

## Piipaash Alphabet Pronunciation Guide

### The Xalychidom Alphabet

The alphabet we are using is one that has been developed by a group of tribal members from the Community. We use Roman symbols as the English alphabet does, but they do not necessarily represent the same sounds as English letters. So, if you go about trying to read Piipaash as if it were English, you will likely pronounce the words wrong. You will have to learn this writing system letter by letter, and leave English rules aside.

Some Maricopa sounds do not exist in English (and vice-versa), so it can be difficult to describe them to English speakers. In the second column below, an approximate English equivalent is provided.

### Stress

Stress falls on the final syllable of the root word (e.g., pii-paash' not pii'-paash)

### Pluralization

In Piipaash, most nouns do not have plural forms. The same noun form is used in reference to one or many (a few nouns that reference people do have plurals). Verbs, however, have forms that indicate the subject is either singular (1), dual (2) or plural (3+).

### Vowels

The Piipaash alphabet contains five (5) short vowels and five (5) long vowels. The principal difference between long and short vowels is the duration for which they are held. They are as follows:

#### SHORT VOWELS

| Letter | O'odham                     | Piipaash | Milga:n        |
|--------|-----------------------------|----------|----------------|
| a      | like the /a/ in father      | 'a       | saguaro cactus |
| e      | usually like the /e/ in pet | 'ave     | snake          |
| i      | usually like the /i/ in sit | dish     | seed           |
| o      | like the /o/ in go          | iitho    | stomach        |
| u      | like the /u/ in flute       | kuchar   | spoon          |

#### LONG VOWELS

| Letter | O'odham                        | Piipaash | Milga:n |
|--------|--------------------------------|----------|---------|
| aa     | like the /a/ in father         | paap     | potatoe |
| ee     | usually like the /ei/ in eight | 'avee    | mouse   |
| ii     | usually like the /ee/ in seed  | mariik   | bean    |
| oo     | like the /o/ in go             | iidoo    | tooth   |
| uu     | like the /u/ in flute          | 'uuv     | grapes  |

## CONSONANTS

The Piipaash alphabet contains 25 consonant sounds, two of which are derived from Spanish and are utilized only in borrowed words.

| Letter | Sound   | Piipaash   | Milga:n            |
|--------|---|------------|--------------------|
| ch     | like the /ch/ in chair                                  | chii       | fish               |
| d      | like the /th/ in this or that                           | thadish    | corn               |
| f      | like the /f/ in fish (Spanish derivative)               | kafee      | coffee             |
| k      | like the /k/ in kiss                                    | kosh       | pig                |
| kw     | like /k/ with rounded lips (initial sound in queen)     | kwnxo      | basket             |
| ky     | /k/-/y/ sequence (initial sound in cute)                | mathkyaaly | ramada             |
| l      | like the /l/ in land                                    | lames      | table/city of mesa |
| ly     | like the /ll/ in million                                | kalyaap    | prickly pear       |
| m      | like the /m/ in man                                     | maa        | milk               |
| n      | like the /m/ in man                                     | npee       | wheat              |
| ng     | like the /n/ in name                                    | narangk    | orange (fruit)     |
| ny     | like the /ng/ in song (Spanish derivative)              | nyaa       | l/sun/east/day     |
| p      | like the /ny/ in canyon                                 | pan        | bread              |
| q      | like the /p/ in spin (soft)                             | vqor       | fruit              |
| qw     | like /k/ but tongue touches further back in the mouth   | qwaaq      | deer               |
| r      | rolled like Spanish /rr/ in perro                       | rav        | chili              |
| s      | like the /s/ in salt                                    | sny'ak     | woman              |
| sh     | like the /sh/ in share                                  | shiyaal    | money              |
| t      | like the /t/ in talk                                    | mat        | earth/dirt         |
| th     | like the /th/ in thousand or thin                       | tha'ur     | chair              |
| v      | like the /v/ in victory                                 | va         | house              |
| w      | like the /w/ in win                                     | iiwaa      | heart              |
| x      | like the German /ch/, (/h/ is closest sound in English) | xa         | water              |
| xw     | like the /x/ above but with rounded lips                | milxwee    | skunk              |
| y      | like the /y/ in yes                                     | iiyaa      | mouth              |

## COMMON DIPTHONGS

A diphthong refers to two adjacent vowel sounds occurring within the same syllable.

| Letter | Sound                                     | Piipaash | Milga:n |
|--------|---|----------|---------|
| ch     | like the /ch/ in chair                    | chii     | fish    |
| d      | like the /th/ in this or that             | thadish  | corn    |
| f      | like the /f/ in fish (Spanish derivative) | kafee    | coffee  |
| k      | like the /k/ in kiss                      | kosh     | pig     |

### Glottal Stop

A glottal stop (which looks like an English apostrophe) / ' / represents a closed glottis, which means the throat is closed and no air is passing through. If the glottal stop occurs in the middle of a word, it is a quick pause or a stop in the flow of breath as in the English expression uh-oh.

salt - s'ii

In Maricopa, words beginning with a vowel may sound as if they begin with an English /h/ sound. This is because the glottis is open and air is passing through. If the vowel is preceded by a glottal stop, that means no air is passing through the closed throat, therefore, no English /h/ sound. \*

iiwaa (heewaa) - his/her/its heart

'iiwaa (eewaa) – my heart

A glottal stop / ' / may also occur at the beginning of a word that begins with a consonant. In this case an epenthetic vowel is sometimes inserted.\*

mxank (məxank) - he/she/it likes it

'mxank ('əmxank) - I like it

*\*Some speakers do not noticeably enunciate the glottal stop at the beginning of a word.*