

Kitwe On Line

Kitwe, Zambia forum for info, news, business and discussions

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20 - Learn To Speak Bemba Online Using The Bible

by JS - Tuesday, September 27, 2011

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/learn-to-speak-bemba-online-using-the-bible.html>

The Holy Bible is a revered book of devotion for inspiration and instruction. It can also help you **learn to speak Bemba!**

The method outlined below is improvised from what is available on the internet at the moment. If you have any suggestions on how this method can be improved on, please feel free to let us know by posting your comments in the box below. (*Please see update 7th January, 2016 below*)

The idea is simply to use three searchable versions of the Bible. One is in English, the second in Bemba and the third is an audio version in Bemba. (We could not find a suitable single searchable English version that combines the convenience of the two types shown below - hence the two English versions).

You open three separate windows in your internet browser to have easy access to each of the windows.

[Photo by David Ball](#)

There are numerous conversations on different topics in the Bible. The better your knowledge of the Bible, the less you need the search functions.

Search for some words in English(text) to get a list of all the passages in the Bible where your chosen words appear. Choose a passage to open and play the equivalent in the Bemba audio window.

As the audio starts, you begin to follow the verse in Bemba(audio) while looking at the words in the English (text) version. By comparing the activity in the three windows, it is possible to learn some useful Bemba words.

Ingredients

You will need to open these three files on your computer or smart phone at the same time, in different tabs of your internet browser:

1. [A searchable version of the Bible](#)

2. [A copy of the Bible open in another tab in your internet browser](#)
3. [A talking version \(MP3\) of the Bemba Bible open in another tab](#) (Currently, only the New Testament is available)

Method

1. Under the Tools menu, create a folder and name it e.g. Bemba Bible
2. Using FireFox internet browser, **bookmark** each of the above websites and place the book marks in the folder you made in (1)
3. From now on, you can come to this file of bookmarks
4. From the Bookmarks menu, open files (1) and (2) by clicking on "**Open All Bookmarks**" (In Different Tabs of same window)
5. Next, **open file (3) in a New Window**
6. Then resize the windows to be able to see them side by side
7. Search for a specific scripture in the English version of the Bible (in window (1))
8. Select one of the verses to open in the next window (Window 2) containing the second English version in text format
9. In the separate(Bemba audio) window (3), select the appropriate chapter and verse
10. Press Play in the Audio window and follow the speaker while following along in window (2) - English text.

By setting up the above shortcuts, it becomes possible to open these windows faster next time you use the method.

id="attachment_4609" align="aligncenter" width="600" caption="Screen shot: Three browser windows opened - kitweonline"

If you relax and try to have fun with it, you will begin to see that it is possible to follow part of the conversation. Initially aim to pick out the words that are pronounced the same in English and Bemba, e.g. names of people and places.

With a bit of practice, you can begin to get some idea of the construction of sentences here and there.

We concede this is no substitute for an App that you can download to your phone and ask it to do a direct translation of what you are saying. But then, while we await the Bemba translating app, this can be a source of learning and fun.

What do you think? Does an App (Application Software) to do this already exist or is this an idea for someone in Kitwe to work on and produce an App that can sell worldwide with different versions of the Bible in all 72 Zambian languages and hundreds of other languages worldwide?

Send in your comments. If you do try this method, let us know how you get on.

P/S If there is enough interest expressed here, we can do a video showing this method in action.

Please see update 7th January, 2016:

Unfortunately, the method referred to above will not work with the quoted resources because the pages have been deleted or moved.

Currently, copies of the Bible in different **world languages** can be found here: <https://www.bible.com/en-GB/versions> -The Bemba version appears under "ChiBemba"

You can also get the Bible in **different Zambian languages** here: http://www.biblesociety-zambia.org/index.php?page=shop.browse&category_id=9&option=com_virtuemart&Itemid=96

Other References:

Free KING JAMES VERSION - (Downloadable PDF): <http://www.turnbacktoGod.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/the-holy-bible.pdf>

Bemba Lesson 1 - Learn ici Bemba (Language) - Instructions

by JS - Saturday, September 11, 2010

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/learn-ici-bemba-language-instructions.html>

Bemba is one of Zambia's second most widely spoken language. Some would say it was the most widely spoken. It is also spoken in neighbouring countries like the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Angola, Botswana and Tanzania.

As a tourist visiting the Copperbelt you can expect to come across someone who only speaks Bemba. Learning a new language is part of the excitement of traveling to new places and getting to interact and integrate with local people. Bemba is a very respectful language.

Plural forms of pronouns are used to convey respect for peers and for those older than yourself. When used in the singular form, pronouns would be directed at young children. The curious fact is that traditional rappers at the king's court actually use pronouns in the singular to enhance the veneration of the king. But this is very advanced language! In general any man older than yourself is addressed as "father" - (*ba*) *tata*, an older woman is addressed as "mother" - (*ba*) *mayo*.

Bemba spoken along the line of rail (Kitwe to Livingstone) contains some English and Nyanja terms. English-Bemba terms:

	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
Be careful	Cenjela	Cenjeleni
Call	Ita	Iteni
Carry	Senda	Sendeni
Close	Isala	Isaleni
Come here	Isa kuno	Iseni kuno
Cut here	Putula apa	Putuleni apa
Don't make noise	Wipanga icongo	Mwipanga icongo
Drop	Ponya	Ponyeni
Fetch	Fwaya	Fwayeni
Gently	Bwinobwino	
Go Away	Kabiye	Kabiyeni
Go backwards	Bwelela kunuma	Bweleleni kunuma
Go forward	Kabiye kuntanshi	Kabiyeni kuntanshi
Go sideways	Kabiye kulubali	Kabiyeni kulubali
Go there	Kabiye kulya	Kabiyeni kulya
Go to the left	Kabiye kukuso	Kabiyeni kukuso
Go to the right	Kabiye kukulyo	Kabiyeni kukulyo
Hit	Uma	Umeni
Hurry up	Endesha	Endesheni
Kneel down	Fukama	Fukameni

Let's go	Tiye	Tiyeni
Lie down	Sendama	Sendameni
Lift	Imya	Imyeni
Listen	Umfwa	Umfweni
Little by little	Panono panono	
Look here	Lolesha kuno	Lolesheni kuno
Look there	Lolesha kulya	Lolesheni kulya
Open	Isula	Isuleni
Paddle	Oba	Obeni
Pour	Itila	Itileni
Pull	Tinta	Tinteni
Push	Sunka	Sunkeni
Put down	Bika panshi	Bikeni panshi
Shout	Punda	Pundeni
Shut up/Be quiet	Ikala tondolo	Ikaleni tondolo
Slowly	Panono panono	
Stop/End	Leka	Lekeni
Take that	Bula cilya	Buleni cilya
Take this	Bula ichi	Buleni ichi
Throw	Posa	Poseni
Walk(quickly)	Endesha	Endesheni

//

Look out for more Bemba lessons here.

For a more comprehensive cover of the language, grab yourself an English-Bemba dictionary and enjoy the journey of learning a new language.//

Bemba Lesson 10 - At the Hospital

by JS - Sunday, March 04, 2012

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/bemba-lesson-10-at-the-hospital.html>

Some of the terms you are likely to come across at the clinic or hospital:

Good morning = Mwashibukeni

Good evening = Cungulopo mukwai

How are you? = Mulishani?

What brings you to the clinic today? = Cinshi camuleta kuno cipatala ilelo?

Photo by Giuseppe Bollanti

Do you have pain? = Pali icilekalipa?

Do you have fever? = Umubili ulekaba?

Is he (or she) having fever? (singular) = Alekabo mubili? (singular)

= Balekabo mubili? (plural)

This pill is for worms = Uyu muti wansokanda

Please chew now = Kokoteni nombaline (or "Sheteni nombaline")

This is a vitamin = Aya ma "vitamin"

Take one each day = Mulenwa kamo cilabushiku

Abdominal pain = Ukukalipa mumala

Are you getting abdominal pain? = Mumala mulekalipa?

Chest pain = Ubukali mucifuba

Nausea = Umuseelu

Vomiting = Ukuluka

Diarrhoea = Ukupolomya

Are you having diarrhoea? = Ulepolomya?

= Mulepolomya?

Are you having diarrhoea? = Alepolomya? (singular)

= Mulepolomya? (Plural)

Are you vomiting? = Uleluka? (singular)

= Muleluka? (plural)

Sleep = Tulo

Go to sleep = Sendama (singular)

= Sendameni (plural)

Itching = Ukubaba

Blood = Umulopa

Saliva = Amate

Sputum = Icikôla

Stools = Icimbusu

Urine = Imisu

A sore = Icilonda

Scabies = Lupele

Sores = Ifilonda

Worms = Insokanda

Water = Amenshi

Bemba Lesson 11 - Visiting Grandma

by JS - Monday, May 21, 2012

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/bemba-lesson-11-visiting-grandma.html>

GREETINGS

Grandma's house = Ing'anda yakwa mama

Grand dad's house = Ing'anda yakwa shikulu

Hello Grandma = Mwapoleni mama

Hello Grandad = Mwapoleni shikulu

How are you? = Muli shani?

I am fine = Ndifye bwino

We are fine = Tulifye bwino

They are fine = Balifye bwino

How's the family? = Ulupwa luli shani?

My name is (John) = Nine (John)

[YouTube Video](#)

COOKING

What are you doing? = Finshi mulecita?

I'm pounding maize = Ndetwa mataba

What are you cooking? = Finshi muleipika?

What can I cook for you? = Finshi ningamwipikila?

What would you like to eat? = Finshi mulefwayo kulya?

What would you like to drink? = Finshi mwalanwa?

Where is the salt? = Umucele ulikwi?

Where is the sugar? = Shuga ilikwi?

I am looking for ... = Ndefwaya ...

I am looking for another ...(mango) = Ndefwaya ...(mango) na imbi

Please wash your hands grandma = Sambeni kuminwe, mama

Your bath water is ready (I have prepared your bath) = Amenshi yakowa nimpekanya

a saucepan = Mupika

plate = Mbale

cup = Nkomaki ("Kapu")

glass = ("Gilasi")

Wooden pallet = Mwiko

Cooking oil = Saladi

Safety matches = Macisa

Charcoal = Malasha

Lamp = Lampi

Candle = Nyali

Maize meal = Bunga

Vegetables = Musalu

Meat = Nama

Salt = Mucele

Sugar = "Shuga"

Dish = Mbale yafongomana

Firewood = Nkuni

Water gourd = Inongo yamenshi

Gourd containing "Munkoyo" = Inongo ya munkoyo

The fire is burning well = Umulilo wayaka

The fire is ready = Umulilo wapya

I'm thirsty = Ndi necilaka

Cover the pot = Kupikeni pa mupika

Put away = Bikeni

Put on the shelf = Bikeni pa lwino

Put on top = Bikeni pamuulu

I am full, thanks = Naikuta, natotela

Put in ... = Bikeni mu ...

Put on ... = Bikeni pa ...

GENERAL

(Answering when you are called by name) = Mukwai

They want ... = Balefwaya ...

Is this ... = Bushe ici... (singular)/ Bushe ifi ... (plural)

Drinking water = Amenshi yakunwa

Bathing water = Amenshi yakusamba

They have gone to ... = Bele ku ...

the fields = mabala

the bush = mpanga

the market = Cisankano

the river = mumana

the roadside = musebo

the post office = "Poshiti ofishi"

the shops = matuka

Would you like ... = Bushe mulefwaya ...

I love you very much = Nalimutemwa sana

I missed you a lot = Nalemufulukwa

Would you like help with that? = Mulefwaya mwafwilisheko?

Are you ok? = Muli bwino?

What will you cook? = Finshi mwala ipika?

We have come to visit you = Twishile mukumumona

Have a safe trip = Mwende umutende

Be safe = Mwikale umutende

Travel well = Mwende bwino

You are all grown up = Namukula

Are you hungry? = Muli nensala?

How is school? = Amasambililo yali shani?

How are your young brothers? = Abaice benu bali shani?

How are your young sisters? = Abaice benu bali shani?

How are your sisters? = Bankashi shenu balishani?

Come and visit us again = Mukese tutandalila nakabili

Come and visit me again = Mukese monako nakabili

We want you to come and visit us soon = tulefwaya mukese tandala nakabili bwangu bwangu

When are you coming to visit me again? = Nililali mukesa monako nakabili?

Welcome back = Mwabweleni

I've missed you = Namufuluka

PRESENTS (GIFTS)

I brought you this (little present) = Namuletelako aka

I brought you some photos = Namuletelako ifikope

You are looking well = Mulemoneka bwino

How was your day? = Mwatandala shani?

That's nice = Cawama

Let's pray = Tulombe/Natupepe/Tusalike

Can you lead us in prayer? = Lombeni

Where is ... = ... li kwi?

the toilet? = cimbusu

under the big tree = mwisamba lya cimuti

tree branch = umusambo wakamuti

Over there = Palya

Behind = Kunuma ya ...

Underneath = Mwisamba lya ...

Between = Pakati ka ...

I want to ... = Ndefwaya uku ...

Learn = Sambilila

Take a photo of you = Ukumukope cikope

Work = Ncito

Do some work = Ukubomba

Clean (verb) = Wamya

Wash (verb) = Samfya

Sweep = Pyanga

Dry (verb) = Anika

Pound/Grind = Twa

Boil (verb) = Ipika

Cook (verb) = Ipika

I want to sleep now = Ndefwayo kusendama nomba

I'm going to my bedroom = Naya kucipinda catulo

TAKING PHOTOS

Please stand here = Iminineni apa

Please come here = Nabese kuno (Iseni kuno)

Can you all squeeze in together? = Mwisekeo capamo bonse

There are some visitors for you = Kwaisa beni

I've had a lot of fun = Nayangala bwino sana

I ate well = Naliila

FAREWELL

We are leaving = Twaya

We are going home = Twaya kung'anda

We are coming back (in the near future) = Twalabwela

We are coming back (in the distant future) = Tukabwela

We will be back to see you = Tukesha mumona

I am ready, let's start off = Ninjipekanya, kuti twaima

Let's go = Natuleya

Bye bye = Shalenipo mukwai

I'm going away = Naya

Bemba Lesson 12: Introducing Yourself

by Dr John Sendama - Tuesday, July 17, 2012

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/bemba-lesson-12-introducing-yourself.html>

Bemba

[YouTube Video](#)

INTRODUCING YOURSELF

Hello - Mwapoleni mukwai

How are you? - Muli shani

I'm fine, thanks - Ndifye bwino mukwai

My name is Jane - Nine Jane

What is your name? - Nimwe bani ishina?

I have come from Kitwe - Nafuma ku Kitwe

I have come from London - Nafuma ku London

I live in London - Njikala mu London

Bemba Lesson 12 - Self Introduction

The KitweOnline English-Bemba Dictionary (ebook) is now available on Smashwords. Download your free sample in any of the following formats for your PC, Laptop, Mac, iPad or eReader:

Kindle (.mobi for Kindle devices and Kindle apps),

Epub (Apple iPad/iBooks, Nook, Sony Reader, Kobo, and most e-reading apps including Stanza, Aldiko, Adobe Digital Editions, others),

PDF (good for reading on PC, or for home printing),

RTF (readable on most word processors),

LRF (Use only for older model Sony Readers that don't support .epub),

Palm Doc (PDB) (for Palm reading devices),

Plain Text (download) (flexible, but lacks much formatting),

Plain Text (view) (viewable as web page).

Free Sample Downloads here: <https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/158704?ref=drjs>

English-Bemba Dictionary 500x822 - kitweonline

BOOK REVIEWS:

Review by: jacqueline dickey on Aug. 07, 2012 : (no rating)

I am very happy to have this dictionary. I would like a Bemba-English version, though.
(reviewed within a week of purchase)

Review by: MUSONDA KAPATAMOYO on June 08, 2012 : (no rating)

Wonderful dictionary. Comes in handy very often. Needs more words though because Bemba is very dynamic and continuously changing. The dictionary could reflect that.
(reviewed within a month of purchase)

Bemba Lesson 13: Days, Weeks, Months, Seasons

by JS - Tuesday, March 13, 2012

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-lesson-8-days-weeks-months-seasons.html>

The following are the terms used to describe the days of the week. We follow this up with some examples of common usage.

WEEK DAYS

The prefix "Pali" means "On" , e.g. "On Monday" ,except for Saturday and Sunday when "**pa**" is used:

MONDAY - Pali Cimo

TUESDAY - Pali Cibili

WEDNESDAY - Pali Citatu

THURSDAY - Pali Cine

FRIDAY - Pali Cisano

SATURDAY - **Pa** Cibelushi

SUNDAY - **Pa** Mulungu

Today is

Today is Monday = Lelo nipali Cimo

Today is Tuesday = Lelo nipali Cibili

Today is Wednesday = Lelo nipali Citatu

Today is Thursday = Lelo nipali Cine

Today is Friday = Lelo nipali Cisano

Today is Saturday = Lelo nipa Cibelushi

Today is Sunday = Lelo nipa Mulungu

I'm coming on

I'm coming on Monday - Nkêsa pali Cimo

I'm coming on Tuesday - Nkêsa pali Cibili

I'm coming on Wednesday - Nkêsa pali Citatu

I'm coming on Thursday - Nkêsa pali Cine

I'm coming on Friday - Nkêsa pali Cisano

I'm coming on Saturday - Nkêsa pa Cibelushi

I'm coming on Sunday - Nkêsa pa Mulungu

I came on

I came on Monday = Naishile pali Cimo

I came on Tuesday = Naishile pali Cibili

I came on Wednesday = Naishile pali Citatu

I came on Thursday = Naishile pali Cine

I came on Friday = Naishile pali Cisano

I came on Saturday = Naishile pa Cibelushi

I came on Sunday = Naishile pa Mulungu

I'm not coming on.....

I'm not coming on Monday = Nshakêse pali Cimo

I'm not coming on Tuesday = Nshakêse pali Cibili

I'm not coming on Wednesday = Nshakêse pali Citatu

I'm not coming on Thursday = Nshakêse pali Cine

I'm not coming on Friday = Nshakêse pali Cisano

I'm not coming on Saturday = Nshakêse pa Cibelushi

I'm not coming on Sunday = Nshakêse pa Mulungu

I didn't come on

I didn't come on Monday = Nshaishile pali Cimo

I didn't come on Tuesday = Nshaishile pali Cibili

I didn't come on Wednesday = Nshaishile pali Citatu

I didn't come on Thursday = Nshaishile pali Cine

I didn't come on Friday = Nshaishile pali Cisano

I didn't come on Saturday = Nshaishile pa Cibelushi

I didn't come on Sunday = Nshaishile pa Mulungu

I might come on

I might come on Monday = Nalimo nkêsa pali Cimo

I might come on Tuesday = Nalimo nkêsa pali Cibili

I might come on Wednesday = Nalimo nkêsa pali Citatu

I might come on Thursday = Nalimo nkêsa pali Cine

I might come on Friday = Nalimo nkêsa pali Cisano

I might come on Saturday = Nalimo nkêsa pa Cibelushi

I might come on Sunday = Nalimo nkêsa pa Mulungu

They are coming on

They are coming on Monday = Bakêsa pali Cimo

They are coming on on Tuesday = Bakêsa pali Cibili

They are coming on Wednesday = Bakêsa pali Citatu

They are coming on Thursday = Bakêsa pali Cine

They are coming on Friday = Bakêsa pali Cisano

They are coming on Saturday = Bakêsa pa Cibelushi

They are coming on Sunday = Bakêsa pa Mulungu

He / she is coming on

He (or she) is coming on Monday = Akêsa pali Cimo

He (or she) is coming on Tuesday = Akêsa pali Cibili

He (or she) is coming on Wednesday = Akêsa pali Citatu

He (or she) is coming on Thursday = Akêsa pali Cine

He (or she) is coming on Friday = Akêsa pali Cisano

He (or she) is coming on Saturday = Akêsa pa Cibelushi

He (or she) is coming on Sunday = Akêsa pa Mulungu

Are they coming on

Are they coming on Monday? = Bushe bakêsa pali Cimo?

Are they coming on Tuesday = Bushe bakêsa pali Cibili?

Are they coming on Wednesday = Bushe bakêsa pali Citatu?

Are they coming on Thursday = Bushe bakêsa pali Cine?

Are they coming on Friday = Bushe bakêsa pali Cisano?

Are they coming on Saturday = Bushe bakêsa pa Cibelushi?

Are they coming on Sunday = Bushe bakêsa pa Mulungu?

Is he / she coming on?

Is he (or she) coming on Monday? = Bushe akêsa pali Cimo?

Is he (or she) coming on Tuesday = Bushe akêsa pali Cibili?

Is he (or she) coming on Wednesday = Bushe akêsa pali Citatu?

Is he (or she) coming on Thursday = Bushe akêsa pali Cine?

Is he (or she) coming on Friday = Bushe akêsa pali Cisano?

Is he (or she) coming on Saturday = Bushe akêsa pa Cibelushi?

Is he (or she) coming on Sunday = Bushe akêsa pa Mulungu?

Can they come on? = Bushe kuti baisa pa.....?

How could they come on? = Bushe kuti baisa shani pa?

MONTHS

Month = Mweshi

January = Kabengele kanôno

February = Kabengele kakalamba

March = Kutumpu

April = Shinde

May = Kapepo kanôno

June = Kapepo kakalamba

July = Cikungulupepo

August = Kasakantobo

September = Lusuba lunôno

October = Lusuba lukalamba

November = Cinshikubili / Mwanganamfula

December = Mupundu-milimo

BIRTHDAY

I was born in = Nafyelwe mu

The day I was born = Ubushiku nafyelwe

He / She was born in = Afyelwe mu

We were born in = Twafyelwe mu

When were you born? = Mwafyelwe lilali? (plural)

When were you born? = Wafyelwe lilali? =(singular)

Where were you born? = Mwafyalilwe kwisa?

Happy Birthday = Sefyeni ubushiku mwafyelwe (plural)

Happy Birthday = Sefya ubushiku wafyelwe (singular)

SEASONS

Wet season / Rainy season = Mainsa

Summer / Hot season / Dry season = Lusuba

Winter / Cold season = Mpepo

Each

Today = Lêlo

Daily = Cila bushiku

Weekly = Cila mulungu

Monthly = Cila mweshi

Yearly / Annually = Cila mwaka

Day = Bushiku

One day = Bushiku bumo

One week = Mulungu umo

One month = Mweshi umo

One year = Mwaka umo

Week = Mulungu

This week = Uno mulungu

Last week = Mulungu wapwile

Next week = Mulungu uleisa

That week = Ulya mulungu

Month = Mweshi

This month = Uno mweshi

Last month = Mweshi wapwile

Next month = Mweshi uleisa

That month = Ulya mweshi

Year = Mwaka

This year = Uno mwaka

Last year = Mwaka wapwile

Next year = Mwaka uleisa

That year = Ulya mwaka

Bemba Lesson 15.3 - How to Ask a Question - WHAT? - To Eat

by JS - Thursday, January 17, 2013

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/bemba-lesson-15-3-how-to-ask-a-question-what-to-eat.html>

Bemba Lesson - To Eat - kitweonline

In this lesson - **How to Ask a Question** in Bemba, we look at the verb "Eat" (Lya).

Note:

- **Mu ciBemba** (In Bemba) the same words are used to refer to a man and to a woman (**He / She**).
- In the following examples, remember that the plural form (pl.) is used to address one person as a sign of respect. (The plural form of "You").
- The words Ninshi / Cinshi / Finshi are sometimes used interchangeably, but they mean different things:
 - "Ninshi" to refer to **"What is it?"**
 - "Cinshi" is used when you are referring to one thing, e.g **"What one thing have I done?"**
 - "Finshi." is used to refer to more than one thing, eg. **"What things have I done?"**

Eat = Lya

(You can use "Ninshi"(What is it), "Cinshi" (What thing) or "Finshi" (What things) wherever each of them is used below).

PRESENT TENSE:

What have I eaten? = Finshi nalya?

What have you eaten? = Finshi muliile? (pl.) / Finshi uliile? (sing.)

What has she eaten? = Finshi aliile?

What has he eaten? = Finshi aliile?

What have they eaten? = Finshi baliile?

What does she eat? = Finshi alya?

What does he eat? = Finshi alya?

What do they eat? = Finshi balya?

PAST TENSE:

What did I eat? = Finshi naaliile?

What did you eat? (sing.) = Finshi waaliile?

What did you eat? (pl.) = Finshi mwaaliile?

What did he / she eat? (sing.) = Finshi aaliile?

What did he / she eat? (pl.) = Finshi aaliile?

What did they eat? = Finshi baaliile?

FUTURE TENSE:

What will I eat? = Finshi nkalya?

What will you eat? (sing.) = Finshi ukalya?

What will you eat? (pl.) = Finshi mukalya?

What will he / she eat? (sing.) = Finshi akalya?

What will he / she eat? (pl.) = Finshi bakalya?

What will they eat? = Finshi bakalya?

Look out for further lessons from the 15.00 series.

Did you like this lesson? Did you find it useful? Let me know.

Bemba Lesson 15.4 – How to Ask a Question – WHAT? – To Drink

by JS - Sunday, February 03, 2013

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/bemba-lesson-15-2-how-to-ask-a-question-what-to-drink.html>

Bemba - Ukunwa - kitweonline

In this lesson on **How to Ask a Question in Bemba**, we look at the verb “**Drink**” ([Nwa](#)). **To drink** = Ukunwa

Note:

- **Mu ciBemba** (In Bemba) the same words are used to refer to a man and to a woman (**He / She**).
- In the following examples, remember that the plural form (pl.) is used to address one person as a sign of respect. (The plural form of “You”).
- The words Ninshi / Cinshi / Finshi are sometimes used interchangeably, but they mean different things:
- “Ninshi” to refer to “[What is it?](#)”
- “Cinshi” is used when you are referring to one thing, e.g “**What one thing have I done?**”
- “Finshi.” is used to refer to more than one thing, eg. “**What things have I done?**”

Drink = Nwa

(You can use “Ninshi”(What is it), “Cinshi” (What thing) or “Finshi” (What things) wherever each of them is used below).

PRESENT TENSE:

What have I drunk? = Finshi nali nanwa?

What have you drunk? = Finshi munwine? (pl.) / Finshi unwine? (sing.)

What has she drunk? = Finshi anwine?

What has he drunk? = Finshi anwine?

What have they drunk? = Finshi banwine?

What does she drink? = Finshi anwa?

What does he drink? = Finshi anwa?

What do they drink? = Finshi banwa?

Listen to Audio: [Bemba Lesson - To Drink - Present Tense](#)

PAST TENSE:

What did I drink? = Finshi nanwine?

What did you drink? (sing.) = Finshi wanwine?

What did you drink? (pl.) = Finshi mwanwine?

What did he / she drink? (sing.) = Finshi anwine?

What did he / she drink? (pl.) = Finshi banwine?

What did they drink? = Finshi banwine?

Listen to Audio: [Bemba Lesson - To Drink - Past Tense](#)

FUTURE TENSE:

What will I drink? = Finshi nkanwa?

What will you drink? (sing.) = Finshi ukanwa?

What will you drink? (pl.) = Finshi mukanwa?

What will he / she drink? (sing.) = Finshi akanwa?

What will he / she drink? (pl.) = Finshi bakanwa?

What will they drink? = Finshi bakanwa?

Listen to Audio: [Bemba Lesson - To Drink - Future Tense](#)

Look out for further lessons from the 15.00 series.

Did you like this lesson? Did you find it useful? Let me know.

Bemba Lesson 16 - Small Talk

by JS - Sunday, March 03, 2013

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/bemba-lesson-16-small-talk.html>

Yes = Ee (Mukwai)

No = Awe (Mukwai)

Please = Napapata

Excuse me = Banjeleleko (Mukwai)

Thank you = Natotela (Mukwai)

You are welcome = Cilifye (Mukwai)

Pardon? (I beg your pardon) = Amuti (shani)?

I don't understand = Nshumfwile

Can you say that again, please? = Mwati shani (mukwai)

Please speak slowly = Landeni panono panono

Do you speak English? = Mwalishibe cisungu?

Where can I find the toilet? = Nikwisa ningasanga icimbusu?

What is your name? (Singular) = Niwe nani shina?

What is your name? (Plural) = Nimwe bani shina?

What are your names? = Nimwe bani amashina?

How old are you? (Respectful) = Muli nemyaka inga iyakufyalwa?

How old are you? = Uli ne myaka inga iyakufyalwa?

I am Years old = Ndi nemyaka

Where do you live? (Pl) = Mwikala kwi?

Where do you live? (Sing.) = Wikala kwi?

What is your job? (Pl.) = Mubomba ncito nshi?

What is your job? (Sing.) = Ubomba ncito nshi?

Would you like to go to? = Kuti mwatemwo kuya ku?

Please give me ... = Mpeniko

Bemba Lesson 19 - The Basics of the Bemba Language

by JS - Wednesday, July 10, 2013

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/bemba-lesson-19-the-basics-of-the-bemba-language.html>

Learn Bemba on KitweOnline

Mwaiseni (Welcome)

[Welcome = Mwaiseni](#)

As discussed in *Lesson 8 - Learn How to Read and Pronounce Bemba Words*, the Bemba language uses the same letters of the alphabet as English. Before learning to make sentences in Bemba, you need to know about the building blocks.

This lesson covers

- Vowels
- Special vowel sounds (Double vowels)
- Consonants and
- Syllables.

The lesson also includes Audio to help you learn the sounds. Once you have mastered the simple basics, you will find it easier to read and write Bemba words and sentences.

VOWELS

Definition:

Vowel = A sound made by allowing air to flow freely through the mouth and throat.

Apart from "O" vowels are pronounced differently in Bemba, compared to English:

A

[A](#)

E

[E](#)

I

I

O

O

U

U

While the sound of a vowel can change in English, it does not change in Bemba. As an example, in English the "E" sound is different in the word "End" compared to the word "English." This does not happen in Bemba. This makes it much easier to read Bemba words.

Double Vowels

Bemba is a very musical language. Some words change their meaning merely by the way they are pronounced. The vowels are drawn out to make a different sound. A caret is used to show such vowels. An alternative way is to write the vowel twice to denote the drawn out sound.

â (aa)

Aa

ê (ee)

Ee

î (ii)

Ii

ô (oo)

Oo

û (uu)

Uu

Examples:

â (aa) e.g. Laanga = **Show**

[Laanga](#)

ê (ee) e.g. Leenga = **Draw**

[Leenga](#)

î (ii) e.g. Fiimba = **Cover**

[Fiimba](#)

ô (oo) e.g. Boomba = **be Wet**

[Boomba](#)

û (uu) e.g. Fuuma = **Spray** (v.)

[Fuuma](#)

CONSONANTS:

Definition:

A **consonant** is a sound made by the partial or total obstruction of air flow in the mouth and throat. This can be done with the lips (e.g. "B"), the teeth (e.g. "T"), the tip of the tongue or the back of the tongue (e.g. "K").

- There are no Bemba words that use the letters **J , Q, R, V, X, or Z.**
- The Bemba alphabet is different in another way; it contains a **unique** letter “?” . To make life easier when typing and writing, this letter can be represented by “**N’g**”. It is pronounced “**n’g**” as in the English word “singer” (soft "G"). The good news is that there are just a small number of words that use this special character sound.

Examples:

- **Ng'anda** = House,
- [Nganda](#)
- **Ng'wena** = Crocodile,
- [Ngwena](#)
- **Ng'uni** = Honey bird,
- [Nguni](#)
- **Nang'ana** = Be lazy
- [Nang'ana](#)

- etc.
- Other special consonant features:
 - **B** - The letter "B" is a soft sound in Bemba. e.g.
 - "**Bowa**" (Mushroom)[Bowa](#)
 - "**Bomba**" (Work)[Bomba](#)
 - "**Kabwe**" (Stone)[Kabwe](#)
 - In every day usage, you will hear the "B" sound used as a hard sound, e.g. in describing the language as "Bemba" or in pronouncing the name "Banda." These are adapted sounds and are not original Bemba sounds.
 - **C** - In English, the letter "C" can be a soft sound (e.g. "Church" or a hard sound (e.g. "Candle." In Bemba, it only exists as a soft sound.
 - **D** - The letter "D" only exists in combination with a preceding consonant,

e.g. "**Ndeya**." (I am going)

[Ndeya](#)

"**Ndusha**." (Bile)

[Ndusha](#)

There are no Bemba words that start with the letter "D."

- **G** - As for the letter "D", the letter "G" exists only in combination with a preceding consonant and there are no Bemba words starting with the letter "G."
- "**Hanging**" **Consonants**:

Most Bemba words end with a vowel. As more foreign words are incorporated into the language, you come across adapted words that end with a consonant. The Bemba tend to finish the word off with a vowel.

Examples:

Golf becomes **Gofu** [Gofu](#)

Salad becomes **Saladi** [Saladi](#)

Scarf becomes **Shikafu** [Shikafu](#)

Book becomes **Buku** [Buku](#)

Abigail becomes **Abigelo** [Abigelo](#)

Bell becomes **Belu**[Belu](#)

Jam becomes **Jamu**[Njamu](#)

Queen becomes **Kwini**[Kwini](#)

Bus becomes **Bashi**[Bashi](#)

SYLLABLES

Definition:

A **syllable** is made up of letters in a word that are pronounced as one unit

Features:

- **Syllables can be formed by the combination of a consonant and a vowel.**

Examples:

Ba[Ba](#)

Be[Be](#)

Bi[Bi](#)

Bo[Bo](#)

Bu[Bu](#)

- The sound of the vowel does not change.
- **Syllables can be formed by a combination of two consonants and a vowel.**

Examples:

Cha[Cha](#)

Che[Che](#)

Chi[Chi](#)

Cho[Cho](#)

ChuChu

- Syllables can be formed by a combination of three consonants and a vowel.

Examples:

MfwaMfwa

MfweMfwe

MfwiMfwi

(Mfwo)

(Mfwu)

- Syllables can be formed by a combination of vowels

Note that vowels, alone, can also make syllables.

Reading Exercise:

For words you are not sure how to pronounce, identify the vowels in the word. Say the vowels out loud and then mix each one with the consonant(s) that come before the vowel. e.g. In "**Chibale**", the vowels are "i", "a" and "e":

- Make the "i" sound and then mix it with the "**Ch.**" sound.
- Next, make the "a" sound (there is only one way to pronounce "a" in Bemba) and then mix it with "**b**" (soft sound for "b").
- Finally, make the "e" sound and then mix it with the "**L**" (once more, there is only one way to pronounce the "e" in Bemba).

Look up some words that challenge your pronunciation and break them up in the same way. You will find it easier to feel your way through each word.

This knowledge of **vowels**, **consonants** and **syllables** forms an important part of the foundation for the forthcoming lessons on **How to Construct Sentences in Bemba**.

Shalenipo (Bye)

[Shalenipo](#)

You can silently leave or, better still, you can let me know what you think of this lesson by leaving your comment below.

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Bemba Lesson 2 - Common Verbs

by JS - Thursday, December 16, 2010

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/bemba-lesson-2-common-verbs.html>

Lufwanyama Maize Farm - KitweOnLine

Here is a collection of verbs commonly used in everyday speech:

Bemba Lesson 21 - The Secret to Reading Bemba Words

by JS - Sunday, August 03, 2014

<http://kitweonline.com/?p=8234>

Two-Consonant Words

Bemba Words

Spoken language is based on the sounds made by the 5 letters of the alphabet a,e,i,o,u also known as vowels. The rest of the letters of the alphabet are called consonants. Consonants can be combined with vowels to make different sounds (syllables):

Vowels:

a, e, i, o, u.

Consonants:

b,c,d,f,g,h,(j),k,l,m,n,p,(q,r),s,t,(v),w,(x),y,(z)

The letters that do not exist in Bemba are shown in brackets.

Example:

ma

me

mi

mo

mu

Some Bemba words are made by combining **two-consonants to form a unit which is then used with the vowel**. The resulting sound is guided by the vowel (a,e,i,o,u) that follows each combination. This lesson looks at some of these words and gives examples, with audio.

2-CONSONANT WORD EXAMPLES

Here are some examples of words that make use of the above combinations of two **consonants** (shown in

BLUE) followed by a **vowel (shown in RED)**:

BW

bwali *Maize meal mush*

bwela *Come back*

bwinga *Wedding*

(**bw**o)

(**bw**u)

CH

cha

che

chi

cho

chu

CH

chalici - *Church*

chela - *Metal*

chishimu - *Caterpillar*

chola - *Bag*

chumbu - *Sweet potato*

As you learn **Bemba** words, look for these units of consonants and their associated vowel in each word you read.

To make things simple, vowel sounds in **Bemba** don't change the way they do in English. For example, the letter "U" is pronounced differently in the following English words: Pull, Puke, Punk. In **Bemba** it only makes one sound wherever it is used: Puta, Pula, Punama.

When you come across a new **Bemba** word, say only the vowel sounds in it, and then read the whole word by mixing each vowel with the consonants that come before it.

Chibale *A girl's or boy's name*

Fyompa *Suck*

Pyanga *Sweep*

Twâla *Bear fruit or Take to a place*

Shimika *Tell (a story)*

Sompola *Snatch*

Have fun with the exercise.

The secret to reading **Bemba** words is in recognising that the pattern of sounds made by consonants is determined by the vowels with which they are connected.

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Bemba Lesson 22 - ROMANCE

by JS - Thursday, November 07, 2013

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/bemba-lesson-22-romance.html>

Rose (Photo by Mrs Herbert Stevens)

Ever since I posted the first Bemba lesson, I have received several requests for tips on words to use when talking to a loved one. Such a use of the Bemba language is positive and healing. It is therefore with pleasure that I respond to Benedicte's request for a lesson on this topic.

Romantic expressions tend to be poetic. This poses a problem when you are learning a language because poetry does not easily flow from a learner's lips. Even if you learnt such deep Bemba, your loved one may not be able to appreciate your efforts because the language you are using is too deep even for them.

If you went out on the streets of Kitwe and asked a hundred people what "Nsalankwale yandi" means, you will be lucky if you got one or two who knew that it means "**my rose**." If, on the other hand you asked what "iluba lyandi" means, everybody will tell you it means "**my flower**." This is a good reason to simplify things and use words that are more likely to be universally understood.

You have probably heard that traditionally, you show respect by addressing one person as though they were more than one (plural). When it comes to romantic language, intimacy can be deepened by using the singular form of address, e.g "**It is you (plural) that I love**" (Nimwe natemwa) becomes "Niwe natemwa." The expressions in this lesson are therefore given in the singular form.

Kitweonline is a family website. This limits what can be included here, but you don't miss much if you learn what is included.

So here goes:

English **Bemba**

Look Mona

My rose We nsalankwale yandi

My Lily We cananika candi

I am yours Ndi obe

You are mine Uli wandi

Embrace me Mfukatila

It is you my heart loves Niwe umutima wandi watemwa

I will never let you go Nsakakulekeko iyo

Your lips Imilomo yobe

Your lips are beautiful Imilomo yobe yaliyemba

Let me see your face Unenge ukumone cinso cobe

Let me hear your voice Unenge ukuumfwe shiwi lyobe

Your voice is sweet Ishiwi lyobe lyaliwama

You are my love Wemunandi watemwikwa

I long for you Ndakufuluka

I am longing for you Ndekufuluka

My (wife) spouse Nabwinga wandi

My (husband) spouse Shibwinga wandi

My queen Musano wandi

You are beautiful Waliyemba

You are handsome Waliyemba

You are my beauty Wewayemba wandi

You are the most beautiful woman in the world We wayemba pabanakashi bonse

Your hair looks beautiful Umushishi obe nauwama

Your hair locks are beautiful Ifikuti fyobe fyaliyemba

Your cheek Isaya lyobe

Your cheeks Amasaya yobe

Your hands Iminwe yobe

Your legs Amolu yobe

Your walk is beautiful Intampulo shobe shaliyemba

I love your breasts Nalitemwa mabele yobe

Your tummy Ifumo lyobe

Your teeth Ameno yobe

Your mouth is sweet Akanwa kobe kalilowesha

For more romantic words to use, check out <http://kitweonline.com/languages/english-bemba-translations>

Bemba Lesson 24 - Nouns and Adjectives

by JS - Tuesday, September 09, 2014

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/bemba-lesson-24-nouns-and-adjectives.html>

In this short video lesson, we will look at the way adjectives are used in Bemba, as compared to English.

[YouTube Video](#)

A **noun** is a part of a sentence that names a person, place, thing, idea, action or quality. Examples:

Itaba = cob of maize

Umuntu = person

Kapenta = a type of small fish

Amenshi = water

An adjective is added to a **noun** to give more information about it, e.g. size, colour or number.

In Bemba, adjectives usually follow the **noun**, eg.

Umusebo ukalamba = a big road

Itaba ilyabola = a rotten cob of maize

Umuntu umutali = a tall person

Kapenta uwalula = bitter Kapenta fish

Amenshi ayatalala = cold water

In this short lesson, we saw that there is a difference between English and Bemba in the way adjectives and nouns are used: In Bemba, the adjective usually follows the noun.

Bemba Lesson 25: Describing Places and Space

by JS - Tuesday, September 16, 2014

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/bemba-lesson-25-describing-places-and-space.html>

Adverbs of Place and Space

Space and places are described using different adverbs. In some cases, more than one word is available. Where this is the case, the words are here separated by a coma.

Examples show how the words can be used.

In front, forward, before = Kuntanshi, Pantanshi

[She is standing in front of the car](#)

Eminine kuntanshi ya motoka

Behind = Munuma, Kunuma

[You have fallen behind](#)

Mwashala kunuma

Below, On the ground = Panshi, Mwisamba

[Put it on the ground](#)

Bikeni panshi

Above = Pamulu, Mumulu

[Lift it above](#)

Imyeni mumulu

Inside = Mukati, Pakati

[Put it inside](#)

Bikeni mukati

In the middle = Pakati, Mukati

In the middle of all this

Pakati ka ifi fyonse

Outside = Kunse, Panse

Take it outside

Twaleni panse

Beside = Lubali

Stand beside the tree

Iminineni kulubali lwa cimuti

This side = Kuno lubali

Come this side

Iseni kuno lubali

That side = Kulya lubali

Take it that side

Twaleni kulya lubali

Near = Pepi, Mupepi

He is near

Ali mupepi

Around = Mumbali, Kumbali

Go around the house

Piteni mumbali ya ng'anda

With, Together = Pamo

Are you together?

Bushe muli pamo?

Far = Patali, Kutali

He went far away

Bele apatali

Everywhere = Konse, Monse, Ponse

The joy is everywhere

Insansa shili konse

Elsewhere = Kumbi, Pambi, Mumbi

You can go elsewhere

Kuti mwaya kumbi

Here = Kuno, Pano, Muno

Come here

Iseni kuno

There = Kulya, Palya

I want to go there

Ndefwaya ukuya kulya (Ndefwayo kuya kulya)

Bemba Lesson 27: Emergencies

by JS - Wednesday, May 27, 2015

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/bemba-lesson-27-emergencies.html>

In this lesson you will learn some phrases that will come in handy in emergency situations. It will help you to understand what someone may be trying to communicate to you in an emergency. It can also prepare you to communicate in Bemba when you are faced with an emergency.

If you cannot remember any Bemba words in an emergency, just speak in English. There is a good chance that someone will understand you because most people have been to school and English is the official language in school.

There are some terms, such as First Aid Kit, that we don't have in Bemba. We have used the English term. You will find that most Bemba people will tend to use the same English terms.

Emergency Bemba Phrases

Where is the toilet? = Icimbusu cilikwisa, mukwai?

Can you help me please? = Ngafweniko, napâpâta?

Can I use your phone, please? = Kuti nabonfyako foni, mukwai? / Ndelombako phoni ("I am begging for a phone")

Do you have a First Aid Kit? = Bushe namukwata *First Aid Kit*?

Call an ambulance = Iteni *Ambulance*

Call a doctor = Iteni *Doctor*

Call a nurse = Iteni ba Nasi

Call the police = Iteni ba kapokola (Iteni ba *Police*)

Call the fire brigade = Iteni ba *Fire Brigade*

Help! = Ngafweniko! / Nafwa ee! ("I am dying!")

Look out! = Moneni!

Stop! = Iminineni! ("Stand still")

Thief! = Kabwalala!

Leave me alone! = Ndekeni nemwine!

Go away! = Fumeni apa!

There has been an accident! = Kuli amasanso!

It's an emergency! = Masanso!

Can you think of more phrases that might come in handy in an emergency? Get in touch with us below.

Bemba Lesson 3 - Learn How To Count In Bemba

by JS - Monday, January 10, 2011

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/learn-how-to-count-in-bemba.html>

Calculus-KitweOnLine

A day may come when we have a Bemba word for "calculus". In the meantime, this highly adaptable language has incorporated new words into everyday use. Counting is one such area. In this lesson we cover **how to count in Bemba** from 1 to 999,999, the easy way.

If you were to stop someone on the streets of Kitwe and asked them what "Umwanda umo na cimo" means, chances are that not one in ten will be able to tell you. Everyone practically uses the English terms for counting, especially in the urban areas. Thousands of Kwacha are spent in the course of groceries shopping and people are perfectly comfortable talking about "millions", "thousands" and "hundreds" of Kwacha.

The Bemba words for low counts between 1 and 5 are adjectives. Therefore the prefix determines which choice of word you use, eg. :

	SMALL	BIG
1	kamo	cimo
2	tubili	fibili
3	tutatu	fitati
4	tune	fine
5	tusano	fisano

Examples:

One small guitar - Akalimba **kamo**.

One big guitar - Icilimba **cimo**

6 mutanda

7 cine lubali ("four on one side")

8 cine konse konse ("four on each side")

- 9** pabula ("one short")
- 10** ikumi **limo**
- 12** ikumi **limo** na **fibili** ("one ten and two")
- 20** amakumi **yabili** ("two tens")
- 21 amakumi **yabili** na **cimo** ("two tens and one")
- 22 amakumi **yabili** na **fibili** ("two tens and two")
- 23 a makumi **yabili** na **fitatu** ("two tens and three")
- 24 (etc.)
- 30** amakumi **yatatu**
- 40** amakumi **yane**
- 50** amakumi **yasano**
- 60** amakumi **mutanda**
- 70** amakumi **cine** lubali
- 80** amakumi **cine** konse konse
- 90** amakumi pabula
- 100** umwanda **umo**
- 101** umwanda **umo** na **cimo**
- 102 umwanda **umo** na **fibili**
- 103 umwanda **umo** na **fitatu**
- 104 (etc.)
- 200** imyanda **ibili**
- 300** imyanda **itatu**
- 1,000** ikana **limo**

2,000 amakana **yabili**

3,000 amakana **yatatu**

1,000,000 umuntapendwa **umo** ("One uncountable")

2,000,000 imintapendwa **ibili** ("Two uncountables")

So there you have it. You can now practice and use real Bemba words for counting. There are 72 other Zambian languages out there. We want to do the same for each one of them here on KitweOnLine.

Do you speak any of the other Zambian languages? Work with us to fill in the gaps. Get in touch below. We want to hear from you.

Bemba Lesson 4: Visiting A Friend

by JS - Friday, February 04, 2011

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/bemba-lesson-4-visiting-a-friend.html>

In this lesson we cover some words you might want to use while visiting a friend.

<u>BEMBA.</u>	<u>ENGLISH</u>
Odi	May I come in?
Kalibu (Odini)	You may come in
Ingileni	Please come / go in
Ikaleni pa mupando.	Please be seated
Bushe ba mayo epo bali?	Is the mistress at home?
Bushe ba tata epo bali?	Is the master at home?
Epo bali	He /she is in
Awe tabalipo	No he / she is not in
Tabaliko	He / she is not there
Bele kwi?	Where has he / she /they gone?
Bele ku tauni	He / she / they have gone to town
Bele ku nchito	He / she / they have gone to work
Bele ku "market"	" " " " " to the market
Bele mukutapa amenshi.	He/she/they have gone to draw water
Bele ku cililo	He/she/they have gone to attend a funeral
Balebwela lilali?	When are they coming back?
Katwishi	I am not sure
Nshishibe uko bali.	I don't know where they are
Mwisakamana	Do not worry
Balaisa nombaline.	They are coming back very soon
Taba cilanda	They did not say
Taba cinjeba.	They did not tell me
Bacitila mulolele.	They asked if you could wait
Isaleni icibi.	Please close the door
Amenshi nayapya?	Is the water boiled?
Inganda ino isuma.	This house is nice
Inganda ino ikulu.	This house is big
Umwana uyu musuma.	This baby/child is lovely/nice
Mwansekesha	You make me laugh
Mwisakamana ku cakulya.	Do not bother preparing food
Natotela sana	Thank you very much
Shani tu "tea"?	How about some tea?
No mukaka	With milk
Na mani	With eggs

Na "bread"

With bread

Na ma sikono

With scores

Bemba Lesson 6 - Greetings

by JS - Friday, October 21, 2011

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/bemba-lesson-5-greetings.html>

For the first time, you can add fun to learning Bemba by following the audio lessons.

ENGLISH BEMBA

Hello

Muli

shani? [audio:<http://kitweonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Mulishani-2-Bemba-Lesson-5-Greetings1.mp3>|titles=Mulishani 2 - Bemba Lesson 5 - Greetings]

Welcome

Mwaiseni [audio:<http://kitweonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Welcome-Mwaiseni.mp3>|titles=Welcome - Mwaiseni]

How are you?

Muli

shani? [audio:<http://kitweonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Mulishani-2-Bemba-Lesson-5-Greetings1.mp3>|titles=Mulishani 2 - Bemba Lesson 5 - Greetings]

I'm fine, thanks. How are you? Ndifye bwino. Naimwe ngamuli

shani? [audio:<http://kitweonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Ndifye-bwino-naimwe-nga-mulishani-Bemba-Lesson-5-Greetings.mp3>|titles=Ndifye bwino naimwe nga mulishani - Bemba Lesson 5 - Greetings]

Good morning **Mwashibukeni** [audio:<http://kitweonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Good-morning-Mwashibukeni.mp3>|titles=Good morning - Mwashibukeni]

Good afternoon (Resting)
Mwatandaleni [audio:<http://kitweonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Mwatandaleni-Bemba-Lesson-5-Greetings.mp3>|titles=Mwatandaleni - Bemba Lesson 5 - Greetings]

Good afternoon (Working)
Mwabombeni [audio:<http://kitweonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Mwabombeni-Bemba-Lesson-5-Greetings.mp3>|titles=Mwabombeni - Bemba Lesson 5 - Greetings]

Good evening **Chungulopo mukwai** [audio:<http://kitweonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Good-Evening-Chungulopo-mukwai.mp3>|titles=Good Evening - Chungulopo mukwai]

Good night **Sendamenipo umutende** [audio:<http://kitweonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Goodnight-Sendamenipo-umutende.mp3>|titles=Goodnight - Sendamenipo umutende]

Goodbye **Shalenipo** [audio:<http://kitweonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Goodbye-Shalenipo.mp3>|titles=Goodbye - Shalenipo]

**Have a nice day (Resting) Tandalenipo
umutende [audio:<http://kitweonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Tandalenipo-umutende-Bemba-Lesson-5-Greetings.mp3>|titles=Tandalenipo umutende - Bemba Lesson 5 - Greetings]**

Have a nice day (Working) Bombenipo umutende [audio:<http://kitweonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Bombenipo-umutende-Bemba-Lesson-5-Greetings.mp3>|titles=Bombenipo umutende - Bemba Lesson 5 - Greetings]

**See you later Tukamonana
limbi [audio:<http://kitweonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Tukamonana-limbi-Bemba-Lesson-5-Greetings.mp3>|titles=Tukamonana limbi - Bemba Lesson 5 - Greetings]**

Let us know what you think of this format for the Bemba lessons. If you have specific words you would like to learn send in your request in the box below.

Bemba Lesson 7 - Asking Questions

by JS - Tuesday, January 17, 2012

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/bemba-lesson-7-asking-questions.html>

It is useful to have a quick list of the five types of questions you are likely to use in different situations.

Here's a list covering Who? What? When? Where? How? Examples are given to illustrate the use of these terms.

Some questions start with the "**Bushe....**" interjection. It's a bit like putting the question mark at the beginning of your sentence.

Depending on the situation, and the intonation used, "Bushe" can also signal exasperation.

As usual, the plural (pl.) form is used as a sign of respect, and so is preferable over the singular (sing.) form.

WHAT? = Nshi? Cinshi?

What is it? = "Finshi?"

What has happened? = "Finshi ficitike?"

What just happened? = "Finshi fyacitika?"

What happened? = "Finshi fyacitike?"

What is your name? = "Nimwe bani ishina?" (pl.)

What time will you come? = "Mukesa nshita nshi?" (pl.) / "Ukêsa nshita nshi?" (sing.)

WHO? = Ani?

"Who is it?" = "Nibani?" (pl.) / = "Nani?" (sing.)

"Who are you?" = "Nimwe bani?" (pl.) / = "Ni wani?"(sing.)

"Who is coming?" = "Nibani baleisa?" (pl.) / = "Nani aleisa?" (sing.)

"Whose shoes are those?" = "Bushe nsapato shilya sha bani?" (pl.) / = "Bushe nsapato shilya sha kwani?"

WHERE? = Kwi? / Pi?

"Where is it?" (big) = "Cili kwi?"

"Where is it?" (small) = "Kali kwi?"

"Where are you?" (singular) = "Muli kwi?" (pl.) / = "Uli kwi" (sing.)

"Where are you?" (pl.) = "Muli kwi?"

"Where can I find...." = "Nikwi(sa) ningasanga....."

"Where can I buy....." = "Nikwi(sa) ningashita....."

WHEN? = Lilali? / Mu nshita nshi?

WHY? = Mulandu nshi?

"Do you have.....?" = "Namukwata?" (pl.) / = "Naukwata?" (sing.)

"Can you?" = "Kuti mwa....." (pl.) / = "Kuti wa " (sing.)

"Have you got?" = "Namukwata" (pl.) / = "Naukwata" (sing.)

"Will they....." = "Baka"

"Did you" = "Mwali"? (pl.) / = "Wali"? (sing.)

"Is it" = "Cili"?"

"Are they" (people) = "Bali.....?"

"Are they" (big things) = "Fili"

"Are they" "Tuli"?"

"Is she?" (big) = "Ali.....?" (sing.) / = "Bali.....?" (pl.)

"Is he?" (big) = "Ali.....?" (sing.) / = "Bali.....?" (pl.)

Learn How To Read and Pronounce Bemba Words

by JS - Monday, January 23, 2012

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/language/bemba-language-culture/bemba-lessons/learn-how-to-read-and-pronounce-bemba-words.html>

Bemba Lesson 8

Learn how to read Bemba using simple methods.

The Bemba language is broadly based on the English alphabet.

Most words are based around the five **vowels**: A,E,I,O and U. (Vowel = A sound made by allowing air to flow freely through the mouth and throat)

When you take away the vowels from the 26 letters of the English alphabet, you are left with 21 **consonants**: B,C,D,F,G,H,J,K,L,M,N,P,Q,R,S,T,V,W,X,Y and Z (Consonant = Sounds made by the partial or total obstruction of air flow in the mouth and throat. This can be done with the lips, the teeth, the tip of the tongue or the back of the tongue)

Except for the six letters of the alphabet that are either rarely used (J) or absent altogether from the Bemba alphabet (Q,R,V, X and Z), most of the consonants are pronounced the same as in English: B,C,D,F,G,H,K,L,M,N,P,S,T,W, and Y.

Most Bemba words are formed from a combination of a **consonant** followed by a **vowel** to make a distinct sound. Such a sound is called a **syllable** (= the letters of a word that are pronounced as one unit).

Simple words will usually be made up of one consonant followed by a vowel, e.g. “Ma”

For now, however, we will start with the very simple sounds that help you speak and read more easily.

You don't need to worry about the five letters of the alphabet that are **absent** from the Bemba alphabet. (Q,R,V, X and Z). The letter “J” is a special case which we will discuss later.

The Bemba alphabet is different in another way; it contains a **unique** letter “?” . To make life easier when typing and writing, this letter can be represented by “N’g”. It is pronounced “’n’g” as in the English word “singer”

Watch the video to learn a fast way of reading and pronouncing Bemba words.

[YouTube Video](#)

Now that you are comfortable with syllables that are made of a consonant and a vowel, take a look at some Bemba words and have fun working out how to pronounce them using the method you have just learnt here.

Here are a few examples for you to read:

Awe (NO)

Leta (Bring)

Sala (Choose)

Kola (Intoxicate)

Pepa (Pray)

Belama (Hide)

Isa (Come)

Fuma (Go out)

Look out for a follow up on this lesson in the near future.

The Story of the Orphan Snail

by JS - Monday, August 20, 2012

<http://kitweonline.com/kitweonline/discover-kitwe/culture/story-telling-culture/the-story-of-the-orphan-snail.html>

640px-Garden_snail_defecating

Photo by [Fir0002/Flagstaffotos](#)

Zambian Fireside Stories

Once upon a time, there was a snail whose parents died shortly after he was born. He was homeless. During the day, he would wander aimlessly, looking for food. At night, he would look for a place to curl up and sleep. He led a lonely life.

One morning he was woken by the sound of laughter and shouting nearby. He slid out from under a rock and went to see who was making so much noise. Through the tall green grass by the river bank he saw a snail playing with a butterfly. The butterfly had the largest wings he had ever seen with two big spots that made it look as though two giant eyes were watching you. Each time the butterfly landed on his shell, he screamed in delight and rolled over to shake the butterfly off.

As he came closer, he saw that the snail was about his age. He had clean stripes along the side of his body. His shell was so shiny that it reflected the sunlight like water in a pond.

“Hello” said the orphan, peeping from his shell.

“Hello my friend,” said the striped snail, still giggling. “What is your name?”

“Oh, I don’t know.” said the orphan. “I have heard people call me Nkola. I think that is my name.”

“We are all called Nkola because that is what we are. Everybody calls me Kapekesa. What does your mum call you?”

“I have no parents. They all died when I was a baby.”

Kapekesa moved closer to the shy little snail and touched him with one of his tentacles without saying a word. Then he smiled and said, “Are you hungry? My mum prepared some pumpkin leaves for me. Come and join me. I live behind that big Mukwa tree.”

Nkola was not sure if Kapekesa’s parents would let him eat at their house, but he was hungry. He decided to follow his new friend.

To Nkola’s surprise, Kapekesa’s parents welcomed him like an old friend. They even started telling their

favourite snail jokes. They made sure he had as much food as he could eat. When they heard the story about his parents, Kapekesa's dad said, "Young snail, you are not going anywhere tonight. You can stay with us and you can play with your friend every day.

Nkola and Kapekesa became good friends from that day.

One day, as a big cloud began gathering in the sky, Kapekesa's dad called them and said "My sons, when you are playing in the open and you see a big cloud like that, you must hurry and find shelter under a stone or in a hollow tree. Such clouds bring heavy rains which can sweep an adult snail away."

Kapekesa paid no attention, but Nkola listened very attentively to the old snail's advice.

A few weeks later, while Kapekesa and Nkola were out in the open, Nkola pointed to the sky and shouted to his friend, "Look, Kapekesa. There is a large dark cloud just like your dad showed us. Quick, let's hide in this tree."

"My dad is always saying things like that," he said. "I can't go running every time I see a cloud."

Nkola tried to persuade his friend but he just kept on playing. Nkola decided to run for cover and hid in a hollow tree.

There was a sudden loud thunder clap and the skies opened with a heavy downpour of rain. Nkola closed his eyes and held on as tightly as he could. By the time Kapekesa saw the current of rain water sweeping towards him, it was too late to hide. He was swept away and was never seen again.

The moral of the story is that you don't need to have parents to benefit from the teachings of the elders. If you pay attention, you will save yourself a lot of trouble.

Do you know any traditional stories? Send in your comments and share your favourite story with us.

[For more Zambian folk tales, visit Lubuto Library Collection](#)

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