

## Discussion questions for Chapter 1, 'The Native Languages of Wisconsin'

**First, watch these two very brief videos.**

- a. [Master---Apprentice](#): Arlene Thunder Blackdeer (HoChunk)
  - b. [A living language](#): Ron Korn (Menominee)
1. Describe the approaches in the two videos to language maintenance. (I used the term 'language maintenance', many some people talk about 'revitalization', 'preservation', etc. These can be different things or different names for similar things.)
  2. What are the goals? What do the people involved hope to see happen specifically?
  3. What are the motivations of the people involved?
  4. What kinds of challenges are involved in keeping these languages alive?

**Second, to the chapter.**

1. What American Indian languages are/were spoken in Wisconsin? What families do they belong to? What languages have been displaced from Wisconsin? Which have come to Wisconsin?
2. How many speakers do they have? (If you didn't know these numbers, were you surprised by them?) What are the difficulties in establishing numbers of speakers?
3. We've already talked a little about 'endangerment'. How is it defined here?
4. Why are these languages endangered?
  - a. What have government policies been toward indigenous languages?
  - b. What were the boarding schools and what role did they play?
  - c. How does the contemporary situation differ or not differ from the situation 50 or 100 years ago?
5. Describe the various efforts underway in Wisconsin's Native American communities to revitalize their languages. Visit at least one of the websites noted in the chapter (or another from a Wisconsin tribe/band) and be able to describe what people are doing for language preservation.