Pum Opunvkv
Pun Yvhiketv
Pun Fulletv

◀ ▶ ◀ ▶ ◀ ▶ ◀ ▶

Our Language
Our Songs
Our Ways

Note: This is a draft of a textbook. Some parts are still incomplete. We would be grateful for any comments. -Jack Martin, Margaret Mauldin, Gloria McCarty, 2003.

Acknowledgments / Mvtô!

The Creek (Muskogee) language

_____

Vocabulary

estŏnkô how are you?
estŏnkis os I'm fine
mvtô thank you
hēr's ci hello

ehẹ yes
mŏnks, mŏnko no
enkâ okay
hvŏ okay (in answer to a request)

_____

Creek (or Muskogee, Muscogee) is a living language spoken in Oklahoma and Florida. It was formerly spoken by a number of **etvlwv** or small tribes in what is now Alabama and Georgia. Some groups speaking Creek migrated to Florida in the 1700's, where they became known as Seminoles. In the 1830's, most Creeks and Seminoles were forced to move to Indian Territory. Today, Creek is spoken in three locations:

> •the Muscogee (Creek) Nation of Oklahoma
> •the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
> •the Seminole Tribe of Florida

Historically, the capital of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation was Okmulgee (Creek **Ŏkmulke**). The old tribal headquarters is now the Creek Council House Museum. The new tribal headquarters in Okmulgee was built in the 1970's. Wewoka (Creek **Ue-wohkv** or "barking water") is the capital of the Seminole Nation. Many place names (Tulsa, Tallahassee, Wetumka, Eufaula, Weleetka, Sasakwa, Konawa) in Oklahoma, Florida, Alabama, and Georgia are Creek.

Some people prefer the term 'Creek', and some prefer the term 'Muskogee'. The word in Creek is **Maskoke**. It has no other meaning. The term 'Creek' is slightly broader and is used here to include dialects spoken by Seminoles.

Creek belongs to a family of languages called Muskogean:

```
                              Muskogean


   Choctaw  Chickasaw   Alabama  Koasati   Hitchiti-Mikasuki  Apalachee  Creek
```
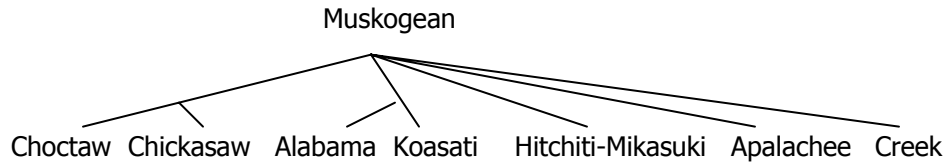
The Muskogean family once stretched from Louisiana to Georgia and is the most important language family in the South. Much of eastern Oklahoma (four of the Five Civilized Tribes) is Muskogean territory. The languages are very different from each other--a little more different than Spanish and French. Because of this, it's thought that the language ancestral to the modern languages was spoken about 3,000 years ago.

Missionaries began extensive work on Creek in Indian Territory in the 1800's. They taught students how to read and write, and with them developed a practical alphabet based in part on the English alphabet. Creek speakers published many laws and other materials before Oklahoma statehood.

When Oklahoma became a state, Creek ceased to have the same importance it once did. Creek and Seminole lands in Indian Territory were parceled out to non-Creeks, so that Creek speakers no longer formed a contiguous group. As a result, Creek is an endangered language today. Most people who speak Creek are grandparents or great-grandparents. Few children are learning the language in schools.

The language you are learning in this textbook is an ancient language. The opportunity you have to hear it and speak it is rare. We hope you have respect for the language and for those who wish to pass it on to others.

The alphabet

_____

Vocabulary

cokv book, newspaper, paper, letter
eshoccickv pen, pencil
vhvŏke door

vhvŏkuce window
mvhayv teacher
cokv-hēcv student
cvhŏcefkv my name

_____

The Creek alphabet has been in use since 1853. We have added a few extra marks above and below vowels to help people learning the language. These are not used elsewhere.

a   **ayŏ** hawk. Long as in *father*.
            ăkketv to bite. Short as in *box*. (Only found before *h* and *k*.)

c   **cesse** mouse. As in *such*.

e   **ēckŏ** roasted corn. Long as in *feed*.
            efv dog. Short as in *hit*.

f   **fo** bee. As in *foot*.

h   **halŏ** tin can. As in *heel*.

i   **ehiwv** his wife. As in *hey*.
            Lētkis. I'm running. As in *bed*. (at the ends of sentences)

k   **kapv** coat. As in *skin*.

l   **lucv** turtle. As in *low*.

m   **meskē** summer. As in *mouse*.

n   **nerē** night. As *not*.

o   **ofv** inside. Long as in *code*.
            ŏpv owl. Short as *hotel*.

p   **penwv** turkey. As in *spin*.

r   **r̲vrŏ** fish. Not found in English: Say **l**, but force air over tongue.

s   **s̲vmpv** basket. As in _s̲ound_.

t   **t̲vffŏ** grasshopper. As in _st̲op_.

u   **su̲tv** sky. Short as in _pu̲t_.

v   **v̲ce** corn. Short as in _sofa̲_.

w   **w̲akv** cow. As in _w̲ait_.

y   **y̲vnvsv** buffalo. As in _y̲et_.

Some vowels may be combined:

ae   **A̲e̲ha!** an exclamation.
ie   **i̲e̲metv** to hand to.
vŏ   **vhv̲ŏ̲ke** door.
eu   **cēme̲u̲** you, too.
ue   **u̲e̲wv** water.

For English speakers, the difficult letters to remember are **c**, **i**, **r**, and **v**.

Creek makes a distinction between short and long vowels. Long vowels are held longer. Listen carefully to the difference between the following:

	Short	Long
	v, ă	**a**
	e	**ē**
	u, ŏ	**o**

	Short	Long
Ex.	**fv̲kv** vine, **fă̲kke** soil	**fa̲kv** hunting
	e̲cke mother	**ē̲ckŏ** roasted corn
	cu̲kŏ house, **cŏ̲kwv** mouth	**co̲kv** book

The short vowels **ă** and **ŏ** are variants of **v** and **u**. They have a little more of the quality of **a** and **o**, but are short. Outside this course, some people spell them with **v** and **u**, and some people spell them with **a** and **o**.

Vowels and diphthongs are sometimes nasal. These are written **ą, ǫ, ų, ę̄, v̨,** etc.

Creek has tone: **nake** thing vs. **nâke** what.

Consonants can be doubled, and then are held longer:

eṯŏ tree   **ceṯṯŏ** snake
hvc̱e tail   **hvc̱c̱e** stream

_____

Exercises

1   Have your **mvhayv** say the following words several times and try to hear whether she's saying the (a) word, the (b) word, or the (c) word:

a **lăksv** hoof   b **laksv** liar

a **fvkv** vine   b **fakv** hunting

a **hvce** tail   b **hvcce** river   c **hacē** drunk

a **ele** his/her foot   b **elē** dead

a **ehe** her husband   b **ehe̜** yes

a **nake** thing   b **nâke** what

a **hēces** he's looking at it b **hêces** he sees it

Pair up and practice saying each until your partner can tell which you're saying.

2 **V** or **a**? Listen to the following words as they are read and try to figure out whether the sound is a **v** (short) or **a** (held long):

a **t__ffo** grasshopper   h **__t__me** car
b **k__fe** coffee   i **__yo** hawk
c **luc__** turtle   j **y__n__s__** buffalo
d **cvpuc__** my grandfather   k **s__t__** apple
e **k__pv** coat   l **p__k__n__** peach
f **w__kv** cow   m **h__lp__t__** alligator
g **ef__** dog

3 **E** or **ē**? Do the same for **e** (short) and **ē** (held long):

a **__cŏ** deer   c **__kvnv** land
b **f__ke** heart   d **__kv** his/her head

e   **__wvnwv** his/her sister
f   **wakv-p__s__** milk
g   **vp__ssē** fat
h   **m__sk__** summer

4   Use the right diphthong:

a   **hŏp__wv** child
b   **vh__kuce** window
c   **l__kē** deep

More on the alphabet

_____

Vocabulary

herē good   **pǒkkǒ** ball
here-mahē very good   **ǒhliketv** chair
hvse-eskērkv clock   **hiyôwat** now
mvhakv-cukǒ school   **Cehecarēs** I'll see you

_____

In the nineteenth century, the Creek First Reader introduced the alphabet by combining letters into two- and three-letter syllables. We use the same method here:

Two-letter syllables:

ca	ce	ci	co	cu	cv
fa	fe	fi	fo	fu	fv
ha	he	hi	ho	hu	hv
ka	ke	ki	ko	ku	kv
la	le	li	lo	lu	lv
ma	me	mi	mo	mu	mv
na	ne	ni	no	nu	nv
pa	pe	pi	po	pu	pv
ra	re	ri	ro	ru	rv
sa	se	si	so	su	sv
ta	te	ti	to	tu	tv
wa	we	wi	wo	wu	wv
ya	ye	yi	yo	yu	yv

af	ef	if	of	uf	vf
ak	ek	ik	ok	uk	vk
al	el	il	ol	ul	vl
am	em	im	om	um	vm
an	en	in	on	un	vn
ap	ep	ip	op	up	vp
as	es	is	os	us	vs
at	et	it	ot	ut	vt

Three-letter syllables:

sak	sek	sik	sok	suk	svk
lak	lek	lik	lok	luk	lvk
mas	mes	mis	mos	mus	mvs
mat	met	mit	mot	mut	mvt
hak	hek	hik	hok	huk	hvk
has	hes	his	hos	hus	hvs
mak	mek	mik	mok	muk	mvk
man	men	min	mon	mun	mvn
hal	hel	hil	hol	hul	hvl
nak	nek	nik	nok	nuk	nvk
fas	fes	fis	fos	fus	fvs
cas	ces	cis	cos	cus	cvs
spa	spe	spi	spo	spu	spv
sla	sle	sli	slo	slu	slv
yek	yes	yet	yec	yun	yvn
yok	cem	fen	kut	mah	con
hon	pun	lof	yat	kat	res
ska	hvl	hvt	hom	cet	lof
wol	wik	sap	net	pel	cak
wak	ket	fvt	yen	sko	poh
rak	ken	pok	lvf	hop	tat
cef	cof	rah	mvt	cuf	cvf

Four- and five-letter syllables:

wvnh   cvmh   kvnks

_____

Exercises

1   Real language: Try reading the following:

Es·tŏn·kô!
Hŏm·păks cē!
Mv·tô!
Es·te mas·ko·ke em pu·nv·kv kēr·ri·yēs.

2   Try reading the following illustrations from the Creek First Reader:

Cuho. CUKO.	*Efv.* EFV.	*Eco.* ECO.
Fuco. FUCO.	*Pvlvknv.* PVLVKNV.	*Enhe.* ENKE.
Es Cvpa yeckv. ES CVPA YECKV.	*Es cvllv.* ES CVLLV.	*Oh liketv.* OH LIKETV.

Heyv eshoccickvt ôs 'This is a book', Eshoccickvt ôwv? 'Is that a book?'

_____

Vocabulary

heyv, yv this
mv that
vnhesse my friend
'skotkv scissors

hŏnvnwv male, man
hŏktē female, woman
pŏkkēccv ball player

_____

The words **heyv** and **mv** mean 'this' and 'that'. In 'be' sentences ('be', 'am', 'is', 'are'), the word meaning 'be' comes at the end. A **-t** can appear on both noun phrases, but the first is often dropped:

Noun phrase (-t)	Noun phrase -t	ôs
Heyv(t)	**cokvt**	**ôs.**
this-T	book-T	is
'This is a book.'		
Mv(t)	**eshoccickvt**	**ôs.**
that-T	pen-T	is
'That is a pen.'		

When you use **-t** and say **Heyvt̲ cokvt ôs**, it means 'This is a book (as opposed to everything else)'.

Questions end in **-v**:

> **Heyv cokvt ôs.** This is a book.
> **Heyv cokvt ôwv?** Is this a book?
>
> **Mv eshoccickvt ôs.** That is a pen.
> **Mv eshoccickvt ôwv?** Is that a pen?

Pronouns ('it', 'he', etc.) can be left out in Creek: the following are complete sentences:

> **Cokvt ôwv?**   Is [it] a book?
> **Ehẹ, cokvt ôs.**   Yes, [it] is a book.

Ŏh-ŏnvkv (reading)

Heyv hvse-eskērkvt ôs.
Pŏkkŏt ôwv?
Mŏnks, hvse-eskērkvt ôs.

Heyv vnhesset ôs. Hŏktēt ôs.
Heyv hŏktē vnhesset ôs.
Hŏnvnwvt ôwv?
Mŏnks, hŏktēt ôs.

_____

Exercises

1   Introduce yourself and someone else along the following lines:

     Mary cvhŏcefkvt ôs.   My name is Mary.
     Yv vnhesset ôs.   This is my friend.
     Cokv-hēcvt ôs.   [He/She] is a student.
     Hŏnvnwvt ôs.   [He] is a man.

2   Answer with *ehę*:
Ex.   Cokvt ôwv?   <u>Ehę, cokvt ôs.</u>

     Mv hŏktēt ôwv?   _____
     Mv vnhesset ôwv?   _____
     Mv hŏnvnwvt ôwv?   _____
     Vnhesse pŏkkēccvt ôwv?   _____
     Mary hŏktēt ôwv?   _____

     Give the question corresponding to the answer:

Ex.   <u>Eshoccickvt ôwv?</u>   Ehę, eshoccickvt ôs.
     _____   Ehę, cokvt ôs.
     _____   Ehę, mvhayvt ôs.
     _____   Ehę, pŏkkŏt ôs.
     _____   Ehę, hŏktēt ôs.

Heyv nâket ôwv? 'What's this?'

_____

Vocabulary

efv dog   **penwv** turkey
pose cat   **sŏkhv** hog
fucŏ duck   **tŏlôse** chicken
răkkŏ horse   **sâsăkwv** goose
wakv cow   **yvpefikv** sheep
cŏwatv goat   **vpuekv** tame animal

_____

'What' in Creek is **nâke**. In 'what' questions and other questions requiring a
long answer, the sentence ends in **-a**:

      Heyv eshoccickvt ôs.   This is a pen.
      Heyv nâket ôwa?   What is this?
      Eshoccickvt ôs.   It's a pen.

      Mv cokvt ôs.   That is a book.
      Mv nâket ôwa?   What is that?
      Cokvt ôs.   It's a book.

Notice that the question word doesn't move in Creek.

There's a short way to say **ôwv** and **ôwa**: just use **te** and **tē**, respectively:

      Heyv eshoccickvt ôwv?   Is this a pen? (long way)
      Hey eshoccickv te?   Is this a pen? (short way)

      Heyv nâket ôwa?   What is this? (long way)
      Heyv nâke tē?   What's this? (short way)

Another small word **tv** is very useful:

      Heyv tv?   What about this?
      Mv tv?   What about that?

Ŏh-ŏnvkv

Heyv nâket ôwa? Wakvt ôwv?
Ehẹ, wakvt ôs.

Vpuekvt ôwv?
Ehẹ, vpuekvt ôs.

Heyv nâket ôwa? Wakvt ôwv?
Mŏnks, hŏnvnwvt ôs.

Heyv tv? Nâke tē?
Tŏlôset ôs.
Ehẹ, tŏlôset ôs. Heyv tŏlôse vpuekvt ôwv?
Ehẹ, vpuekvt ôs.
Heyv vnhesset ôwv? Mŏnks, tŏlôset ôs!
Heyv tŏlôse hŏnvnwvt ôwv? Ehẹ, hŏnvnwvt ôs.

_____

Exercises

1   Which is bigger/biggest?

a	efv	b	fŏcŏ	c	rǎkkŏ
a	yvpefikv	b	penwv	c	pose
a	wakv	b	cŏwatv	c	sâsǎkwv
a	tŏlôse	b	rǎkkŏ	c	pose

2   List all the **fuswv** (birds):

3   List the animals you get **wakv-pesē** (milk) from:

4   List the animals you wouldn't eat:

Heyv cokv catēt ôs 'This book is red', Mv cokv hvtkēt ôwv? 'Is that book white?'

_____

Vocabulary

catē red   **hvtkē** white
hŏlattē blue   **lvstē** black
lanē green, yellow, brown

_____

Heyv 'this' and **mv** 'that' can be used with nouns:

>   **heyv cokv** this book
>   **mv cokv** that book

Sentences like 'This book is red' follow the pattern below:

Noun phrase (**-t**)	Adjective **-t**	**ôs**
Heyv cokv(t)	**catēt**	**ôs.**
this book-T	red-T	is
'This book is red.'		
Mv eshoccickv(t)	**lvstēt**	**ôwv?**
that pen-T	black-T	is?
'Is that pen black?'		

Notice that adjectives end in **-ē** in Creek. You can use **te** here, too:

>   **Mv eshoccickv lvstēt ôwv?**   Is that pen black? (long way)
>   **Mv eshoccickv lvstē te?**   Is that pen black? (short way)

Ŏh-ŏnvkv

Heyv răkkŏ lvstēt ôs. Catē te?
Mŏnks, lvstēt ôs.
Heyv răkkŏt vnhesset ôs.

Heyv tv? Lvstēt ôwv?
Mŏnks, hvtkēt ôs. Yv penwv hvtkēt ôs.

Exercises

1   Which color describes plants?

2   Which colors are opposites?

3   Answer the questions in Creek:

a   Heyv nâke te?

b   Heyv vpuekv hvtkē te?

c   Hŏlattēt ôwv?

4   Answer the **vpŏhkv** (question):

a   Heyv nâket ôwa?

b   Vpuekvt ôwv?

c   Hvtkē te?

Mv cokv lvstē 'that black book'

___

Vocabulary

răkkē big, large   **hŏmē** bitter
cutkē, cutkusē small, little   **hiyē** hot
mŏcvsē new   **kvsvppē** cold
leskē old (of a thing)   **fvmpē** stinky
cvmpē sweet

___

An adjective can be used within a noun phrase to modify a noun:

>**mv cokv lvstē** that black book
>**heyv efv cutkē** this small dog

Notice the placement of the adjective. These noun phrases can then be used in sentences:

Yv(t)		**eshoccickv**	**lvstēt**	**ôwv?**
this-T		pen	black-T	is?

'Is this a black pen?'

Mv eshoccickv	**lvstē(t)**	**răkkēt**	**ôwv?**
that pen	black-T	big-T	is?

'Is that black pen big?'

Be careful not to confuse sentences like **Yv(t) eshoccickv lvstēt ôs** 'This is a black pen' and **Yv eshoccickv(t) lvstēt ôs** 'This pen is black'. The first identifies something as a black pen; the second identifies a pen as black. Often there is a pause after the subject.

Ŏh-ŏnvkv

Heyv vnhesse mŏcvsēt ôs.
Nâket ôwv?
Efvt ôs!
Răkkē te? Mŏnks, cutkēt ôs.
Efv cutkēt ôs.

Heyv tv? Vnhesset ôwv?
Mŏnks. Wakvt ôs.
Yv wakv fvmpēt ôs!

Exercises

1   Connect the opposites!

răkkē	hŏmē
lvstē	hŏnvnwv
kvsvppē	cokv-hēcv
leskē	mv
cvmpē	hvtkē
hŏktē	cutkē
mvhayv	hiyē
yv	mucvsē

2   Add an adjective to modify the noun:
Ex.   mv pose   <u>mv pose cutkē</u>

a   yv cokv   _____
b   mv eshoccickv   _____
c   vnhesse   _____
d   wakv   _____

3   Combine the two questions into one:
Ex.   Cokvt ôwv? Lvstēt ôwv?   <u>Cokv lvstēt ôwv?</u>

a   Poset ôwv? Cutkēt ôwv?   _____
b   Eshoccickvt ôwv? Catēt ôwv?   _____
c   Efvt ôwv? Lanēt ôwv?   _____
d   Sŏkhvt ôwv? Răkkēt ôwv?   _____

Răkke-mahē 'very big'

___

Vocabulary

mvnettē young
vculē old (usually of a male)
hŏktvlē old (of a female)
mahē tall

kŏcŏknē short
sulkē many, a lot, much
nvcŏmē, nvcŏwē few, not many, not much

___

Degree can be shown in adjectives by adding **-mahē** 'very':

vculē old (of a male)   **vcule-mahē** very old
herē good   **here-mahē** very good
cvmpē sweet   **cvmpe-mahē** very sweet

Notice that the vowel at the end of the adjective is short here (**-e**).

Another way to indicate degree is with **ŏrēn** 'really, a lot':

Yv cokv leske-mahēt ôs.   This book is very old.
Yv cokv ŏrēn leskēt ôs.   This book is really old.

___

Exercises

1   Change one part each time to form a new sentence:

a   Yv   cokvt   ôs.
b   _____   _____   _____
c   _____   _____   _____
d   _____   _____   _____
e   _____   _____   _____

2   Express yourself! Use *-mahē* 'very':
Ex.   Yv sŏkhv răkkēt ôs.   Yv sŏkhv răkke-mahēt ôs.

a   Yv eshoccickv leskēt ôs.   _____
b   Vnhesse kŏcŏknēt ôs.   _____
c   Yv mvhayv mvnettē te?   _____
d   Yv ŏhliketv cutkēt ôs.   _____
e   Yv cokv leskēt ôs.   _____
b   Mv cokv catēt leskēt ôs.   _____

Cokv-hēcvt ôwis 'I am a student', Mvhayvt ŏntskv? Are you a teacher?

_____

Vocabulary

vne I	**este-hvtke** white person
cēme you	**este-lvste** black person
ēme he/she	**este-Maskoke** Muskogee, Creek
pome we	**este-Semvnole** Seminole
este person	**ŏmvlkv** all, everything
este-cate Indian	**este-ŏmvlkv** everyone
este-lane Asian	

_____

The pronouns in Creek are:

> **vne** 'I'
> **cēme** 'you'
> **ēme** 'he/she'
> **pome** 'we'

Pronouns are not used much in Creek because verbs include person markers. Pronouns sometimes contract: the expression **Cēme tv?** 'How about you?' is usually shortened to **Centv?**. Instead of **ēme** 'he/she', the word **mv** 'that' is often used.

Here are the different persons for 'be':

> **ôwis** I am
> **ŏntskes** (**ôwetskes**) you are
> **ôs** (**ôwes**) he/she/it is
> **ôwēs** we are
> **ôwatskes** y'all are

Here are some examples:

> **Mvhayvt ôwis.** I am a teacher.
> **Cokv-hēcvt ôwēs.** We are students.
> **Este-Maskoket ôwis.** I am Muskogee.

(Note: usually the same form of the noun is used for singular and plural.)

Here are the question forms of 'be':

ôwiyv? am I?
ŏntskv? are you?
ôwv? is he/she/it?
ôweyv? are we?
ôwatskv? are y'all?

_____

Exercises

1   Take turns reciting the pronouns and different forms of 'be' in class.

2   Change the sentence so that it fits the pronoun in parentheses:
Ex.   Mvhayvt ôwis. (ēme)   <u>Mvhayvt ôs.</u>

a   Cokv-hēcvt ôwēs. (cēme)   _____
b   Este-Semvnolet ôwis. (pome)   _____

3   Answer the questions with _ehẹ_:

a   Mvhayvt ŏntskv?   _____
b   Pokkēccvt ŏntskv?   _____

Heyv cokv tokot ôs 'This is not a book'

_____

Vocabulary

atvme car
perrŏ boat
perrŏ-tvmkv airplane
escunēckv truck
nene road
cukŏ house
kvtŏpŏkv, **kvpŏtŏkv** hat, cap

hŏnnv dress
hvtekpikv pants
kapv coat
'stelepikv shoe(s)
nake thing
nak-ŏmvlkv everything

_____

To say 'not' with a noun, **toko** is used:

      cokv book
      Yv cokvt ôs.   This is a book.
      Yv cokv tokot ôs.   This is not a book.
      Yv cokv tokot ôwv?   Isn't this a book?

Here are the different persons for **toko**:

      Mvhayv tokot ôwis.   I am not a teacher.
      Mvhayv tokot ôwetskes.   You are not a teacher.
      Mvhayv tokot ôs.   He/She is not a teacher.
      Mvhayv tokot ôwēs.   We are not teachers.
      Mvhayv tokot ôwatskes.   Y'all are not teachers.

To say 'also', a suffix **-u** is added to a noun phrase (or **-ŏ** after **v**):

      vne I, me
      cēme you
      mv efv that dog

      vneu me, too
      cēmeu you, too
      mv efvŏ that dog, too

When **-u** is added to a noun phrase, **-t** is never used with it.

Ŏh-ŏnvkv

      Estŏnkô!
      Sammy cvhocefkvt ôs.
      Mvhayvt ôwis.

Yv vnhesset ôs.
Vnhesseu mvhayvt ôs.
Cokv-hēcv tokot ôs.
Pŏkkēccvt ôs.
Vneu pŏkkēccvt ôwis.

Centv? Cēmeu mvhayvt ŏntskv?
Cēmeu pŏkkēccvt ŏntskv?
Este-Maskoket ŏntskv?

_____

Exercises

1   Practice the pattern *Yv cokv tokot ôs* by replacing *cokv* with the following
noun phrases:

a   (atvme)   _____
b   (perrŏ-tvmkv)   _____
c   (efv lvstē)   _____
d   (mv atvme leskē)   _____

2   Use four sentences to describe what you are not:
Ex.   Mvhayv tokot ôwis._____

a   _____
b   _____
c   _____
d   _____

3   Try to get the rest of the class to identify a particular object in the room
by stating what it is not. (For example: *Yv cokv tokot ôs. Ŏhliketvŏ tokot ôs.
Eshoccickvŏ tokot ôs.*)

4   Use *-u* 'also' with the pronoun in parentheses to form a sentence:
Ex.   Cokv-hēcvt ôwis. (vne)   Vneu cokv-hēcvt ôwis._____

a   Cokv-hēcvt ŏntskv? (cēme)   _____
b   Mvhayvt ôwis. (vne)   _____
c   Mvhayvt ŏntskv? (cēme)   _____
d   Pŏkkēccvt ôwis. (vne)   _____
e   Pŏkkēccvt ŏntskv? (cēme)   _____

Vm efv 'my dog', cvcke 'my mother': Possession

_____
Vocabulary

ecke his/her mother   **ekv** his/her head
erke his/her father   **ecŏkwv** his/her mouth
epuse his/her grandmother   **efēke** his/her heart
epuca his/her grandfather   **ele** his/her leg, foot
esăkpv his/her arm   **môwis** but
enke his/her hand

_____

There are two ways to say 'my' in Creek:

     vm efv my dog   **cvcke** my mother
     vm atvme my car   **cvsăkpv** my arm
     vm pose my cat   **cvpuse** my grandmother

For parts of the body and family terms (i.e., nouns indicating relationship), **cv-** is used. For other types of nouns (mostly things that can be transferred), **vm** is used. Here are the complete sets of prefixes:

     vm my   **cv-** my
     cem your   **ce-** your
     em his/her/its/their   **e-** his/her/its/their
     pum our   **pu-** our

Examples:

     vm efv my dog   **cvcke** my mother
     cem efv your dog   **cecke** your mother
     em efv his/her/their dog   **ecke** his/her/their mother
     pum efv our dog   **pucke** our mother

A sound change affects the **vm** set: final **m** is used before vowels and consonants made by closing the lips (**p**, **m**); forms ending in **n** are used before all other consonants:

     vn cukŏ my house
     cen cukŏ your house
     en cukŏ his/her house
     pun cukŏ our house

A possessor may be a full noun phrase. In this case, a form of **em** is used:

> **Bill em efv** Bill's dog
> **Mary en cukŏ** Mary's house
> **cvcke em atvme** my mother's car

Ŏh-ŏnvkv

Justin cvhŏcefkvt ôs.
Cokv-hēcvt ôwis.
Yv vm efvt ôs.
Vm efv lanēt ôs.

Yv vnhesset ôs.
Jenny ehŏcefkvt ôs.
Em efv hvtkēt ôs.
Vnhesse em efv răkkēt ôs.

Yv cvrke em atvmet ôs.
Em atvme cutkusēt ôs.
Môwis, mŏcvsēt ôs.

Yv cvpuse em atvmet ôs.
Cvpuse em atvme leske-mahēt ôs.
Môwis, răkkēt ôs.

Heyv vm atvmet ôs!
Cem atvme tv?
Leskē te? Mŏcvsē te?

_____

Exercises

1   Give the possessed form corresponding to the noun phrase in parentheses:

Ex.	efv (vne)	vm efv
a	erke (cēme)	_____
b	pose (ēme)	_____
c	ekv (vne)	_____
d	enke (cēme)	_____
e	atvme (pome)	_____
f	cokv (cēme)	_____

g	kvtŏpŏkv (vne)	_____
h	hvtekpikv (Bill)	_____
i	cokv (vm mvhayv)	_____

Likepvs 'Have a seat': Commands

___

Vocabulary

letketv to run	**(ǒ)pvnetv** to dance
tasketv to jump	**hǒmpetv** to eat
yvhiketv to sing	**esketv** to drink
liketv to sit down	**mēkkǒ** chief, king
hueretv to stand up	**hǒpuewv** child
wǎkketv to lie down	**tvstvnvke** warrior

___

Just as adjectives have been listed with final **-ē**, verbs are listed in Vocabulary sections with final **-etv**. To use a verb in a sentence, you usually need to find the stem (the part before **-etv**). Simple commands are formed by adding **-vs** to the verb stem:

      letketv to run   stem: **letk-**

      letketv to run   **Letkvs!** Run!
      tasketv to jump   **Taskvs!** Jump!
      yvhiketv to sing   **Yvhikvs!** Sing!

Commands may be made more polite by adding **-ep-**:

      letketv to run   **Letkepvs.** Please run.
      liketv to sit   **Likepvs.** Have a seat.
      nǒcetv to sleep   **Nǒcepvs!** Please go to sleep.

The ending **-vs** is one of several endings you'll see with Creek verbs:

      yvhiketv to sing   stem: **yvhik-**
                                 Yvhikvs! Sing!
                                 Yvhikes. He/She is singing.
                                 Yvhikv? Is he/she singing?

Here, **-vs** indicates a command, **-es** indicates a statement, and **-v** indicates a question.

___

Exercises

Expressing aspect: Grades

Vocabulary

nŏcetv to sleep   **tvmketv** to fly
wvnvyetv to tie   **erkenvkv** preacher
vyetv to go   **tŏpv** bed
ăkketv to bite   **svmpv** basket
fēketv to pay   **uewv** water

Grades are changes in the shape of a verb. Grades indicate aspect (whether an action is ongoing, completed, repeated, etc.). There are four grades in Creek:

    wvnvyetv to tie   stem: **wvnvy**-

    zero grade   **wvnvyvs** tie it!
    lengthened grade (l-grade)   **wvnayes** he/she is tying it
    falling tone grade (f-grade)   **wvnâyes** he/she has tied it
    nasalizing grade (n-grade)   **wvnąyes** he/she keeps tying it
    aspirating grade (h-grade)   **wvnăhyes** he/she tied it (today)

Grades apply to the stem. The stem is the part before **-etv**:

    wvnvyetv to tie   stem: **wvnvy-**
    vyetv to go   stem: **vy-**
    letketv to run   stem: **letk-**

Exercises

Progressive aspect: The L-grade

Vocabulary

wohketv to bark   **yvkvpetv** to walk
hvlketv to crawl   **ēhketv** to hide (oneself)
vfvnketv to kiss   **vcemketv** to climb
vtŏtketv to work   **fayetv** to hunt
vtetv to come

The lengthened grade (l-grade) is the most common grade in Creek. It's used for any action in progress ('is walking', 'is working', etc.), whether in the present ('is walking'), past ('was walking'), or future ('will be walking').

As its name suggests, the l-grade is formed by lengthening the last vowel of a stem. The short vowels on the left shift to the long forms on the right:

v, ă	→	**a**
e	→	**ē**
u, ŏ	→	**o**

Here are some examples:

vyetv to go   **ayes** he/she is going
ăkketv to bite   **akkes** he/she is biting
letketv to run   **lētkes** he/she is running
nŏcetv to sleep   **noces** he/she is sleeping

When the last syllable is already long or a diphthong, it doesn't get any longer. This means that **a**, **ē**, **o**, **i**, and **ue** remain unchanged:

tasketv to jump   **taskes** he/she is jumping
fēketv to pay   **fēkes** he/she is paying
wohketv to bark   **wohkes** he/she is barking
liketv to sit down   **likes** he/she is sitting down
hueretv to stand up   **hueres** he/she is standing up

The L-M-N rule. A vowel + **l**, **m**, or **n** acts like a diphthong. If the stem ends in **VlC**, **VmC**, or **VnC** (where V and C stand for any vowel or consonant) no lengthening applies:

        hvlketv to crawl   **hvlkes** he/she is crawling
        hŏmpetv to eat   **hŏmpes** he/she is eating
        vfvnketv to kiss   **vfvnkes** he/she is kissing him/her

_____

Exercises

1   Complete the following:

Ex.   vyetv to go   stem: <u>vy-</u>
                                       lgr.: <u>ay-</u>
        he/she is going   <u>ayes</u>

a   vtŏtketv to work   stem: _____
                                       lgr.: _____
        he/she is working   _____

b   esketv to drink   stem: _____
                                       lgr.: _____
        he/she is drinking   _____

c   wăkketv to lie down   stem: _____
                                       lgr.: _____
        he/she is lying down _____

d   fayetv to hunt   stem: _____
                                       lgr.: _____
        he/she is hunting   _____

e   vretv to go about   stem: _____
                                       lgr.: _____
        he/she is going about _____

f   vcemketv to climb   stem: _____
                                       lgr.: _____
        he/she is climbing   _____

g   ēhketv to hide   stem: _____
                                       lgr.: _____
        he/she is hiding   _____

h   tvmketv to fly   stem: _____
                                        lgr.: _____
        he/she is flying   _____

i   vtetv to come   stem: _____
                                        lgr.: _____
        he/she is coming   _____

j   yvkvpetv to walk   stem: _____
                                        lgr.: _____
        he/she is walking   _____

Resulting states and intensives: The F- and N-grades

_____

Vocabulary

kerretv to learn, know   **hecetv** to look at
(e)yacetv to want   **esetv** to catch
ocetv to have   **pŏhetv** to listen
vccetv to put on (a dress)   **lekŏthē** warm

_____

The falling tone grade (f-grade) has the same rules of lengthening as the l-grade, but falling tone (^) appears on the last syllable of the stem:

        kerretv to learn   **kêrres** he/she knows
        wăkketv to lie down   **wâkkes** he/she is lying
        liketv to sit down   **lîkes** he/she is sitting
        eyacetv to want   **eyâces** he/she wants it
        ocetv to have   **ôces** he/she has
        vccetv to put on (a dress)   **âcces** he/she is wearing (a dress)

We saw that the l-grade indicates ongoing action. Notice how the f-grade changes the meanings of verbs:

        kerretv to learn   **kērres** he/she is learning it
                                kêrres he/she knows it

        wăkketv to lie down   **wakkes** he/she is lying down
                                wâkkes he/she is lying

        hecetv to look at   **hēces** he/she is looking at it
                                hêces he/she sees it

        esetv to catch   **ēses** he/she is catching it
                                êses he/she is holding it

        ocetv to have   **oces** he/she is having (a baby, a party)
                                ôces he/she has (a baby)

        vccetv to put on (a dress)   **acces** he/she is putting on (a dress)
                                âcces he/she is wearing (a dress)

In each case, the f-grade seems to indicate a state. The f-grade is common with only a few verbs: positional verbs (sit, stand, lie), verbs of wearing, and the verbs above. The most common verb in the f-grade is **ŏwetv** 'to be', though. It occurs in the f-grade after a noun or any stem ending in **-ē**:

ŏwetv to be   **Efvt ôs.** It's a dog.
                              Lanēt ôs. It's green.

The nasalizing grade (n-grade) has the same rules of lengthening found in the l-grade, but the last vowel of the stem is nasalized:

wvnvyetv to tie   **wvnąyes** he/she keeps tying it

With verbs, the n-grade means that the action took place over a long period, either because of a long wait or repeated action.

In adjectives, the n-grade is often combined with **-us-** to show greater intensity:

herē good   **hęrusē** beautiful
lekŏthē warm   **lekǫthusē** nice and warm
afvckē happy   **afąckusē** very well satisfied

_____

Exercises

1   Listening practice. Your teacher will randomly read an l-grade or f-grade verb. Circle the word you hear:

a   likes   lîkes
b   acces   âcces
c   kērres   kêrres
d   ēses   êses
e   oces   ôces
f   wakkes   wâkkes
g   hēces   hêces

2   Complete the following:

Ex.   esetv to catch   stem: es-
                             fgr.: ês-
      he/she is holding it   êses

a   hecetv   to look at   stem: _____

                                           fgr.: _____

         he/she sees it   _____

b   vccetv   to put on (a robe)   stem: _____

                                           fgr.: _____

         he/she is wearing it   _____

c   pŏhetv   to listen   stem: _____

                                           fgr.: _____

         he/she hears it   _____

d   liketv   to sit down   stem: _____

                                           fgr.: _____

         he/she is sitting   _____

e   kerretv   to learn   stem: _____

                                           fgr.: _____

         he/she knows   _____

The H-grade

_____

Vocabulary

nesetv to buy   **lentappetv** to trip
wiyetv to sell   **vretv** to go about
ŏmiyetv to swim   **pvcēssetv** to veer
ŏssetv to go out   **ŏsketv** to rain
fekhŏnnetv to stop   **mēcetv** to do

_____

The h-grade is used for several different things. One common use is to indicate Past 1 (an even occurring between last night to today). The h-grade seems difficult at first, but can be broken down into several rules:

a. If a verb stem ends in a single consonant, add **-h-** before that consonant:

nŏcetv to sleep   **nŏhces** he/she went to sleep
nesetv to buy   **nehses** he/she bought it
wiyetv to sell   **wihyes** he/she sold it
ŏmiyetv to swim   **ŏmihyes** he/she swam

If the preceding vowel is long, it gets shortened:

fēketv to buy   **fehkes** he/she bought it

When **-h-** is inserted after **v**, the **v** is spelled **ă**. (It's still short, it just has a little more of the quality of **a** in this position.)

vyetv to go   **ăhyes** he/she went

b. When a verb stem ends in two consonants, it's hard to add an **-h-** in front of them, so there are two ways around that:

   i. If the stem ends in two different consonants or **kk**, insert **-î-** between them:

hŏmpetv to eat   **hŏmîpes** he/she ate
letketv to run   **letîkes** he/she ran
tasketv to jump   **tasîkes** he/she jumped

tvmketv to fly	**tvmîkes** it flew
wohketv to bark	**wohîkes** it barked
wăkketv to lie	**wăkîkes** he/she lay down

ii. If the stem ends in any other double consonant, drop one and add **-îy-**:

ŏssetv to go out	**ŏsîyes** he/she went out
fekhŏnnetv to stop	**fekhŏnîyes** he/she stopped
lentappetv to trip	**lentapîyes** he/she tripped
kerretv to learn, know	**kerîyes** he/she found out

_____

Exercises

1   Complete the following:

Ex.   esetv to catch   stem: <u>es-</u>
                                   hr.: <u>ehs-</u>
       he/she caught it   <u>ehses</u>

a   hecetv to look at   stem: _____
                                  hgr.: _____
       he/she sees it   _____

b   vpoketv to sit (of 3+)   stem: _____
                                  hgr.: _____
       they sat down   _____

c   yvkvpetv to walk   stem: _____
                                  hgr.: _____
       he/she walked   _____

d   fēketv to pay   stem: _____
                                  hgr.: _____
       he/she paid   _____

e   pvcēssetv to veer   stem: _____
                                  hgr.: _____
       he/she veered   _____

Nēsis 'I'm buying'

_____

Vocabulary

ăkkŏpvnetv to play   **eccetv** to shoot
ăkhŏttetv to shut, close   **huehketv** to call, holler
hŏpŏyetv to look for   **nvfketv** to hit
hvkihketv to cry   **(ŏ)punvyetv** to talk, speak
hvmah! listen!

_____

The person doing the action is marked on the verb in Creek:

       nesetv to buy   stem: **nes-,** lgr. **nēs-**
                                          nēsis I am buying
                                          nēsetskes you are buying
                                          nēses he/she is buying
                                          nēsēs we are buying
                                          nēsatskes y'all are buying

       hecetv to look at   stem: **hec-,** fgr. **hêc-**
                                          hêcis I see it
                                          hêcetskes you see it
                                          hêces he/she sees it
                                          hêcēs we see it
                                          hêcatskes y'all see it

_____

Exercises

1   Memorize the forms for 'see'. Take turns reciting them in class.

2   Complete the following:

a   vtŏtketv to work   stem: _____, lgr. _____
        I am working   _____
        you are working   _____
        he/she is working   _____
        we are working   _____
        y'all are working   _____

b   hŏmpetv to eat   stem: _____, lgr. _____
        I am eating   _____
        you are eating   _____

he/she is eating   _____
we are eating   _____
y'all are eating   _____

c   esketv   to drink   stem: _____, lgr. _____
      I am drinking   _____
      you are drinking   _____
      he/she is drinking   _____
      we are drinking   _____
      y'all are drinking   _____

Nēset owis 'I am buying'

_____

Vocabulary

takketv to kick   **maketv** to say (no audience)
vkerricetv to think about   **vpeletv** to laugh
nŏricetv to cook ...   **vtŏtetv** to send
kicetv to say to (someone)

_____

In Creek, there's a short way and a long way to make a sentence. In the long way, the auxiliary verb 'be' is used. The main verb appears in a Non-Final form (ending in **-et**):

      letketv to run   **Lētkes.** He/She is running.
                                      Lētket os. He/She is running.

      vyetv to go   **Ayes.** He/She is going.
                                        Ayet os. He/She is going.

The long way seems a lot more common than the short way. Notice that the auxiliary is **os** here rather than **ôs**. **ôs** is used after noun phrases and adjectives.

In the long pattern, the verb 'be' may be marked for person:

      nesetv to buy   **Nēset owis.** I am buying.
                                        Nēset ŏntskes. You are buying.
                                          Nēset os. He/She is buying.
                                        Nēset owēs. We are buying.
                                        Nēset owatskes. Y'all are buying.

_____

Exercises

Overview of the sentence

___

Vocabulary

hvmken one	**ôsten** four
hŏkkôlen two	**căhkêpen** five
tuccênen three	**assēcetv** to chase

___

A verb is a complete sentence in Creek:

    Oskes.   It's raining.

Other types of sentences use a slightly different pattern. A sentence like 'A dog is chasing a cat' has the following order in Creek:

Noun phrase **-t**	Noun phrase **-n**	Verb
Efvt	**posen**	**assēces.**
dog-T	cat-N	is chasing

'A dog is chasing a cat.'

Notice that the subject noun phrase comes first and ends in **-t**, while the object noun phrase ends in **-n**. The main difference between 'be' sentences and sentences with other verbs is in the use of the **-t/-t** pattern or the **-t/-n** pattern. Of course, not all sentences have subjects and objects.

Time adverbs ('right now', 'yesterday', etc.) generally come first:

Hiyowat	**efvt**	**posen**	**assēces.**
now	dog-T	cat-N	is chasing

'Right now a dog is chasing a cat.'

A noun phrase may include a demonstrative (**heyv** 'this', **mv** 'that'), a noun, and an adjective (**lvstē** 'black'):

Efv	**lvstēt**	**pose**	**lanēn**	**assēces.**
dog	black-T	cat	yellow-N	is chasing

'A black dog is chasing a yellow cat.'

Numerals (**hvmken** 'one', etc.) may occur after adjectives. As part of the subject noun phrase, they end in **-t**; as part of the object noun phrase, they end in **-n**:

Efv lvstē hvmket   pose lanē   hŏkkôlen   assēces.
dog black one-T   cat   yellow two-N   is chasing
'One black dog is chasing two yellow cats.'

_____

Exercises

Efv hvmken hêcis 'I see one dog': Numbers

Vocabulary

ēpâken six
kŏlvpâken seven
cenvpâken eight
ŏstvpâken nine
palen ten
tŏknawv money, dollar

hŏpŏrrenkv, **hŏpŏrrenkuce** cent,
    penny
kvlăksuce nickel
nvrkvpuce dime
kvnsatkv quarter

The Creek numbers from 1 to 10 are easier to remember if you arrange them
five by five:

1	**hvmken**	6	**ēpâken**
2	**hŏkkôlen**	7	**kŏlvpâken**
3	**tuccênen**	8	**cenvpâken**
4	**ôsten**	9	**ŏstvpâken**
5	**căhkêpen**	10	**palen**

It helps to know that **vpaken** means 'added'. Six comes from 'added to itself',
seven comes from 'two added', etc. No Creek speaker would ever take the
numbers apart this way, but it helps those who are learning the language as
adults.

When used in counting or as part of an object, numbers end in **-n**. As part of
the subject, a number ends in **-t**. Within a noun phrase, the order is Noun -
Adjective(s) - Numeral:

> **Efv lvstē hvmket   pose lanē   hŏkkôlen   assēces.**
> dog black one-T   cat   yellow two-N   is chasing
> 'One black dog is chasing two yellow cats.'

Ŏh-ŏnvkv

Hvmah!
Nâket ôwa?
Răkkŏ te?
Mŏnks. Nŏkŏset ôs.
Letkvs!
Letkēpis! | I <u>am</u> running!

Exercises

1 Write out your phone number in Creek.

2 Write out the following in words:

1¢ _____

3¢ _____

5¢ _____ or _____

6¢ _____

10¢ _____ or _____

25¢ _____

$1 _____

$5 _____

$10 _____

Cettŏt wâkkes cē! 'There's a snake!': Expressing existence

_____
Vocabulary

ayŏ hawk
cesse mouse
cettŏ snake
cufe rabbit
ecŏ deer
erŏ squirrel
fuswv bird
kŏnŏ skunk

kŏwăkkuce bobcat
lŏcv turtle
nŏkŏse bear
rvrŏ fish
sŏkhv-hatkv opossum
wotkŏ raccoon
yvhv wolf
yvnvsv buffalo
_____

Existence in Creek is often expressed by using the verbs **liketv** 'to sit', **hueretv** 'to stand', or **wăkketv** 'to lie' in the f-grade:

> **Cettot   wâkkes cē!**
> snake-T   is lying (Fgr)
> There's a snake!

The above sentence is literally "A snake is lying!", but the most natural translation in English is 'There's a snake!'. The **cē** on the end of the sentence is an expressive particle used for strong statements or commands.

Humans and many animals may sit, stand, or lie. Some inanimate objects sit, others stand, and other lie. Things that are long tend to lie, things that are tall usually stand, and things that are squat generally sit:

> **Custaket lîkes.**   There's an egg.

When something is alive and moving about, it's more natural to use **vretv** 'to go about' in the l-grade:

> **Cesset ares cē!**   There's a mouse!

Another way to express existence is with the verb **ocetv** 'to exist, have' or the adjective **sepeko** 'absent':

> **Kvco ôces.**   There are berries.
> **Kvco sepekot ôs.**   There are no berries.
_____
Exercises

1   Find the animals!

```
a  l  c  e  s  s  e  p
e  ŏ  e  a  y  ŏ  n  y
f  c  t  f  k  ŏ  n  v
v  v  t  o  u  l  o  n
e  r  ŏ  k  e  s  m  v
c  u  f  e  u  i  w  s
ŏ  r  v  r  v  r  ŏ  v
m  n  ŏ  k  ŏ  s  e  t
```

2   Use the nouns below to express existence:
Ex.   ecŏ   Ecŏt ares.

a   yŏpo-lŏwake (elephant)   _____
b   wakv   _____
c   pŏkkŏ   _____
d   kafe (coffee)   _____