Keku hech ni likwsi?

By Ellen Goodlett
For Shelley
Keku hech ni likwsi?

Ellen Goodlett
Lomewe, xhuk nan.
Ku watun likwsu.
Na xhuk alemske nataopantamen.
Weneyan ahas ok luwe,

“Keku hech ki likwi?”

“N’seksi,” luwe na ahas.
“N’seksi hech?”
luwe na xhuk.

“Ku,”
luwe na seksitahas.
“Seke ahsen.”

“Wanishi,” luwe na xhuk,
ok wenekalao.
Na na xhuk weneyan chahkol ok luwe,

“Keku hech ki likwsi?”

“Ntaskaskwi,”
luwe na chahkol.
“Ntaskaskwi hech?”
luwe na xhuk.

“Ku,”
luwe na askaskwsit chahkol.
“Askaskwe skikw.”

“Wanishi,”
luwe na xhuk, ok wenekalao.
Na na xhuk weneyan chulens ok luwe,

“Keku hech ki likwsi?”

“Newisasi,”
Luwe na chulens.
“Wanishi,”
luwe na xhuk, ok wenekalao.

“Newisasi hech?”
luwe na xhuk.

“Ku,”
luwe na wisasit chulens.
“Wisae xaskwim.”
Na na xhuk weneyan teme ok luwe,

“Keku hech ki likwsi?"
“Newipunkwsi hech?”
luwe na xhuk.

“Ku,”
luwe na wipunkwsič teme.
“Wipunkwe ahchu.”

“Wanishi,”
luwe na xhuk,
ok wenekalao.
"Keku hech ki likwsi?"

"N’siskwinakwsi,“ luwe na ahtu.

Na na xhuk weneyan ahtu ok luwe,
“N’siskwinakwsi hech?”
luwe na xhuk.

“Ku,” luwe na
siskwinakwsit ahtu.
“Siskwinakwe temaken.”

“Wanishi,”
luwe na xhuk,
ok wenekalao.
Na na xhuk weneyan opalaniye ok luwe,
“Keku hech ki likwsi?”

“Nopsi,”
luwe na opalaniye.
“Ku,” luwe na opsit opalaniye. “Ope ool.”

“Wanishi,” luwe na xhuk, ok wenekalao.

Nopsi hech?” luwe na xhuk.
Na na xhuk weneyan okwes ok luwe,

“Keku hech ki likwsi?”

“Nemaxksi,” luwe na okwes.
"Nemaxksi hech?" luwe na xhuk.

"E-e!"
luwe na okwes.

"Eche! Hipaha!"
luwe na maxksit xhuk.
Ok winkhatenamu

Oh-nay !
Long ago, there was a snake.
He did not know his color.
The snake left to find it.

He saw him a crow and said, “What color are you?”
“I am black,” said the crow.

“Am I black?” said the snake.
“No,” said the black crow. “A rock is black.”
“Thank you,” said the snake, and he left him.

Then the snake saw him a frog and said, “What color are you?”
“I am green,” said the frog.

“No,” said the green frog. “Grass is green.”
“Thank you,” said the snake, and he left him.

Then the snake saw him a bird and said, “What color are you?”
“I am yellow,” said the bird.

“No,” said the yellow bird. “Corn is yellow.”
“Thank you,” said the snake, and he left him.

Then the snake saw him a wolf and said, “What color are you?”
“I am gray,” said the wolf.
“Newipunkwsi hech?” luwe na xhuk.
   “Am I gray?” said the snake.
   “No,” said the gray wolf. “A mountain is gray.”
“Wanishi,” luwe na xhuk, ok wenekalao.
   “Thank you,” said the snake, and he left him.

Na na xhuk weneyan ahtu ok luwe, “Keku hech ki likwsi?”
   Then the snake saw him a deer and said, “What color are you?”
“N’siskwinakwsi,” luwe na ahtu.
   “I am brown,” said the deer.

“N’siskwinakwsi hech?” luwe na xhuk.
   “Am I brown?” said the snake.
“Ku,” luwe na siskwinakwsi ahtu. “Siskwinakwe temaken.”
   “No,” said the brown deer. “A road is brown.”
“Wanishi,” luwe na xhuk, ok wenekalao.
   “Thank you,” said the snake, and he left him.

Na na xhuk weneyan opalaniye ok luwe, “Keku hech ki likwsi?”
   Then the snake saw him an eagle and said, “What color are you?”
“Nopsi,” luwe na opalaniye.
   “I am white,” said the eagle.

“Nopsi hech?” luwe na xhuk.
   “Am I white?” said the snake.
“Ku,” luwe na opsi opalaniye. “Ope ool.”
   “No,” said the white eagle. “An egg is white.”
“Wanishi,” luwe na xhuk, ok wenekalao.
   “Thank you,” said the snake, and he left him.

Na na xhuk weneyan okwes ok luwe, “Keku hech ki likwsi?”
   Then the snake saw him a fox and said, “What color are you?”
“Nemaxksi,” luwe na okwes.
   “I am red,” said the fox.

“Nemaxksi hech?” luwe na xhuk.
   “Am I red?” said the snake.
“E-e!” luwe na okwes.
   “Yes!” said the fox.
“Eche! Hipaha!” luwe na maxksit xhuk.
   “Hooray!” said the red snake.

And he was happy.
About the Author

Ellen Goodlett is a Bryn Mawr student majoring in Linguistics and Creative Writing at Swarthmore. She loves writing for children, young and old. Her recent hobbies include learning how to draw and paint, and studying Lenape. She would also like to apologize for any anatomically incorrect drawings in this picture book. Like she said, “drawing and painting is a recent hobby.”
Lomewe, xhuk nan... Ku wantun likwsu.

This story is intended to teach young children animals and colors in Lenape, and to introduce them to simple sentence structures.

Recommended for ages 2-6