



# Yoruba Language School

*Managed by Yoruba Foundation Calgary*



# Introduction

- Yoruba is one of the three major languages in Nigeria.
- The language is spoken not only in Nigeria but in most of the West African Countries – and even in the Caribbean and South American nations.
- The language is globally recognized and it is one of the major African languages with significant contribution to Oxford Dictionary – **7 Contributed in 2024.**
- The Yoruba Language School (YLS) Calgary was established in 2004 with the help of one of our community members who is now a grandmother.



# Objective of the Language School

- Values and cultural preservation through teaching and understanding of the language.
- Exposure to language and culture enthusiasts across the globe – we have people of western origin going to Nigerian universities to learn about the language and the culture.
- Address cultural and intercultural dynamics.
- Root and identity – essential tool for immigrants to navigate new environment



# Meeting & Location

- The School started at the Nigeria Canadian Association of Calgary House in the NE
- Started by meeting twice a month for a total of 6 hours (3 hours/class).
- Later moved to the Genesis Centre in the NE
- Meeting rescheduled to 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays of the month
  - Class ran between 11:00am – 2:00pm
  - Lunch served to students from 12 – 12:30
- Currently, the school is fully online
  - Genesis Centre used for in-person cultural activities such as dancing, drumming, craft making etc.
  - Guest speakers invited for mentorship and coaching on public speaking



# Curriculum and Teaching Resources

- Current curriculum aligns mostly with that for Grades 1 – 6 in Nigeria.
- Modifications made to ensure suitability for the Canadian environment.
- Books ordered from US & Nigerian publishers – some with bilingual writings.
- Each student has at least three books to practice.
- Grading basis – Attendance; Class participation; Homework; and End of Session Review

## Resources

- 1 Principal
- 3 Teachers (We have three classes based on student's level of language proficiency)
- 3 Parent Volunteers (IT support, in-class support, and in person activity coordination)
- 1 Coordinator (YFC Vice President)
- Bi-annual meetings between parents, teachers, volunteers to discuss progress & challenges

# YEAR 1 CURRICULUM (LEVEL 1)

- WEEK 1 ORIENTATION
- WEEK 2 Kika A- G ati akopo (learning of letters using visuals and posters)
- WEEK 3 Reading of numbers 1-10. Kika noomba Okan de Ewa (using textbook and aids/posters in class)
- WEEK 4 Reading of numbers 11-20. Kika noomba Okanla de Ogun (using textbook and aids/posters in class)
- WEEK 5 Revisiting alphabets and numbers and form words & sentences with them in English and Yoruba.
- WEEK 6 Knowing of 6 shapes in Yoruba
- WEEK 7 Dealing with 6 different colours and forming sentences with them in Yoruba
- WEEK 8 BREAK
- WEEK 9 Revisiting alphabets, numbers, shapes, and colours
- WEEK 10 MIDTERM TEST
- WEEK 11 Learn basic greeting words and other basic letter words in Yoruba
- WEEK 12 Parts of the body and clothes (naming at least 4 parts and forming sentences with it)
- WEEK 13 Revisiting parts of the body, clothes and greetings in Yoruba (elderly)
- WEEK 14 Learning about 5 kinds of fruits and food in Yoruba
- WEEK 15 Learning about 5 kinds of Animals in Yoruba
- WEEK 16 Revisiting fruits, food and animals
- WEEK 17 Practicing songs for GALA NIGHT
- WEEK 18 Learn days and months of the year
- WEEK 19 Talk about Family and the home (people in the home, and work we do at home)
- WEEK 19 Learn and revisit days and months of the year & discuss FAMILY
- WEEK 20 Learn words in shopping
- WEEK 21 Talking about weather (types of weather) in Yoruba
- WEEK EXAM



# Alphabet in English – Álúfábẹ̀ẹ̀tì Ní Ède Gẹ̀ẹ̀sì

A B C D E F G H I J K L  
M N O P Q R S T U V W  
X Y Z

# Alphabet in Yoruba – Álúfábẹ̀tì ní Èdè

Yoruba

A B D E Ẹ F G Gb H I J

K L M N O Ọ P R S Ẹ T

U W Y



## Ìrànṣọ̀wọ̀ Ìpè Pronunciation Aid

A - Add

E- Able

G - Give

I - Ill

L - Leap

O - Oh

R - Reed

T- Tea

Y - Yield

B- Bee

E - Egg

GB - Pronounced  
together

J - JeeP

M - Me

Ọ - Ọr

S - See

U - Uood

D- DeeP

F- Fee

H - HeaP

K - KeeP

N - Need

P - Pronounce k and p  
together

Ş - Şee

W - WeeP



# Examples of Alphabets in Yoruba

## Apéré Alufabeti ni Yóruba

A – Aja – Dog	Adura – Prayer
B– Bata – Shoe	Baba – Father
D– Dada– Dreadlock	Dodo–Plantain
E– Eyin – Teeth	Ejo– Snake
Ẹ – Eyin – Egg	Ẹkaasan – Good Afternoon/ Ẹku ile –
F– Fila – Hat	
G– Gele– Hat /Headgear	Gigi – Mirror
GB – Gbaguda – Cassava	
H– Hun – Sew	
I – Igi– Tree	





# YLS Challenges

- Success stories are boring without challenges – ours is no exception!
- We live in a fast-paced world, so getting people to spare their time is tough!
- Students already had some other extra-curricula commitments – attendance impacted
  - Somewhat resolved by moving the class to online – We have students from across the globe
  - Our IT volunteers did great by getting a not-for-profit/educational right for Google Meet.
- Attention during online classes – How do you judge if the students are actively listening?
  - Introduction of fun activities like kahoot!, and other learning engagement tools
- The Language is purely heteronymical/homographical in nature. Early enrolment/introduction is essential for good understanding.
- Inadequacy and inaccuracy of online resources.



# Success

- We have gone beyond curriculum instructions to introduction of several activities that help facilitate learning and motivate students' interests
- **6 Students (with 2 teachers) went on excursion to Oyotunji Village in South Carolina in July 2023 – See images on the next slides**
- Field trip is now part of our academic calendar plan – twice a year
- Cooking classes organized to train the students on one of the most popular Yoruba dishes
- Safety Training Course – Stay Alone Course for children (32 Students benefited so far)
- Participation and representation of Yoruba Culture during Nigerian/African & other Social cultural events – showcased class learnings, values, and traditional dances.



# Looking Ahead

- Our hope is to continue to update the curriculum and expand the classes.
- Update the learning tools for ease of understanding.
- Leverage AI and other technologies for teaching.
- Collaboration with experts in the field of AI to further enhance quality of online resources.
- Organize formal trainings for teachers and volunteers to further enhance their teaching skills.
- Expand the learning materials library.
- Update cultural artefacts and resources.
- Organize more field trips to Yoruba historical sites and monuments.

# Oyotunji Field Trip

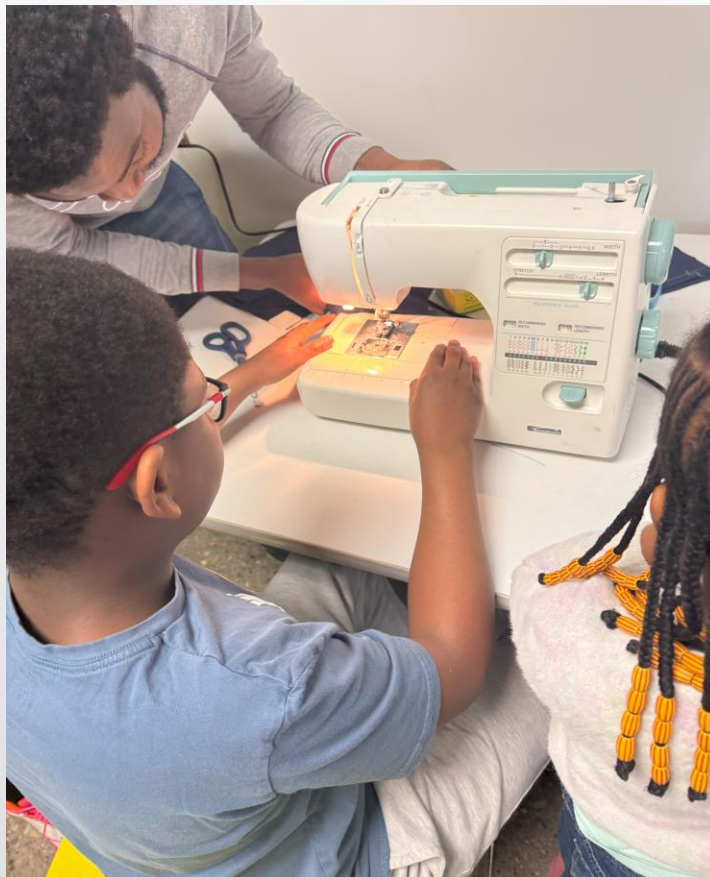




# Oyotunji Field Trip



# Sewing Class



# Cooking Class





**Thank you for your attention**