

Oral History

Oral History is a way of passing on knowledge by speaking, listening and remembering.

For Cree, Metis, and many other Indigenous peoples, oral history means learning from a person who knows, a family member, a knowledge keeper, or an Elder, who has information on a particular topic. The history can include family stories about certain people or places. It can relate to a particular event, or it can explain something about the way things are. A good memory is important to get the information correct. Often it uses storytelling, *âcimowin* (Cree), or *aen nistwayr* (Michif). The learner is not given an explicit moral or lesson but is expected to ponder and think for themselves what the meaning is behind a story.

There are certain times, seasons, and places where specific types of oral histories and stories are told. Some of it is privileged information and only some members of communities can be present. Oral information can be sacred in nature, metaphors to convey life lessons, accounts of kinship networks and family genealogies, or important knowledge about traditional ways.