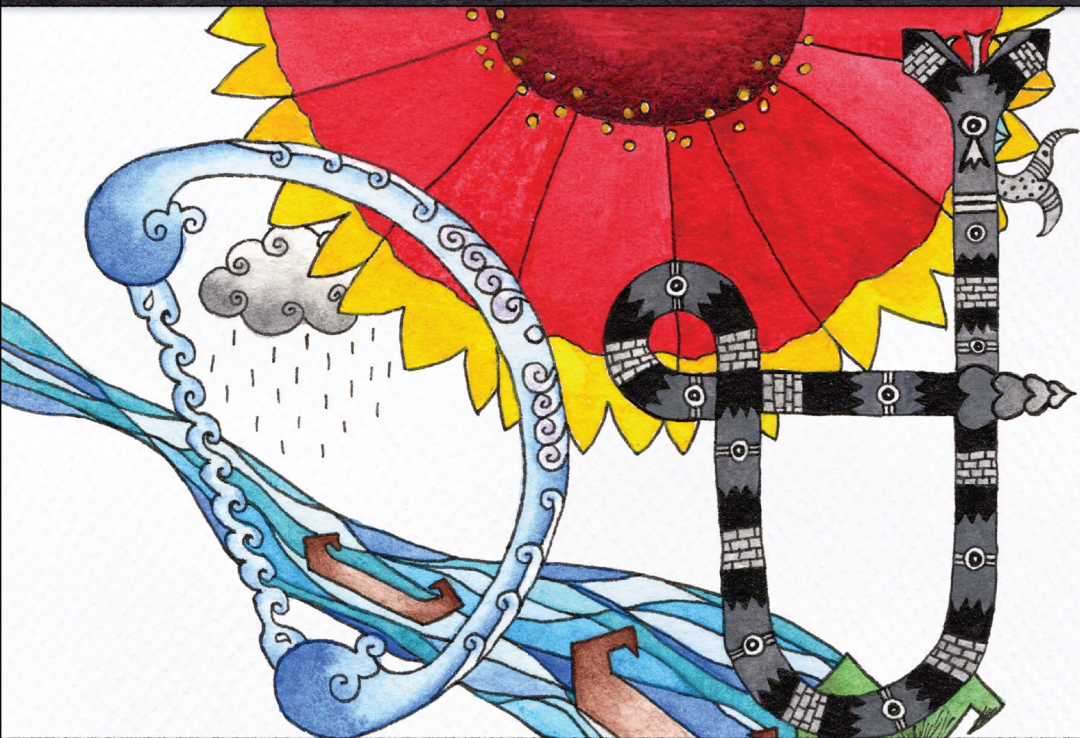


The Cherokee Syllabary

AN ILLUSTRATED KEY TO THE CHEROKEE LANGUAGE



ᎠᎵ ᎠᎵᎵ ᎠᎵᎵᎵ
Tsalagi Digoweli Tsunoyvgi

Written by Brad Wagon • Illustrated by Beth Anderson

The Cherokee alphabet is not an alphabet at all but a **syllabary**. That means that each Cherokee character represents a complete syllable, not just a consonant or a vowel. The Cherokee word for “water,” pronounced *ama*, is written with three English letters, **a**, **m**, and **a**. Using the Cherokee syllabary, the same word is written with only two characters: **D**, pronounced *a*, and **Ꮝ** pronounced *ma*.

Accompanying each of the illustrations is a facing page that shows a Cherokee word that contains the illustrated Cherokee syllabary character. The sound of each syllable in the Cherokee word is shown below the corresponding Cherokee character. The English translation of the Cherokee word is shown on the following line.

A row of characters from the Cherokee syllabary chart is shown at the bottom of each page, with each character’s corresponding sound below it.

The entire Cherokee syllabary is shown on the next page as a chart. The chart contains a column for each vowel sound; the rows show how those vowel sounds combine with each of the consonant sounds to make a Cherokee syllable.

Basic Pronunciation Key

- a:** as a in “father” **e:** as a in “cake”
- i:** as e in “Pete” **o:** as o in “hello”
- u:** as u in “tuba” **v:** as u in “rung” but with a more nasal sound

All the Cherokee consonant sounds are the same as their English versions with a few exceptions:

- g:** sounds like the *g* in “gaff” or the *k* in “kite”
- qu:** sounds like the *qu* in “question” or the *gw* in “Gwen”
- tl:** non-English sound made by combining *t* or *h* with the *l* sound
- Ts:** sounds like *j* in “John,” or *ch* in “chair”

D	R	T	Ꮘ	Ꮖ	i
a	e	i	o	u	v
Ꮝ Ꮟ	Ꮡ Ꮢ	Ꮣ Ꮤ	Ꮥ Ꮦ	Ꮧ Ꮨ	Ꮩ Ꮪ
ga ka	ge gi	go gu	gv		
Ꮫ	Ꮬ	Ꮭ	Ꮮ	Ꮯ	Ꮰ
ha	he	hi	ho	hu	hv
Ꮱ	Ꮲ	Ꮳ	Ꮴ	Ꮵ	Ꮶ
la	le	li	lo	lu	lv
Ꮷ	Ꮸ	Ꮹ	Ꮺ		
ma	me	mi	mo	mu	
Ꮻ Ꮼ Ꮽ	Ꮾ	Ꮿ	Ᏸ	Ᏹ	Ᏺ
na hna nah	ne	ni	no	nu	nv
Ᏻ	Ᏼ	Ᏽ	᏶	᏷	ᏸ
qua	que	qui	quo	quu	quv
ᏹ ᏺ	ᏻ	ᏼ	ᏽ	᏾	᏿
sa s	se	si	so	su	sv
᏿ ᏽ	᏾ ᏿	᏿ ᏽ	᏿ ᏽ	᏿ ᏽ	᏿ ᏽ
da ta	de te	di ti	do/to	du/tu	dv/tv
ᏽ	᏾	᏿	ᏽ	᏾	᏿
tla dla	tle tli	tlo tlu	tlv		
᏿	ᏽ	᏾	᏿	ᏽ	᏾
tsa tse	tsi tso	tsu tsv			
᏿	ᏽ	᏾	᏿	ᏽ	᏾
wa we	wi wo	wu wv			
ᏽ	᏾	᏿	ᏽ	᏾	᏿
ya ye	yi yo	yu yv			



GA GT

ga lv lo i

sky

G g Y A J E
ga ge gi go gu gv

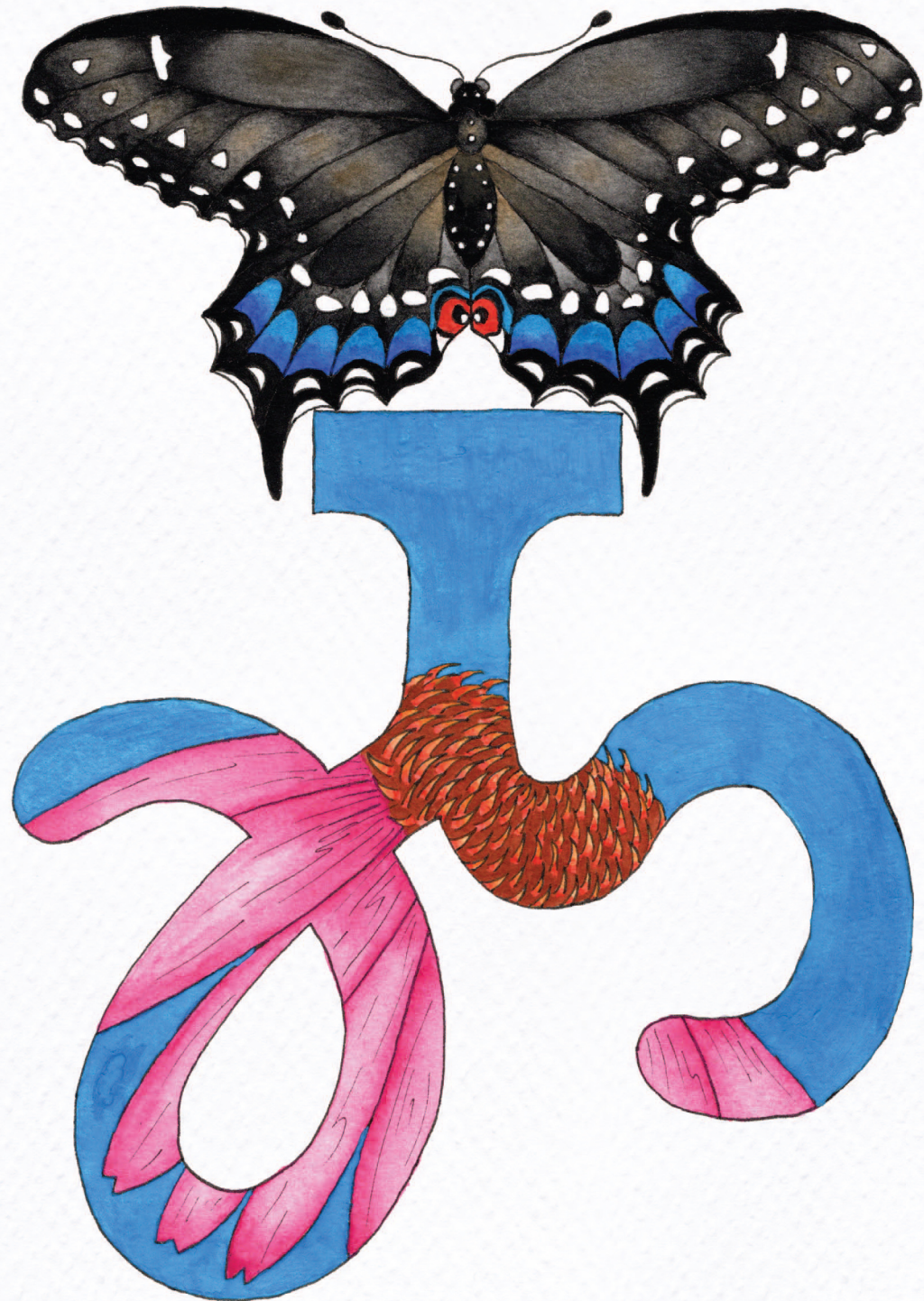


4M

se lu

corn

W ɔ ɹ G M ʌ
la le li lo lu lv



କାମାମା

ka ma ma

butterfly

କା ମେ ମି ମୋ ମୁ
ma me mi mo mu



ᑭᑭᑭ

da g' si

turtle

ᑭ ᑭᑭ ᑭᑭ ᑭᑭ ᑭᑭ ᑭᑭ
da de di do du dv



ᑦᑲᑲ

tlo ge si

field

ᑲ ᑲ ᑲ ᑦ ᑦ ᑲ
tla tle tli tlo tlu tlv