Plants and Medicines Unit

Lesson 3 of 5 – Kwändür – Stories

Dànch'eä?	Hello, how are you?
Shahu, Ayenzhi Shäwkwäthän.	Me too, I am happy.
Däzhän ts'ú dze che.	This is brown spruce pitch.

Chįch'a dakwäch'a?	How is it outside?
Chįch'a nts'í nts'i.	It is windy outside.

I hope you have learnt some new things in the past couple weeks about Yukon wilderness as well some ST words. This is #**3 of 5 lessons** for Southern Tutchone First Nation class.

Instructions:
Dännch'ea dunèna and families! This activity will have you read a story with your families. I encourage the older students to read the story to your families. This is a story about Chusäy – Loon and how he got his beautiful markings. I have attached the story written by our wonderful school Elder Nakhela (Hazel) Bunbury to this activity and I hope you all enjoy it.
Feedback:
After you have read the story, please create a reflection in your own special way. This may be a drawing, written reflection, playdough scene, nature diorama, even a song or rap! Any way that you would like to present your learning through this story will be wonderful to see. I cannot wait to see what you come up with!
HAVE A GREAT WEEK! I miss you all very much! Nànûch'i shį!

Shared by Lindsay Chambers
Hidden Valley ST Language teacher

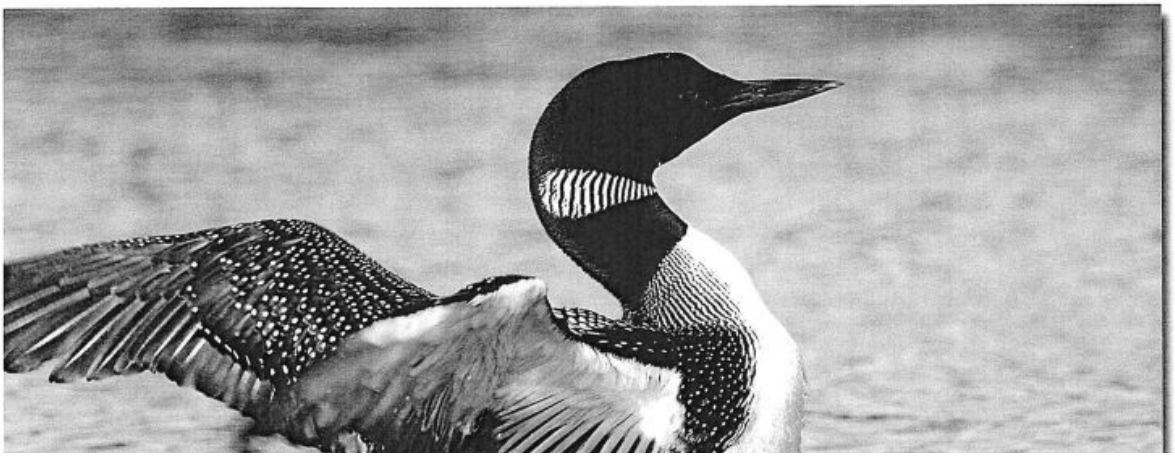
Complete this week's assignment then send it in to me, Mme. Nicole Smith at Nicole.smith@yesnet.yk.ca. This is also the email you can ask any questions you may have.

There are many versions of this story of how the loon rescued a blind man. Our people call the loon chusay, meaning "water crier". This version of the story was told to us by our grandmother, Tuchätk' e. It was told to her by her grandmother many years ago, when she was a child.

Long ago, it happened that a young girl was given to an old blind man to be his wife and to help him. She was very unhappy and resentful that she had to look after the old man and had to lead him around. The young girl and the old man had children.

Once, when the family went on shakat (a summer hunting trip), they came upon a moose. The blind man asked the girl to help him get the bow and arrows ready. He asked her to turn him in the direction of the moose and he shot the arrow. The moose ran away and the young girl was very angry because she thought the old man had missed the moose . He tried to explain that he did not miss the moose. He said" I was a very good hunter in my youth. "I can tell that I hit the moose." The young woman said "You didn't get the moose. You let it get away! I am leaving you here!" She pushed him under a tree, and left him there alone to die. The women and her children left to look for the moose. They found the moose and saw that it was dead. The old man had not missed the moose after all. Even though they knew this they did not return for the old man. They just cut up the moose and packed it back to the village.

The old blind man sat underneath the tree for many days and many nights and no one came. He was hungry and very thirsty. His mouth was dry. As he sat there, he heard the cry of loons. The loons sounded very close and he knew there was water nearby. The man began following the cries. He crawled along, following the sound, bumping into trees and willows as he tried to make his way to the lake. He asked the plants "What are you?" They said "I am a

tree", "I am a willow, you are going in the right direction." There were alders growing along the creek that flowed into the lake. They said to him "We are alder trees." He knew he had arrived at the lake. Reaching around he felt water. After he drank his fill of water he asked a nearby tree, "May I sit under your branches?" The tree said, "Yes Grandfather, sit and rest." Out on the lake, he could hear the loons. He could understand the language of the chusay, for they were his spirit helpers. Suddenly, he heard someone say "Nun! You! What is wrong with you?" The old man answered "I am blind and I have been abandoned, I was dying of thirst." It was the loons that were speaking to him, the loons who were actually his animal spirit helpers. The chusay said to the man, "Get on my back. We are going to heal you." After the man got on the loon's back, they dove into the water several times. Each time they surfaced the man could see a little better until he was able to see perfectly! They brought him back to the shore. The old man could not only see now, he had turned back into a young man. When he came into the village, the people did not recognize the strapping young man. He was a great hunter. He hunted for the people, saving them from starvation. After hunting for the people and leaving them with enough food for the winter, he left. The man left forever and did not return to his wife or return to live in the village but went away to live in a different land.

T'l'ahų