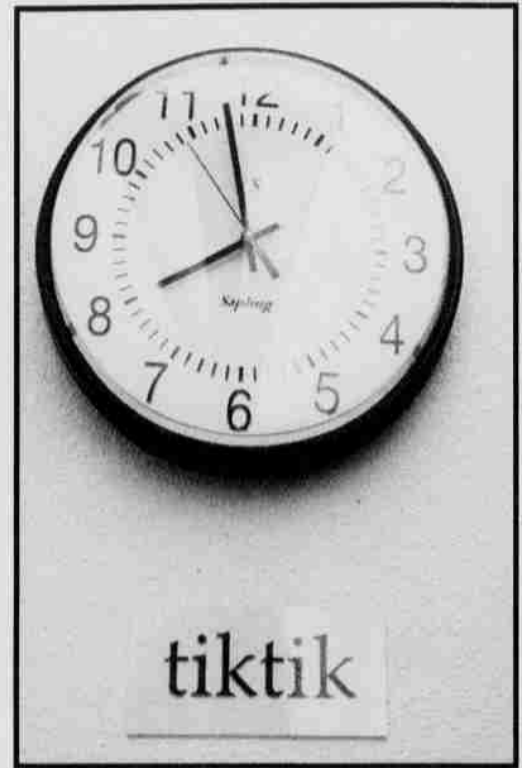




**In Flight** — Michael Reyes (left) and Sammy Johnson toss paper airplanes from the class balcony. Children in the class are allowed plenty of fun time, which can be essential to a child's development.



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ing electric brain."

"We have a group of folks who discuss these words on regular basis and come up with new names in Chinuk," said Johnson.

The teachers hope to expand the program to ensure success.

"We need follow through, otherwise it won't work," said Whisler. "We need commitment from the Tribal Council. I hope they realize how important it is to our survival. It's part of our Tribal heritage. I think it's good when kids can be proud of their heritage."

Whisler certainly is. She learned Chinuk from her fluent grandmother. As a girl, Whisler would listen to her grandmother and aunts gossip in Chinuk.

"My one goal in life was to have a conversation with her in Chinuk, which I did. Speaking Chinuk is like keeping her here with me. I love that."

Whisler is proud to pass the language on to the children, as her grandmother did to her. Other Chinuk speakers feel the same.

"To see a new generation of children speaking the language," said Johnson. "It makes it all worthwhile." ■



**"Ears" = "Qxalan"** — Tribal youth Cameo Kester touches her ears and repeats "Qxalan" which is the Chinuk word for ears as Tony Johnson leads the class in an exercise designed to teach the kids to identify with themselves in Chinuk.



**Jackie's Lap** —

Cameo Kester and Shayla Ulestad sit in Language specialist Jackie Whisler's lap during story time. The children are read to in Chinuk each day.