

Opichi (Robin)

*Maajii-Ojibwemowag (They Begin to Speak Ojibwe) – ANA Language Project
Teacher/Caregiver Supplemental Document*

The Story of Opichi

Since very long ago, the Anishinaabeg have a tradition of sending children out to the forest to build a lodge, fast, and wait for a dream or vision once they are old enough.

There was once a young boy named Opichi who's father was very respected in the community. Instead of waiting for the last snow to leave the ground before sending his child into the woods as was custom, his eager father sent him out with snow still covering everything. The father believed his son would become stronger from going

into the cold and would have a stronger vision.

Eager to please his parents, young Opichi went out into the woods to build his lodge, fast, and wait for his vision.

Each day his father would check up on him and ask his son what he had seen. The boy was visited by many animals, beaver, hawk, wolf, and bear, who all gave him teachings. His father was happy to hear this but wanted Opichi to stay longer, believing his son would grow stronger the more visions he saw. His

father didn't seem to notice his cold and shivering son getting weaker by the day.

After four days Opichi's mother was too concerned about her son's health and safety, so she told the father it was time to get their son. Once they arrived however, they couldn't find their son anywhere around the lodge he had built and stayed in for the past four days.

All of a sudden, a bird with a red chest flew out of the lodge making a noise resembling their son's name: *opi chi chi chi, opi chi chi chi*.

The bird then landed on a tree branch and spoke: "My parents," said the bird, "the son you knew is gone. You sent him out too early and asked him to wait out there for too long. Now I will return at the beginning of each spring, and my song will let people know when it is the time for a child to go on a dream fast. Now you must also help to remind parents not to make their child go out too early or stay out too long."



Giiwedinong Set: Opichi Book Ojibwe Language Word List

- **Aaniin**– hello
- **Indizhinikaaz**– I am called
- **Ziigwan**– it is Spring
- **Nindoozaawaakigane** – I have an orange chest
- **Nimiskwaakigane**– I have a red chest
- **Gigizhebaawagad**- it is morning time
- **Naabe-bineshiinh**– a male bird
- **Nagamodaa**– let's sing
- **Ishkwaagamizigewag**- they finish boiling sap
- **Ingiw**– those
- **Anishinaabeg**– Anishinaabe people
- **Nibakade**– I am hungry
- **Mooség**– worms
- **Niminwendaan**– I like
- **Gaye**– and, also, as for, too
- **Niin**– I, me
- **Indoozhitoomin**– we are building
- **Waziswan**- a nest
- **Omaa**– here
- **Zhingwaakong**– white pine
- **Nashke!**- Look!



Opichi Migration Map



-Opichiwig have a very large migration range, they can travel from as far north as Alaska to as far south as Guatemala!

-The northern section of the map is the breeding area in the spring time, the middle section is where they are most likely to hang out year-round, and the lower section is where most like to be during the cold winter months.

-Why do opichiwig migrate during the winter?

In the winter the ground becomes too cold and frozen for them to get mooseg out of the ground to eat, so they must fly south to where the ground is warmer and easier to pull out mooseg.

-Opichiwig typically fly at a speed of 30-36 mph and can travel as far as 100-200 miles per day! They mostly journey south during the daytime, but some continue on overnight as well.

-Opichiwig tend to cruise together in flocks, so they don't get too lonely. During migration when they don't have much time for pulling out mooseg they eat a lot of berries.

-Why don't opichiwig just stay in the south? The soil in the south can get so warm in the summer time that the mooseg burrow deeper into the soil, making it very difficult for opichiwig to get their food.

That's why they make the journey back up north after the snow melts, the ground unfreezes, and the cold goes away.



Giiwedining Set: Opichi Book Ojibwe Language Word List Continued

- **Nisinoon**– There are three
- **Iniw**– That, those
- **Waawan**– an egg
- **Bashkaawe'omag**– they are hatching
- **Banajaanyag**– baby birds
- **Wenda**– really; completely
- **Mawiwag**– They are crying
- **Giwii-amwaawaa**– do you want to eat
- **Wiisinidaa**– let's eat
- **Ashamishin**– feed me
- **Niibin**– It is summer
- **Inga-zoongide'e**– I shall be brave
- **Weweni**– Be careful
- **Mawinzodaa**– let's pick berries
- **Odatagaagominag**– blackberries
- **Manoomin**– wild rice
- **Dagwaagin**– it is fall
- **Aniibiishan**– leaves
- **Waatebagaa**– there are bright and colorful leaves
- **Maajipon**– it starts to snow
- **Gisinaa**– it is cold

Extra Resources:

More opichi Information & Facts:

https://journeynorth.org/tm/robin/facts_migration.html

[https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/American_Robin/lifehistory#](https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/American_Robin/lifehistory#story#)

Bineshii migration map explorer:

<https://explorer.audubon.org/explore/species/1055/american-robin/migration?sidebar=collapse&layersPanel=expand>



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Grant number: 90NL0645

