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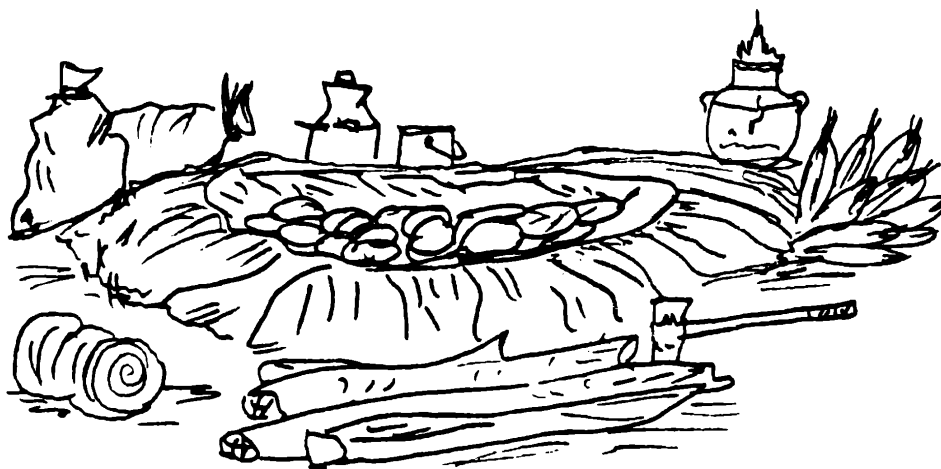
Mary Lou Tenijieth, Mary Ann Tessay, Ellen Danford,  
Toni Antonio and Faith Hill

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# NOHWIYATI'



Nadâ' Leeshbízh

**See p. 16**

The papers and poems in this booklet pages 2-14  
were written by Apache students at the 1983  
American Indian Language Development Institute

The illustrations used in it were done by  
Canyon Z. Quintero, Sr.  
for the book Keys to Reading and Writing Apache

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## INTRODUCTION

NOHWIYATI' (Our Language) is a delightful and informative book of poems, stories and articles written in or about the Western Apache language. The authors, Toni Antonio, Ellen Danford, Mary Lou Tenijieth, and Mary Ann Tessay, were students at Arizona State University's Fifth American Indian Language Development Institute held in the summer of 1983 at Sacaton, Arizona. They all are part of the Whiteriver Public Schools Bilingual Education Program. The students were assisted in their study of the Apache language by their linguistic instructors, Ofelia Zepeda and Faith Hill.

The American Indian Language Development Institute is an intensive four week linguistic and curriculum development training program for speakers of American Indian languages. The Institute is based on the premise that American Indian Tribes have great knowledge of their languages and cultures which should be utilized and incorporated within the educational systems their children attend. The Institute provides direction and guidance for Indian instructors to acquire skills in order to develop and reinforce the teaching of the children through the language and culture of their respective communities.

The articles on the Western Apache language were shortened and condensed from longer term papers done during the Institute. It is hoped that an additional publication containing the more detailed work on the language can be printed in the future. Additional articles are needed and will be greatly appreciated.

The works you are about to read demonstrate the results of the time, effort and study done by the authors. They are to be complimented on their fine work and encouraged to continue in their study and writing of the Western Apache language.

Sandra Kay Johnson  
Curriculum Specialist  
Arizona State University  
Tempe, Arizona

Ndee Biyati'

Díí yati' nohwíyééhí  
dázhóqó síh hadot'aahí  
k'ehgo shich'i' áyíłts'ag.

Bee da'olzhíí  
bídagonl'aah le'.

Bee k'eda'íłchíí  
bídagonl'aah le'.

Bee ídaada'ódlíí le'.

### Apache Language

This language of ours  
sounds  
like music to my ears.

Let's learn  
and read it.

Let's learn  
and write it.

Let's be proud of it.

Toni Antonio

# A MATCHING GAME

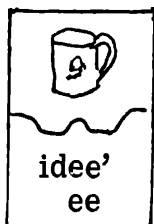
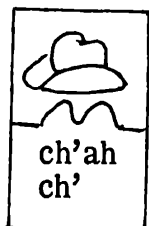
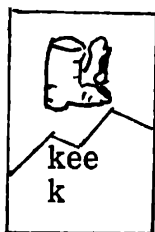
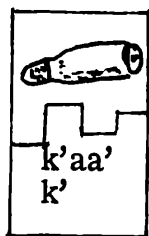
Mary Lou Tenijeth

This is a good game for beginning grade children. In fact, playing it can help anyone to learn to read and spell Apache.

Use 5 by 7 cards made of tagboard. Find pictureable Apache words. Put the picture on the top part of the card, and the word on the bottom part. Draw a line across each card, making each line different in shape, and then cut the cards apart following the line. This makes a puzzle out of each card.

Mix up the picture and word parts so that no matching parts are together. The object of the game is to match the picture and word parts of each card. The number of cards will depend on the number of people playing. One can play it by himself, or any small number can play, trying to see who can match the most cards from the pile.

This is a good "do it yourself" game for a student who has some free time. To learn to distinguish between nouns and verbs, verb cards could have a darkened corner. The player could use noun cards first, and then verb cards.



## VOWELS



aasitíni

aa

a shita' my forehead

aa shitaa' my father

ạ nadá' corn

ạạ goyáạ wise



idee'

ee

e shi'ide' my cup

ee idee' a cup

ẹ lẹ'e/lẹk'e it was

ẹẹ nenkẹẹz o'clock



íícho

ii

i shini' my land

ii shinii' my face

ị sịh a song

ịị dị'ị four



doolé

oo

o ałdó' also

oo itoo' soup

ọ dọ' a fly

ọọ nodóọz striped

u tú water

hayú where?

ákú there

## CONSONANTS

Mary Ann Tessay

The Western Apache Language has 30 consonants. All of them can be used at the beginning of a syllable, but only 11 ever come at the end of a syllable. Most syllables are CV (Consonant, Vowel) or CVC (Consonant, Vowel, Consonant).

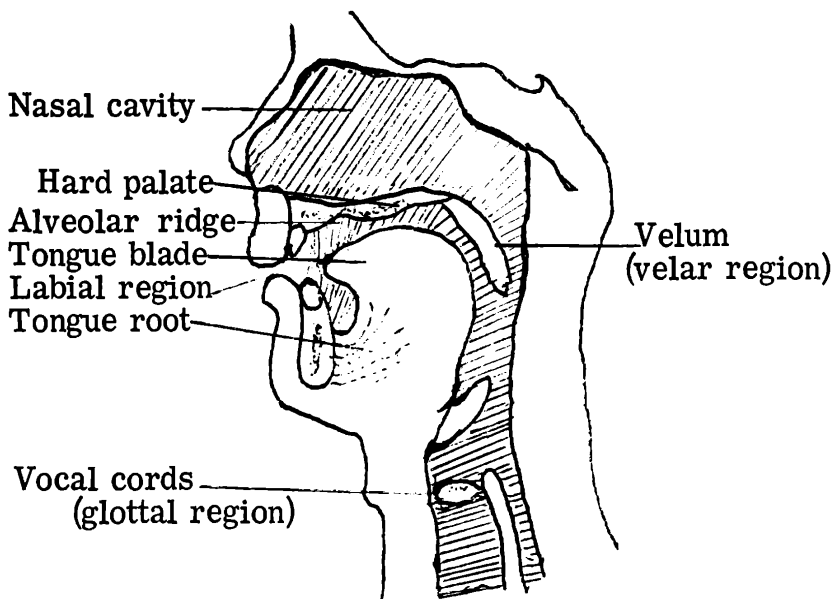
The words chosen here to illustrate the sounds of the consonants are ones which can be pictured for classroom purposes.

When we say a word we do not often think about the sounds of which it is made, or how they are made. To do this in Apache, however, is important, for it is written according to sound. The quickest way to learn to read and write it is to learn the sounds, what letters are used to represent them, and where and how they are made.

The picture on the next page shows the names of the parts of the mouth and throat used in making the sounds. As each sound is described three words will be used. The first tells where the sound is made, the second tells how it is made, and the third tells whether or not the vocal cords are used in making it. "Voiced" means they are used, and "voiceless" means they are not used.

The first letter of the Apache alphabet is the glottal stop. It is not in the English alphabet, although it is needed to spell the expression used when a baby falls down, or a glass of juice tips over. It is something like O-oo. There is a catch in the breath where the hyphen is. Apache uses a high comma for this - O'oo. This is very convenient, for it is used to indicate a holding of the breath when 5 other sounds are used. For example, when you say chaa (beaver) you say it just like ch in English 'children'. But when you say ch'ah (hat) you hold your breath. And when you say k'aa' (bullet) you hold your breath, but not when you say kee (shoes). The same is true of t' and t, tɬ' and tɬ, and ts' and ts. Examples will be given.





In the picture above names are given for areas where the sounds of the alphabet are made. Words used to tell how they are made are explained here:

Stops are formed when the airflow in the vocal tract is completely blocked at points between the vocal cords and the lips.

Fricatives are formed when the stream of air must flow through a very narrow opening in the vocal tract, so that friction is created.

Affricates begin with a stop, but are released into a fricative.

Nasals are formed with open nasal cavity. The velum is lowered. For sounds which are not nasal the velum is raised, closing the nasal cavity.

Liquids have more air coming through the vocal tract than most sounds except vowels.

Glides are similar to liquids. They are like vowels, so are sometimes called semi-vowels.

Beginning on the next page, the sound of each consonant will be described.

Hyphens will be used between the three facts given first about each sound: where - how - voiced or not.



o'i'ă

glottal - stop - voiceless

A glottal stop is a sudden hold your breath as in:

o'i'ă (sunset), dī'i (four), dō' (a fly)



be'idáné

b

bilabial - stop - voiced though not

as strongly voiced as b in English. The sound is formed by both lips together, stopping the air.

bán (bread), ba' (fox)



ch'ah

ch'

palatal - affricate(glottal) - voiceless

The tongue is placed behind the upper front teeth on the ridge, and the breath is held.

ch'il (flower, plant), ch'osh (bug)



chaa

ch

palatal - affricate - voiceless

The tongue is placed behind the upper front teeth on the ridge and the air is forced out strongly.

chagháshé (children), chálámané (Japanese or Chinese)



dō'

d

alveolar - stop - voiced

The tongue is placed behind the upper front teeth on the ridge tightly, stopping the airflow.

dīhił (black), dooli (bull), doolé (butterfly)



dlō'

dl

alveolar - lateral liquid - voiced

The tongue is placed behind the upper front teeth on the ridge, first stopping the air, then the sides of the tongue relax, and air flows through.

dlō'ishcho (rat), dláág (moss)



dził

dz

alveolar - affricate - voiced

Like dl except that it is the tip of the tongue that relaxes, and air blows through at the tip, not the sides.

dzaagee (here), na'idzog (marking)



gaagé

g

velar - stop - voiced

This sound is made by the vocal cords when the air is stopped in the velum, the soft part of the roof of the mouth behind the hard part.

goshk'an (banana), gosnih (bee's honey), gish (cane)



kéghad

gh

velar - fricative - voiced

Made like the g except that the velum is not tightly closed. Some air escapes through it as the guttural sound is made.

naghaa (walking), bitaghaa (his beard)



hawúh

h

glottal - fricative - voiceless

The air which makes the sound comes through far back in the glottal region.

ha'ánazéh (gathering place)

for us/nohwá

you(pl.)

hw

velar - fricative - voiceless

Like h except that the lips are rounded.

doo hwaa da (not any), nohwich'i' (to us)



bijaa'

j

palatal - affricate - voiced

Almost like ch except for a slight difference in the shape of the tongue.

jaagé (antelope), jeeh (gum), jii (day)



k'aa'

k'

velar - stop (glottal) - voiceless

The mouth is shaped as for g, but no sound from the vocal cords, and the back of the tongue strikes the roof of the mouth. ik'ah (cooking oil)



kee

k

velar - stop - voiceless

Like the k' except for its "click" caused by its quick strike against the roof of the mouth, and release. ke'iban (moccasin), keghad (root)



íloh

l

alveolar - lateral liquid - voiced

The tip of the tongue is placed behind the upper front teeth on the ridge, and a continual sound comes from the vocal cords. doolé (butterfly)



hí  
l

alveolar - lateral liquid - voiceless

The tongue is as for an l except that its edge is more flat, and air is blown out over the sides of the tongue.  
leezh (dirt), lóg (fish)



mé'  
m

bilabial - nasal - voiced

The lips are closed and the velum is lowered. Air escapes through the nasal cavity as the sound is made by the vocal cords. magashi (cow)



nadá'  
n

alveolar - nasal - voiced

Same as m except that the lips are not closed, and the tip of the tongue is at the ridge behind the teeth.  
nalbiil (car), nagonkaadi (war)



sis  
s

alveolar - fricative - voiceless

Air comes out from the sides of the tongue through a narrow space between the tip of the tongue and the upper teeth. sáan (old woman), sohi (wickiup poles)



shash  
sh

palatal - fricative - voiceless

The back of the tongue is raised to almost touch the roof of the mouth, and air escapes between them.



shoh (frost), shíí (me)

t'iis (cottonwood tree)

t'

alveolar - stop (glottal) - voiceless

The tip of the tongue strikes the ridge behind the upper teeth while the breath is held.

bit'aa' (its leaves), bit'oh (its nest)

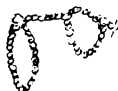


tús  
t

alveolar - stop - voiceless

The tip of the tongue presses firmly against the ridge behind the teeth.

tih (ice), tazhik'áné (chicken)



t'ool

t'

palatal - lateral liquid (glottal)-voiceless

The flattened tongue strikes the roof of the mouth.

The breath is held.

t'iish (snake), t'aakał (camp dress), t'oh (grass)



godilthi'

tʃ palatal - lateral liquid - voiceless

The same as for tʃ' except that the breath is not held.

náyikthiish (cutting hay), ténálthi' (swimming)



ts'aaʃ

ts' alveolar - affricate (glottal) - voiceless

The very tip of the tongue strikes the ridge behind the upper teeth, then is quickly released to allow the air to escape as for s. The breath is held.

táts'aa' (burden basket), its'in (bone)



tséé

ts alveolar - affricate - voiceless

The same as ts' except that the breath is not held.

tsi'hón (box), tsííg (coals), tsi'aaʃ (pillow)



gową

w bilabial - glide - voiced

With the lips rounded, air flows out. Vocal cords are operating.

woo' (teeth), wą'yú (up over there)



yoo'

y palatal - glide - voiced

With the tongue lowered, air flows out through the back of the mouth. Vocal cords are operating.

yáá (sky), yiyąą (he is eating it)



zas

z alveolar - fricative - voiced

The same as s, but voiced.

izee' (medicine), iza'á (bridle)



zhááli

zh palatal - fricative - voiced

The same as sh, but voiced.

nzhq (pretty), shizhaazhé (my child)

Shash Bito'

Nilchi' biyi'yú

Tú sikáni ch'ini'iyyúgo

Dénzhónégo ádat'ij.

Nadich'ihgee, túhí da'ilké' yúwehéyú onádilk'ot

Ła' hadago,

Ła'híí hayaago,

Ła'híí ildí'gé', yúwoyúgo onádilk'ot.

Bear Lake

Within the pine forest

If you should look at the lake

The waves are beautiful.

When the wind blows the waves travel in  
every direction,

Some to the West,

Some to the East,

And some to the North.

Mary Ann Tessay

## Apache 'Handling' Verbs

Ellen Danford

The Apache Language has two types of verbs. There are non-handling verb stems and handling verb stems. The following are examples of verb stems that are different from a handling verb.

Gídí hish'íí'. I see a cat.

The stem of this verb is -'íí' (see)

Naltsoos hasht'íí'. I want a book.

The stem of this verb is -t'íí' (want)

Handling verbs are those which are used in speaking about handling objects. They include picking up, putting down, getting, giving, receiving and so forth.

The Apache Language does not just say "give it to me". We are very specific about handling objects. The language always has to give the information relating to the object, its characteristics or qualities. The Apache has many words to express the handling of an object. We classify articles as to their size, shape, texture, number, and what they consist of. All this is done by the stem of the verb.

The stem shows what kind of object is being handled, and it also shows the tense. Sometimes a prefix also shows something about the mode.

There are eleven different types of handling verbs. Three of them refer to plural objects: -jáh, -díí, -né'. The others refer to singular objects: -'aah, -tíh, -kaah, -léé, -teeh, -tsóós, -tkeeh, and -tsoo'.

In this paper, I will discuss just the handling verbs in the present tense and the singular form.

The table on the next page shows eight different handling verbs in the present tense and the singular form. The information included in this table is the following: The kind of object being handled; Singular present tense stem; An example for each stem.

Kind of object being handled	Singular Present tense stem	Example
A bulky object as: rock, hat, purse, etc.	-’aah	Ch’ah ndāh nādish’aah. I am getting the hat for you.
A slender stiff object as: pencil, stick, brush, pole, etc.	-tɪh	Kɪh beha’igɛsɛ ndāh nādishtɪh. I am getting the house key for you.
Something in an open container, something on a platter, etc.	-kaah	Túhɪh’ ɪa’ ndāh nādishkaah. I am getting coffee for you.
A slender, flexible object as: rope, tire chain, etc.	-lée	Tɪ’ool ɪa’ ndāh nādishlée. I am getting the rope for you.
Something that is alive such as: dog, cat, baby, etc.	-teen	Gídɪ ndāh nādishteen. I am getting the cat for you.
A flat, flexible object as: blanket, paper, towel, etc.	-tsóos	Ch’ig ndāh nādishtsóos. I am getting the blanket for you.
A mushy matter as: mud, lard, mashed beans, etc.	-tlee	Ik’ah ɪa’ ndāh nādishtlee. I am getting the lard for you.
A non-compact matter as: cotton, hay, yarn, etc.	-tsoo’	Ich’ogha’á ɪa’ ndāh nādistsoo’. I am getting some cotton for you.



## Apache Tense System

Toni Antonio

Tense (time) can be indicated several different ways in the Apache Language: by the stem of the verb, or by *ni'* (past) or *doleeł* (future) following the verb, or by such words as *alk'iná'* (past, already), *k'adii* (now), *k'adzhá* (later), *adaana'* (yesterday), *díjii* (today) or *iskaa* (tomorrow).

There are also verb prefixes which indicate mode, which is an aspect of time, such as: *-ná-* (again and again), *-di-* or *-d-* (future).

Here is an example of verb stems which indicate tense in the verb 'to make, or do': *-laa* (past), *-le'* (present), *-líi* (future).

1. Shimaa tsígist'íí áyílaa. (Past)  
My mother made tortillas.
2. Shimaa tsígist'íí áyile'. (Present)  
My mother is making tortillas.
3. Shimaa tsígist'íí áyidoliil. (Future)  
My mother will make tortillas.

Here is an example of how *ni'* and *doleeł* are used:

1. Naltsoos dayózhíí ni'. (Past)  
They read the book.
2. Naltsoos dayózhíí. (Present)  
They are reading the book.
3. Naltsoos dayózhíí doleeł. (Future)  
They will read the book.

### Questions

A question in Apache which can be answered by 'yes' or 'no' is expressed by *Ya'* at the beginning and *née* at the end, or more often by just *née* at the end.

1. Ya' Bob la'íí Joe akú da'iyáá' née? (Past)  
Did Bob and Joe eat here?
2. Ya' Bob la'íí Joe akú da'iyaa' née? (Present)  
Are Bob and Joe eating here?
3. Ya' Bob la'íí Joe akú da'iyaa' doleeł née? (Future)  
Will Bob and Joe eat here?

Any of these could be spoken without *Ya'*. Notice that in 1 and 2 the only difference is the stem tone.

## More About the Language

It is true that the Apache Language has many long words, but often one word in Apache can be a whole sentence in English. For example:

gánádabíłdishdii-I say it like that to them over and  
gá ná da bíł dish dii<sup>over</sup>.  
like over plural to mode-I say  
that and over them

If -yúgo is added after the stem-gánádabíłdishdiiyúgo it means 'if I say it like that to them over and over...'

As in all languages, there are differences in the way Apache is spoken, which come from ancestors. One example is the many verb stems which begin with d in one dialect and n in another as: -dii/-nii (say), -daa/-naa (alive, live). Some non-verbs have this difference also as: yúde'/yúne' (in it), -ná'/-dá' (and then), and ndee/nnee (Apaches, people).

The problem is how to write this difference. n with a line under it (n) can indicate that it may be sounded as either d or n. Another way of indicating the difference may be discovered in time.

Some words are completely different, but have the same meaning as: hat'íí/nt'é (what), nohwíí/néé (we).

These differences in speech cause problems in writing, but Apaches who learn to read well, find that they can make the necessary changes as they read, to their own way of speaking, or that of their listeners.

Nadá' Leeshbízh, on the next page, was written in 1972 at the Fort Apache Culture Center by members of the Staff. It was printed in the book Keys to Reading and Writing Apache. Lines drawn under the syllables help in sounding out the words. Any Apache speaker can easily learn to read, once the system of sounding out words is mastered.

Faith Hill

Nadâ' Leeshbízh

Da'itsé hagoch'igeed. Tséé nteelí ákúyaa nht'éégo  
nch'ihiniil. Áí biká'zhi' dédizhchaahí nch'ihiniil.

Áíyé' chizh chích'ilbayé lâago biká' nch'ihiniil.  
Chizh aał ninâdenk'âago tsílg siliŭ', áík'ehgo  
tseehí hit'ij nâsdlíŭ'.

Nadâ' bit'aa' bígoltilyé' nadâ' ákúyaa nch'ihijáh.  
La'ihíí bildeego ách'ile'. Hách'it'ijyúgo ikaz  
bích'ijáh. Nadâ' bit'aa' biká' nanáníŭ'.

Tsi ilm'gee hadago nan'aago ách'ile'. Aałgo  
leezh biká' ngoch'ikaah. Tsihi hanách'itihgo o'i'án  
hileehgo ísaa' bighách'í'i'ánihi nch'í'aah yúyaa tú  
lâago och'ihí'aah, áíyé' bida'dit'aah.

Iskaaní bijji ha'idziigo hk'ídach'inil, áígé'  
bídach'ikde'. La'íí sidogo dach'iyaa', la'íí dijíŭzhi  
bigha bídach'ilgish. T'ah sidogná' shá'yú nídziig,  
na'ik'a' biká'zhi'. Táagi jijyú shá'yú náts'inízi'go  
náhasgahzhi'.

Náhasgaayé' izis bee ilch'i' nch'ijáh, dagohí  
ísaa' bee ilch'i' nch'i'aah.

Áí dahagee bé'ists'óz bił ch'ilbéézh. La'íí  
its'in bił ch'ilbéézh. Its'ig aldó' bił likaa'.

## Barbecued Corn

First they would dig a hole. They would carefully lay flat rocks in there. On top of these they put medium-sized rocks.

Then they put in lots of oak firewood. When the wood was burned completely down to coals the rocks could be seen again.

The corn husks were spread on and then the corn was put in. Some of it had some husks left on. If they wanted to they put in some sugar cane stalks. They covered it all with more corn husks.

In the middle they set up a pole. When all this was done they covered it with earth. They pulled out the pole, and in the hole that was left they put a bucket with the bottom out, and poured in lots of water, then they covered it over.

The next day they dug up the corn and spread it out, then husked it. Some they would eat while it was hot, some they would shell to make dried corn. While it was still hot they spread it in the sun on a cloth. For three days they would leave it spread in the sun, until it was dry. Then they would gather it up and put it into bags or cans.

They would sometimes boil it with beans. Some they would boil with soup bones. It is good boiled with gristle.