What is it?
The Mentor-Apprentice Program (MAP) is a one-on-one language immersion program. A "mentor" (a fluent speaker of a language) is paired with an "apprentice" or learner. Immersion means that you are totally immersed or surrounded with the language. You do not use English for teaching the language.

How does it work?
The mentor and apprentice spend 10-20 hours per week (50 hours per month) together doing everyday activities, but these activities are done using the language at all times. This is a big time commitment, so both mentor and apprentice are paid for their time, like a job. If the mentor or apprentice is working full time, she or he may have to take time off work to participate in the program for the required number of hours, which is why a stipend is paid for their time.

Does the apprentice learn to read and write?
The goal of the Mentor-Apprentice program is to create new speakers of the language, so the focus must be on SPEAKING and LISTENING. Reading and writing are important too, but those skills can come later.

How long is the FPCC Mentor-Apprentice program?
One “year” of the FPCC MAP consists of 300 hours of immersion, which takes about six months to complete. The team completes reports every 50 hours. The reports help the team to see how much they’ve learned over time, and help FPCC track team progress.

Are there tests in the program?
There are no tests, but the apprentice does an evaluation with a panel of 3 community language experts every 100 hours. The evaluation time is a good chance for the team to connect with other speakers in the community. While it is often hard for an apprentice to see his or her own progress, the evaluation panel can provide valuable feedback and encouragement to the team.

Many people in the community want to learn. Can you have more than one apprentice?
The standard team is one mentor and one apprentice. The program will not work well if it becomes like classroom-based teaching, with only one mentor and many apprentices.

Does the Mentor-Apprentice program really work?
Yes! If both mentor and apprentice make the commitment to spend the necessary time in the program, and follow the recommendations, apprentices really do learn a lot! In British Columbia since 2008, we have had over 30 apprentices become more fluent in their languages. It is recommended that mentor and apprentice spend at least 900 hours (3 sets of 300 hours) together in immersion for the apprentice to reach a functional level of fluency.