

Mi'kmaw Language Cards

Lesson plan prepared by Aiden Gillis, Indigenous Arts Programmer, at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.

Suggested Grade/Age Levels

- Grade 1-12, adult assistance for younger grades may be necessary
- Adults

Introduction

This activity is based on the artwork, “*Untitled [Moose with Birds]*,” by Norval Morrisseau, where the artist signs his Anishinaabe name Copper Thunderbird in Cree syllabics



Norval Morrisseau
Untitled [Moose with Birds], c. 1975.
Acrylic on canvas. 92.2 x 156.0 cm. Gift
of the Estate of Faye Settler, Upstairs
Gallery, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 2005.

Set Up:

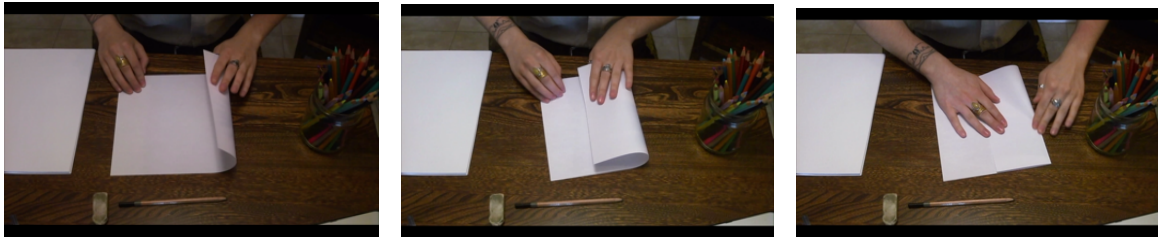
- Large flat surface area
- Materials near by

Materials:

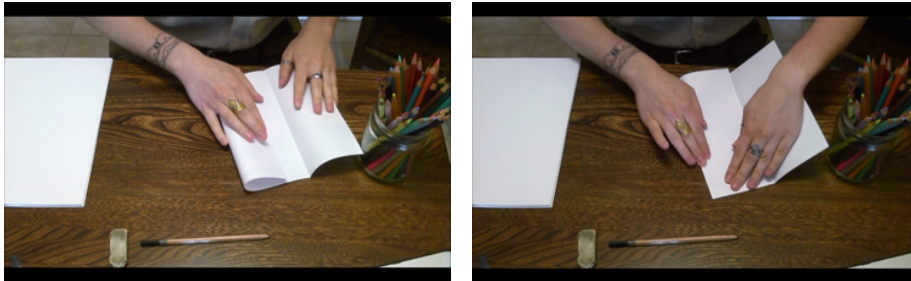
- colour pencils or crayons
- 8.5 x 11-inch paper

Process:

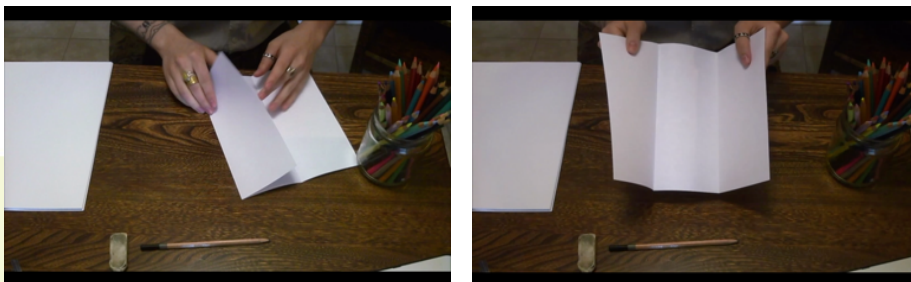
To begin, we're going to create 6 cards per sheet of paper, without using scissors.



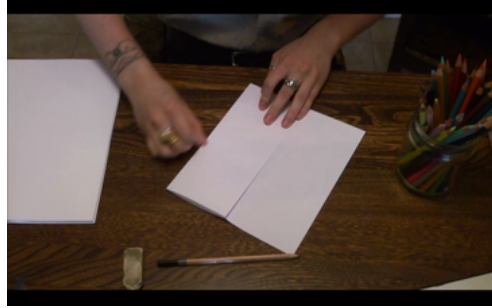
1. Fold one side of the paper, so that the top portion covers half of what you see on the bottom portion.



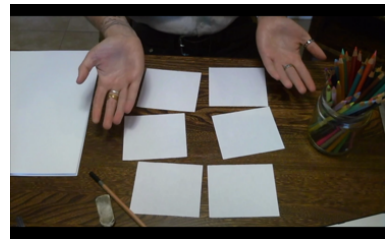
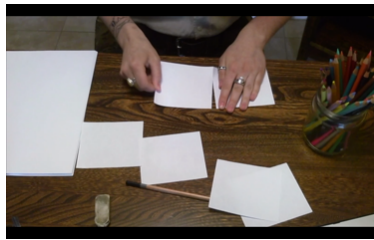
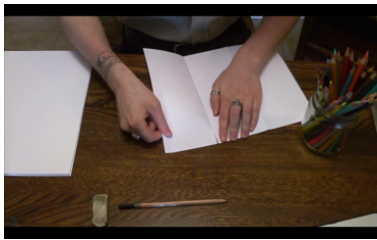
2. Put the opposite end of the sheet into your first crease and fold.



3. Open your paper to reveal 3 sections.



4. Fold both creases the opposite way and flatten them against the table. Now, we are forming our “cut-lines”. Open your paper, flip it over and crease the paper in the opposite direction. The more you do this, the weaker the fibres of the paper will become, creating a smoother rip once we separate the paper.



5. Now, we tear the panels apart. Lay your paper flat on the table. With one palm resting on the page, place your index finger next to the start of the cut line, and use your dominant hand to slowly pull the paper away. Reposition your hands further down the paper, if necessary, to complete the cut.
6. Now that you have 3 long pieces of paper, we're going to fold each of them in half and repeat step 4 to separate each one into 2 pieces, giving us a total of 6.

Now that we have 6 cards, let's decorate them.



7. Start by writing the Mi'kmaw word.

8. If you're not sure which words to begin with, start with categories such as colours, family members, animals, objects, and basic sentences to ask for what you need and how you feel.
(see the Resources section at the bottom for Mi'kmaw vocabulary)
9. Beneath the Mi'kmaw word, write how you would pronounce it based on how it sounds. There are Mi'kmaw language apps you can download to hear how a word is pronounced.
(see the Resources section at the bottom)
10. Draw a picture that describes your word. While you're drawing, try saying the word repetitively. This will help you remember the meaning.
11. On the opposite side of the card, write the word in English with small light letters in case you forget the meaning.

I've created cards for words to describe Morrisseau's painting, such as:

- a. Tiam (dee-awm) (Moose)
- b. Jipji'j (jib-jeej) (bird)
- c. Kewisin (Geh-we-sin) (I am hungry)
- d. Wuloqataln (wuh-low-gho-daln) (I am having dinner)
- e. Watapte'k (wa-dap-deg) (yellow)
- f. Mekwe'k (meg-wey-g) (red)
- g. Stoqnamu'k (stoh-hun-na-moog) (Green)
- h. Musqnamu'k (Moose-gwa-nah-moog) (blue)
- i. Nipi'k (nih-pee-g) leaves

Resources:

Mi'kmaw Language Apps:

L'nui'suti and Tal-Tluen

Mi'kmaw Language Hashtags:

#Lnuisi; #SpeakMikmaq

Mi'kmaw Vocabulary Websites:

- <https://mikmaqonline.org/>
- <http://firstnationhelp.com/ali/vocabulary.php>
- <http://www.jilaptoq.ca/en/posters.html>

Paper Folding:

<https://www.wikihow.com/Fold-a-Paper-Into-Thirds#Using-the-.22Eyeball.22-Method>

Paper Cutting:

<https://www.wikihow.com/Cut-Paper-Without-Using-Scissors>