



# FirstVoices

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## **FirstVoices Language Tutor Provides New First Nations Language Teaching Tool**

VANCOUVER – FirstVoices.com, an online First Nations language archiving tool administered by the First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council (the First Peoples' Council), has developed a new language learning system that First Nations communities can use to teach their languages.

The FirstVoices Language Tutor allows communities to build intuitive language lessons that mimic the way a child learns a language. Users are able to listen to a word or phrase, record themselves speaking and then compare the result with a recording of a fluent speaker. They can also match images, video and audio clips from the FirstVoices library with words and phrases. The online program includes a student tracking system so parents and teachers can monitor student progress through the lessons.

“It’s exciting to have this new online language-learning tool to support what communities have been able to archive so far with limited resources,” said Tracey Herbert, Executive Director at the First Peoples’ Council. “While the goal at FirstVoices has always been the archiving of First Nations languages, it is also vitally important to incorporate the tools necessary for language learning as a way to stem the loss of First Nations languages.”

One of the most attractive features of the language tutor is that each community can customize lessons to suit their unique needs. Language teachers can build their lessons and quizzes from scratch or edit pre-existing lesson templates. They can incorporate their own photos, videos and audio recordings so that their lessons reflect the language in their community.

“This feature really contributes to learning, said Peter Brand, FirstVoices Coordinator. “Young students get really excited when they hear the voices of their own relatives in their language lessons, or are able to connect landmarks in their communities to the vocabulary they are studying.”

The FirstVoices Language Tutor was officially launched at the First Nations Technology Conference – ICT Summit 2010 in Vancouver on March 19, 2010.

To access the language tutor, go to [www.firstvoices.com/tutor](http://www.firstvoices.com/tutor).

**About FirstVoices:**

FirstVoices.com was created in 2003 in response to the rapidly decreasing number of First Nations language speakers in British Columbia. Since then, B.C. First Nations communities have uploaded thousands of text entries in dozens of different Aboriginal writing systems as well as sound files, pictures, videos and games to archives that they own and operate independently. There are currently 38 B.C. First Nations archives and 17 archives from outside B.C. on FirstVoices.com.

**About the First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council:**

The First Peoples' Council is a B.C. Crown corporation with the mandate to support First Nations in their efforts to revitalize their languages, arts, cultures and heritage. The First Peoples' Council has distributed more than \$21.5 million to B.C. Aboriginal communities over the past 20 years. For more information, visit [www.fphlcc.ca](http://www.fphlcc.ca).

**Media Contact:**

Megan Lappi, Communications Manager  
The First Peoples' Heritage, Language and Culture Council  
(250) 652-5952 ext. 214  
Cell: (250) 893-8897