

LESSON ONE (NITÓXKA)

Vocabulary:

<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Other Words</u>
-APO- = to go, come	anóm = here
-APOTAKI- = to work	ómi = there, over there
-OMAHKA- = to run	anóhk = now
-ITOMO- = to lead, go first	itom- = first, leading
-OTO-ITO- = to come, go, arrive	oki = hello!. come in!
-UPI- = to sit (down)	ki = and
-ITAUPI- = to live, dwell	nitóxka = one
	sokápi, sokap- = good
	nit- = I, me, real, one, Indian

Each lesson will have a word list or vocabulary, including verbs, nouns and other kinds of words or stems. Often these "words" are only stems and cannot be used by themselves. If the "word" has a hyphen in front of it or behind it or both, it is a combining form and must have something attached to have it make sense. How to make these combinations will be one of the main things to learn in the Blackfeet language. You must also learn to tell verbs from nouns, and for that reason they will be listed separately. The verbs are so important in Blackfeet that they will be given to you in capital letters and only as stems to which you will have to link other terms. It may be a good idea if you try to find the verb stem first of all and then consider all the particles that come attached to it in front and behind:

VERB STEM

Now let's start to use a few of these verb stems to make sense out of them:

	<u>singular</u>	<u>plural</u>
1st person	nitAPOTAKI = I work	nitAPOTAKIhpinan = we work
2nd person	kitAPOTAKI = you work	kitAPOTAKIhpuwaw = you (pl.) work

Notice that to say "I" you add ni-t- in front of the verb stem. The -t- must be inserted in some words as a "go-between". Some people use just the -t- and omit the ni-. To say "you" the prefix is ki-t- and

must not be omitted. What do you add to end of the stem to say "we"? To say "you pl." ("you guys")? We should note that this way to say "we" is not the only way and is used only when "we" does not include "you".

Exercises:

Take each one of the verb stems listed in the vocabulary and treat it just the way APOTAKI is treated here.

	<u>singular</u>	<u>plural</u>
1st person		
2nd person		

It will be a good habit to use this table-like form to conjugate verbs from now on. To conjugate means to "yoke up" and is a Latin word used to describe what we do to verbs. With one of our verb stems, there is a little trick to remember: OMAHKA drops the final -A if nothing is attached onto it, becoming -OMAHK' (note the use of the apostrophe.) There is another trick to remember if you use ITAUPI or ITOMO: The "go-between" -t- of nit- and kit- turns into ts in front of the i. (I usually write Z in place of TS.) Many verbs act like OMAHKA, ITAUPI and ITOMO. That will help keep us awake.

Now translate:

1. I live here. You live there. We live here. You (pl.) live there.
2. Now I am working. ("am working" is the same as just "work".)
3. (Make up your own.)

LESSON II (NÁTOKA)

Vocabulary

<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Nouns</u>
-ANI- = to say, tell	aki = woman
-SAMI- = to hunt, seek	akíkoan = girl
-SAXI- = to go out	nápi ^{koan} = white man
-XIKAI- = to walk	Pikúni = Piegan
-PUYI- = to speak	Síxika = Blackfoot, Blackfeet
-OHKIMA- = to wait	Káina = Blood(s)
-OKA- = to sleep	nápi = old man
-PAPAUKA- & -PAPOKA- = to dream	napí = friend, partner! (in address only)
-ASAINI- = to cry, weep	mahkúyi = wolf
-YIMI- & -IMI- = to laugh	mistáki = mountain
	iníw = buffalo

Other Words

nat-, nátoka = two
amóyauk, amóye = here is..... (on handing things)
à = yes
sá = no
kíka! = wait!
kakó! = go on!

AKI and KOAN: Algonquian languages usually do not distinguish male and female. In some cases, however, Blackfeet uses these two terms as suffixes in this manner: -AKI is frequently attached to feminine personal names and to tribal and ethnic terms; e.g. nápiaki = white woman; Pikúni-aki = Piegan woman. -KOAN is sometimes attached to masculine tribal and ethnic terms: e.g. Pikúni-koan = Piegan man. For other functions of -KOAN, see Lesson .

Timeless Verbs: Blackfeet does not need to distinguish time or tense in its verbs as English does, though it can make such distinctions if the speaker wants to. In other words, a Blackfeet verb may refer to the past or the present and be translated "I do ..." or "I did ...", "I was doing".

Prefixes ÁI and ÁU: Most verbs in Blackfeet require one or the other of these two prefixes, usually accented. You just have to remember which of

these two goes with which verb. Some verbs, however, require neither but may use one if the speaker wishes. The verbs given in Lesson I and SAXI do not require such a prefix. Of the verbs given in this lesson, ANI takes ÁU and so does ASAINI: áuANI, áuASAINI. The other verbs in this lesson take ÁI: áiSAMI, áiXIKAI, áiPUYI, áiOHKIMA, áiOKA, áiPAPAUKA, áiYIMI. Here is how it works:

nitáuANI = I am saying etc. nitáuANIhpinan = we are saying etc.
kitáuANI = you are saying etc. kitáuANIhpuwaw = you(pl.) are saying etc.

These prefixes can be translated by the "progressive" forms in English: e.g. "I am (was) doing". The pronunciation of ÁI varies from AY as in English "day" to the Y in English "sky" and sometimes even to the U in English "but".

From here on the prefix ÁI or ÁU will be given with each verb in the vocabularies that requires such a prefix, or usually uses one.

Exercises:

Conjugate each one of the new verbs using the appropriate prefix if one is needed. But be careful! áiSAMI and SAXI are like OMAHKA; they drop their final vowel (I) when nothing follows it and put an apostrophe in its place.

LESSON III (NIUÓXKA)

Vocabulary:

<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Nouns</u>
áúAMISO = to go up, climb	matapi = person
áiINISO = to go down, descend	nizítapi = Indian (real person)
áiSUMOSI = to get water, go for water (drops final I)	sahkúmapi = boy
áúAHKAILI = to go home	poka = child
kokit! = give me! (command only)	ímita = dog
piít! = come in! (" ")	nitómitam = my dog
istúpit! = sit here (there)! (command form)	kitómitam = your dog
	kos = cup, dish

Other Words

(n)api-	= white
sahk-	= short
niuóxka	= three
ami-	= up
in-	= down
amítóhzi	= up, upstream, west
inisóhzi	= down
suyi-	= water, in the water
isuóhzi	= near the water, on the shore

Command Forms:

We have just a few of these, but you can see from them that to form a command we add -T to the verb stem when only one person is addressed. e.g. UPIt = sit down!

Interrogatives:

To ask a question with either of the singular forms we have had, simply add the suffix -HPA to the verb stem. To ask a question using either of the plural forms, add -A at the end of the word. For example:

	<u>singular</u>	<u>plural</u>
1st person	nit-ANI-hpa	nit-ANI-ihpinan-a
2nd person	kit-ANI-hpa	kit-ANI-puwaw-a

These words mean: "Am I telling...?" , "Are you telling...?" Some people drop the final -A in accordance with the tendency in the Blackfeet language to silence final vowels.

Negatives:

To form negatives with any verb in the forms we know, prefix MÁT- to the interrogative forms just given. But the -T- of nit- and kit- disappears in front of MÁT-, and the accent falls back from AI or AU to MÁT-. For example:

- 1- ni-mát-ANI-hpa = I do not say ni-mát-ANI-hpinan-a = we do not say
2- ki-mát-ANI-hpa = you do not say ki-mát-ANI-hpuwaw-a = you do not say

These words can also be translated: "I am not telling" etc. If we use the prefix AU- with ANI we get these forms:

- 1- ni-mát-auANI-hpa ni-mát-auANI-hpinan-a
2- ki-mát-auANI-hpa ki-mát-auANI-hpuwaw-a

Exercises:

Conjugate all the verbs we know in the interrogative and negative forms.

Translate:

- 1- Come in and sit down here! 2- Give me the cup! 3- Give me one cup (two cups, three cups)! (You do not need plural forms with numerals.)
4- I am not laughing. Are you laughing? 5- Do you live near the shore?
6- No, I live here. Yes, I live there.

The pupils should ask each other questions for each possible verb:

"Are you...? and then reply "Yes, I am... or "No, I am not..."

LESSON IV (NISO)

<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Nouns</u>	<u>Other Words</u>
áiSÁPI = to look at, see	kon = snow	-sko (collective suffix)
áiKOANI = to play	konsko = snow (on the ground)	sik-, sixi- = black
UNOZI = to be hungry	napayéni = bread (from French <u>la farine</u>)	nisó = four; nisuim(an) nisúi (in)
INAKI = to be thirsty	áisixikimi = coffee	puhs- = here, to here
áiKAKIAKI = to chop (wood), bat, hit (in baseball)	niétahta = river, stream	mist- = away (from here)
AMI = to be the one	kítan(i) = loaf of bread, cooking; pl. -anisz	-ikip- = funny, quick
óhKOTAKI = to give	-kimi = water	ík-, íx- = very
KITA = to bake, cook (ohKÍTA: áihKIT')	ohkí = water (in.)	im- = true, truly
POHSAPO = to come here	pokún(a) (an.) = ball; pl. pokúyix; nóhpokún = my ball; mióhpokún = baseball (the game & the ball)	-it- = there, here (at a point in space- time)
MISTAPO = to go away		
áuzIMOTA = to run away		

Plurals: To form plurals, we must first know the gender of the noun: Is it "animate" or "inanimate"? In Algonquian languages it has become customary to divide nouns into these two genders even though the terms "animate" and "inanimate" do not seem adequate. Nouns for people and animals are animate, of course, but some things, like stars are also considered animate. Nouns for some trees are animate, some inanimate. Some terms are animate with one meaning and inanimate in another: e.g. kos(a) means "cup" if animate and "a pottery dish" if inanimate. The plurals of animate nouns are formed by adding -IX. The plurals of inanimate nouns are formed by adding -ISZ. If a noun ends in -N, the -N is dropped before changing to the plural. It is not necessary to pluralize nouns in Blackfeet, however, especially if they are accompanied by a numeral or some other indication of plurality. Here are some examples:

imitaix = dogs; kosix = cups; kosisz = dishes; akikoaix = girls.

Numerals have several forms: counting forms, animate and inanimate forms and one or more combining forms each. Here are some of the extra forms for the numerals we already know by their counting forms:

- 1 - nitóxka ('toxka); nitóxkam; nitóxkai
- 2 - nátoka; nátokam; nátokai.
- 3 - niuóxka; niuóxkam; niuóxkai.
- 4 - nísó; nísuim; nísúi.

Exercises:

A- Read and understand: Nápikoaix; kosix; kosisz; mistakisz; akiix.
 Nitupi anóm; kizitupihpuwaw. Kitáíok' isoóhzi. Kitáiyimi; Kitáíniso.
 Kitáínisohpuwaw. Kika! Kitáiohkimahpuwaw. Piít! Oki, napí! Kokit kos!
 Sokápin íksokápi. Amoyauk kos. Otot! Mistapot! Puhsapot! Anohk
 nitáipuyihpinan. Nitáuamisohpinan amítóhzi. Isoóhzi nízitáupihpinan.
 Amítóhzi kizitúpi. Isoóhzi nitapotakihpinan. Isoóhzi nízitapohpinan.
 Anoma kizitotóhpuwaw. Nizipikúnikoan. Nitáíok'. Kimátapokihpuwawa.
 Nimátapokihpinana. Nizitsam'. Nimázitsamihpa. Anóm nitáhkaii. Kitáikipa-
 nihpa?

Compound verbs: You can make up new verbs by combining ANI (which drops final -I of course) by prefixing im-, ikip-: e.g. kiz-im-AN' = you're right, you tell the truth. Kiz-ikip-ANI-hpa? = Are you joking?

B- Translate: You are speaking. We are speaking. I am a Piegan.
 I am working. I'm not working now; are you working here? We are
 running near the water. You (pl.) stay here; you (pl.) laugh and sleep.
 We are sleeping. We laugh. I am waiting. You sit down over here and
 I sit on shore. Are you joking. I'm not joking. I'm telling the truth.
 Speak up! You live there. You are going down. I'm joking and you are
 laughing. We live near the water. I sleep. I do not sleep. I am
 hunting now. I'm not hunting now. Are you going home? Come here!
 Go away!

Complete Exercise: In each group of three sentences, there is one question, one affirmative answer and one negative answer. Fill in whichever sentence is missing: KitáuANIhpa? A, nitáuANI. Sá, nímátauANIhpa.

Kizikipanihpa? A, _____ . Sá, _____ .
 _____ ? A, nitomahk'. Sá, _____ .
 Omi kizitapohpuwaw? A, _____ . Sá, _____ .
 _____ A, _____ . Sá, nimátahkaiihpinana.
 _____ ? A, _____ . Sá, nimátauasainihpa.
 Kitáixikaihpa amítóhzi? A, _____ . Sá, _____ .
 _____ ? A, nitáipapauk'. Sá, _____ .

LESSON V (NISITÓ)

<u>Verbs</u>	<u>Nouns</u>	<u>Other Words</u>
APIXISTAKI = to throw	notas = my horse, pet	pi- = far
ohKITUPI = to ride, sit on, straddle	kotas = your horse, pet	kit-,ihkit- = on the
áiSOTA = to rain	otas = his/her horse, pet	akai-, akau- = many
ohPOTA = to snow	otomitam = his/her dog	oma = that, the
áiSOPU = to be windy, blow	nínaw = man, chief	mazoap- = beautiful
áiPIUO = to be far off	áiputaw = airplane	nisitó = five
áiPUTA = to fly	pokún(a) = ball (a.)	nisizí (an.)
NISIZÍiaw (an.), NISITÓiaw (in.) = there are five.	pokúyix (pl.)	nisitoí (in.)

The Rest of the Conjugation of the Verb: The first portion of the conjugation of a verb included the first and second persons. It did not include the 1st person plural (that refers to "you" or the person spoken to), nor any third, fourth or fifth persons. These are all part of the second configuration, made up mostly of suffixes. Fourth and fifth persons may seem strange to you because English does not have them. The fifth person is now so rarely used that we shall skip it for the present.

Third Person: Third person forms are usually made with suffixes only. Since there is no distinction for sex, we may translate it by either "he" or "she" and occasionally by "it", for the singular, and by "they" for the plural. (Note the verb NISIZI-. In another lesson we'll discuss a distinction between the so-called "animate" and "inanimate".) The 3rd person singular is formed by suffixing -WA to the stem or root. Usually the A of -WA is final and therefore silenced, and all we may hear is the W sounded like the W in English "few". Some people, especially south of the border, do not even say that. There are also instances where a final -A or final -M is the 3rd person ending, but we can discuss those cases when we come to them. The 3rd person plural ("they") is formed by adding -IAW to the stem. If the stem ends in -I, the two I's blend into one, so it will be optional whether you write them as one or two. Obviously, some verbs will only be used in the 3rd person singular: e.g. óhPOTAW = it is snowing (the OH- is drawled when initial, like English "AW".) Obviously too, when the verb stems end in O or U, an added -W does not change the

sound of the word and so may be optional in writing, though the meaning will be clearer if it is written.

Many nouns add the 3rd person -W or -WA or even -A. This fact shows that nouns too can become 3rd person and in fact are then really verbs. Such nouns would be translated "it is a man", "it is an airplane", and so on: nína-w; áiputa-w. Thus, other nouns we have had would be written: ímitaw, iníw, napiw, pokaw, niétahtaw, ponokaw.

Fourth Person: Algonquian languages sometimes have this feature of "fourth person" that represents someone (or something) that would be a subordinate 3rd person in an Indo-European language: e.g. "the boy's horse ran away". (In this sentence in Algonquian the "boy" is 3rd person" and "his horse" is 4th person.) The 4th person has only a singular form and is made by suffixing -ÍNAI to the stem. (The AI here sounds like Y in "sky".)

Sample Conjugation of these forms:

	<u>singular</u>	<u>plural</u>
3rd person	(áú)ÁNI-w'	(áú)ÁNI-iaw
4th person	(áú)ÁNI-ínai	_____

Since the two I's blend in such forms, you can write them áuANIaw and áuANÍnai instead of the way I have used above.

First Person Inclusive: When "we" includes the person addressed, the form is called "inclusive" and is made by suffixing -OP to the stem: e.g. áuANIop, APOTAKIop etc.

The Full Conjugation: (We'll take SUMOSI as an example.)

	<u>singular</u>	<u>plural</u>
1st person	nitáíSUMOS'	nitáíSUMOSIhpinan (exclusive) áíSUMOSIop (inclusive)
2nd person	kitáíSUMOS'	kitáíSUMOSIhpuwaw
3rd person	áíSUMOSIw	áíSUMOSIaw (áíSUMOSI-iaw)
4th person	áíSUMOSInai (áíSUMOSI-ínai)	

Agents: The stem of the verb automatically becomes the noun agent, that is, the noun that indicates the doer. The APOTAKI means not only "to work" but (with the -W suffixed) means also "the worker". And áíYIMI means "to laugh" while áíYIMI-w means "he laughs" or "the laugher."

The Prefix -OH-: Many words with a root beginning in K (occasionally another letter) prefix -OH-. If the prefix then becomes initial, it changes to IH-. Examples: ihKOTAKI, ihKITA; The singular conjugation of ihKITUPI runs this way:

nitohKITUPI, kitohKITUPI, ihKITUPIw, ihKITUPIinai. The plural conjugation is nitohKITUPIhpinan, ihKITUPIop, kitohKITUPIhpuwaw, ihKITUPIiaw.

Exercises:

a - Apotakiw'; apotakiaw. Akikoan aunoziw' ki ainiakiw'. Sakhumapi ki ninaw aunoziaw. Auamisow' ki aipiuow'. Nitaipiuo. Nitaiokahpinan. aio-kaop; kitaio'. Omi kizitapotakihpuwaW. Itow. Izitotow.

B - The man is working there. They are running near the water. They are running in the water. She is staying here; the woman is staying here. The Piegan man is chopping wood. My horse ran away. Your horse ran away. The boy's horse ran away. His/her horse ran away. The boy is playing in the snow.. The boy's dog is playing in the snow. Not I! (I'm not the one.) That Piegan man is the leader. I'm hungry; I'm very hungry. You are thirsty; You are very thirsty. The boys are very thirsty.

C - Let each student select a verb to conjugate in all known forms.