

Small Number and the Old Canoe

Story Transcript: English and Sliammon

šɛ nux^wɛl hɛga Mɛnaθɛy

The canoe and Menathey

This is not a traditional Sliammon story but one that could be told in any First Nations community. The story appealed to us because of its descriptive language and presented a challenge to translate. The story also has a math focus and we hope to encourage teachers to use it.

θiyɛçis qomtys Mɛnaθɛy. payɛʔot laxlaxtən. hɛl ša k^wɔk^wpas hɛga ša çičyɛs λoλoɔot. payɛʔot ʔik^w k^waʔənəns ninijɛ k^w yɛyɛθotss Mɛnaθɛy.

Menathey is 5 years old. He is very mischievous. He lives with his grandfather and grandmother. They are very patient with his antics

"t^hapawč,xaλ k^wat^s hojux^w tɛʔɛ k^waɫt, natəm ša k^wɔk^wpas. hɛwhew ʔajumiš mot ša k^waɫt, nas k^w nonohom. λišlišt^s šɛ ʔɛmaθs hɛga qəmqəms ga hahas qaqsem ʔasqič.

"I am busy, I want to finish this feast dish", said grandpa. A beautiful feast dish. He tells his grandson and friends to go and play outside.

hɛhew ʔit ʔi:mot tok^w. hojeyʔil^h q^wɛt. ʔuk^wtəm k^wɔnetas ʔɛʔajux^was qaqsems. λɛλx^watawnatəm Kɛspaul ga gatasəm k^wɛʔɛt nijɛ k^wa taθəməys.

It is a very beautiful day. They ran down to the beach. Everything they saw sparked a new game. Kɛspaul spoke, "Let's see who can throw a stone the furthest in the water."

hɛyɛʔot tox^wox^wəs nəms k^w ʔi: xajays - tətɛçeyin, θačays,ʔi θič. tawtawusaman ta k^wɛt Mɛnaθɛy k^w ʔi: xagis.

The boys quickly learn that a good stone that will travel far must - oval, smooth and flat. Menathey walked far along the beach looking for good rocks.

θoga k^wumšun ta λɛʔɛgən. kɛɛtšun k^w λəqλakt λaqəm. lax^wiš ʔi θo hɛgayin. t^haqɛq^wan k^w tamas. jaqa k^wa nɛ ša nux^wɛl. xoxmotolč nɛʔas, panosʔot ʔata λaqəm. k^wɛʔɛš Mɛnaθɛy. jik^wtas ʔičsans. papk^wɛtas ta nux^wɛl. ʔaʔot k^w moʔoš ʔi: qajɛʔot q^wašq^wiš ninijɛ k^w θiyičs. qɛyɛtas k^w qəmqəms. q^wol jɛλʔaw.

He went towards the bushy area. He tripped in the long grass. He fell over headfirst. Menathey hit his head on something. All of a sudden he saw the canoe. It must have been there a long time, covered over in grass. Menathey stood up. Rubbing his forehead. He stood looking at the canoe. Even though his head hurt he was very excited about his discovery. He yelled for his friends. They came running.

ne k^w k^wak^wēšit ta tutəmtamiš, qarqaptas ta nux^wel. hehew xoʔolomiš. hehew ti: mot. "k^wenayeče qayemix^w tət ʔowolətoʔ?" natəm Menaθey. "čimče θux^wens xoʔolos ta hititoʔ?" natəm Kespaul.

The boys stand around the canoe. Rubbing their hands over the top of the canoe. It looks very old. It is very big. "I wonder how many people it would have held" said Menathey. "i wonder how old it is" said Kespaul.

niʔyex^wegas k^w qaqsemos. ne k^w ga taqəm k^wanas gət yiqəšoʔ ta nux^wel. qajeʔot taqəm ʔi: ʔaʔayin čēčuqomayčəm Kespal. "hehewč qaqəm. q^waga hošt ʔeltan," hot Kespaul. ʔuk^w ʔot k^wal qaqəm. jeʔeyʔ θo ju.

The boys forgot about their game. They spent a long time talking about who might have used the old canoe. As they were talking, Kespaul's stomach started to growl. "I am hungry. Let's go eat." he said to his friends. Everyone started to realize that they were also hungry. They ran home.

juʔ ju Menaθey k^w nes k^wuk^wpa ʔeʔexetas ša ti k^walt. hotot qayehəm hanəm q^wašq^wiš Menaθey. šoʔosəm k^wuk^wpas. papk^watas ta qax ʔičsens Menaθey. "čemołčx^w?" natəm k^wuk^wpa. niyex^wəm Menaθey ša ʔičsens. ʔaʔayin tawtas še k^wuk^wpas ninije k^w θiyeyčs ša nux^wel. q^wayin tasečoʔ k^w q^womis.

Menathey ran home where grandpa was carving a huge feast dish. Menathey is shouting excitedly. Grandpa looks up. He saw the bruise on Menathey's forehead. "What happened", asked grandfather. Menathey had forgotten that he had bruised his forehead. He began to tell his grandpa about the canoe they found. "it must be at least a hundred years old" said Menathey.

qasqasem k^wuk^wpə. "toxnex^wčšin nux^wel. θox^wens k^wa ʔeʔelos. heʔ šat^s manəʔ hega ša ʔayeštanos ʔa hitoʔ." hehew ti qasems ša k^wuk^wpas ninije k^w q^waq^wθəms. "hehew k^wa čēčigat mot ʔak^w hayhi ʔik^w θaθčeʔəm. ʔuk^wtəm hayhitaygasoʔ. k^wanetačx^w ša čelas xatek^w asqičs ša ʔaqt ʔayeʔ hayewoʔ ʔasnə pəpəmoʔ."

Grandfather had a big smile talking about his story. "They were the best builders and carvers. They were able to do anything. You know those three totem poles in front of the longhouse? It was each of their work."

nonpeganəm Menaθey hehew k^w ʔačts, "namθam k^wat^s ʔoʔsəm, ʔuk^wsam tam hayhitən, nam k^wat^s hehew." gayt^səm ʔat^s k^wuk^wpa k^wisəm k^wvnas k^wenaye ʔayeštanos ʔat^s čēčmeq^w? saʔa, čelas, mos, θiyēčts, k^wanas k^wεʔet?

Menathey was thinking just as he was about to fall asleep, "when i grow up i will also be a builder and carver. Just like them." I will ask grandpa tomorrow how many brothers hs father had. Two, three four, five or more..."

gayeltanč: čemasče nonpeganəms Menaθey k^wvnas k^wenaye ʔayeštans ša čēčmeq^ws - saʔa, čelas, mos, θiyēčts, k^wanas k^wεʔet?

Question: Why did Menathey that that his great grandpa might have two, three, four, five or more brothers?