, dish, cup, spoon, plate, table, water, tea, coffee.
- Listening and learning stations will continue as they are developed for multilayered level.

### **UNIT III CONVERSATION, ALPHABET REVIEW, CREATIVE LEARNING**

Adult Studies: Kwatsan conversation and vocabulary focuses on themes of HONOR, RESPECT, HUMOR, DISCIPLINE, RESPONSIBILITY, LOVE, and HONESTY on traditional and modern concepts of Creation, History, Government, Customs, Culture, and other related topics. Core lessons are designed to impart knowledge of Quechan family vocabulary as well as to encourage knowledge of traditional ways of addressing relatives and Maatwits (FAMILY AND RELATIVES). Fourteen lessons are presented to introduce the Kwatsan vocabulary, mother, father, grandfather, grandmother, sister, brother, etc.... Stories are included to emphasize the important family roles.

**DISCIPLINE, RESPONSIBILITY:** This unit strives to develop skills sufficiency – to encourage responsible care for their things and their actions (e.g. to take a responsible role in the family). Lessons include stories and early childhood concepts of “play fair, share, help out at home, and more” throughout the Kwatsan learning the Language units.

- ❖ **LOVE, HONESTY:** Every corner of the world has to live in harmony, in partnerships, family, friends, corporate offices, etc.
  - Learners will read and hear about the how the Kwatsan were seen by the early settlers. They will hear that our ancestors were known for being hospitable, problem-solvers and decision-makers.
  - The curriculum includes appropriate social Language with introduction to beginning conversation, intermediate conversation and advanced conversation.
    - Students will have a key role in planning and implementing subjects, themes and activities in the curriculum and will assess every lesson at the end of the activity.
    - Students are given opportunity to expand their creative imaginations through learning the Language, through acting and dramatization. The units are student based for learning the Kwatsan meaning of life situations through Language.
    - They are given the chance to practice life skills as they learn the Kwatsan skills of baking easy bread, making tortillas or fry bread, sewing traditional dresses, making

- bows, arrows or preparing gourds for pi ipáa, Iilyshaa, ' atsayérts, Uuráv, ' Aaróop and other songs.
- Students have the opportunity to live how the ancestors may have lived by fishing, cooking outdoors, playing sports, or creating art and crafts. This unit provides learning opportunity to teach respect for the natural resources on the Fort Yuma Indian Reservation. Words and conversation is employed for every experience (e.g. fish (Atsíits), fry (Uushíilyk), water (' axá), taste (Kwanymashúuny ma' ávalyma' émtum. *You never taste the fishy taste.* (1970s), (Atsíits atáqshøk takavék qwél a' ím. *The fish jumped and went back in (into the water) with a splash.* (GB)
  - Explore the community by taking field trips with resource experts such as with Cultural Preservation or Amut Pipa Foundation as a Language enrichment and review.

#### **UNIT IV CONVERSATION, ALPHABET, CREATIVE LEARNING and SHARING THE LANGUAGE**

In Unit IV, Language Immersion activities are held to facilitate the on-going use of the Kwatsan Language to keep the spoken Language alive and to share the spoken Language with students at any stage of learning. Immersion activities expose, disclose and publicize meaning to the spoken Kwatsan Language through:

- Story sharing sessions; live recordings; dramatizations utilizing historical references and other resources for the purpose of documenting the spoken Kwatsan Language.
  - Participation in developing “How To – “ video recordings for such topics as how to make traditional dresses, fry bread, lazy bread, flutes, arrows, bows, sewing, beading, basketry, pottery making, Native musical instruments, wood craft and numerous other cultural subjects.
  - Participation in staging coyote stories and other Quechan legends for documentation for future instructional material. Participation in musical dramatizations and exhibits in the Kwatsan dialect.
- Videos recordings will be designed to document Quechan culture and custom.
- Video equipment namely, cameras, lap tops, computer learning stations, sound systems, microphones, blue tooth boxes, and all components of the equipment will be the responsibility of the assigned staff member under the Language Director.
  - The equipment will be utilized solely for the development of Language learning tools and to archive the Quechan culture and customs as references.
  - Photos taken for the expressed purpose of teaching and documenting a concept will be in accordance with Quechan Tribal policy.
  - All creative tools are developed for teaching purposes and are to be archived as Language references.