



Ojibwemotaadiwag Anishinaabewakiing.

They speak Ojibwe to each other in Indian Country.

Zaaga'iganing, ingiw ikwewag ojibwemotaadiwag. Apane wiindamaadiwag gegoo mii dash geget baapiwaad.
Gii-niibing, gii-mawadishiwewag gii-mawinzowaad. Ingii-tebitawaag ingiw ikwewag.
“Mino-giizhigad noongom, baapiwaad. Ikwewag ozegi'aawaan iniw makwan. Wii-animinizhimowag,” gii-ikido, nimaamaa.
Mii dash gii-kichi-baapiyaang gaye. Gichi-niibowa ningii-mawinzomin. Ani-niibing, niwii-mawinz.
Mawinzodaa! Mawadishiwedaa! Baapidaa! Niibin.

(At the lake, those women talk Ojibwe to each other. All the time they tell each other something and then certainly they laugh. When it was summer, they visited when they picked berries. I heard those women from a distance.
“It is a good day now, when they laugh. The women are scaring the bears. They will run away scared,” said my mother. And then we had a big laugh too. We picked a whole lot of berries. As summer begins, I want to pick berries.
Let's all pick berries! Let's all visit! Let's all laugh! It is summer.)

Bezhig—1

Double vowel system of writing Ojibwemowin.
—Long vowels: AA, E, II, OO
Waabooz—as in father
Miigwech—as in jay
Aaniin—as in seen
Mooz—as in moon

—Short Vowels: A, I, O
Dash—as in about
Ingiw—as in tin
Niizho—as in only

—A glottal stop is a voiceless nasal sound as in A'aw.

—Respectfully enlist an elder for help in pronunciation and dialect differences.

OJIBWEMOWIN
(Ojibwe Language)

VAI—S/he feeling action.
Use any VAI: Verbs, Animate, Intransitive

Root: Niimi.—S/he dances.
Niniim.—I dance.
Giniim.—You dance.
Niniimimin.—We dance.
Giniimimin.—We all dance.
Giniimim.—You all dance.
Niimiwag.—They dance.
Niimin!—Dance! (to one) Daga—Please
Niimig!—You (plural) dance! Gaawiin—No
Niimidaa!—Let's all dance! Eya'—Yes
Gaawiin niimisii.—No, s/he is not dancing.
Gaawiin niimisiwag.—No, they are not dancing.

Niizh—2

Circle the 10 underlined Ojibwe words in the letter maze. (Translations below)

A. Daga, wewebanaabiidaa! Niwii-naadin i'iw jiimaan.

B. Noongom gaawiin noodinzinoon. Wii-kimiwan ina?

C. Niwii-waabamaag ogaawag. Indayaan miijimikanijigan

D. Aandi waa-wewebanaabiyaang? Izhaadaa akeyaa giowedinong!

E. Nizaagitoon zaaga'igan. Niwii-kanawendaan apanee.

F. Niwewebanaabii. Nimiijin. Nibaa.

G. Akawe, daga bagidin asemaa.

H. Mino-giizhigad, izhaayaan imaa zaaga'iganing.

J	W	N	E	A							
I	I	O	O	K	O						
I	I	O	J	E	M	G					
M	K	D	I	Y	W	O	A				
A	I	Z	H	A	A	D	A	A			
A	M	T	N	A	Y	E	D	K	W		
N	I	M	I	I	J	I	N	W	A	A	
P	W	E	O	W	B	E	N	G	A	N	G
A	A	S	E	M	A	A	Z	A	N	S	E
G	N	I	W	I	I	N	A	A	D	I	N
J	I	M	S	H	T	O	D	K	I	O	M

Niswi—3

IKIDOWIN
ODAMINOWIN
(word play)

Down:
1. always
2. a lot
7. where
8. also

Across:
3. women
4. thustly, then
5. let's all laugh
6. something
9. walleyes

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

minaan
(blueberries)

Niiwin—4

VAI B-form—When, if or While...
Use suffixes. Also in W-type questions!

Nagamo.—S/he sings. Nagamowin—Song
Nagamoyaan.—When/if I sing.
Nagamoyan.—When/if you sing.
Nagamod.—When/if s/he sing.
Nagamoyang.—When/if we sing.
Nagamoyeg.—When/if you all sing.
Nagamowaad.—When/if they sing.
Nagamod, nimbizindawaa.—
If s/he sings, I listen to him/her.
Aandi negamowaad?—
Where are they singing?
Niimi'idiwin!—
Dance (powwow)
Mii'iw.—That's all.

1. Giminwendam na nagamo ____?
(when I)
2. Aaniin apii waa-nagamo ____ iwidi
waabang? (S/he).

3. Zaaga'inganing bagizo ____ giminawaanigozig. (if you all)
4. Aandi waa-wiisini ____? Nimbakade.
5. Megwaayaak mawinzo ____, indizhaa. (if they)

Translations:

Niizh—2 A. Please, let's all go fishing with a line! I will get that boat. B. Today is it not windy. Will it rain? C. I want to see walleyes. I have bait. D. Where will we line fish? Let's go north. E. I love the lake. I want to always take care of it. F. I line fish. I eat it. I sleep. G. First, please put down tobacco. H. It is a good day when I go there to the lake.

Niswi—3 Down: 1. apane 2. niibowa 7. aandi 8. gaye Across: 3. ikwewag 4. mii 5. baapidaa 6. gegoo 9. ogaawag

Niiwin-4 1. Are you happy when I sing? (yaan) 2. When will she sing over there tomorrow? (-d) 3. When you all swim in the lake, you all are happy. (-yan) 4. Where will you eat? I am hungry. (-yeg) 5. When they pick berries in the woods, I go. (-yeg)

There are various Ojibwe dialects; check for correct usage in your area. The grammar patterns may help a beginner voice inanimate and animate nouns and verbs correctly, as well as create questions and negate statements. Note that the English translation will lose its natural flow as in any world language translation. This may be reproduced for classroom use only. All other uses by author's written permission. Some spellings and translations from The Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe by John D. Nichols and Earl Nyholm. All inquiries can be made to **MAZINA'IGAN**, P.O. Box 9, Odanah, WI 54861 or email lynn@glifwc.org.

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