Background

We are experiencing a time when there are few remaining Indigenous language speakers. The languages will only thrive with the understanding and support of the greater population of Canada which is why we need non-First Nations school systems as partners. When contact happened, many of the teachings and understandings that Indigenous people had were not respected or valued. Today, these teachings would be helpful in so many aspects: economy, child-rearing, relationship building, education and learning, and how to live in an environment that is sustainable and has a fairness in the sharing of the resources. These values are shared in the learning of Indigenous languages. Imagine if all Albertan students could speak at least a few words in Indigenous languages? Students who are not First Nations likely won’t have the opportunity to learn at home. In order for the languages to be seen with equal value to other languages, they need to be heard.

“The Cree language, or Nehiyawewin, is one of many indigenous languages within the Algonkian family of languages. The Cree “Y” dialect is one of the five major dialects in Canada. Cree is a language of relationships—relationships to Omâmawi Ohtâwîmâw (the Creator), to others (kinship) and to Kikâwînaw Askiy (Mother Earth), which encompasses all living things. It is a rich
and complex language because it relates to kinship, nature and spirituality.

The Roman orthography recommended for the instruction of Cree is the Pentland orthography, which is based on the Cree syllabics of standard orthography. The “Y” dialects of the Plains and Woodland Cree of Alberta use 14 English letters, of which 8 are consonants (c, k, m, n, p, s, t and h), 3 are short vowels (a, i, o), 4 are long vowels (a, i, o, e), and “w” and “y” are listed as semi-vowels. A sound variation occurs within the same dialect based on regional and cultural differences” (Cree Language and Culture, Alberta Education, 2008).

Having students explore and enjoy movement early on in school is so important for them to live long and healthy lives, to help lower the risk of diabetes and other health concerns, and to develop a strong foundation of movement to support their physical literacy journey.

Thank you for using these cards as a way to bring life and relevance back to the Cree language while supporting physical activity opportunities at your school or other setting.

Thank you to Lisa Cardinal from Lac La Biche, Alberta for her knowledge and translations of the animals into the Plains Cree language.

The original artwork in this resource has been done by Crystal Putz, an artist from Edmonton, Alberta.
How to Use

Use this deck of Alphabet AniMoves to help explore fun and creative movements while learning the Cree names of animals. There are cues for movement on the back of each card. Using these cues not only gives children opportunity to move, but can help in the learning and remembering of the Cree name for each animal.

In addition to the traditional use of the “flash cards”, there are activity ideas included to help foster further movement and learning of the Cree names of animals.

This resource is suitable for all ages and can be used in a variety of ways, including:

- Language Classes
- Physical Education and Wellness Programs
- Daily Physical Activity
- Literacy
- Recess
- Transitions
- Free Time
Activities

AniMoves Relay

Place cards at one end of the activity space and have participants line up in small teams on the other. The first participant in each team will run (or use another form of locomotion) to the end of the space with the cards, pick one up and move back to their team the way the animal they chose moves to tag off the next participant who will repeat the process. Feel free to encourage animal noises!

Relay races tend to be inactive for the participants who are waiting for their turn. To maximize movement opportunities, be creative with ways to keep the participants active. Examples include a balance challenge, hopping on one foot or moving like the animal brought back until the next one comes, and creating smaller groups to minimize wait times.

Animal Alphabet Freeze

Choose an animal from the cards and have participants move around the activity space like that animal. When you say freeze, have the participants freeze in a pose that reflects the animal they are moving like. To unfreeze, a participant must be able to name the animal in the Cree language. They can call out the Cree name on your cue (after a few moments of balancing in their chosen position) and then you can choose another animal from the deck of cards for the next movement.

Another variation of this activity is to choose a locomotor skill for the participants to move in (such as skipping, walking backwards, jumping, hopping, galloping) and then call out the Cree name of an animal from the card deck and have them freeze like that animal. You could have the card with the name facing the participants and then turn to reveal the picture of the animal to see if they are correct.
**Story Telling**

Use the cards to tell a story. You can do this by sharing a story that is related to one of the animals in the deck of cards, having the participants act out the story as it is being read aloud. You can also build an active story by having the participants pick cards as you go around a circle, each taking turns adding to the story by adding a new animal character and movement each time. While encouraging all participants to try, remember to use the Cree names for each animal to enhance the learning of the Cree language.

**Follow the Leader Charades**

Have a participant pick a card that the other participants can’t see. Have them act out the animal without using words while the other participants mimic their movements at the same time. Participants should try and guess the animal they are acting out using it's Cree name.

Once the animal has been guessed, have another participant pick a new card and repeat the activity.
How Do You Move?

This is a partner activity in which each participant is assigned a card and corresponding animal. In pairs, the participants take turns asking each other “How do you move?”. The other partner will answer with a movement showing how that animal moves and the asking partner will then try to guess the animal using it’s Cree name. They will take turns going back and forth until they guess each other’s animal, presenting a new movement each time the question is asked.

AniMoves Movement Dice

Download the free Movement Dice resource and assign each animal a number on the sheet. Find a die and roll to see how you can move! This is a great activity to incorporate numbers in the Cree language as well.

http://befitforlife.ca/resources/movementdice

Transitions

Use these cards as a tool for transitions! As you transition from one space to the next pick an animal to inspire your movement. This is a great time to incorporate some creative movement - you don’t just have to walk!
Move!

• Crouch down, place hands on floor in between your feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs
Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can

Sit down, play a violin with your legs

Move!

- Flex your arms forward and chirp
- Jump like a cricket

kwâskocisis

cricket
Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
Sit down, play a violin with your legs

MOVE!

• Duck walk for 10 seconds
• Tuck your arms into your arm pits like wings and twist 10 times
Aa
Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can

Sit down, play a violin with your legs

Hop around the room, 2 feet together in a galloping motion

Make horns on your head with your hands and try to scratch your knee

Move!
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs
• Bring your hands to your eyes like binoculars and look around with your owl eyes
• Sit on the floor and twist to each side for 10 seconds
Mm
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs
• Make triangles with your hands and bring them over your head like fox ears
• Pounce like a fox looking for mice in the snow!
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs
• With your nose, try and tap imaginary wood in front of you as fast as you can
• Flap your arms while running around the room

MOVE!

woodpecker
Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can

Sit down, play a violin with your legs

Move!

- Cat walk on a line on the floor
- Calf raises - rise up and down our your tip toes
- Stretch and roll, like a cat in the sunshine
- Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
- Sit down, play a violin with your legs

**Eagle**

- Stretch your arms wide and soar around the room like an eagle
- Stand tall and proud, using eagle eyes to see things far away

**Move!**
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs

wâwâskêsíw

elk

MOVE!

• Gallop around the room like an elk
• Paw at the ground like an elk digging through the snow for grass
Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can

Sit down, play a violin with your legs

MOVE!

• Reach your hands up, roll your fists like a rearing horse
• Shake your head and neigh like a horse
• Buck like a horse, hands on floor while kicking legs up backwards
Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can

Sit down, play a violin with your legs

Squat down like a gopher hiding in it’s hole

Pop up on your tip toes and look alert

**Game Suggestion:** Using poly dots as gopher holes, have students run to a spot, then stop to pop up and look around.
Mm
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs

MOVE!

• Slither around like a snake on the floor
• Crouch down on floor and jump up really fast
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs

MOVE!

• Flap your wings and move slowly around the room
• Buzz like a bee

Game Suggestion: have half the students as flowers and the other half as bees. The bees have to touch the top of the flowers, then the roles switch.
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs

**Move!**

• Leap from one ‘rock’ to another, moving quietly like you are hunting prey, slowly and quietly on all fours
Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs

Move!

• Army crawl on your elbows and toes for 10 seconds
• Stick out your tongue and try to touch your nose

osikiyas
lizard
Aa
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs

MOVE!

• Flutter your arms quickly and run on the spot for 10 seconds

Game suggestion: Have students hold their arms over their heads in a point like the beak of a hummingbird. Have some students hold hula hoops, and have the hummingbird students run around trying to fly through the hula hoops.
- Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
- Sit down, play a violin with your legs

**MOVE!**

- Sneak around on your tiptoes as quietly as you can
Move!

- Stretch your neck like you are looking up at the moon
- Crouch on your heels and howl

wolf

mahihkan
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs

MOVE!

• Hop like a frog 10 times
• Move your arms like a frog swimming through the water
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs
• Bring your hands together in front of you and pretend to swim around the room
• Leap like a salmon out of the water
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs
• Snort through your nose like a bison
• With hands and feet on the floor, gallop across the prairie

paskwâwi-mostos
bison

MOVE!
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs
• Lie on the floor and roll over like a dog
• With your hands and knees on the floor, pretend to wag your tail
Kk
Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can.

Sit down, play a violin with your legs.

Move!

• Roll around in the mud
• Root around with your snout
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs

MOVE!

• Bunny hop around the room
• Wriggle your nose
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs

Move!

• Sit on the floor with the bottom of your feet together and bounce your knees like flapping wings
- Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
- Sit down, play a violin with your legs

MOVE!

- Slap your thigh like a beaver slaps its tail on the water
- Swim through the water with little beaver paws
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs

**MOVE!**

• Stamp your feet, click your teeth, and growl like a frightened porcupine
• Pretend to climb a tree then shoot a porcupine quill like an arrow
Kk
Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can

Sit down, play a violin with your legs

Move!

• Run like a goose and then take off to fly while spreading your wings wide
• Honk like a goose as you waddle around
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs

MOVE!

- Fly as if you are dancing in the wind
- Twirl and spin while cawing like a crow
Mm
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs

**MOVE!**

• Put your hands with fingers spread on the side of your head like moose antlers
• Take very large steps as you move around with your very tall moose legs
Mm

[Image of a mountain lion]
Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can

Sit down, play a violin with your legs

Misi-pisiew

cougar

MOVE!

• Crouch down on all fours
• Move around on all fours as quiet as you can be like a stalking cougar
• Bear crawl
• Stand up on your hind legs and growl like a bear!
• Pretend to be a coyote hunting
• Stop and look around when you hear something
• Chase and pounce when you find it
Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
Sit down, play a violin with your legs

MOVE!

- Swim like a trout in a winding river
- Jump out of the water to catch a bug
Mm
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs

Move!

• Pretend to swim like a loon then dive down to catch a fish
• Try to make a loon call
• Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can
• Sit down, play a violin with your legs

MOVE!

• Make yourself small as a mouse
• Scurry around like you are looking for something to eat
Crouch down, place hand on floor in between feet and jump forward as far as you can

Sit down, play a violin with your legs

Stand tall like a heron
Lift one leg and balance on one foot
While balancing try to reach down with your beak to catch a fish