

Kellor Paap, a linguist and teacher from Red Cliff, speaks about learning the language, preserving the language, immersion schools, teaching methods and the importance of keeping the language alive.

1. Asemaa akawe, mii ezhichigeyaan endaso-giizhik nimbiindaakoonaa ingiw manidoog.
First of all, I make a tobacco offering to the spirits every day.

2. Boozhoo indinawemaaganidog.
Hello my relatives.

3. Waawaakeyaash indigo, Keller indizhinikaaz, Keller Paap indizhinikaaz zhaaganaashiimong.
I am called Waawaakeyaash, my name is Keller, my English name is Keller Paap.

4. Aapiji niminwendam omaa ayaayaan noongom.
I am very happy to be here today.

5. Miskwaabikaang izhinikaadeg ishkoniing wenjibaayaan, besho, besho imaa Gichi Gamiing.
Miskwaabikaang is the name of the reservation that I come from, near Lake Superior.

6. Red Cliff izhinikaade zhaaganaashiimong.
In English it is called Red Cliff.

7. Gii-kwiwizensiwiyaan gaawiin, gaawiin aapiji ningii-noondanziin I'iw anishinaabemowin.
When I was a little boy I did not hear very much Anishinaabe language.

8. Mii eta go gii-naano-biboong gaa-maajii-gikinoo'amaagooyaan ji nitaa-anishinaabemoyaan.
It has only been five years since I started learning to speak Anishinaabemowin.

9. Idash gaawiin noongom, noongom geyaabi gaawiin aapiji ninitaa-anishinaabemosii noongom.

And today I still only know how to speak very little Anishinaabemowin.

10. Zanaganad, zanaganad da-aabajitooyaan I'iw anishinaabemowin endaso-giizhik idash endaso-giizhik nimbiindaakoonaag ingiw manidoog da-wiidookawiwaad ji nitaa-anishinaabemoyaan. **It's hard, it's hard to use it every day and every day I make a tobacco offering to the spirits to help me to learn how to speak Anishinaabemowin.**

11. Aapiji go niminwendam gagwejitoon da-nitaa-anishinaabemoyaan.

I am very happy to try to speak Anishinaabemowin.

12. Nimiigwechiwendam, nimiigwechiwenimaag ingiw gikinoo'amaagejig; Pebaamibines, Tobasonakwut Kinew, ininiwag, mindimooyenyag, akiwenziiyag gaye.

I am thankful to my teachers, Pebaamibines, Tobasonakwut Kinew, the men, the old ladies, and the old men.

13. Booch igo ji mikwendamagwaa ingiw gikinoo'amaagejig anishinaabemowin, anishininaabe izhitwaawin gaye.

It is necessary to recognize those that taught me to speak Anishinaabemowin, and the cultural values, too.

14. Ganabaj mii sa iw, mii sa ingiw gaa-gikinoo'amaawiwaad.

I think that is all that taught me.

15. Niizhtana ashi-ishwaaswi nindaso-biboonagiz idash manoominike-giizis o'apii ningii-ondaadiz.

I am twenty-eight years old and I was born in August.

16. Superior izhinikaade I'iw odenaa gaa-ondaadiziyaan.

I was born in Superior.

17. Gaa-kwiiwizensiwiyaan ningii-taamin besho imaa odenaang izhinikaadeg Mishiimini-odenaang iwidi gaa-gikinoo'amaagooyaan gaye iwidi gabe-gikendaasowigamigong.

When I was a little boy, we lived near Minneapolis and that's where I went to school and then to college.

18. Ingii-wijjii-anokiimaa a'aw Pebaamibines izhinikaazod anishinaabewinini gikinoo'amaagejig anokiid iwedi Mishimini-odenaang gabe-gikendaasowigamigong.
I worked with Pebaamibines, Ojibwe language teacher who works at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

19. Indinendaan sa minochiged, nitaawichiged a'a.
I think he does good work, he's knows what he's doing.

20. Mii iwidi gaa-maajii-anokiiyaan anishinaabemowin endaso-giizhik, endaso-giizhik.
That's when I start working over there, every day.

21. Ganabaj niswi biboong gaa-anokiiyaan imaa.
I think I worked for three years there.

22. Idash noongom nindanokii omaa sa go Odaawaa-Zaaga'iganing gabe-gikendaasowigamigong.
And today I work at the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe Community College.

23. Omaa, omaa sa go ishkoniganing.
Here on the reservation.

24. Idash Bakeyaabashkikaang indaa noongom.
But I live in Hayward now.

25. Gaawiin aapiji gaawiin niibowa nitaa-anishinaabemosiiwag ongow anishinaabeg endaawaad imaa.
There are not very many Anishinaabeg there that can speak Anishinaabemowin.

26. Zanagan ji aabajitooyaan anishinaabemowin endaso-giizhik.
It's hard to use Anishinaabemowin every day.

27. Mii eta go geyaabi bimaadiziwaad ingiw gichi-aya'aag ganabaj niizhtana, ganabaj ashi-naanan eta go eyaawaad omaa ishkoniganing netaa-anishinaabemowaad.
There are only about twenty maybe fifteen elders left there who know how to speak Anishinaabemowin.

28. Mii ingiw gaganoonagwaa anishinaabemotawagwaa omaa anokiiyaan omaa noongom.

I talk to them in Anishinaabemowin here at work.

29. Iwidi wenjibaayaan, Miskwaabikaang gaawiin niibowa anishinaabeg iwidi nitaa-anishinaabemowaad.

Over there where I am from, Red Cliff, there are few Anishinaabeg who know how to speak Anishinaabemowin.

30. Gaawiin niibowa eyaawaad imaa ganabaj niwin, ganabaj niwin eta go geyaabi go ogikendaanaawaa da-nitaa-anishinaabemowaad.

There aren't that many, maybe only four that know how to speak Anishinaabemowin.

31. Idash igo ingitiziimag gaawiin gaye, gaawiin nitaa-anishinaabemosiiwag.

And my parents do not speak Anishinaabemowin either.

32. Ingitiziimag, nisayenh, nimise, gaawiin nitaa-anishinaabemosiiwag.

My parents, my older brother, my older sister, they all do not know how to speak Anishinaabemowin.

33. Niin eta go.

Just me.

34. Zanagad, zanagad aapiji, aapiji go zanagad.

It's hard, it's really hard.

35. Mii wenji-pabaa-ayaayaan miziwe moozhag igo pabaa-ayaayaan anishinaabe akiing, ji bizindawagwaa ingiw nitaa-anishinaabemowaad,

That's why I travel all over Ojibwe country to listen to those that speak Anishinaabemowin.

36. Iwidi Misi-Zaaga'iganing, iwidi Gaa-Zagaskwaajimekaag, iwidi Nagaajiwanaang, iwidi Zhaaganaashi-Akiing ishkoniganan, omaa sa go wiishkonsing gaye, Miskwaabikaang, Waaswaaganing, Odaawaa-Zaaga'iganing,

Over there at Mille Lacs, Leech Lake, Fond Du Lac, the Canadian reserves, here in Wisconsin at Red Cliff, Lac Du Flambeau, and Lac Courte Oreilles.

37. Gakina sa go ishkoniganan ningagwejitoon ji izhaayaan, ji bizindawagwaa ingiw nitaa-anishinaabemowaad.

I try to go to all the reservations, to listen to those that know how to speak Anishinaabemowin.

38. Booch igo da-izhichiged awiia giishpin wii-nitaa-anishinaabemod.

This is what someone must do if they want to learn Anishinaabemowin.

39. Gidaa-izhichige I'iw ji mawadisagwaa ingiw gaye.

You must visit them, too,

40. Bezhig indinawemaagan endaad iwidi Ashland.

I have one relative who lives over in Ashland.

41. Gaawiin ningikendanziin izhinikaadeg I'iw odenaa Ashland.

I don't know what Ashland is called (in Anishinaabemowin)

42. Idash wiin gaye wiin ingii-gikinoo'amawig anishinaabemowin.

And she taught me some Anishinaabemowin.

43. Ingii-wiindamawig bezhig dibaajimowin, dibaajimowin.

She told me this one story.

44. Mii iw:

This is it:

45. Mewinzha giiwenh bezhig, bezhig gwiiwizens gii-ayaa.

A long time ago there was this one boy.

46. Idash igo apane ogii-kagwejimaan ookomisan, ookomisan ogii-kagwejimaan iniw gwiiwizens apane, "Daga wiidookawishin. Ambe, ambe wiidookawishin."

And his grandmother was always asking him, "Come here and please help me."

47. Gii-ikido, “Gaawiin, gaawiin, nindayekoz, nindaakoz.”

And he said, “No, I’m tired, and I’m sick.”

48. Idash gii-nishkaadizi a’aw mindimooyenh.

And this old woman got mad.

49. “Hayaa! Aaniin ezhiwebiziyen giin?”

“Geez, why are you like this?”

50. “Nindaakoz. Nimishomis gaa-inaapined.

“I am sick. My grandfather was ailed also.”

51. “Mii sa go gaye niin gaa-inaapineyaan omaa noongom.

“This is what ails me today, also.”

52. “Mii wenji-ayekoziyaan, aakoziyaan gaye.”

“This is why I am tired and sick.”

53. Idash mindimooyenh gii-ikido, “Shaanh! Gaawiin, gaawiin. Ingikenimaaban gimishomisiban.

And the old woman said, “No, I knew your late grandfather.”

54. “Gaawiin ayekozisii, gii-kawanaandam.”

He wasn’t tired, he starved to death.”

55. Mii gaa-ikidod.

This is what she said.

56. Idash apane go nimikwendaan o’o ingiw, ingiw nitaa-aadizooked, ingiw gichi-aya’aag, mindimooyenyag, akiwenziiyag.

And I always remember those elders, old women and men who know how to tell legends.”

57. Booch igo, booch igo ji noondamaan ji bizindamaan i’iw apane ji gikendamaan anishinaabemowin.

And I must always listen to this, so that I can learn Anishinaabemowin.

58. Mii izhichigeyaan.

This is what I do.

59. Niminwedam gaye noongom gagwe-gikinoo' amaageyaan omaa, omaa gabe-gikendaasowigamigong.

Today I am happy to try teaching here at the Community college.

60. Miinawaa ningagwejitoon ji "implement"-itooyaan I'iw "Language Preservation Plan" izhinikaadeg I'iw omaa "Language Preservation, Restoration" gaye, intergenerational.

And I am trying to implement this "Language Preservation Plan" here, also called "Intergenerational Language Restoration."

61. Abinoojiinyensag, anishinaabensag miinawaa ininiwag, ikwewag, gichi-aya'aag.

For babies all the way up to elders.

62. Gakina sa go anishinaabeg omaa ji wiidokodaadiyang ji bimaadiziwinagak o'o anishinaabemowin,

For all Anishinaabeg here, to help each other so that Anishinaabe lives on.

63. Ji wanitoosiwang o'o anishinaabemowin gaye.

So that we don't lose it.

64. Mii izhichigeyaan omaa gaye.

This is also what I do here.

65. Mii sa iw, mii sa iw bangii.

That is all.

66. Ninga-gagwejitoon zhaaganaashimoyaan gaye.

I will speak English, too.

67. Gii-kwiiwizensiwiyaan gaawiin ningikendanziin, gaawiin ningii-nitaa-anishinaabemosii.

When I was a boy I didn't know how to speak Anishinaabemowin.

68. Ganabaj naanan ikidowinan ingii-gikendaanan.

I think I knew five words.

69. Bakwezhigan, zhooniyaa, gaawiin, jiisan, waabooz.

Bread, money, no, rutabagas, rabbit.

70. Idash gaawiin ningikendanziin nitaa-anishinaabemoyaan.

But I didn't know how to speak Anishinaabemowin.

71. Idash gaa-maajii-gikinoo'amaagooyaan iwidi Mishiiminii-odenaang.

And when I started learning over there in Minneapolis,

72. Ganabaj gii-naano-biboong, naano-biboong.

I think it was five years.

73. Mii o'apii gaa-maajii-anishinaabemoyaan.

This is when I started to learn Anishinaabemowin.

74. Gaawiin ningikendanziin, gaawiin ningikendanziin gaa-onji-anishinaabemoyaan.

I don't know why I learned Anishinaabemoyaan.

75. Idash iniw gaa-enakamigak, gaa-enakamagiziyaan, gaa-pawaajigeyaan.

And certain things happened, happened to me, dreams that I had.

76. Ganabaj ingiw, ingiw awesiinyag anishinaabeg gaye, manidoog, ganabaj ingiw gaa-wiidokawiwaad ji maajii-anishinaabemoyaan.

I think those animals, Anishinaabe people, too, and the spirits helped me to start speaking Anishinaabemowin.

77. Mii o'apii gaa-maajii-anishinaabemoyaan, gaa-gikinoo'amaagooyaan anishinaabemowin.

This is when I started to speak Anishinaabemowin, when I started to learn Anishinaabemowin.

78. Gaa-kagwejimigooyaan awegenon P'iw anishinaabemowin?

When I am asked, what is anishinaabemowin?