

Pronunciation Guide

Woodland Cree translation and Standard Roman Orthography (SRO) Y-Dialect by Bill and Emily Sewepagaham of the Little Red River Cree Nation

Woodland Cree Y-Dialect is a dentalized language with the letter K sounding like an unvoiced G or a soft K sound. There is no puff air behind the consonant sound.

The letter T is like an unvoiced D. Move the tongue back so that it connects with the alveolar ridge and do not allow a puff of air to follow the sound.

The letter P is like an unvoiced B. There is no aspiration or puff of air following the sound.

The letter H is pronounced with a strong breath, like the English word “hay.” In the IPA transliteration, the H is noted; in the phonetic translation, a double “hh” is used to denote pronunciation of the H.

The letter I sounds like the English “i” in “fit,” never as in English “eat.” This is the most common vowel mistake singers make when reading the SRO.

Capital letters or bolded syllables as marked below indicate stressed syllables. If there is no stress indicated, all syllables are equal.

The IPA transliteration is written below the Cree words, the phonetic illustration below the IPA, and the English translation at the end of each group.

For more information on Standard Roman Orthography, visit this

link: https://algonquianlanguages.ca/media/How_To_Spell_It_In_Cree-Standard_Orthography-Plains-Cree.pdf

sîkwahki translates as “in the spring” in Woodland Cree Y-Dialect. It is pronounced [si-kwʌh-kɪh] or “see-kwuhh-kih.”

sîkwahki

si-kwʌh-kɪh

SEE-kwuhh-kih

In the spring,

ayiwâk ta mîyonâkwan askîy

ʌj-I-wʌk tʌ mî-jo-nʌ-kwʌn ʌ-ski

uh-yih-wuhk tuh MEE-joh-NUH-kwun uh-SKEE

The earth will be more beautiful.

ta mîyonâkwan askîy sîkwahki

tʌ mî-jo-nʌ-kwʌn ʌ-ski si-kwʌh-kɪh

tuh mee-yoh-nuh-kwuhn uh-skee see-kwuhh-kih

The earth will be beautiful in the spring.

ta sakipikaw

tʌ sʌ-kɪ-pɪ-kʌw

tuh SUH-kih-pih-kuhoo

The leaves will come out.

sîpîya ta pimcowanwah

si-pi-jʌ tʌ pɪm-tʃo-wʌn-wʌh

see-pee-yuh tuh pihm-choh-wuhn-wuhh

The rivers will flow.

kinwîs ta kîsikaw sîkwahki

kɪn-wis tʌ ki-sɪ-kʌw si-kwʌh-kɪh

kihn-WEES tuh KEE-sih-kuhoo SEE-kwuhh-kih

The days will be longer in the spring.

pîwiysak ta takopîyâwak

pi-wʌ:i-sʌk tʌ tʌ-ko-pi-jʌ:u-wʌk

pee-wuh-see-suhk tuh tuh-koh-PEE-juhoo-wuhk

The birds will fly back.

piskîsak ta nihtawikowak

pɪs-ki-sʌk tʌ nɪh-tʌ-wɪ-ko-wʌk

pihs-kee-suhk tuh nihh-tuh-wih-ko-wuhk

Baby animals will be born.