



txʷəl gʷəlapu, gʷəlapu dʔiišəd, dsyayayəʔ čələp. Amber Sterud Hayward tsi dsdaʔ. spuyaləpabš čəd. λ'uyayus čəd txʷəl ti spuyaləpabš ʔal ti slələʔul'badīʔ yəxʷ ti txʷəlšucidadiʔ.

Good day to you all, my friends and relatives. My name is Amber Sterud Hayward and I am a Puyallup Tribal member. I work for the Puyallup Tribe, formerly in the Historic Preservation Department and currently in the Language Program.

You just watched “The Boarding School & Cushman Project: The Education of the First People of this Land.”

This video describes the education system of our ancestors who resided in the usual and accustomed areas of Lushootseed country in Washington State.

As you saw in the video, our people highly valued the land, the people, other tribes and cultures, and speaking multiple languages. We valued our families, caring for our community, our history, our traditional stories and teachings. Our people still highly value each of these things today.

Pre-European contact, there were thousands of Native languages spoken across the United States by millions of Native speakers. Presently there are believed to be approximately 175 Native Tribal language spoken by approximately 350,000 people, with English still being the predominant language.

Can you imagine a time in Tacoma’s history when a person could speak up to 15 languages? Probably not. That’s because, post European contact, Colonizers forced assimilation upon our people and forced the English language and culture on our ancestors. Monolingualism and ethnocentrism is highly valued in American history, and we still see the effects of this today.

I’d like to broaden our scope and take a peek at the rest of the world as it relates to monolingual, bilingual and multilingual speakers. There are approximately 379 million English monolingual speakers in the world. English is the predominate language in the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Ireland and the United States – with about 75% of Americans being monolingual.

There are 1.132 billion bilingual English speakers in the world. Did you realize that almost half of the world speaks at least 2 languages? Think about that for a moment. There are several countries in the world that have multiple official languages including: Aruba, Luxembourg,

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Singapore, Malaysia, India and South Africa. Multilingual speakers make up about 13% of the world's population.

Now let's focus back on the United States. Think back to the values and education system you listened to in this video regarding the Native Peoples of this land. I'd like to ask some questions for you to personally reflect on.

1. Where do your ancestors come from?
2. What are your ancestral languages?
3. Do you or your family members speak those ancestral languages?
4. If you don't speak them, think about why you don't.
5. Do you feel that your ancestral language is important to pass on to your children and future generations?
6. Knowing that the First People of this land highly valued multiple languages, how does this compare to American values?

Now I'd like you to take some action in your personal life, and see how you might start valuing the languages and cultures around you. You can start by recognizing the people you interact with daily who come from different cultures and speak different languages. These people might be your neighbors, co-workers, students and even family members. Maybe these people are your own parents or grandparents who haven't passed down your ancestral language to you.

If you desire to broaden your knowledge and acceptance of your ancestry and other cultures, begin asking the people in your life about their ancestral languages. You can begin by asking them how to say a few greetings and departure phrases and work on them each time you see them. How do you think those people would feel if you put some effort into speaking their language with them? South African Comedian Trevor Noah reportedly speaks 8 different languages and states, "Nelson Mandela once said, 'If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart.' He was so right. When you make the effort to speak someone else's language, even if it's just basic phrases here and there, you are saying to them, 'I understand that you have a culture and identity that exists beyond me. I see you as a human being.'" End quote.

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Please know that the full immersion Lushootseed video and this accompanying video has not been arbitrarily put together. Each word, perspective, story, and each question has been chosen very intentionally. This very Puyallup-centric presentation of history was very deliberately compiled to make you see us as human beings who have a story to share. By centering our story right here in our homelands, you have to connect to us through the geography and specific stories shared. We are trying to make it hard for you to disconnect from us. We've all heard the blanket statements regarding the Native American experience in the United States. These blanket statements still allow for you to detach from our stories. We want you to know that these things occurred right here, to our people, on the Puyallup Reservation in Pierce County Washington – and the effects of this history still has an impact on our community today.

We thank you for your time, and we mostly thank you for considering personally reflecting on this video, the questions and broadening your awareness for others in your life - because we all want to be seen as human beings, to be acknowledged and to be accepted.

If you'd like to dig deeper, or would like more time to process these concepts and values, please see the accompanying document that goes with this section covering The Education of the First People of this Land.

huyəx̣ẉ čəł – We are finished.

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