

About the Siletz Tribal Language Program

siletzlanguage.org/about-siletz-tribal-language.php

1. What were the five major language families spoken on the Coast (Siletz) Reservation?

Athabaskan, Hoka, Penutian, Sahaptin, and Salish.

2. Explain why Chinook Wawa (Jargon) was created and used.

The Chinook Jargon was used to communicate between different language speakers, including English speakers.

3. What year was the Practical Alphabet developed? What did the Practical Alphabet make possible?

It was developed in 1994. The Practical Alphabet made possible a keyboard-friendly format, documentation of the language, and curriculum development.

4. When did the first Athabaskan language classes begin in Siletz?

The early 1980s.

5. What was found in the Siletz Tribal-wide assessment to determine the number of Siletz language speakers in 1996?

The Tribe had lost more than 90 percent of the ability to speak the Native language, Athabaskan.

6. What was the Tribe's response to this finding?

Possible answers: Teaching community classes, creating a permanent position of Traditional Arts and Language Specialists, teaching in school classrooms, applying for grant funding to develop curriculum.

7. What is the hope for sharing language lessons?

"... that the Creator will help us to keep these ancient words of ours alive, for this generation and all those yet to come."