BC Métis FEDERATION

French-Michif Newsletter

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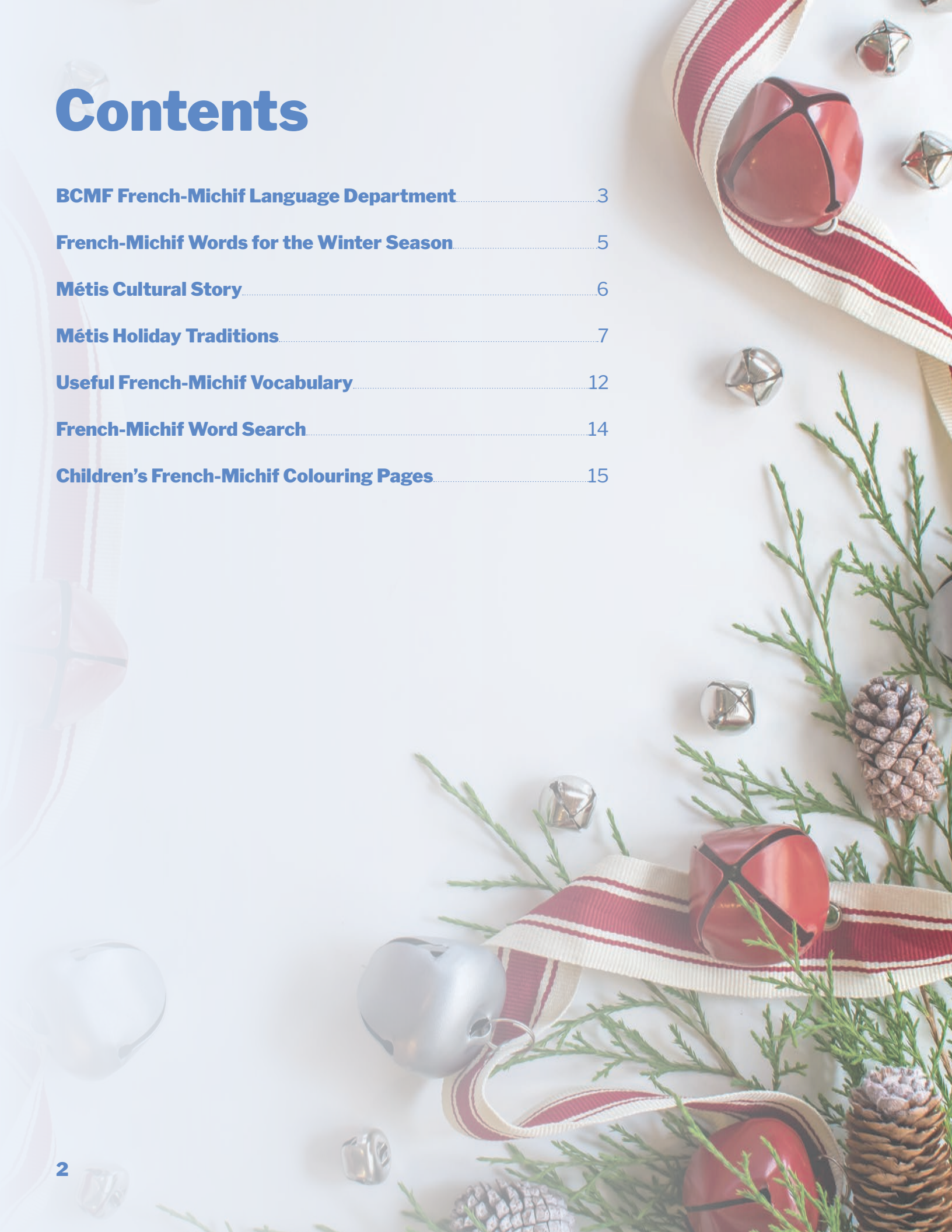


BCMF French-Michif Language Department

BC Métis Federation has a dedicated French-Michif Language Department. The French-Michif Language Department consists of the **Director of Culture & Language, Jeanie Cardinal**, and contract specialist in linguistics, illustration arts, French-Michif Speakers and varying administration and language specialists. Within the language department numerous developments of French-Michif language content has been accomplished over the last five years.

We started with a dream and hope to revitalize a French-Michif language. We surveyed our membership and targeted the highest responses from our members to revitalize the French-Michif language.

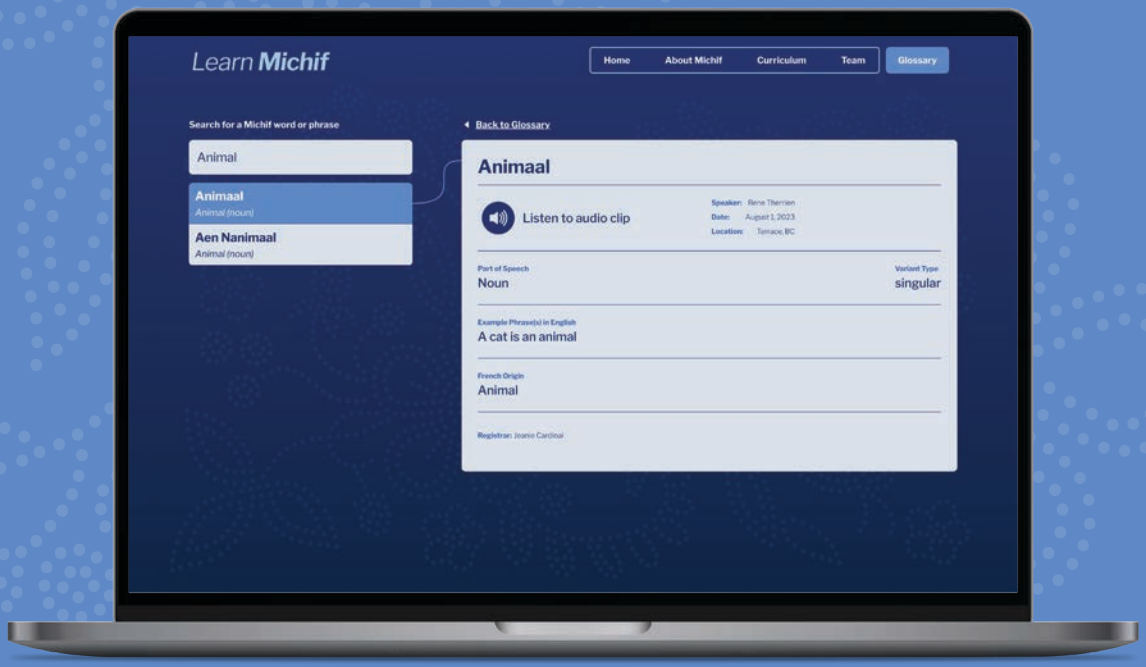
Throughout the five years of French-Michif language developments we are privileged to have the contributions of **three fluent French-Michif Speakers, Rene Therrien, Francis Fisher, and Earl Belcourt**. We are privileged to have them available and passionate to share and contribute the language they have grown up in and held with them to pass on to us today.

Rene Therrien

Francis Fisher

Earl Belcourt

Coming soon! BCMF is developing a new online glossary to help you learn French-Michif.



Have you used the BCMF French-Michif Language through Stories K-12 Curriculum?

If so, your feedback is invaluable to us.

Please visit **bit.ly/3R7ZC25** and fill out the survey.

French-Michif Words for the Winter Season

French-Michif	English
Lii zaanfaan or Lii zawnfawn	Children (plural)
Nowel	Christmas
Li zhoor di Nowel	Christmas Day
Aen Nawb Nowel	Christmas Tree
Faamii	Family
Payr Nowel	Father Christmas or Santa
Lii maanzhii	Foods (plural)
Lii Prayzaan	Gifts (plural)
Bonn Heureuz Aanii	Happy New Years
Pleu Vyay Michif	Métis Elder (feminine)
Pleu Vyeu Michif	Métis Elder (masculine)
Faamii di Michif	Métis Family
Zhoor di laan	New Years Day
Shoovreu di nor	Reindeer
Niizh	Snow
Naazh di niizh	Snow Angel
Lii baan d'niizh	Snowbanks
Nom di niizh	Snowman
Shawreau d'niizh	Snowplow
Raachet	Snowshoes
Lii taanpet di niizh	Snowstorm
Lii zhenn	Youth (plural)

Métis Cultural Story

The Métis New Year's

Lesson Thirty-Four / Level 3: K-6 BCMF French-Michif Curriculum

Author: Rene Therrien

New Year's (Zhoor di laan) was a time to remember when I was small. I knew there would be **fiddle players** (lii zhooweur di vyayloon) playing and people would be **dancing** (daansii/dawnsii) all night long. They would **dance the Red River Jig** (daansii la jig de la rivyayr roozh), do **storytelling** (li koontoer d'istwayr) and **play la Barouche** (zhway la Barouche) cards all through the **night** (swayr).

The women would prepare their best dishes of **foods** (lii maanhzii) weeks before the **New Year's** (Zhoor di laan) celebration. The musicians were always in a big demand, playing their **music** (meuzeuk) all over the place.

Back in the old days, at midnight the Métis custom was for men to take two **rifles** (lii kaarabin) and **ammunition** (kaartoosh) and go to the back door of the **house** (mayzoon), **open the door** (roov la port) and fire a shot to the **west** (oo west) to see the old year out, then go the front door and fire a shot to the east to welcome the New Year in.

New Year's (Zhoor di laan) was always a special time for **Métis families** (Faamii di Michif) in Métis communities. From singing and dancing to having a feast of **food on the table** (maanzhii seur la taab) to celebrate being **all together** (toot aansaamb).

Happy New Year's (Bonn Heureuz Aanii) was celebrated and practiced by the French influence in 1800s and this event continued until January 6th of the new year. It was called All King's Day. If you stood outside, you could hear **bells** (lii klosh) ringing through the **cold** (fret) **winter** (l'ivayr) air, as families gathered at the **homes** (lii mayzoon) of their **Elders** (lii pleu vyeu), **parents** (lii paraan) or grandparents. The Métis would go from **house** (mayzoon) to **house** (mayzoon) to toast the **New Year's** (Zhoor di laan) and enjoy **foods** (lii maanzhii) **together** (aansaamb).

Visit the French-Michif audio library to listen to the story!

bit.ly/4a0NjNA

Métis Holiday Traditions

Chivaree or Shivaree

A chivaree is a noisy celebration or gathering, what we might now call a social. Some Métis held chivarees at New years, accompanied by the men firing their rifles at midnight New Years Eve. The chivaree or social dance following a Métis wedding typically went for three days after the ceremony. Christmas Eve: On Christmas Eve, after Midnight Mass, a feast was held, and gifts would be opened (around 2:00 am). Often the Priest would take this opportunity to visit several homes.

Feu de joie

A feu de joie is a salute of guns fired on ceremonial occasions. In French this term would literally translate as bonfire.

A Métis Custom on New Year's Eve

At midnight, it was often a Métis custom for some Métis to take two rifle shells, open the back door of the house and fire a shot to the west to see the old year out, then open the front door and fire a shot to the east to welcome the New Year in. The modern urban version- is to bang two pots together instead of firing shots. Zhoor di laan (**New Years Day**), Bonn Heureuz Aanii (**Happy New Years**).

La Bonn Aanii Métis Celebration

The Zhoor di laan (**New Year**) was always a time for a special celebration in Métis communities. Singing, dancing and fiddle playing with associated feasts were the highlights of their celebration. The French-Michif people at Turtle Mountain, North Dakota give this description:

"The New Year Celebration is one that has been practiced since the era of French Influence in the 1800s. Years ago, this event began on New Year's Even and extended until January 6th, All King's Day. If you stood outside, you could hear the sleigh bells ringing through the cold night air as families gathered at the homes of Elders (parents and grandparents)."

Traditionally, they would go from house to house to toast the New Year and enjoy the feast. Upon arrival to someone's home you can hear the expression "La Bonn Aanii" and receive a kiss and a handshake from everyone in the house young and old. The custom of kissing and shaking hands is an expression of good wishes for the coming year…the feast included foods such as boolet (**meatballs**), bangs (**Scottish influenced fried bread dough**), la galette (**bannock**), lii paataek (**potatoes**), di lawr (**pork**), la koonficheur paabinaan - in sauce (**cranberries sauce**), li baef (**beef**), aen daend (**a turkey**), homemade lii tart (**pies**), toorkayr (**meat pie**) and poochin (**boiled cake**).

Aen Resett (a recipe)

Métis Traditional Resett la Poochin (Métis traditional pudding recipe)

Recipe courtesy of Royal Albert Museum.

There are many names for the steamed pudding, it is recognized as La poochin, la pouchine is also known as pouchine-en-sac, la poutine dans le sac, or lapochim.

As a Métis family tradition, we show friendship and love through sharing and gifting. No matter where we live, or how far apart, every time we cook a traditional recipe we are drawing upon our ancestors, It is a feeling and tradition that stretches back generations. Métis recipes varies, as well from family to family.

With its adaptive structure, you can easily substitute the dried fruit for anything on hand or swap the lard for something more convenient. One can imagine it being pulled from a pot over a fire (though we have stoves and ovens now) and enjoyed after a hearty stew. In the wintery months, often two of these puddings were made. One for the holidays and one for the New Year. You add canned pineapple and diced fruit similarly to a fruitcake. It's not necessarily the ingredients that make something traditional.

Fayte aen poochin (Make/Do your own pudding)

INGREDIENTS

English	French-Michif
1/2 a cup of lard (or beef suet, chopped fine)	Demii taas da saandoo
1/2 a cup of brown sugar	Demi taas da seuk brun
1 cup of raisins	Enn taas da raazayn
1/2 a cup of currants	Demi taas currents
1 teaspoon of pastry spice	Enn cheuyayr d epist
2 cups of flour	Deu taas la farinn
1/2 teaspoon of salt	Demi cheuyayr d sel
4 teaspoons of baking powder	Kaat cheuyayr d paat a l'ivy
3/4 cup of milk	Trwaa kaar d taas d'let

1. Mix flour, salt, and baking powder together. Cut the lard into the flour with a pastry blender or a fork until incorporated. Add in your raisins and currants (or whichever fruit of choice). Add sugar and milk. Mix until just combined and no flour streaks remain. Do not overmix.
2. Prepare a pudding cloth (or a pudding bag big enough to hold 6 cups) by wetting it and flouring. You can use any undyed muslin or cotton cloth that is a minimum of 20" by 24". Fill it with the dough and gather at the top. Tie it off with butcher's twine and leave two inches space for the pudding to expand.
3. Place the sack in a deep pot of simmering water and cover. The water should be deep enough to fully cover the pudding when submerged. The excess cloth can stick out from the water. Cover and simmer for 2 ½ to 3 hours.
4. Try not to check on it too much – lifting the lid will let heat and steam escape. Don't be surprised – it will float after the first hour!
5. In the last ten minutes prepare the sauce.

La Soos d Poochin (the pudding sauce)

INGREDIENTS

English	French-Michif
1/2 a cup of sugar	Demi taas d suek
1 tablespoon of cornstarch	Hen cheuyayr a tab cornstarch
1 cup of boiling water	Hen taas d loo shood
2 tablespoons of butter	Deu cheuyayr a tab d beur
1/2 a teaspoon of vanilla extract (or any extract you like)	Demi cheuyayr d vanilla

1. Mix sugar, water, and butter in a small saucepan over medium heat with a whisk. Make a slurry with the cornstarch and a few tablespoons of cold water.
2. When the sugar is melted, whisk in the vanilla extract and slurry. Make sure to keep whisking! Cook until the sauce thickens slightly. It will be a very thin sauce.
3. Carefully remove the pudding from the pot and place on a plate. Let it sit a few minutes before unwrapping and removing the pudding cloth for washing. **Try not to burn your fingers, it stays quite hot!**
4. Cut and serve with the sauce or any syrup you prefer.

Useful French-Michif Vocabulary

Lii Mwaa	Months
Zhaanvyii	January
Fevriyii	February
Maars	March
Avrii	April
Mii	May
Jwaen	June
Jooyet	July
Aahoo	August
Septaanbr	September
Oktobr	October
Noovaambr	November
Disaambr	December

Smen	Week
laenjii	Monday
mordji	Tuesday
mikaarjii	Wednesday
jhwijii	Thursday
vaandarjii	Friday
samjii	Saturday
jimaansh	Sunday

Lii kooleur	Colours
nwayr	black
bleu	blue
brun	brown
vayr	green
gree	grey
arawnsh	orange
rose	pink
vyalet	purple
roozh	red
blaan	white
zhounn	yellow

Useful Words	
Wii	yes
noon	no
pi	and
oo	or
paski/paske	because (m/f)
ki	who
kosay/kway	what
ivo/divo	where
kaan	when

Numbers	
zayroo	zero
hen	one
deu	two
trwaa	three
kaatr	four
saenk	five
sis	six
set	seven
wit	eight
neuf	nine
jhis	ten
oonz	eleven
dooz	twelve
trayz	thirteen
katorz	fourteen
kaynz	fifteen
sayz	sixteen
jhis set	seventeen
jhis zwit	eighteen
jhis-neuf	nineteen
vaen	twenty
traant	thirty
karaant	forty
saenkaant	fifty
swasaant	sixty
swassant-jhis	seventy
kaatravaen	eighty
kaatravaen-jhis	ninety
saan	one hundred

Useful Adjectives	
groo/groos	big (m./f.)
pchi/pchit	small (m./f.)
fasil	easy
jeur	hard
boon/bonn	good (am/pm)
shoo	hot
fret	cold

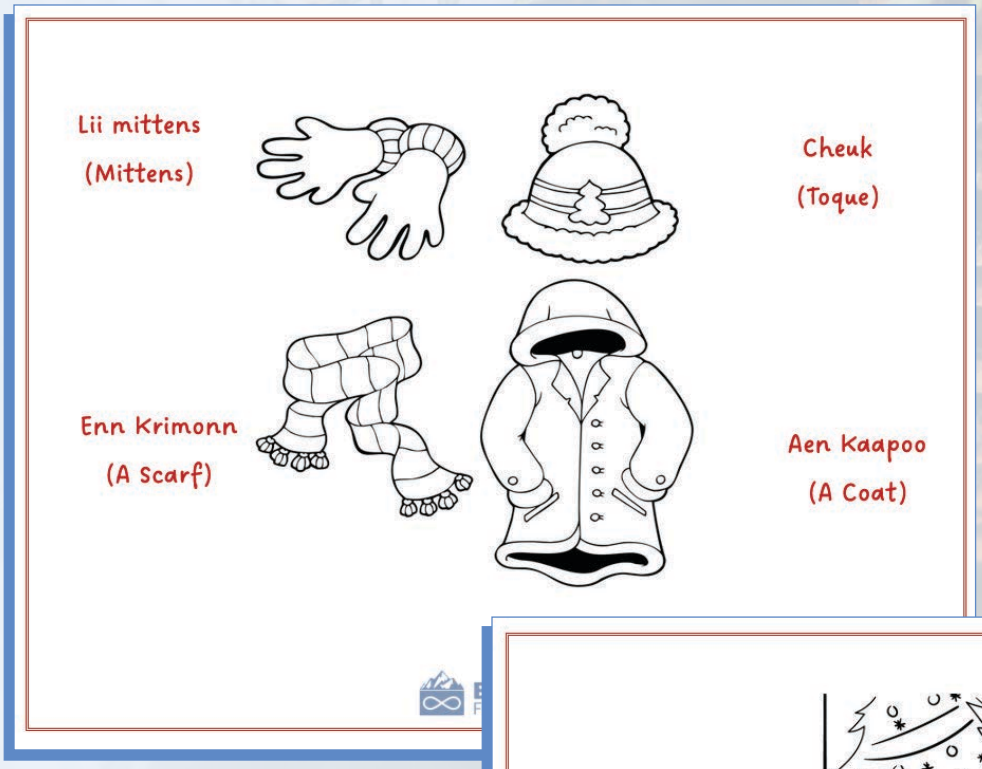
Key Phrases	
Alo,Taanishi!	Hi!
Boon zhoor!	Good Day!
Mattwayr ta leur!	See You later!
Si boon t'raankontray	It is good to meet you
Kamman sa vaw	How are you?
Pi tway	And you?
Baen boon	very good
Boon	good
Malaad	sick
Oos chu d'vyin?	Where do you come from?
Mwin, J'ma'ppl...	My name is...
Toon noon tway?	What is your name?
Chu peu maap'lay...	You can call me...
J'em...	I like...
Mattwayr aankoor.	See you again.
Bonn zhoornii.	Have a good day.
Maarsii.	Thank you
Maarsii moon naamii.	Thank you my friend.

French-Michif Word Search

Find these French-Michif words
Aansaamb
Beur
Bonn Aanii
Boolet
Cheuyayr
D'loo
Daansii
Faamii
Farinn
Gaalet
Maanzhii
Mayzoon
Niizh
Nowel
Paraan
Poochin
Resett
Saandoo
Seuk
Taas
Trwaa
Vyayloon

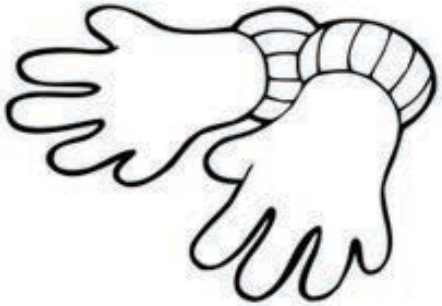
Aansaamb (Together), **Beur** (Butter), **Bonn Aanii** (Good Year), **Boolet** (Meatballs), **Cheuyayr** (Spoon), **D'loo** (Water), **Daansii** (Dancing), **Faamii** (Family), **Farinn** (Flour), **Gaalet** (Bannock), **Maanzhii** (Food/Eating), **Mayzoon** (House), **Niizh** (Snow), **Nowel** (Christmas), **Paraan** (Parent), **Poochin** (Pudding), **Resett** (Recipe), **Saandoo** (Grease/Lard), **Seuk** (Sugar), **Taas** (Cup), **Trwaa** (Three), **Vyayloon** (Three)

Children's French-Michif Colouring Pages



Lii mittens

(Mittens)

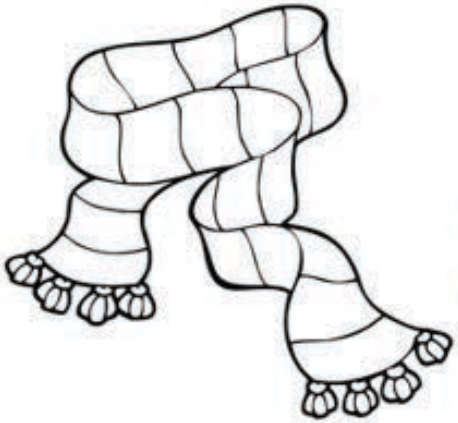


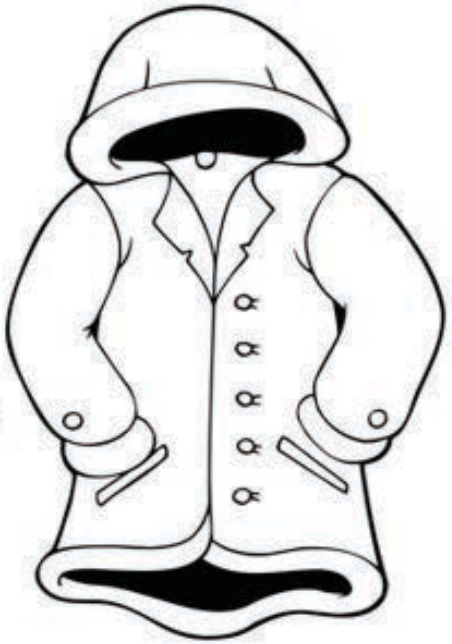
Cheuk

(Toque)

Enn Krimonn

(A Scarf)





Aen Kaapoo

(A Coat)

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Payr Nowel (Father Christmas/Santa)

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