

Lesson Plan: Chinook Jargon - A British Columbian Language

Grade Level: 9, 11, 12 (adaptable for Grade 5)

Subject: Social Studies, First Peoples

Objectives:

1. Students will learn about the history and significance of Chinook Jargon, understanding its role as a crucial tool for communication not only between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people but also between Indigenous groups who spoke different languages.
 2. Students will explore the concepts of language revitalization and reconciliation.
 3. Students will consider how efforts to revitalize Chinook Jargon can support broader Indigenous language revitalization initiatives, including building confidence for learning traditional languages.
 4. Students will reflect on how they can integrate Chinook Jargon words and phrases into their daily lives.
 5. Students will recognize that Chinook Jargon is part Indigenous and part non-Indigenous, incorporating many different language groups, and therefore belongs to everyone.
 6. Students will understand how Chinook Jargon can serve as an inspiration from BC's history on how people can learn from each other to work together and make a better province.
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Core Competencies:

- Communicating, Collaborating
 - Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking
 - Positive Personal and Cultural Identity
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Curricular Competencies:

- **Grade 5:**
 - **Ask Questions:** Help students frame questions about how languages evolve when different cultures meet.

- **Recognize Perspectives:** Explore how different people used Chinook Jargon to communicate with each other in BC's early history.
 - **Grades 9, 11/12:**
 - **Inquiry Process:** Guide students in asking how languages can serve as bridges between different cultures, and why certain words from different languages were adopted into Chinook Jargon.
 - **Assess Significance:** Help students understand the significance of Chinook Jargon in BC's past and present, especially in the context of intercultural communication.
 - **Interpret Historical Accounts:** Support students in interpreting the historical importance of Chinook Jargon through maps, videos, and discussions.
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First Peoples Principles of Learning:

- Learning recognizes the role of Indigenous knowledge.
 - Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.
 - Learning requires exploration of one's identity.
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Materials:

- **Video:** "Can you speak British Columbian?"
 - **Map of British Columbia with Chinook Jargon Place Names**
 - **Chinook Jargon word key** (provided after the map)
 - **Handouts** with questions and activities from "Word a Week" worksheets
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Procedure:

1. **Introduction (10 minutes):**
 - **Scenario:** Ask students, "What would you do if you were in a situation where there was no common language?" Explain that this was the reality in Proto British Columbia 200 years ago when many different cultural groups and languages coexisted in the region.

- **Language Diversity in BC:** Share that BC is home to **35 languages with 96 dialects**, many of which are at risk of being lost. Ask students why it is important to keep these languages alive.
- **Jay Powell's Role:** Introduce the story of Jay Powell, the last fluent speaker of Chinook Jargon in BC, who has been active in revitalizing many traditional languages in British Columbia and advocates for keeping these languages alive.
- **Broader Language Revitalization:** Many traditional Indigenous languages in BC need support to continue. Chinook Jargon can serve as a bridge to help people become more confident in learning traditional languages, while respecting the importance of each Indigenous language.

2. Video and Discussion (15 minutes):

- Show the video "Can you speak British Columbian?"
- Facilitate a discussion that includes:
 - The **close link between Chinook Jargon and BC's history**—how it reflects interactions between Indigenous peoples, settlers, and traders.
 - Discuss **why different vocabularies from Indigenous and European languages were added** to Chinook Jargon and how this helped various communities communicate.
 - Highlight that **Chinook Jargon is part Indigenous and part non-Indigenous**, with words from many different language groups. Because of this, it belongs to everyone, reflecting the shared history of the region.

3. Word a Week Activity (25 minutes):

- **Overview:**
 - Introduce a few selected Chinook Jargon words from the "**Word a Week**" worksheets (e.g., "Chuk" = Water, "Naika" = Me, "Wawa" = Speak).
 - Students will explore the meaning, pronunciation, and use of these words, and complete the related worksheets.
- **Procedure:**
 1. Introduce a few words using the provided worksheets.
 2. In small groups or individually, students complete the **NESAIKA AKS...** activities, such as creating sentences using the word, answering

discussion prompts, or translating sentences from Chinook Jargon to English.

3. **Encourage students to reflect on how they might integrate Chinook Jargon words and phrases into their daily lives**—for example, how they could use phrases like "Naika tiki" (I want) or "Wawa" (speak) in everyday conversations.

4. Each group or student presents their word and sentences to the class.

- **Reflection:** Discuss the significance of the words, how they were used historically, and how students might use Chinook Jargon phrases in their own interactions.

4. **Place Name Activity (15 minutes):**

- Provide students with the Map of British Columbia and the **Chinook Jargon word key**.
- Ask students questions such as:
 - **What does this map tell us about how widespread Chinook Jargon was throughout the province?**
 - **Why do you think certain places kept their Chinook Jargon names?**
- Encourage students to explore the connections between language and geography by identifying key regions where Chinook Jargon was spoken.

5. **Research Inquiry (Optional Homework):**

- Assign students to **learn more of the Chinook Jargon language**, encouraging them to expand their vocabulary through self-study or group work.
- Have students present what they have learned about Chinook Jargon words in a subsequent class.

6. **Closure (5 minutes):**

- Summarize the importance of Chinook Jargon in BC's history.
- Discuss ongoing efforts for language revitalization and reconciliation.
- Encourage students to reflect on their own cultural identities and the role of language in shaping them.

Assessment:

- **Formative Assessment:** Participation in discussions, completion of the "Word a Week" worksheet, and presentations.
 - **Summative Assessment:** Optional research inquiry project on learning more Chinook Jargon words.
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Differentiation:

- For **Grade 5**, simplify the word activity by focusing on basic vocabulary and sentence creation.
 - For **higher grades**, encourage deeper analysis of the historical context and cultural significance of the words.
 - Provide additional support for students with diverse learning needs.
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Extension Activities:

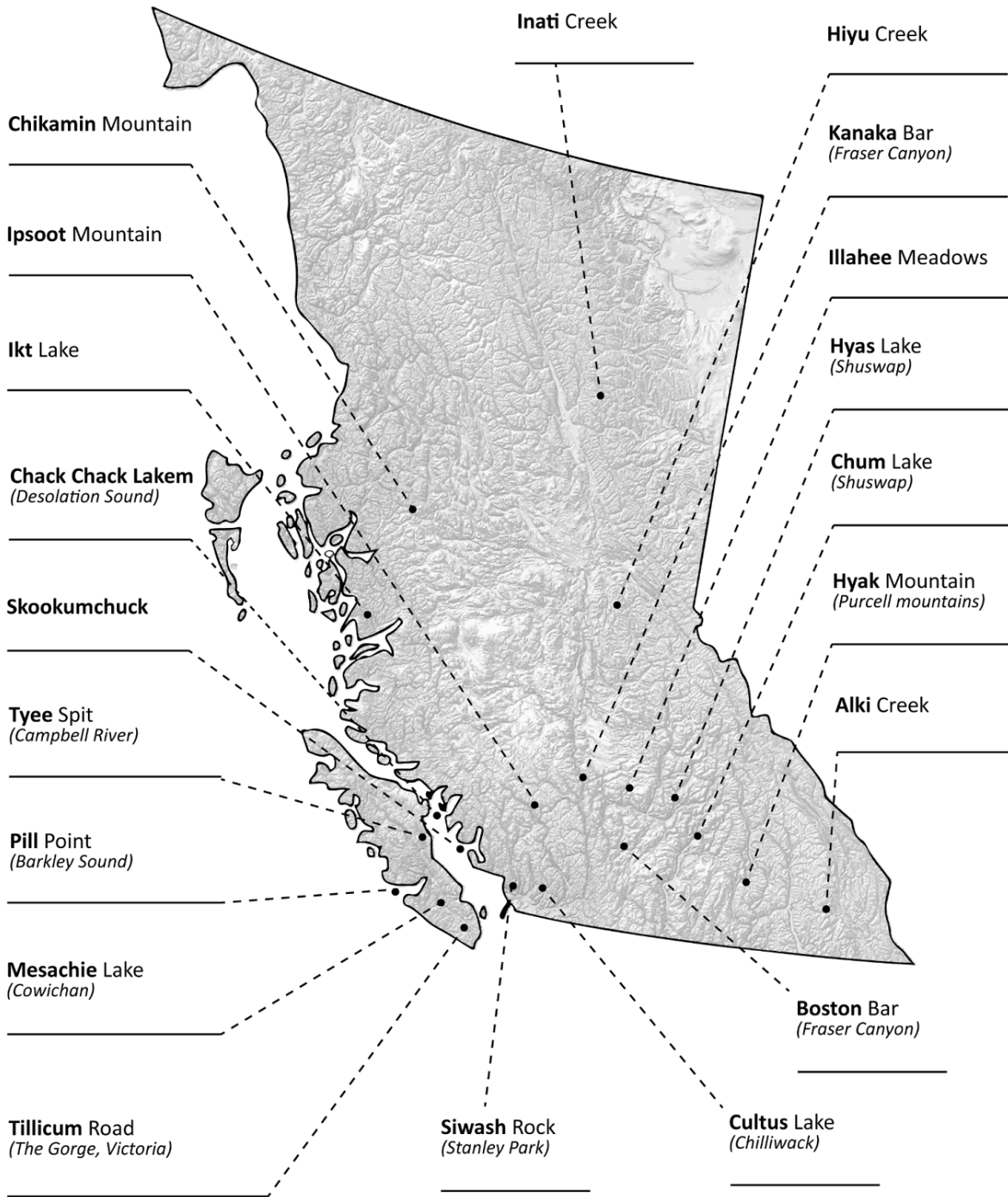
- Explore other examples of **Pidgin and Creole** languages around the world.
 - Create a project showcasing Chinook Jargon words and their use in place names or everyday life.
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Additional Resources:

- **BC Chinook Jargon Website:** Offers a **Teach Yourself Course** for students interested in continuing their study of Chinook Jargon.
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Notes:

- Every traditional Indigenous language in British Columbia has dozens of words that come from Chinook Jargon. This reflects how important Chinook Jargon was in bridging the language barrier among First Nations.
- The lesson plan can be adapted based on the available time and classroom needs.



Word Key for Map of BC

Chinook Jargon

Alki

Boston

Chikamin

Chuck

Chum

Cultus

Hiyu

Hyak

Hyas

Ikt

Illahee

Inati

Ipsoot

Kanaka

Mesachie

Pill

Siwash

Skookum

Tillicum

Tolo

Tyee

English

'The future'

'American'

'Metal'

'Water'

'Painted'

'Useless'

'Many'

'Fast'

'Great'

'One'

'Grassland'

'Creek'

'Hidden'

'Hawaiian'

'Evil'

'Red'

'First Nations'

'Strong'

'Friend' 'Family' 'People'

'Win' 'Earn'

'Chief' 'Large Salmon'