



The Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund Language Style Guide

This language style guide is for staff of the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund (DWF) to ensure consistent language throughout all communications.

You may find many Indigenous Peoples/community members use terminology that DWF avoids. Each Indigenous person and community are unique, and many terms continue to hold significant historical context and meaning behind them. It is not our place to correct the terminology Indigenous community members use, nor is it acceptable to adopt this terminology.

Finally, Chanie Wenjack was an Anishinaabe boy born in Ogoki Post on the Marten Falls Reserve in Northern Ontario. In honour of Chanie’s Anishinaabe heritage, DWF tends to use Anishinaabemowin words/phrases, as well as Anishinaabe stories, where applicable and appropriate in our work.

This Language Style Guide will be revised on an ongoing basis.

Mission

Inspired by Chanie’s story and Gord’s call to build a better Canada, the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund aims to build cultural understanding and create a path toward reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Vision

Our goal is to improve the lives of Indigenous people by building awareness, education, and connections between all peoples in Canada.

Principles

Our name is: Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund. Include “the” as part of a sentence, not as part of the name. Use the abbreviation “DWF” after the full name has appeared whenever possible.

Capitalize according to Indigenous preference, not to standard resources.

Avoid possessives before groups (e.g., Canada’s Indigenous Peoples).

Always refer to the three major groups of Indigenous Peoples in the same order: First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. (And where Urban Indigenous people are included in the list, it follows Métis.)

Do not use “the” or “people” with “Inuit”.

Always include the accent on Métis. (ALT + 0233 on num pad.)

Use Indigenous Peoples as a term specifically referring to groups of people—i.e. peoples).

Use Indigenous people as a more generic term referring more to the individuals than to the groups—e.g. when Indigenous people move to urban centres...

Read more about Peoples vs. People in [UBC's Indigenous Peoples Language Guide](#), page 6.

If you are working with an Indigenous community, use their preferred terminology. Only translate the community name to French if they have an official French translation.

Use the term non-Indigenous people(s) instead of settlers, colonizers, Europeans, newcomers, and so on.

Use "all people(s) in Canada" rather than Canadians.

For Indigenous Elders, board members, artists etc., include which Nation they are from when appropriate, and using the preferred terms of the individual being described.

Example:

- Sarah Midanik (Métis Nation of Alberta)

Use the term "content warning" ahead of information about the impact of residential schools.

DWF is a national charity

Punctuation

Use the oxford comma (for example: "First Nations, Inuit, and Métis" rather than "First Nations, Inuit and Métis").

Use double quotation marks. (Use single quotation marks only for quotations that appear within a quotation.)

Place most punctuation (commas and periods always) within quotation marks. In bulleted lists, do not include end punctuation except where items are complete sentences.

Single quotation marks when referring to a title of a work of art, ie 'Beading Together' by Corrina McKay

Numbers and Dates

Spell out numbers one through nine in most cases in running text; use numerals for 10 and higher.

For elementary and high school grades, use numerals. For example: Grade 7.

Write dates without an ordinal indicator ("st," "nd," "rd," "th")

Write dates in month day, year format: July 31, 2016, or just July 31 if the year is already clear (instead of: July 31st, 2016, or July 31st)

Use abbreviated months when space is limited. For example "Jan 31"

For date ranges, use "to" instead of an en dash in date ranges. For example: March 29 to April 4. Exceptions for social media due to space.

Time: 1:00 PM ET (include capitalized PM or AM, ET or PT)

Capitalization

(Does not follow standard capitalization.)

Artist Ambassador Program	Legacy Schools
Band, Band Councils	Legacy Spaces

Calls to Action (caps when referring to the TRC's 94 Calls to Action)	Medicine Wheel
Chief and Council	Métis, Métis Citizen, Métis Historic Homeland, Métis Homeland, Métis Nation
Chief, hereditary Chief	Nation, Nations
Comprehensive Land Claims	non-Indigenous people
Confederation, pre-Confederation	Numbered Treaties, Peace and Friendship Treaties, Williams Treaties, etc.
Elder	Parliament
First Nation(s)	Potlatch
Friendship Centre	Province of British Columbia
Government of Canada, but Canadian government	Province of Canada
Grade 7—use caps and numerals, but seventh grade	ReconciliACTION Guidebook
Indian	reconciliACTION, reconciliACTIONs
Indian Agent	Status Indian, non-Status Indian, but Indian status
Indian Bands and Councils	Supreme Court of Canada
Indigenize, Indigenization (but indigenous in relation to plants, animals, etc.)	Survivor of residential school
Indigenous knowledge	the West, Western
Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous people	Two-Spirit
Internet	Urban Indigenous people
Inuit	Youth Ambassador Program
Knowledge Keeper	Gord Downie's call to 'Do Something'

Do Not Capitalize

act, acts of Parliament	federal government
colonialism	powwow
colonization	reconciliation
contact	residential school system, residential schools, Indian residential schools
day schools, Indian day schools	treaty, treaties, treaty process (generic)
decolonization	unceded territory

Terms to Avoid

Aboriginal (unless using legal terms)
Canada's Indigenous Peoples, our Indigenous Peoples (implies ownership)
Indian (unless using legal terms). Also avoid "city Indian" or other variations.
Indigenous Canadians
Master (i.e. Masterlist which is rooted in slavery terms)
Native

Trailblazer

NEW Naming Conventions

New	Former
Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation	Mississaugas of the New Credit (official website)

Translations Community Names

English	French
Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation	La Première Nation des Mississaugas de Credit (used on official website)

General rule: do not translate community name unless officially used by that community.

DWF Land Acknowledgement | Reconnaissance du territoire (Toronto)

English	French
<i>The Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund operates programs throughout Turtle Island. Our main office is located on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat Peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people. We acknowledge that the area is covered by Treaty 13, signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and is located within Dish With One Spoon Territory.</i>	Le Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund gère des programmes dans toute l'Île de la Tortue. Notre bureau principal est situé sur le territoire traditionnel de nombreuses nations, notamment la Première Nation des Mississaugas de Credit, les Anishnabeg, les Chippewa, les Haudenosaunee et les Wendat, et il abrite aujourd'hui de nombreux peuples inuits, métis et des Premières nations. Nous reconnaissons que la région est couverte par le Traité n° 13, signé avec la Première Nation des Mississaugas de Credit, et qu'elle est située dans le territoire du « bol à une seule cuillère ».

Boilerplate “About” section

About the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund

Inspired by Chanie’s story and Gord’s call to build a better Canada, the Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund (DWF) aims to build cultural understanding and create a path towards reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. DWF’s work centres around improving the lives of Indigenous people by building awareness, education, and connections between all people.

For more, visit www.downiewenjack.ca @downiewenjack **Resources**

[BCcampus Indigenization Collaborative Project, 2016 – 2018](#)

[Indigenous Peoples: Language Guidelines Version 3.0, UBC](#)

