

## Engaging with Yakama Legends, (50 minutes)

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This activity is intended to be used with Yakama middle schoolers, where students are Indigenous language learners of an endangered language. The language being learned is the Yakama dialect of Ichishkiin. When teaching Indigenous languages, it is important that narrative sharing be involved in the teaching practices of the class. Therefore, this activity is centered around the Yakama legend titled *Sikni (Yellowbell)*. It asks learners to interact and engage with the legend and make language decisions based on what they learned could be appropriate. The assessment of this activity will be informal and formative. The teacher will simply observe how learners are using "nay" and "na" to engage with or think about the content.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES. Learners will be able to:

#### Knowledge:

- Understand the main concepts of *Sikni (Yellowbell)* Legend.
- Recognize vocabulary for asking for clarification and answering.

#### Analysis:

- Recognize ways in which the narrator made sure listeners were understanding the story and why.
- Recognize places in the story where they can ask for clarification and why.

#### Subjectivity:

- Make a decision about how and whether to respond to the narrator's cues for understanding.
- Make the decision about how and whether to ask for clarification from the narrator.

#### Awareness:

- Gauge when the narrator is asking for clarification of understanding and know how to respond.
- Gauge when an appropriate opportunity would be to ask for clarification and know the repercussions if they were to ask at an inappropriate time.

**MODE(S):** Interpretive, Interpersonal

**MATERIALS:** [Yellowbell story explanation](#), [Yellowbell Story Recording](#), [Sikni \(Yellowbell\) handout](#)

### PROCEDURE

#### Before the Lesson:

1. Teachers: Familiarize yourself with the legend and ways it can be explained. You can use the *Building Solidarity* [page](#) under *Ichishkiin* on the pragmatics repository developed by CASLS.
2. Develop an activity for learners to engage with as much of the vocabulary from the legend as possible, so that they are prepared to understand some of it before it is told. They can do this by watching a narrated slideshow of pictures and words in the target language (you will need to create this as the teacher), sorting flashcards or words into categories, etc.
3. Assign the activity you create to be done prior to the day of the lesson.
4. Print out enough copies of the *Sikni (Yellowbell)* handout for yourself and each learner.

#### Beginning of Lesson (15 minutes):

1. Using the *Sikni (Yellowbell)* handout, begin telling the legend. Periodically stop and translate as much of it to English as needed for learners to fully understand its meaning.
  - a. Stop to ask learners if they recognize any words.

**Keywords:** direct requests, indirect requests, rank of imposition, everyday requests

- b. Also stop to explain a landmark or reasoning for something in particular. This is where you integrate “*Nay?*” (asking for clarification and understanding).
- c. Learners reply with “*li!*” to express that they understand.
- d. For example:
  - i. T (narrator): *The Warm Wind came to melt all the snow away. That is when you know spring or root digging time is near, nay?*
  - ii. Ss (listeners): *li!*

**Middle of Lesson (20 minutes):**

1. Pass out the Sıkni (Yellowbell) handout. Learners prepare to tell the story using English and as much of the target language as each one can. First, they read the story independently and silently, highlighting words they want to use in the target language.
2. Learners take turns playing specific roles in telling the story. They use the phrase “*Nay?*” themselves, but this time the T will be the listener and the one saying “*ii!*”.
  - a. This is where the teacher also implements the use of “*Na?*” as a clarifier. For example:
    - i. S (narrator): *Then the Warm Wind came to melt all the snow away.*
    - ii. T (listener): *And that is when you know spring or root digging time is near na?*

**End of Lesson (10 minutes):**

1. Discuss with learners about how *nay* and *na* were continuously used throughout the story and why it was used, as well as how they think these terms could be applied outside of storytelling.
2. In pairs of small groups, learners come up with examples of how they can use these the rest of the day/week.

**After the lesson:**

1. Learners use the phrases over the next week and keep a daily reflection log, either digitally or on paper, in order to report back on how they used them.
2. Teachers: provide feedback - often these phrases are situational and depend on who you talk to and what you are talking about.