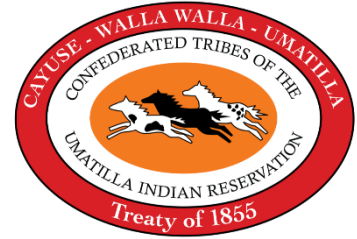


# Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

## PRESS RELEASE

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### CTUIR Offering Umatilla Language Reading Group This Summer

MISSION – The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) is offering a trial Umatilla language reading group this summer for those interested in learning the language.

CTUIR's Human Resources (HR) Training is offering the experience from 3-4 p.m. on Tuesdays starting July 15 in the Nixyàawii Education Center at 46251 Naxš Wínataš on the Nixyàawii Governance Center campus.

"While the class won't teach you how to speak the language, reading a language is a good way to supplement other language learning," HR Training Coordinator Gretchen Kern said. "It's a low-stress way to be exposed to more complicated language use, with no pressure to respond or even understand everything. It's nice to see how speakers of the language phrase things and to learn from their words."

Kern said the group, which is open to anyone willing to learn, will read texts from the Umatilla Dictionary as they are already translated and the spelling and vocabulary (dialect) match the dictionary.

"So it's easier to look words up and see how they fit together compared to working with a text or recording from another source," she said. "We will plan to start with Pamàwanibā Tkʷàtatma Bnà Tiibāmpa (The Foods Named Themselves in This Land) from the Umatilla Dictionary."

If participants have copies of the Umatilla Dictionary they are encouraged to bring them. If not, dictionaries will be provided. Also provided will be printouts with space for notes.

No prior language experience is needed, and participants can come and go as their schedules allow. Kern said during the classes participants can expect to:

- Kd' qnsn t r d sgd TI ` stk' Chshnm qx sn dmc v nqpr +
- Become familiar with reading the alphabet,
- Look up individual words to see how they line up with the translated sentences,
- Be exposed to more Umatilla vocabulary and sentence structures and
- Engage in cultural appreciation through the content of the texts.

Only the Umatilla language will be used because there are already Umatilla texts published in the dictionary, they're publicly available and they've already been approved by Umatilla speakers and the CTUIR to share.

Kern, who holds a Ph.D. in linguistics and has worked as a CTUIR linguist for more than three years, said she plans to lead the group, but Umatilla speakers Fred Hill and Mildred Quaempts have offered to help with pronunciations and answer questions.

"I'm hoping that once it gets going, participants will be able to work as a group to look up words without a lot of teaching and that everyone will come up with different ways to read that work better for them," she said. "My role should be to help decode the grammatical explanations in the dictionary, so people can understand grammar and the dictionary in a way that makes sense to them."

Kern said with the summer reading group being a trial, the goal is to measure any interest in this method of appreciating a CTUIR language.

"If there's interest in continuing or expanding the group, we can find a time and place and work something out for dictionaries. If people really are up for a challenge, we could see if we can find any shareable Walla Walla or Cayuse/Nez Perce texts to try to work through," she said.

Space is limited, so those interested in attending should email [training@ctuir.org](mailto:training@ctuir.org) or call 541-429-7195.

*The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation is comprised of the Cayuse, Walla Walla and Umatilla Tribes, and formed under the Treaty of 1855 at the Walla Walla Valley, 12 Stat. 945. In 1949, the Tribes adopted a constitutional form of government to protect, preserve and enhance the reserved treaty rights guaranteed under federal law.*

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**Caption:** The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation is offering a Umatilla language reading group this summer for those interested in learning the language. The main teaching tool will be the Umatilla Dictionary. Classes are scheduled for 3-4 p.m. on Tuesdays starting July 15 at the Nixyàawii Education Center at 46251 Naxš Wínataš on the Nixyàawii Governance Center campus. CTUIR