

HOW CAN YOUTH ENGAGE IN LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION?



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SUPPORTING
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REVITALIZATION
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Language revitalization is the process of increasing language speakers in a community. Language reclamation is the process of reclaiming linguistic rights for an Indigenous language and aligns more with community values and beliefs. Language revitalization is important for Indigenous communities because it is intrinsically connected to culture, identity, and land reclamation. We need Indigenous languages to understand our identities, our culture, and our land. It is important for youth to engage in language revitalization and language learning so that our languages can continue to thrive and be preserved. There are many different ways youth can become involved in language learning and revitalization. You have to be willing to allow language into your life.



USE THE SKILLS YOU ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT TO START LEARNING YOUR LANGUAGE

Tip 1

USE THE SKILLS YOU ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT, WHETHER THAT BE HOBBIES, YOUR CAREER, OR EDUCATION TO START LEARNING YOUR LANGUAGE. YOU CAN INCORPORATE YOUR INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE INTO THESE AREAS OF INTEREST. ANY BACKGROUND OR SKILL YOU HAVE HAS A PLACE IN LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION. DO NOT OVERTHINK LEARNING YOUR LANGUAGE, BUT REMIND YOURSELF THAT ANYTHING YOU DO WILL BE SUPPORTIVE. THIS INCLUDES ART, SCIENCE, HEALTH, AND MORE. YOU CAN LEARN PHRASES AND WORDS THAT ARE SPECIFIC TO THAT HOBBY OR SKILL. FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOUR AREA OF INTEREST IS HEALTH, LEARN WORDS OR PHRASES THAT ARE ASSOCIATED WITH HEALTH, SUCH AS ANATOMY, BODY PARTS, AND DIFFERENT PHRASES TO TALK ABOUT HEALTH.

RESEARCH LANGUAGE LEARNING MATERIALS

Tip 2

IF YOU DO DECIDE TO START LEARNING YOUR LANGUAGE, A GOOD STARTING POINT IS TO RESEARCH MATERIALS THAT EXIST IN YOUR LANGUAGE. YOU CAN SEARCH ON GOOGLE AND TRY TO FIND MATERIALS. YOU CAN LOOK FOR WEBSITES, PHONE APPS, CURRICULUMS, DICTIONARIES, OR BOOKS. IT CAN ALSO BE HELPFUL TO LOOK ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR A LANGUAGE GROUP TO CONNECT WITH OTHER LANGUAGE LEARNERS OR POTENTIALLY PEOPLE TEACHING THE LANGUAGE. YOU CAN ALSO FIND YOUR COMMUNITY/BAND CONTACT INFORMATION AND ASK IF THEY KNOW OF ANY RESOURCES OR PEOPLE TO ASK ABOUT HOW TO START LEARNING YOUR LANGUAGE.

PUT LANGUAGE INTO YOUR LIFE

Tip 3

DO NOT VIEW LANGUAGE LEARNING AS SEPARATE FROM YOUR DAY-TO-DAY. THERE IS NOT A DICHOTOMY BETWEEN THE TWO, BUT RATHER LANGUAGE LEARNING IS CONNECTED TO YOUR LIFESTYLE. YOU HAVE TO EMBED LANGUAGE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES INTO YOUR LIFE AND ALLOW LANGUAGE TO BE A PART OF YOUR DAILY ROUTINE. LANGUAGE LEARNING IS A LIFE-LONG JOURNEY THAT YOU HAVE TO COMMIT TO AND BE DEDICATED TO LEARNING. RATHER THAN FINDING AN HOUR EVERYDAY TO LEARN YOUR LANGUAGE, YOU CAN INSTEAD INCORPORATE LANGUAGE THROUGHOUT YOUR DAY. THIS CAN BE DONE WHILE CLEANING, COOKING, EVEN STUDYING. LEARN WORDS AND PHRASES ASSOCIATED WITH SPECIFIC TASKS OR ACTIONS THAT YOU ARE DOING. YOU CAN SAY PHRASES SUCH AS, "I AM CLEANING THE DISHES," "THIS IS A CUP," "THIS CUP IS DIRTY," OR, "IT LOOKS COLD OUTSIDE, I AM GOING TO WEAR A SWEATER TODAY." YOU CAN NARRATE YOUR DAILY ROUTINE IN YOUR LANGUAGE.

EXPOSE YOURSELF DAILY TO YOUR LANGUAGE

Tip 4

ALONGSIDE PUTTING LANGUAGE INTO YOUR LIFE, YOU SHOULD CONTINUE TO PRACTICE THE PHRASES AND WORDS THAT YOU LEARN DAILY. A GOOD RULE OF THUMB IS THE 20X20X20 RULE. THIS MEANS THAT YOU HAVE TO HEAR A WORD 20 TIMES, SAY A WORD 20 TIMES, AND USE IT 20 TIMES TO REMEMBER IT. THIS CAN BE DONE BY PLACING STICKERS OF WORDS IN YOUR LANGUAGE ALL OVER YOUR HOUSE TO CONTINUOUSLY BE EXPOSED AND USING THE WORDS YOU DO KNOW EVERY DAY. TRY USING THE WORDS IN DIFFERENT PHRASES AND INSTANCES.

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ENGAGE IN LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION & LEARNING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Tip 5

WE ALL USE OUR PHONES ON A DAILY BASIS AND ENGAGE IN SOCIAL MEDIA. WHETHER THAT BE SCROLLING THROUGH TIKTOK OR INSTAGRAM FOR A FEW HOURS OF THE DAY. WHILE ENGAGING IN THIS DAILY RITUAL, YOU CAN CURATE YOUR FEED TO INCORPORATE INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE CONTENT CREATORS. WHETHER THEY ARE TEACHING YOUR LANGUAGE, OR DISCUSSING LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION. YOU CAN EXPOSE YOURSELF DAILY AND PUSH YOURSELF TO LEARN MORE PHRASES. YOU CAN ALSO LISTEN TO PODCASTS OR JOIN FACEBOOK GROUPS SPECIFIC TO YOUR LANGUAGE.

BECOME A CONTENT CREATOR

Tip 6

YOU CAN BECOME A CONTENT CREATOR YOURSELF. PERHAPS YOU WANT TO CREATE AN INSTAGRAM PAGE OR TIKTOK ACCOUNT TO DOCUMENT YOUR LANGUAGE LEARNING JOURNEY. OR MAYBE YOU CAN START ADVOCATING OR BRINGING AWARENESS TO LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION. YOU CAN SHARE CONTENT ON YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES. THIS DOES SUPPORT LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION BECAUSE YOU ARE INCREASING THE VISIBILITY OF OUR INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES, ACCESSIBILITY TO THEM, AND AWARENESS ABOUT THE STATUS THAT OUR LANGUAGES ARE IN. THIS INFORMS THE GREATER PUBLIC ABOUT THE STATUS OUR LANGUAGES ARE IN, AND CREATES THE ABILITY FOR PEOPLE TO TAKE ACTION AND ENGAGE IN LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION. IN ADDITION, YOU CAN AMPLIFY INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE ACTIVIST VOICES. BY SHARING THEIR VIDEOS AND CONTENT, IT INCREASES THEIR VISIBILITY AND ABILITY TO EDUCATE NON-INDIGENOUS PEOPLE ABOUT LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION.

DEVELOP RESOURCES WITH YOUR OWN PERSONAL SKILLS

Tip 7

DEVELOPING LANGUAGE RESOURCES IS ACTUALLY MUCH EASIER THAN IT SOUNDS. MAYBE YOU REALLY ENJOY MAKING TIKTOK'S, OR YOU ARE GREAT WITH CREATING, AND EDITING VIDEOS. YOU CAN EASILY FILM VIDEOS OF YOURSELF SPEAKING IN YOUR LANGUAGE. VIDEOS ON INSTAGRAM AND TIKTOK ARE GREAT RESOURCES FOR PEOPLE TO LEARN THEIR LANGUAGE. YOU COULD ALSO FILM VIDEOS OF PEOPLE SPEAKING IN YOUR LANGUAGE AND SHARE THEM WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY. PERHAPS YOU ARE AN ARTIST, YOU CAN CREATE ARTWORK FOR SHORT STORIES IN YOUR LANGUAGE. YOU CAN CREATE MUSIC VIDEOS IN YOUR LANGUAGE OR ANIMATED STORIES. THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS, BUT THINK ABOUT THE SKILLS YOU HAVE AND HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE TO DEVELOPING LANGUAGE RESOURCES. YOU CAN COLLABORATE WITH OTHERS IN YOUR COMMUNITY TO DEVELOP A MINI PROJECT. YOU CAN WORK WITH OTHER YOUTH WHO HAVE A VARIETY OF SKILLS TO DEVELOP A LANGUAGE RESOURCE SUCH AS CHILDREN'S BOOKS, ANIMATIONS, OR MAYBE YOU CAN FILM COMEDY VIDEOS. IF YOU HAVE A SPECIFIC INTEREST NOT RELATED TO LANGUAGE SUCH AS HEALTH OR SCIENCE, YOU COULD DEVELOP DIAGRAMS OF BODY PARTS IN YOUR LANGUAGE, OR PLANTS AND ANIMALS SPECIES. THINK ABOUT CURRENT DIAGRAMS, AND RESOURCES THAT EXIST FOR SCIENCE, HEALTH, BUSINESS, AND ECONOMICS. HOW CAN YOU DECOLONIZE THOSE RESOURCES AND INCORPORATE YOUR LANGUAGE?



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