The Toki Pona Reader's Kit

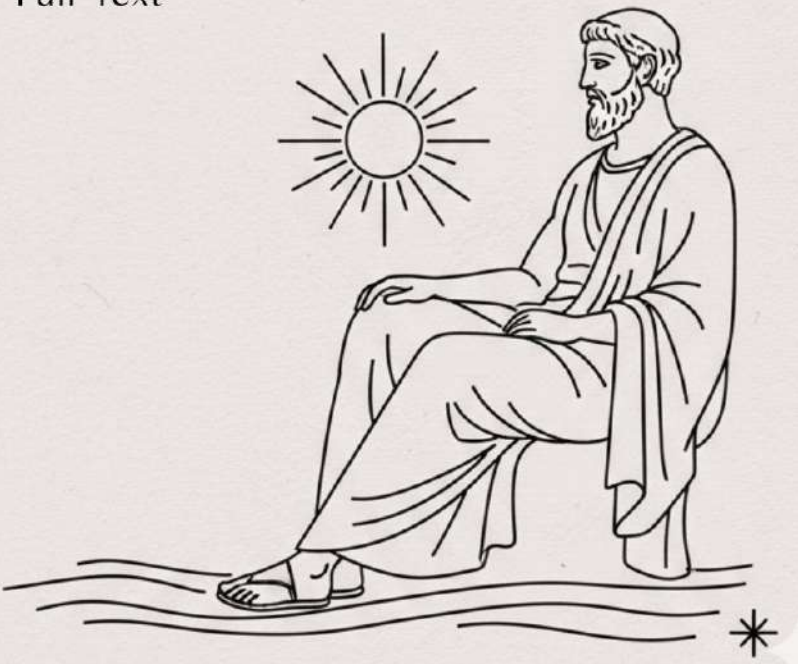
A Beginner's Guide

Using Philosophical Texts

Includes

The Golden Verses of Pythagoras

Full Text



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Includes

The Golden Verses of Pythagoras

(Full Text)

Created & Curated by

Biletskyi-Volokh Anton (ABV)

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Downloads (PDF/EPUB) and updates:

toki.abvx.xyz/kit – toki.abvx.xyz/kit.pdf - toki.abvx.xyz/kit.epub

Series page: stoic.abvx.xyz

Sitelen pona font: nasin-sitelen-pu (RetSamys).

Reference text (public domain): “The Golden Verses of Pythagoras” (Project Gutenberg, ebook #69174).

This guide is a learning and reading aid, not an academic critical edition.

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The Toki Pona Reader's Kit

Part 1 — Fast Start

1.1 What is toki pona (and why it's worth it)

Toki pona is a tiny constructed language designed around one radical idea: you can say a surprising amount with a very small number of words. Instead of learning thousands of terms, you learn a compact core vocabulary and combine it in simple, flexible ways. The result feels less like memorizing a dictionary and more like learning a new way to think in clean, low-noise sentences.

Toki pona was created by Canadian translator and polyglot **Sonja Lang** (often called *jan Sonja* in the community). Early versions appeared online in **2001**, and the language later received its first "official" book form in **2014** with *Toki Pona: The Language of Good* (commonly referred to as **lipu pu**). A second official book, *Toki Pona Dictionary* (**lipu ku**), followed in **2021**, documenting how the community actually uses the language.

Since then, toki pona has grown into an active online culture: learners, writers, artists, and tool-builders share texts, courses, dictionaries, and communities. If you want a good starting point, use the official site and the community wiki, and keep a dictionary like Linku nearby while reading. If you want real-time practice and help, the largest community hub is the *ma pona pi toki pona* Discord server.

Beginner resources

- Official site (overview, FAQ, links): https://tokipona.org/

- Community wiki (learning + usage + culture): https://sona.pona.la/
- Linku dictionary (multilingual, very handy while reading): https://linku.la/
- ma pona pi toki pona (Discord invite): https://discord.com/invite/mapona
- A magazine written in toki pona (for reading practice): https://liputenpo.org/

What makes toki pona special is not just that it is easy. It is that the language forces you to choose the essence of what you mean. When you cannot hide behind technical vocabulary, you start noticing what matters and what is extra. Many people find that this changes how they read, how they write, and even how they handle everyday thoughts. It is a language that naturally trains clarity.

It is also one of the fastest ways to get the experience of "I can use another language" without years of study. If you have ever felt that languages are not for you, toki pona is a friendly counterexample. You can start reading simple texts quickly, and you can learn the rest while using it. That is why this guide focuses on reading: reading is the shortest path from curiosity to confidence.

In this book we use toki pona as a practical tool for reading real philosophical texts. Philosophy is a good match for a small language: many classic ideas are short, direct, and repetitive in the best way. When you rewrite them in toki pona, the message becomes minimal and readable, and you can see the structure of the thought more clearly. You do not need to "master" toki pona to enjoy this. You only need

a few rules, a small set of key words, and the habit of reading slowly.

Here is a first taste. Even if you do not understand every word, you can already see how the language works.

mi wile sona.

I want to know.

tenpo li tawa.

Time moves.

jan li wile pona.

A person wants what is good. / A person wants to be good.

The rest of this kit gives you exactly what you need to read texts like these in a calm, step-by-step way.

1.2 What you are holding: this kit, this series, and how to use it

This book is a small “reader’s kit” for toki pona. It is not a full course, and it is not meant to turn you into a fluent speaker. Its purpose is simpler: to help you start reading toki pona confidently, using real texts as examples.

The kit is built around a very practical idea: you learn fastest when you read. Reading gives you repetition without boredom, and it lets you absorb grammar and vocabulary in context instead of trying to memorize rules in the abstract. That is why this guide focuses on the parts of toki pona that show up constantly in texts: a small set of sentence patterns, a handful of function words, and a core vocabulary you can reuse everywhere.

This kit also belongs to a larger project: a growing collection of classic texts rewritten in toki pona and presented alongside sitelen pona. Some books in the collection are philosophical (especially Stoic texts), but the method works just as well for other kinds of classics. The goal is always the same: keep the meaning clear, keep the language minimal, and let the reader move between English, toki pona, and sitelen pona without stress.

You can use this kit in two ways. If you are completely new, read Part 1 and Part 2 once, slowly, and do not worry about remembering everything. Then jump directly to Part 6 and try reading the practice text. If you already know a little toki pona, you can treat this book like a reference: keep it open while you read other books in the series, and return to the dictionaries and examples whenever you feel unsure. The

point is to keep moving; you will learn more by reading ten minutes a day than by trying to “finish” a perfect textbook.

To download the latest PDF and EPUB versions of this kit, use these links:

toki.abvx.xyz/kit

toki.abvx.xyz/kit.pdf

toki.abvx.xyz/kit.epub

And if you want to see the full series and future releases, visit:

stoic.abvx.xyz

1.3 How to read our books: the three layers (English / toki pona / sitelen pona)

Books in this project are designed to be readable even if you are new to toki pona. The key is that you are never forced to “guess everything at once”. Each passage is presented in layers, so you can move between them as you need.

Layer 1: English (reference text)

English is here as your safety net. If you get lost, read the English first. Then return to toki pona and notice how the same idea is expressed with fewer words. Over time you will

need the English less and less, but in the beginning it helps you stay calm and keep reading.

Layer 2: toki pona (Latin alphabet)

This is the main text of the project: the classic idea rewritten in minimal language. Toki pona sentences often look short and simple, but a single word can cover a range of meanings. That is normal. The goal is not one-to-one precision; the goal is a clear, faithful idea expressed in a small vocabulary.

When you read toki pona, do not try to translate word by word into English in your head. Instead, look for the sentence structure first: who/what is the topic, what is being said about it, and what is the action (if any). In Part 2 you will learn the few markers that make this easy.

Layer 3: sitelen pona (the same toki pona, written as symbols)

Sitelen pona is not a different language. It is the same toki pona text written with symbols instead of letters. Think of it as a second writing system, like a special font with its own style.

In our books, the sitelen pona line is placed next to the Latin toki pona line to help you slow down and “see” the words as units. Many readers find that this makes the text feel more like a piece of art and less like an exercise. If you

do not want to use sitelen pona yet, you can ignore it completely and read only the Latin line.

How to use the layers while reading

A simple reading strategy is:

1. Read the toki pona line once, slowly.
2. If you are unsure, glance at the English reference.
3. Read the toki pona line again and notice what changed in your understanding.
4. If you want, look at the sitelen pona line as a visual confirmation of the same words.

At first you may move between layers often. That is expected. The goal is not speed. The goal is continuity: keep going, keep the text enjoyable, and let repetition do the teaching.

1.4 How to use glossaries (and how not to get stuck)

In this project, glossaries are not there to test you. They are there to keep you moving. The best way to learn toki pona from reading is to avoid the two classic traps: stopping too often, and trying to decode every word perfectly.

What the glossaries are for

A glossary helps with three things:

1. **Unfamiliar words**

   If you see a word you do not know, check the glossary, get a simple meaning, and continue.

2. **A word that feels "too broad"**

   Many toki pona words cover a family of meanings. A glossary entry can show which meaning is most likely in this text and how we use that word consistently across the series.

3. **Recurring phrases**

   Sometimes the same idea appears again and again. When a phrase repeats, a glossary helps you recognize it quickly, so reading becomes faster and more pleasant.

The right way to use a glossary

Use the "two-second rule":

- If you do not understand a sentence, give yourself a few seconds to see the structure.
- If you still feel stuck, look up only one word — the one that seems most important.
- Read the sentence again and move on.

You do not need to look up everything. Often a sentence becomes clear after you understand just one key word.

The wrong way to use a glossary (common beginner mistakes)

1. **Looking up every word**

   This turns reading into a slow decoding exercise. It also hides the most important skill: recognizing sentence patterns. You will learn faster if you accept partial understanding and keep going.

2. **Trying to force a single "correct" translation**

   In toki pona, several readings can be reasonable. Do not fight this. Choose the meaning that fits the context and continue. If you later discover a better reading, that is normal.

3. **Getting stuck on philosophy words**

   When a classic text uses a big abstract concept, toki pona will often express it with a simple word or a short phrase. Do not expect a one-word technical equivalent. Instead, look for the practical meaning in the sentence: what is being advised, what is being valued, what is being rejected.

A simple workflow when you feel lost

When you reach a difficult passage, try this:

1. Read the English reference once.
2. Read the toki pona line again and identify the structure:

- Who/what is the topic?
- Is there an action (a verb)?
- Is there an object marked by “e”?
- Is there a context frame marked by “la”?

3. Look up one key word, then read once more and move on.

Remember the goal

Your goal is not to translate perfectly. Your goal is to read steadily and enjoy the text. Glossaries exist to remove friction, not to slow you down. The more you keep moving, the more the language starts to feel natural.

Part 2 — Toki Pona in 30 Minutes

2.1 Pronunciation & spelling (only what you need)

Toki pona is written with a small Latin alphabet. You do not need perfect pronunciation to read and enjoy the texts in this series. The goal is simply to recognize words reliably and say them in a consistent, readable way.

The alphabet (small and friendly)

Toki pona uses only these letters:

a e i j k l m n o p s t u w

If a letter is not in that list (for example: b, d, f, g, r, v, z), it does not belong to standard toki pona spelling.

The sound shape of words

Toki pona words are built from simple syllables. In practice, you will see:

- a vowel alone: **a**, **o**
- a consonant + vowel: **mi**, **toki**
- sometimes ending with **n**: **jan**, **tenpo**, **lon**, **sin**

There are **no consonant clusters** (no “str-”, “pl-”, etc.). Words stay easy to scan with the eye.

Stress and rhythm

A safe rule: put the main stress on the **first syllable**.

- **TO**-ki
- **JA**-n
- **TE**-npo
- **PO**-na

Even if your stress is not perfect, readers will still understand you. Consistency matters more than precision.

Two letters that deserve attention

j is like the “y” sound in *yes*.

So **jan** is closer to “yan” than to “jan” with a hard “j”.

w is like the “w” sound in *water*.

Vowels: keep them clear

The vowels are simple and steady. Avoid turning them into long diphthongs.

- **a** as in “father”
- **e** as in “met” (or a clean “eh”)
- **i** as in “machine”
- **o** as in “more” (clean “oh”)
- **u** as in “rule”

You do not need to match a single “correct accent”. Just keep each vowel distinct.

The final “n”

A word can end with **n**. This is a normal ending, not a separate word.

- **jan** (person)
- **lon** (at / in / true)
- **tenpo** (time) does **not** end with n, but you will see **tenpo** next to **lon** very often.

Say the final **n** lightly, like the end of “on” or “in”.

Names and foreign words

In this project you may meet names from Greek and Latin traditions. In toki pona, names are usually adapted to fit the sound rules. The idea is not to preserve every original sound, but to keep names readable and pronounceable inside toki pona.

If you see an unfamiliar name, do not worry. Treat it as a label: read it consistently, and the text will still work.

A tiny reading tip

When you read toki pona, separate words as units. Do not try to “blend” them like fast speech. Clear, slow reading

helps you recognize the grammar markers you will learn next.

Here are three short examples you can already read aloud:

mi wile sona.

tenpo li tawa.

jan li pona.

2.2 The core sentence: “X li Y” (and the mi/sina exception)

If you learn only one pattern in toki pona, make it this one:

X li Y.

It is the basic sentence frame. It lets you say what something is, what it is like, or what it does.

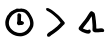
The idea of “li”

li is a small word that tells you: “Now we are saying something about the subject.”

- **jan li pona.**

  A person is good. / A person is OK.

- **tenpo li tawa.**

  Time moves.

- **sona li pona.**

  Knowledge is good. / Understanding helps.

You can think of **li** as a simple “bridge” between the topic (X) and what you say about it (Y).

The mi / sina exception (important and easy)

When the subject is **mi** (I / we) or **sina** (you), **li is normally not used**.

- **mi pona.**

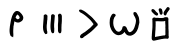
  I am good. / I am fine.

- **sina wile sona.**

You want to know.

But when **mi** or **sina** is not alone (for example: “I and someone else”), **li returns**:

- **mi mute li wile sona.**

  We want to know.

- **sina en jan pona sina li awen.**

  You and your friend stay.

You do not need to overthink this. A quick rule that works while reading:

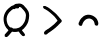
- **mi** / **sina** alone → usually **no li**
- anything longer than just **mi** or just **sina** → **use li**

What can “Y” be?

After **li**, you can see:

1. **an adjective / description**

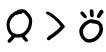
- **jan li ike.**

  The person is bad. / The person is wrong.

2. **a verb (an action)**

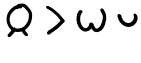
- **jan li toki.**



The person speaks.

3. **a verb phrase** (verb + more words)

- **jan li wile pona.**



The person wants what is good. / The person wants to be good.

At this stage, do not try to label “noun / verb / adjective” too strictly. In toki pona, the same word can play different roles depending on position. The main thing is to see the frame:

subject → li → what we say about it

A reading tip

When you read a sentence and feel uncertain, look for **li** first. It often tells you where the subject ends and where the main statement begins. Once you see that, the rest becomes much easier.

2.3 Objects with “e” (how to read action)

In toki pona, many sentences describe an action: someone does something. When there is a direct object — the thing the action is done to — toki pona marks it with a small word:

e

A simple way to remember it:

- **li** tells you “here is the main action / statement”
- **e** tells you “here is the thing affected by the action”

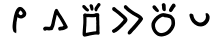
The basic pattern

X li VERB e Y.

- **jan li lukin e tomo.**

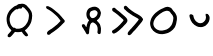
  A person looks at the house. / A person watches the building.

- **mi kama sona e toki pona.**

  I learn toki pona. (literally: I become knowing of toki pona)

- **jan li pali e ijo pona.**

  A person makes/does something good.

One action can have more than one object

If one verb affects several things, you can repeat **e**:

- **mi lukin e lipu e sitelen.**

I look at the page and the symbols.

This is common in simple, list-like philosophical sentences.

“e” is not a preposition

English often uses prepositions like “to”, “for”, “about”, “with”. Beginners sometimes try to use **e** for that. Do not.

- **e** is for the direct object of an action.
- For “to / toward”, toki pona uses **tawa**.
- For “with / using”, it uses **kepeken**.
- For “from / because of”, it uses **tan**.
- For “in / at”, it uses **lon**.

You will learn these in a later section. For now, just remember: **e** is “the target of the verb”.

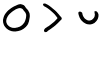
Common beginner confusion: “X li pona e Y”

A tricky point: some words that look like adjectives in English can behave like verbs in toki pona.

- **pona** can describe (“good”), but it can also act like “make good / improve”.

So:

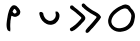
- **ijo li pona.**

The thing is good.

But:

- **mi pona e ijo.**

  I improve the thing. / I make the thing good.

This matters in philosophical texts, where “make your mind good”, “improve your habits”, “correct your judgment” are common ideas.

A reading tip

When you see **e**, stop looking for the subject. You already passed the subject and the main verb. Now you are in the “object zone”: look for what is being acted on.

If you can read this frame, you can read a large part of toki pona prose:

subject → li → verb → e → object

2.4 Context with “la” (how to read framing)

In philosophical writing, a sentence often begins with a frame: “in this situation…”, “for this reason…”, “as for that topic…”. In toki pona, one small word handles this kind of framing:

la

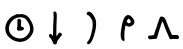
A simple way to read it:

[context] la [main sentence].

You can think of **la** as: “given this context” / “in this frame”.

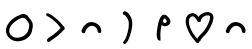
The basic pattern

- **tenpo ni la mi awen.**

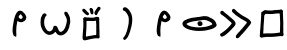
  In this time / right now, I stay. / For now, I remain steady.

- **ijo li ike la mi pilin ike.**

  When something is bad, I feel bad.

- **mi wile sona la mi lukin e lipu.**

  If I want to know, I read the page. / When I want to understand, I look at the text.

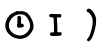
Notice something important: the part before **la** can be very short (a single word) or a full sentence. It is flexible.

Two common uses you will see everywhere

1) Time / situation frames

This is the easiest to recognize.

- **tenpo pini la…**



In the past…

- **tenpo kama la…**

In the future…

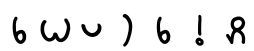
- **tenpo ni la…**

Right now…

2) “If / when” logic (conditions)

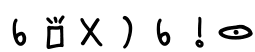
Philosophy often uses conditional thinking: “If you do this, then that happens.” Toki pona does this naturally with **la**.

- **sina wile pona la sina o pali.**



If you want to be good, you should act.

- **sina sona ala la sina o lukin e ni.**



If you do not understand, you should look at this.

“la” helps you read long sentences

When you see **la**, it often means the sentence has two parts. This is helpful: you can read it in two steps.

1. Read the context part (before **la**).

2. Read the main sentence (after **la**).

Even if you do not fully understand the first part, you can still understand the second part and keep going.

A common beginner mistake

Do not treat **la** like **li** or **e**.

- **li** connects subject to statement.
- **e** marks the object of an action.
- **la** sets the frame for the whole sentence.

A reading tip

When you get a sentence that feels "too big", look for **la**. If it is there, split the sentence at **la** and read the two halves separately. This one habit makes philosophical toki pona much easier to follow.

2.5 Grouping with "pi" (how to avoid the #1 beginner mistake)

In toki pona, words often come in small chains. A simple example is:

jan pona

a good person / a friendly person

Here **pona** describes **jan**.

But sometimes you want a longer description, and you need to show which words belong together. That is where **pi** helps.

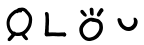
A beginner-friendly way to think about **pi**:

pi means: “the next words form a single group that describes the word before pi.”

The basic idea

Compare these two:

- **jan pi toki pona**

  a person of toki pona / a toki pona person (a person connected to toki pona)

- **jan toki pona**

  a talking person who is good/simple (this can be confusing, because *toki* and *pona* both attach directly to *jan*)

This shows why **pi** exists: it reduces confusion when you have more than one describing word.

A simple rule that works while reading

Use this reading rule:

- Without **pi**, each word tends to attach to the main word directly.
- With **pi**, the words after **pi** attach to each other first, as a group.

So:

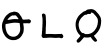
X pi Y Z means roughly “X of (Y Z)”.

Examples you will meet in real texts

- **nasin pi pona jan**

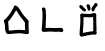
  the way of human goodness / the method of being a good person

- **lawa pi jan**

  the mind of a person / a person’s mind

- **tomo pi sona**

  a place of knowledge / a school

Notice how **pi** makes the phrase feel like a single “unit of meaning”.

A common misunderstanding

pi does not mean “of” in every situation. It is not a general preposition. It is a **grouping marker**.

You should not add **pi** just because English uses “of”. Use **pi** only when you need to group multiple words as one description.

The “two-word rule” (easy and practical)

Most of the time you only need **pi** when you want **two or more words** to stay together as a description.

- If you have only one describing word, you usually do **not** need **pi**:

  jan pona, **toki pona**, **nasin pona**

- If you have a longer description and you want clarity, **pi** is often helpful:

  jan pi toki pona, **nasin pi pona jan**, **tomo pi sona**

A reading tip

When you see **pi**, slow down for one second and do this:

1. Group the words after **pi** into one chunk.
2. Attach that chunk to the word before **pi**.

This one habit prevents most beginner confusion in longer toki pona phrases.

2.6 Commands, advice, and direct address with “o”

In philosophical texts, you will often see advice, reminders, and short instructions. Toki pona has a simple and elegant tool for this:

o

A beginner-friendly way to read **o** is: “this is directed at someone” or “this is what should be done”.

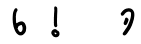
1) Direct address (calling someone)

You can use **o** to call or address a person, like “hey…” or “O…” in older English.

- **jan pona o, kama!**

  Friend, come!

- **sina o, kute.**

  You, listen.

In practice, this form is less common in modern casual writing, but it appears naturally in advice-style texts.

2) Commands and advice (the most common use)

This is the form you will meet constantly in Stoic-style writing:

o + verb

- **o awen.**

  Stay. / Remain steady.

- **o toki ala.**

  Do not speak.

- **o lukin e ni.**

  Look at this. / Pay attention to this.

You can also specify who the advice is for:

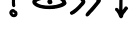
sina o + verb

This is like “you should…”

- **sina o awen lon.**

  You should stay grounded. / You should remain true.

- **sina o weka e pilin ike.**

You should remove bad feelings. / Let go of harmful emotion.

3) “o” plus a full sentence (gentle instruction)

Sometimes **o** introduces an instruction that feels more like a guiding sentence than a sharp command.

- **o sona e ni: ijo ale li tawa.**

  Know this: everything moves / everything changes.

A common beginner confusion

Do not confuse **o** with **li** or **e**.

- **li** tells you “this is the main statement about the subject”
- **e** tells you “this is the object of the verb”
- **o** tells you “this is advice / a command / direct address”

If you see **o**, read the sentence as a message aimed at someone, even if “you” is not written explicitly.

A reading tip

When you meet a short line that starts with **o**, treat it like a “practice instruction” from the text. These lines are often the most memorable, and they are excellent for learning:

you see the same patterns again and again across many authors.

2.7 Negation and yes/no patterns with “ala”

In toki pona, **ala** is the basic tool for negation. It usually means “**no / not / none**”. You will see it constantly in philosophical texts, because advice often comes in the form “do not…” or “this is not…”.

1) Simple negation: “not”

The most common pattern is simply placing **ala** after the word you want to negate.

- **jan li pona ala.**

  The person is not good. / The person is not OK.

- **mi wile ala.**

  I do not want (it).

- **mi sona ala.**

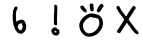
  I do not know.

For commands and advice, you will often see:

- **o pali ala.**

  Do not act. / Do not do it.

- **sina o toki ala.**

  You should not speak.

2) “There is no…” / “not any…”

To say “there is no X” you can use **ala** as a description:

- **ijo ala li lon.**

  Nothing exists / There is nothing.

- **jan ala li sona.**

  Nobody knows.

You will also see the very common phrase:

- **ala li…**

This is a short form that can mean “it is not the case that…” in some contexts.

3) Yes/no questions with “… ala … ?”

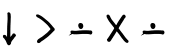
Toki pona has a clean yes/no question pattern. You repeat the main word and place **ala** in the middle:

X ala X?

- **sina pona ala pona?**

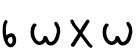
  Are you OK?

- **ni li lon ala lon?**

  Is this true?

- **sina wile ala wile?**

  Do you want (it)?

This pattern is especially helpful while reading, because it tells you immediately: “this is a yes/no question”.

4) Answering yes/no questions (simple and beginner-friendly)

A minimal way to answer is to repeat the key word:

- **pona.** (Yes / good / I’m OK.)

- **ala.** (No / not.)
- **lon.** (Yes / true.)
- **lon ala.** (No / not true.)

Toki pona answers can be extremely short. That is normal.

A common beginner mistake

Do not treat **ala** as a separate “no” word that must stand alone. In toki pona, **ala** often behaves like a normal modifier placed after the word it negates.

So instead of thinking “where do I insert ‘not’?”, think “which word am I negating?”

A reading tip

When you see **ala**, decide quickly which word it belongs to. In most sentences it negates the word right before it. This one habit removes a lot of confusion and helps you keep reading smoothly.

2.8 Questions with “seme” (and how to read ambiguity)

In toki pona, the main question word is:

seme

A beginner-friendly way to read **seme** is: "**what?**" or "**which?**" or "**what kind?**"

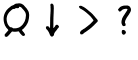
The exact English word depends on the sentence, but the job of **seme** is always the same: it marks an unknown piece of information.

1) The simplest use: "what is this?"

- **ni li seme?**

  What is this?

- **jan ni li seme?**

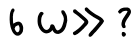
  Who is this person? (literally: this person is what?)

This is a great beginner pattern: you can ask many questions with just **ni / jan / seme**.

2) "What do you want / know / think?" (object questions)

You can put **seme** where the object would be:

- **sina wile e seme?**

  What do you want?

- **sina lukin e seme?**

What are you looking at?

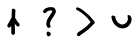
- **mi kama sona e seme?**

What am I learning?

3) “Which one / what kind?” (description questions)

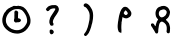
You can use **seme** like a description:

- **nasin seme li pona?**



Which way is good? / What kind of method is good?

- **tenpo seme la mi pali?**



When should I act? (literally: at what time…)

- **jan seme li pana e ni?**

Who gave this?

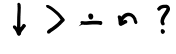
4) “Why?” (one common beginner pattern)

In toki pona, “why” is often expressed with **tan seme** (“from what?” / “because of what?”).

- **sina pilin ike tan seme?**

  Why do you feel bad?

- **ni li lon tan seme?**

  Why is this true?

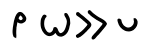
5) How to answer “seme” questions (simple strategy)

Often you can answer by replacing **seme** with the missing information.

- **ni li seme? → ni li tomo.**

  This is a building.

- **sina wile e seme? → mi wile e pona.**

  I want what is good.

A reading tip: “seme” is a placeholder

When you see **seme** in a text, treat it as an empty slot. Ask yourself: “What is missing here?”

Then use the rest of the sentence to understand what kind of answer is expected: a thing, a person, a time, a reason, a method.

About ambiguity (and why it is okay)

Because toki pona is small, a question can be slightly open-ended. For example, **nasin seme** can mean “which method?” or “what kind of method?” Both are fine. In real reading, the surrounding sentences usually make the intended meaning clear.

The best beginner habit is simple: pick the meaning that fits the context, and keep going.

2.9 The prepositions you will see everywhere: lon / tan / tawa / kepeken / sama

Toki pona uses a small set of very common prepositions. They are simple, but they do a lot of work. In beginner reading, these words are your best friends: they tell you how ideas connect.

A practical way to read them is: “this word gives the relationship”.

lon — in / at / on; also “true / real” in some contexts

lon often means location or situation: “in, at, on”.

- **mi lon tomo.**

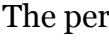
  I am in a building. / I am at home.

- **jan li lon ma.**

  The person is on the land / in the world.

You will also see **lon** used to mean “true / real”:

- **ni li lon.**

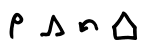
  This is true. / This is real.

Beginner tip: when **lon** appears after **li**, it often means “true”. When it appears before a noun, it often means “in/at”.

tan — from; because of

tan answers two common questions: “from where?” and “because of what?”

- **mi kama tan tomo.**

  I come from the house.

- **mi pilin ike tan ni.**

I feel bad because of this.

In philosophy, **tan** is extremely common because reasons matter.

tawa — to / toward; for; moving

tawa often means “to” or “toward”. It can also mean “for” (as in “for someone”), and it can connect to the idea of movement.

- **mi tawa tomo.**

  I go to the house.

- **ni li pona tawa mi.**

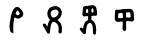
  This is good for me. / This seems good to me.

This second pattern is important in Stoic reading: it expresses appearance, judgment, and perspective.

kepeken — with / using (as a tool)

kepeken is how toki pona says “using”.

- **mi pali kepeken ilo.**

I work using a tool.

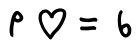
- **mi toki kepeken toki pona.**

  I speak using toki pona. / I speak in toki pona.

sama — like; as; the same as

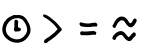
sama expresses similarity.

- **mi pilin sama sina.**

  I feel like you. / I feel the same as you.

- **tenpo li sama telo.**

  Time is like water.

In philosophical texts, **sama** is often used for metaphors and comparisons.

A common beginner mistake

Do not confuse **prepositions** with **e**.

- **e** marks a direct object.
- **lon / tan / tawa / kepeken / sama** describe relationships (where, why, toward whom, using what, like what).

If you can spot these prepositions, long sentences become much easier: you stop reading them as a flat chain of words and start seeing the connections.

A reading tip

When you meet a difficult sentence, circle (mentally) any of these words. They often reveal the hidden structure:

- **lon** (place / truth)
- **tan** (origin / reason)
- **tawa** (direction / perspective)
- **kepeken** (tool / method)
- **sama** (comparison)

Once you see the structure, the meaning usually follows.

2.10 Modifiers, compounds, and "small vocabulary, big meaning"

One reason toki pona works so well for reading is that it builds meaning by **stacking simple words** instead of searching for rare words. This is the core skill that makes a small vocabulary feel surprisingly powerful.

1) Modifiers: the word after describes the word before

In toki pona, the default rule is simple:

word + word means “the first word, described by the second word”.

- **jan pona**

  a good person / a kind person

- **toki pona**

  good/simple communication (the name of the language)

- **tenpo pini**

  past time

- **pilin ike**

  a bad feeling / harmful emotion

Beginner habit: read from left to right, and treat the second word as “what kind”.

2) Compounds: building a new idea from two simple ideas

A compound is just a short phrase that becomes a stable concept.

- **tomo sona**

a place of learning (school)

- **jan sona**

  a knowing person (a wise person / an expert)

- **nasin pona**

  a good way (a good method / a right path)

This is how philosophical language works in toki pona: not by inventing technical terms, but by making stable "meaning blocks" from basic words.

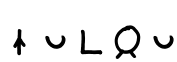
3) How to read longer chains without stress

Sometimes you will see three or more words in a row. Do not panic. Use this simple approach:

1. Identify the main word (usually the first one).
2. Read the rest as descriptions.
3. If it feels unclear, look for **pi** (grouping).

Example without **pi**:

- **nasin pona pi jan pona**

  the good way of a good person

Here **pi jan pona** is a grouped description: “of a good person”.

4) A key idea for philosophy: one word can play different roles

In toki pona, many words can act as “thing”, “quality”, or “action” depending on position. This is normal and useful.

- **pona** can mean “good” (quality)

  ijo li pona.

  The thing is good.

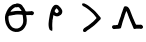
- **pona** can also mean “to improve / make good” (action)

  mi pona e ijo.

  I improve the thing.

- **lawa** can mean “head / mind / control” (thing or idea)

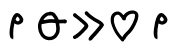
  lawa mi li awen.

  My mind stays steady.

- **lawa** can also mean “to lead / to control” (action)

  mi lawa e pilin mi.



I control my feelings.

You do not need to label grammar categories. Just watch the structure:

- After **li**, the word often behaves like the main action or description.
- After **e**, the next phrase is what the action targets.

5) "Small vocabulary, big meaning" (the right reading attitude)

Because toki pona is minimal, you will often meet phrases that feel broader than a single English word. That is not a weakness; it is the design.

In philosophical reading, this is actually a benefit. It keeps you close to the idea instead of the terminology. When a sentence says **pilin ike**, you can read it as "bad feeling", "harmful emotion", "unhelpful mood", depending on context. The text remains clear even when the exact English label changes.

A reading tip

When you find yourself wishing for a more specific word, pause and ask:

- "What is the simple idea here?"
- "What is the practical instruction?"

- “What is being valued or rejected?”

Toki pona is not trying to be technical. It is trying to stay readable — and that is exactly why it works so well as a language for reading wisdom texts.

2.11 A calm approach to ambiguity (the reading mindset)

If you come from “normal” language learning, ambiguity can feel like a problem. In toki pona it is not a bug — it is the design. A small language cannot give every idea a separate word, so many words cover a **family of related meanings**. The good news is that reading still works, because context usually makes the intended meaning clear.

A helpful mindset is this: in toki pona you often understand a sentence in **layers**. On the first pass, you get the general direction. On the second pass, you notice the details. On the third pass, you see the deeper interpretation. This is especially natural with philosophical texts, because they are meant to be reread anyway.

1) Aim for “good enough to continue”

Your goal is not to produce a perfect English translation in your head. Your goal is to keep reading without getting stuck. If a sentence has two reasonable interpretations, choose the one that fits the surrounding ideas and move on.

Often the next sentence will confirm what the author meant — and even if it does not, you will still have the core idea.

2) Treat broad words as “meaning fields”

Many toki pona words are intentionally wide. For example:

- **pona** can be good / beneficial / correct / healthy / virtuous
- **ike** can be bad / harmful / wrong / excessive / morally flawed
- **lawa** can be head / mind / control / leadership
- **kon** can be air / breath / spirit / inner life
- **nasin** can be path / method / habit / doctrine

When you see a word like this, do not panic. Ask: “Which shade fits the sentence?”

3) Use structure to reduce uncertainty

Ambiguity becomes much smaller when you see the grammar structure clearly. When you are unsure, do this quick check:

- Where is the subject?
- Is there **li**? (main statement)
- Is there **e**? (object / target of action)
- Is there **la**? (context / condition)
- Is there **pi**? (grouping)

Often you will discover that you were not confused about meaning — you were confused about structure. Once structure is clear, the meaning usually becomes obvious.

4) Let repetition teach you

Philosophical texts repeat key ideas. Toki pona also repeats key words. This is a powerful combination: after you meet the same phrase a few times, it becomes a "chunk" you recognize instantly.

For example, if you see a pattern like **pilin ike** several times, you stop translating it word by word. It becomes one unit: "a harmful feeling".

5) A practical rule for beginners

If a sentence makes sense in two ways, prefer the more practical reading:

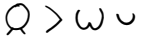
- What is the text advising you to do?
- What is it warning you against?
- What is it calling "good" or "bad"?

This keeps you close to the purpose of the passage and helps you read fluently.

Small exercise (optional, but useful)

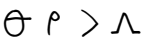
Read these lines and allow yourself to hold a slightly broad meaning. You do not need to pin it down perfectly.

jan li wile pona.

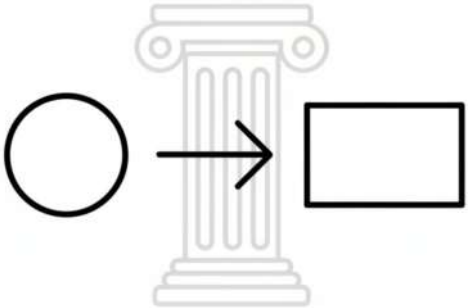


tenpo li tawa.

lawa mi li awen.



If you can understand these lines “well enough”, you are already doing the right thing. That is the skill that will carry you through the texts in this series.



Part 3 — Sitelen Pona (No Fear Edition)

3.1 What sitelen pona is (and what it is not)

Sitelen pona is a writing system for toki pona. It uses simple symbols (glyphs) to represent toki pona words. The important point is this:

Sitelen pona is not a different language. It does not add new grammar. It does not change the meaning. It is simply another way to write the same toki pona you see in the Latin alphabet.

That means you do not need to "learn sitelen pona first" in order to read our books. If you can read toki pona in Latin letters, you already know the language. Sitelen pona is just a second script that makes the text feel more visual and, for many readers, more memorable.

You can think of it like this: the Latin line is the most familiar and the easiest for beginners. The sitelen pona line is a visual mirror of the same sentence. Some people read only the Latin line. Some people read both and enjoy the rhythm of switching. Both approaches are valid.

Sitelen pona is also flexible. Unlike the Latin alphabet, which looks almost the same everywhere, sitelen pona glyphs can have different styles depending on the font or the writer. The same word can be drawn in slightly different ways and still be recognized as the same word. In this project we keep things consistent by using one font style throughout the series.

Finally, sitelen pona is not a secret code and not an "advanced level". It is closer to a special typographic layer. If you choose to ignore it at first, nothing breaks. You can return to it later, and it will start making sense naturally through repetition.

3.2 How sitelen pona is used in this series (reading rules)

In this series, sitelen pona is used as a second writing layer for the same toki pona text. The goal is to make reading calmer and more "chunk-based": you see words as whole units, not as long strings of letters.

Here are the practical rules that matter while reading.

Rule 1: The sitelen line is the same text, not an extra text

When you see a passage written twice (Latin toki pona and sitelen pona), assume they match word for word. If you can read the Latin line, you already know what the sitelen line says.

A good beginner approach is:

1. Read the Latin toki pona line first.
2. Then glance at the sitelen line as a visual confirmation.

3. Over time, you will start recognizing common glyphs automatically.

Rule 2: Read sitelen pona word by word, not symbol by symbol

Each glyph represents a **word**, not a letter. Do not try to "spell" sitelen pona. Instead, treat each glyph as a single word unit.

This is why sitelen pona can feel easier than expected: you are not decoding, you are recognizing.

Rule 3: Spacing is meaningful (most of the time)

In our books, spaces generally separate words. So if you see two glyphs separated by a space, read them as two separate toki pona words.

Sometimes a glyph may be visually complex, but it still represents one word. Trust the spacing.

Rule 4: Punctuation is minimal

Toki pona writing often uses very simple punctuation. In this series, you may see commas, periods, and question marks, but the core structure is carried by the grammar markers you already learned: **li, e, la, pi, o**, and by the overall sentence rhythm.

If you are unsure where a sentence “turns”, look for these markers. They work the same in sitelen pona as they do in Latin text.

Rule 5: If you do not recognize a glyph, use the Latin line

Sitelen pona is here to help, not to test you. If a glyph is unfamiliar:

- do not stop,
- glance at the Latin toki pona line,
- continue reading.

You will learn sitelen pona naturally through repeated exposure.

Rule 6: One font style across the project

To reduce confusion, the books in this project use a consistent glyph set: the **nasin-sitelen-pu** style. You may see different sitelen pona styles online; that is normal. In our books, consistency comes first, so you can build recognition quickly.

A short practice moment

Read the Latin line first, then treat the second line as the same sentence written in sitelen.

mi o awen lon.

tenpo ni la mi toki ala.

If you can follow these with the Latin line, you are already reading sitelen pona the right way.

3.3 Common variations (why the same word may look different)

One thing that surprises beginners is that sitelen pona is not a single fixed "alphabet" with only one official shape for each word. Sitelen pona is more like handwriting or calligraphy: the same word can appear in different styles and still be the same word.

This is normal, and it is not something you need to master in order to read our books.

Why variations exist

There are a few simple reasons:

1. **Different fonts and traditions**

   People draw sitelen pona by hand, use different fonts, or follow slightly different style conventions.

This produces different-looking glyphs that represent the same word.

2. **Simplification and speed**

   Some glyphs have detailed versions and simpler versions. In fast writing, people use shorter shapes. In printed fonts, glyphs may be more geometric or more decorative.

3. **Personal style (like handwriting)**

   Even within the same font family, small differences in stroke shape or proportion are common. Your brain learns to recognize the "idea" of the glyph, not a perfect drawing.

What matters (and what does not)

For reading, two things matter most:

- **The word order is the same** as in the Latin toki pona line.
- **The role of grammar markers** (li, e, la, pi, o, and so on) stays the same.

Small differences in shape do not change grammar and do not change meaning.

How to stay calm when you meet an unfamiliar shape

Use this simple method:

1. Read the Latin toki pona line first.
2. Then look at the sitelen line and try to match glyphs to words you already know.
3. If one glyph looks unfamiliar, ignore it and keep going. You will recognize it later through repetition.

A practical expectation

In this project, we use one consistent printed style (nasin-sitelen-pu). That means you will see far fewer variations than you might see online. Still, you may notice that:

- some glyphs can look “open” or “closed”
- some strokes can be curved or straight
- some symbols can be more abstract than you expected

This is all normal.

The key idea

Sitelen pona reading is not about perfect recognition. It is about familiarity built through repetition. The more you read, the more glyphs become instant and effortless — just like learning to recognize letters as words instead of individual strokes.

3.4 Practical reading tips (speed, spacing, and punctuation)

Sitelen pona becomes enjoyable when you stop treating it like a puzzle and start treating it like a visual layer. The goal is not to read sitelen faster than Latin text. The goal is to read it comfortably, with less friction, and to let it support your understanding.

1) Start slow on purpose

In the beginning, read sitelen pona as a second pass.

1. Read the Latin toki pona line.
2. Read it again, slowly.
3. Only then glance at the sitelen line and match a few glyphs to words you already know.

This builds recognition without stress. After a few pages, some glyphs will start "jumping out" at you automatically.

2) Use the grammar markers as signposts

A small set of words carry a lot of structure: **li, e, la, pi, o**, and often **ala**.

Even if you do not recognize every glyph yet, spotting these markers gives you the frame of the sentence. Once you have the frame, the rest is easier.

A good habit is: when you look at the sitelen line, first try to find the glyphs that correspond to:

- **li** (main statement begins)
- **e** (object begins)
- **la** (context frame)
- **pi** (grouping)
- **o** (advice / command)

3) Trust spacing, but do not overthink it

In this series, spacing is used to separate words, just like in the Latin line. So most of the time:

- one glyph + one space = one word
- several glyphs in a row = several words

If you ever feel uncertain, return to the Latin line. The sitelen line is never meant to “hide” information from you.

4) Do not “pronounce” sitelen in your head

A common beginner habit is to look at sitelen and try to “sound it out” like letters. That makes it harder.

Instead, treat each glyph as a whole word and connect it to meaning first. If you want to say the sentence aloud, read the Latin line.

5) Punctuation is secondary; structure is primary

Sitelen pona can be written with very light punctuation. In our books, punctuation may appear, but the sentence

structure is mainly carried by the grammar markers and by word order.

So when you read:

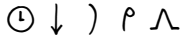
- use **li/e/la/pi/o** as your true punctuation,
- and treat periods and commas as optional reading aids.

6) A simple way to “train recognition”

If you want to get comfortable quickly, choose a short repeated line and read it once a day for a week. Your brain will start recognizing the glyphs without effort.

For example:

tenpo ni la mi awen.



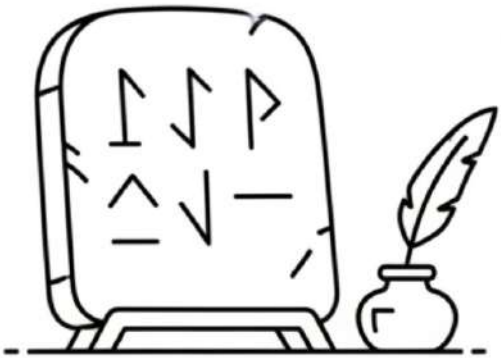
sina o lukin e ni.

mi sona ala la mi lukin e lipu.

7) The real purpose of sitelen pona in this project

Sitelen pona is here to make the text feel like a small object you can return to. It slows the reading down in a good way. It helps you notice patterns. It makes repeated phrases memorable. And it turns minimal language into a visual experience.

If you take it one page at a time, sitelen pona stops being something you “learn” and becomes something you simply read.



Part 4 — The Reference Section

4.1 Core toki pona words (A–Z): word — sitelen — English gloss

This is the core vocabulary used across this project. Meanings are intentionally broad: one toki pona word often covers a "family" of related English ideas. When reading, pick the shade that fits the sentence and keep going.

Format on each entry:

- **first line:** toki pona (Latin)
- **second line:** the same word again (you can apply the sitelen pona font to it)
- **last line:** a short English gloss

---

a

— emphasis; emotion marker ("ah", "oh"); intensifier

akesi

— reptile; amphibian (often: "lizard"-type animal)

ala

— no; not; none; zero

alasa

— to hunt; to search; to try to find

ale

— all; every; everything; the universe

anpa

— bottom; below; lower; humble; to lower

ante

— different; other; to change; to alter

anu

— or

awen

— to stay; to remain; to continue; stable; still

e

— object marker (marks the direct object of a verb)

en

— and (joins subjects)

esun

— market; trade; shop; commerce

ijo

— thing; object; something

ike

— bad; harmful; wrong; excessive; to worsen

ilo

— tool; device; instrument; machine

insa

— inside; inner; center; contents

jaki

— dirty; disgusting; toxic; trash

jan

— person; human; someone

jelo

— yellow (often also: warm light colors)

jo

— to have; to hold; to contain; possession

kala

— fish; sea animal

kalama

— sound; noise; voice; to make sound

kama

— to come; to arrive; to become; event; result

kasi

— plant; vegetation; tree; herb

ken

— can; able; possible; permission; capability

kepeken

— to use; using; with (a tool / method)

kili

— fruit; vegetable; food plant

kiwen

— hard thing; rock; metal; solid; to harden

ko

— powder; paste; clay; semi-solid substance

kon

— air; breath; spirit; essence; inner life

kule

— color; colorful; category/type (in some contexts)

kulupu

— group; community; collection; team

kute

— ear; to hear; to listen; to obey

la

— context marker (“given this…”, “when…”, “in this frame…”)

lape

— sleep; rest

laso

— blue; green

lawa

— head; mind; control; to lead; to govern

len

— clothing; fabric; cover; layer

lete

— cold; cool; raw; to cool down

li

— predicate marker (links subject to statement; not used after lone mi/sina)

lili

— small; little; short; few

linja

— line; string; rope; hair; thread

lipu

— page; book; paper; document

loje

— red

lon

— in/at/on (location); real; true; existence

luka

— hand; arm; five

lukin

— to look; to see; to watch; to examine (often: also “try”, depending on style)

lupa

— hole; opening; door; window

ma

— land; earth; place; area; country

mama

— parent; ancestor; creator; caretaker

mani

— money; wealth; large domesticated animal (context-dependent)

meli

— woman; female; feminine person

mi

— I; me; we; us

mije

— man; male; masculine person

moku

— food; to eat; to drink; to consume

moli

— death; to die; dead

monsi

— back; behind; rear

mu

— animal sound (woof/meow/etc.); vocalization

mun

— moon; night sky object; star (general sky-body sense)

musi

— fun; play; art; entertainment; playful

mute

— many; much; very; several; quantity

nanpa

— number; ordinal marker (“-th”); to count

nasa

— strange; weird; silly; unusual; confused

nasin

— path; way; method; custom; doctrine

nena

— bump; hill; nose; button; protuberance

ni

— this; that

nimi

— name; word

noka

— foot; leg; bottom; lower part

o

— command/advice marker; direct address (“you should…”, “O …”)

olin

— love; compassion; affection; to care for

ona

— he; she; it; they (third person)

open

— to open; to start; beginning

pakala

— broken; damage; mistake; to break; to mess up

pali

— work; to do; to make; effort

palisa

— long hard thing; stick; rod

pan

— grain; bread; cereal food

pana

— to give; to send; to provide; to put out

pi

— grouping marker (groups the next words as one description)

pilin

— feeling; emotion; heart; to feel; to sense

pimeja

— black; dark

pini

— end; to finish; to stop; completed

pipi

— insect; bug; small crawling creature

poka

— side; nearby; next to; vicinity

poki

— container; box; bowl; cup

pona

— good; simple; beneficial; correct; to improve; to make good

pu

— interacting with the official toki pona book; “official / by the book” (context-dependent)

sama

— same; similar; like; as

seli

— fire; heat; warm; to heat

selo

— outer layer; skin; shell; boundary

seme

— what? which? (question word)

sewi

— high; above; sky; sacred; divine

sijelo

— body; physical form; torso

sike

— circle; round; cycle; sphere; wheel

sin

— new; fresh; again; additional

sina

— you

sinpin

— front; face; wall; to face

sitelen

— image; symbol; writing; to draw; to write

sona

— knowledge; to know; to understand; wisdom; skill

soweli

— animal; mammal; land animal

suli

— big; large; important; long; to grow

suno

— sun; light; brightness

supa

— surface; table; bed; platform

suwi

— sweet; cute; pleasant; charming

tan

— from; because of; reason; origin

taso

— but; however; only

tawa

— to; toward; for; moving; movement (context-dependent)

telo

— water; liquid; to wash; fluid

tenpo

— time; moment; occasion; duration

toki

— speech; language; to talk; message

tomo

— building; house; room; structure

tu

— two; pair

unpa

— sex; sexual activity

uta

— mouth; lips; oral

utala

— fight; conflict; compete; struggle

walo

— white; light-colored; pale

wan

— one; single; unit

waso

— bird; flying creature

wawa

— strong; power; energy; intense

weka

— away; absent; to remove; to leave

wile

— want; need; must; desire; requirement

4.2 Particles & function words (quick list with mini-examples)

Particles and function words are the “glue” of toki pona. They are few, but they carry most of the structure. If you can recognize these quickly, reading becomes much easier.

Below is a practical list with short examples. Do not try to memorize it all at once. Use it as a reference while reading.

---

a — emphasis / emotion marker

Used to add feeling, surprise, or emphasis.

mi pona a.

— I’m really fine. / I’m good!

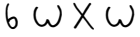
---

ala — negation; “no / not”; also yes/no question pattern

jan li pona ala.

— The person is not good.

sina wile ala wile?



— Do you want it?

---

anu — “or”

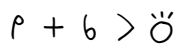
ni anu ni?

— This or that?

---

en — “and” (joins subjects)

mi en sina li toki.

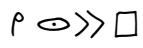


— You and I speak.

---

e — marks the direct object of a verb

mi lukin e lipu.

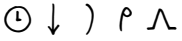


— I look at the page.

---

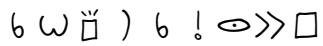
la — context / condition frame

tenpo ni la mi awen.



— Right now, I stay. / For now, I remain.

sina wile sona la sina o lukin e lipu.

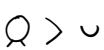


— If you want to understand, you should read.

---

li — links the subject to the main statement (not used after lone mi/sina)

jan li pona.



— A person is good.

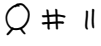
mi pona.

— I am fine. (no li here)

---

nanpa — number; ordinal marker

jan nanpa tu.

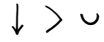


— the second person (person number two)

---

ni — “this / that”

ni li pona.



— This is good.

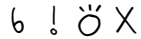
---

o — advice / command / direct address

o awen.

— Stay. / Remain steady.

sina o toki ala.

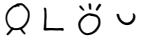


— You should not speak.

---

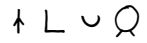
pi — groups the next words as one description

jan pi toki pona



— a toki pona person (a person connected to toki pona)

nasin pi pona jan



— the way of being a good person

---

seme — “what / which / what kind”; question placeholder

ni li seme?

— What is this?

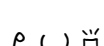
tan seme?

— Why? (because of what?)

---

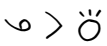
sina / mi / ona — pronouns (used as normal words)

mi wile sona.



— I want to know.

ona li toki.



— They speak.

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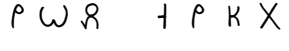
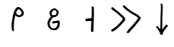
taso — “but / however”; also “only”

mi wile pali. taso mi ken ala.



— I want to act, but I cannot.

mi jo taso e ni.



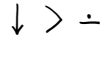
— I only have this.

Prepositions used as function words in many sentences

These behave like normal words, but they often act as connectors:

lon (in/at; true)

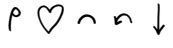
ni li lon.



— This is true.

tan (from; because of)

mi pilin ike tan ni.



— I feel bad because of this.

tawa (to/toward; for; perspective)

ni li pona tawa mi.

— This is good for me / seems good to me.

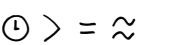
kepeken (using)

mi pali kepeken ilo.

— I work using a tool.

sama (like; as)

tenpo li sama telo.



— Time is like water.

Quick reminder (the “reading shortcut”)

When you feel stuck, scan for these markers first:

li — main statement

e — object

la — context/condition

pi — grouping

o — advice/command

ala — negation / yes-no pattern

If you can see these, you can usually rebuild the meaning even if some content words are new.

4.3 Numbers (how we write them in this series)

In this project we keep numbers simple and consistent. You do not need advanced counting to read the texts. Most of the time, numbers appear only in chapter/line numbering or in very small quantities.

The basic number words

These are the core building blocks:

ala

𐤀

— 0 (none)

wan

— 1

tu

— 2

luka

— 5

mute

— 20 (and also “many” in non-number contexts)

ale

— 100 (and also “all / everything” in non-number contexts)

How numbers are formed (addition)

Numbers are usually formed by adding these words together. Read them as a sum.

- **tu wan** = 2 + 1 = 3

- **luka tu** = 5 + 2 = 7

- **luka luka** = 5 + 5 = 10

- **mute luka** = 20 + 5 = 25

You do not need to calculate perfectly while reading. Often it is enough to feel the scale: small, medium, large.

“nanpa” for ordinal numbers (first, second, third…)

To say “number X” or “the X-th”, toki pona uses **nanpa**.

nanpa wan

— first

nanpa tu

— second

In this series, you may see **nanpa** in headings or references.

A very practical shortcut for readers

If you do not want to do mental math, it is completely fine to treat number phrases as labels. For example, if you see:

nanpa luka luka tu

You can simply read it as “a numbered item” and keep going. The text will still make sense.

When numbers appear in this kit

- In the dictionaries and reference sections, numbers may appear as examples.
- In the practice text, numbering is mainly used to keep lines easy to reference.

The goal is not to make you count. The goal is to make the book easy to navigate.

4.4 Extra / community words used in this project (only if used)

This section lists additional toki pona words that you may see in this project outside the strict “core” list. Some of these words are widely used in the community, some are variants, and some are useful labels inside toki pona culture.

You do not need to learn these words to start reading. Treat them like optional extras: look them up when you meet them, then continue.

Common community words (you may encounter them)

kin

— also; too; indeed (often used for emphasis or “as well”)

namako

— extra; additional; spice; decoration (something added on top)

oko

— eye (often used as a variant of “lukin” in some communities)

kipisi

— to cut; piece; fragment; slice

leko

— square; block; brick; cube-like shape

monsuta

— fear; monster; dread; scary thing

tonsi

— non-binary / gender-diverse; trans (community usage)

jasima

— reflect; mirror; reverse

kijetesantakalu

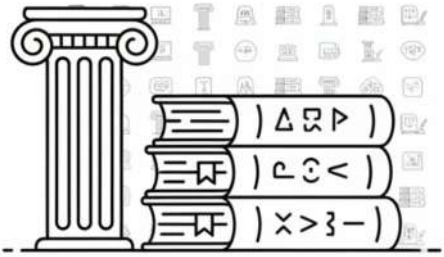
— raccoon / mustelid-like animal (a playful community word)

Project-only notes (how we handle “extra words”)

In this series, we try to keep the language minimal and readable. That means:

- If a core word expresses the idea clearly, we prefer the core word.
- If an extra word appears, it is because it makes the text simpler or more consistent.
- When an extra word matters for understanding, it will also appear in the mini-glossary of the relevant text.

If you never see the words above while reading, you can ignore this section completely.



Part 5 — How Translation Works Here (Beginner-friendly)

5.1 Meaning anchors used across the series (the small set of key ideas)

In this project we try to stay consistent. That means we reuse a small set of toki pona words as “anchors” for big, recurring ideas. When you meet these words many times in different texts, they become familiar, and reading becomes much easier.

These anchors are not “perfect translations” of philosophical terms. They are stable handles. Depending on context, the best English reading may shift slightly, but the core idea stays recognizable.

Below are the most important anchors you will see again and again.

pona — good; beneficial; the right direction; “what should be”

In ethics-style passages, **pona** often carries the sense of “good in the meaningful sense”, not just “pleasant”.

mi wile pona.

— I want what is good. / I want to be good.

ike — bad; harmful; wrong; “what should not be”

Often the ethical opposite of **pona**.

mi wile weka e ike.

— I want to remove what is harmful.

nasin — path; method; practice; way of living

This word does a lot of work in philosophy: “the way”, “the method”, “the discipline”.

nasin pona li suli.

— A good way / right method matters.

lawa — mind; head; control; guidance

In this series, **lawa** is one of the main “mind” words.

lawa mi li awen.

— My mind stays steady.

pilin — feeling; inner sense; emotional reaction

Useful for reading “anger”, “fear”, “desire”, “calm”, and so on in a minimal way.

mi pilin ike.

— I feel bad. / I have a harmful feeling.

wile — want; need; must; desire

A key word for ethics and self-control: what you want, what you think you need, what you choose.

mi wile ala.

— I do not want (it).

ken — can; possible; able

Often appears in “what is in your power” / “what you can do”.

mi ken pali.

— I can act.

awen — stay; remain; continue; be steady

A frequent “Stoic” anchor: endurance, stability, staying with what matters.

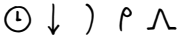
o awen.

— Stay. / Remain steady.

tenpo — time; moment; season

Time is one of the constant themes in wisdom texts.

tenpo ni la mi awen.

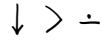


— Right now, I stay.

lon — in/at; true; real

Used both for location and for truth/existence.

ni li lon.



— This is true.

kama — come; become; happen

Very useful for change, growth, events, and “becoming a certain kind of person”.

mi kama sona.

— I learn. (literally: I become knowing)

weka — away; remove; let go

A practical anchor for “release”, “avoid”, “discard”, “step back”.

o weka e pilin ike.

— Let go of harmful feelings.

sona — know; understand; wisdom

Often used for insight and understanding rather than “data”.

mi wile sona e ni.

— I want to understand this.

toki — speech; thought-as-language; teaching

In philosophical texts, **toki** can be “what is said”, “what is taught”, or “the inner talk of the mind”, depending on context.

toki pona li pona tawa mi.

— Toki pona is good for me.

sewi — high; above; sacred; “higher principle”

Used carefully: it can be literal (above) or symbolic (sacred / divine / higher).

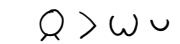
sewi li suli tawa jan mute.

— The sacred / the higher matters to many people.

jan — person; human being

In moral texts, much of the time “the human being” is the real subject.

jan li wile pona.



— People want what is good. / A person wants to be good.

One small note on consistency

When you read other books in this project, you will notice that these same anchors keep returning. That repetition is intentional. It allows you to build fluency by recognition, not by memorization.

5.2 Example 1 (Marcus Aurelius): a short excerpt + how to read it

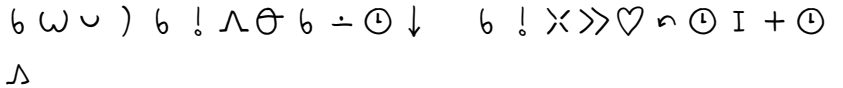
Below is a short idea from Marcus Aurelius in the style used in this project. We will use it to practice reading structure, not to hunt for a perfect word-by-word translation.

English (reference)

If you want to live well, keep your mind steady in the present. Let go of feelings about the past and the future.

toki pona (Latin)

sina wile pona la sina o awen lawa sina lon tenpo ni. sina o weka e pilin tan tenpo pini en tenpo kama.



How to read it (step by step)

Step 1: Find the frame marker

The first key word is **la**, so read it as:

[context] la [main advice].

- **context:** sina wile pona
- **main advice:** sina o awen lawa sina lon tenpo ni

A beginner-friendly reading of the context is:

- **sina wile pona** = *“you want good / you want to be good”*

So the whole first sentence becomes:

- *“If you want what is good / if you want to live well, then…”*

Step 2: Spot the advice marker

After **la** we see **o**, which signals instruction:

- **sina o awen…** = *“you should remain / you should stay…”*

So we already know the author is giving guidance, not describing a fact.

Step 3: Read the core action and the “where/when”

Now read the main action phrase:

- **awen lawa sina**

  “keep your mind steady” (literally: stay as your own mind/control)

Then read the location/time connector:

- **lon tenpo ni**

  “in this time” / “right now” / “in the present”

So the first sentence reads smoothly as:

- *“If you want to live well, keep your mind steady right now.”*

Step 4: The second sentence is another instruction

Again we see **o**, so it is also advice:

- **sina o weka e pilin…**

  “you should remove / let go of feelings…”

Then **tan** introduces the source/topic:

- **tan tenpo pini en tenpo kama**

  “from the past and the future” / “about the past and the future”

So the second sentence becomes:

- *“Let go of feelings about the past and the future.”*

Mini-gloss (only the words that matter here)

- **wile** — want / need
- **pona** — good / the right direction
- **la** — “given this… / if…” (context frame)
- **o** — advice / instruction
- **awen** — stay / remain / be steady
- **lawa** — mind / control
- **lon** — in/at; (also: true, in other contexts)
- **tenpo ni** — the present / now
- **weka** — remove / let go
- **pilin** — feeling / inner reaction
- **tan** — from; because of; about (source/reason/topic)
- **tenpo pini** — the past
- **tenpo kama** — the future
- **en** — and (joins items)

The main takeaway

You did not need a large vocabulary here. You mainly needed to recognize the structure words (**la**, **o**, **e**, **lon**, **tan**) and then let the content words fill in the meaning. This is exactly how the rest of the series is designed to be read.

5.3 Example 2 (Marcus Aurelius): a short excerpt + how to read it

Here is another short line in the exact style used in the Marcus Aurelius book. This example is useful because it is very simple, but it shows how toki pona handles time, contrast, and focus.

English (reference)

Notice this: the past moves away. But your mind can stay in the present.

toki pona (Latin)

sina pilin e ni: tenpo pini li tawa. taso lawa sina li ken awen lon tenpo ni taso.

How to read it (step by step)

Step 1: Read the first sentence as "notice this"

Start with the frame:

- **sina pilin e ni:**

  "you feel/notice this:" / "pay attention to this:"

Here **pilin** is used as "sense / notice / feel", and **e ni** tells you what the attention is directed to.

Step 2: Read the simple statement after the colon

Now read the short sentence:

- **tenpo pini li tawa.**

  "the past moves" / "the past goes away"

This is the basic **X li Y** pattern:

- subject: **tenpo pini** (past time)
- statement: **tawa** (move / go)

Step 3: "taso" means the text is turning

The next sentence begins with:

- **taso**

  "but / however"

This tells you: the author is shifting from one idea to a stronger, more useful idea.

Step 4: Read the second sentence as ability + stability + place

Now read the structure:

- **lawa sina** = “your mind”
- **li ken** = “can”
- **awen** = “stay / remain”
- **lon tenpo ni** = “in the present / right now”

So the core meaning becomes:

- “But your mind can stay in the present.”

Step 5: The final “taso” narrows the focus

There is another **taso** at the end:

- **lon tenpo ni taso**

  “only in the present”

This is a very typical toki pona move: the same word can mean “but” at the start of a sentence and “only” at the end, and context makes the role clear.

Mini-gloss (only the words that matter here)

- **pilin** — feel; sense; notice
- **e** — direct object marker
- **ni** — this
- **tenpo pini** — the past

- **li** — main statement marker
- **tawa** — move; go
- **taso** — but; however; only
- **lawa** — mind; control
- **ken** — can; possible
- **awen** — stay; remain; be steady
- **lon** — in/at; within (here: “in the present”)
- **tenpo ni** — now; the present

The main takeaway

This passage shows a very common pattern in the series: a simple observation (the past moves away) followed by a practical focus (your mind can stay here, now). If you can read **taso** as “turn the thought” and **lon tenpo ni** as “in the present”, you can read a lot of Stoic-style toki pona smoothly.

5.4 Bridge examples (Pythagoras): short lines with mini-glosses

Before you read the full practice text in Part 6, it helps to see what the “Pythagoras voice” looks like in toki pona. The Golden Verses often speak in short instructions: what to respect, what to avoid, and what to practice every day.

Below are a few short lines in the style used in this kit. Read them slowly. Do not try to make them perfectly “literary”.

The point is to recognize the patterns you already learned: **o** (advice), **la** (frame), and a small set of core words.

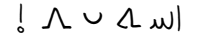
Line 1

English (reference):

Respect what is sacred.

toki pona (Latin):

o awen pona tawa sewi.



How to read it:

- **o** = advice
- **awen pona** = stay in a good way / remain respectful
- **tawa sewi** = toward the sacred / in relation to what is higher

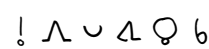
Line 2

English (reference):

Respect your parents.

toki pona (Latin):

o awen pona tawa mama sina.



How to read it:

- same structure as Line 1, just a different target: **mama sina** = your parents

Line 3

English (reference):

Choose good friends.

toki pona (Latin):

o wile e jan pona.

How to read it:

- **o wile e…** = aim for / choose / want
- **jan pona** = good person / good people (friends, companions)

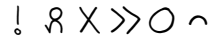
Line 4

English (reference):

Do not do what is harmful.

toki pona (Latin):

o pali ala e ijo ike.



How to read it:

- **pali** is “do/act”
- **ala** negates it
- **e ijo ike** = a harmful thing

Line 5

English (reference):

Be moderate in food and drink.

toki pona (Latin):

o moku kepeken nasin pona. o moku ala mute.

How to read it:

- **kepeken nasin pona** = using a good method / in a good way
- **mute** here is “too much”

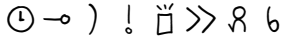
Line 6

English (reference):

Before sleep, review your day.

toki pona (Latin):

tenpo lape la o sona e pali sina.



How to read it:

- **tenpo lape la…** = at sleep time / before sleep…
- **o sona e pali sina** = know/notice your actions (review what you did)

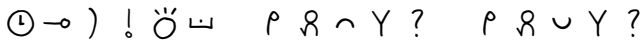
Line 7

English (reference):

Ask yourself what you did wrong and what you did well.

toki pona (Latin):

tenpo lape la o toki insa: “mi pali ike anu seme? mi pali pona anu seme?”



How to read it:

- **toki insa** = inner talk / inner speech
- **anu seme?** = or what? (a simple way to form a reflective question)

Line 8

English (reference):

Tomorrow, choose the better way.

toki pona (Latin):

tenpo kama la o wile e nasin pona.

How to read it:

- **tenpo kama la…** = in the future / tomorrow…
- **o wile e nasin pona** = choose the good path / aim for the good way

Mini-gloss (words that carry most of the meaning here)

- **sewi** — sacred; higher; above
- **mama** — parent
- **tawa** — toward; for; in relation to
- **jan pona** — good person / friend
- **pali** — act; do; make
- **moku** — eat; drink; consume
- **nasin pona** — good way; good method
- **lape** — sleep; rest

- **toki insa** — inner talk; reflection
- **tenpo kama** — future; what comes next

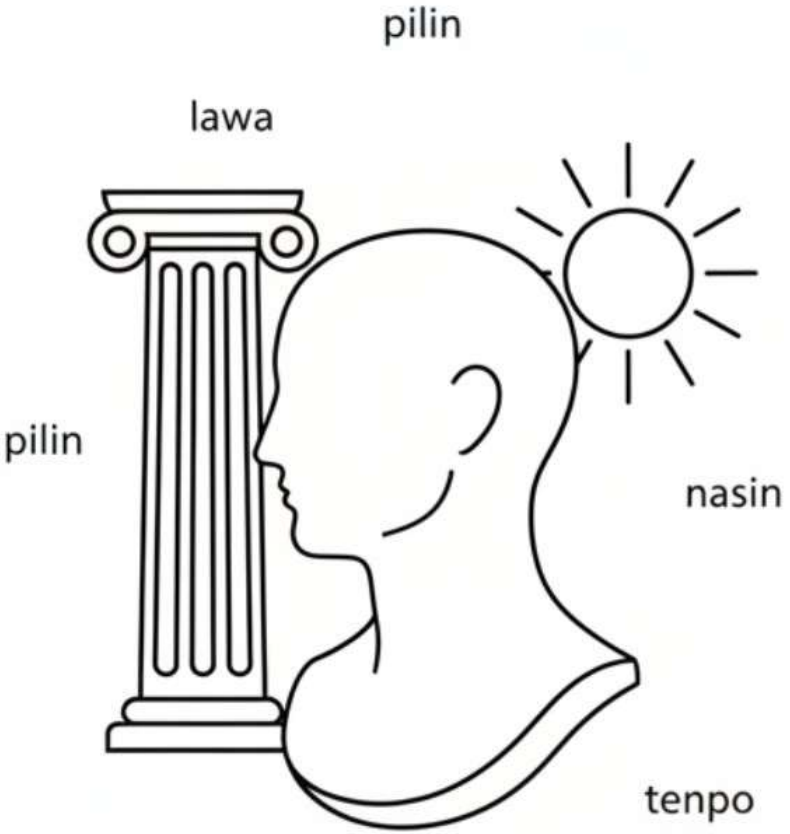
If these lines feel readable, you are ready for Part 6. The full text will use the same building blocks, just with more rhythm and repetition.

Part 6 — Practice Text

The Golden Verses of Pythagoras

Full Text in English,
toki pona, and sitelen pona

(Practice text for
The Toki Pona Reader's Kit)

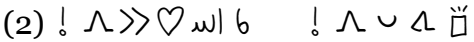

pilin
lawa
pilin
nasin
tenpo

6.1 The Golden Verses of Pythagoras (Toki Pona + Sitelen Pona)

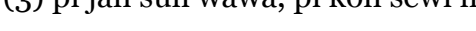
(1) o pana e pali sewi tawa sewi pi moli ala.

(1)

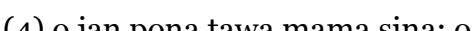
(2) o awen e pilin sewi sina; o awen pona tawa sona

(2) 

(3) pi jan suli wawa, pi kon sewi lili.

(3) 

(4) o jan pona tawa mama sina; o sama pona tawa jan sama; o olin pona tawa jan olin sina; o awen mama pona.

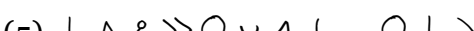
(4) 

(5) o kama jo e jan pona tawa sina: jan ni li wile pona.

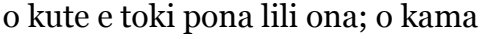
(5)

o kute e toki pona lili ona; o kama sona tan pali ona.

tan pakala lili la o weka ala tan ona.

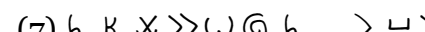


(6) sina ken la o pali e ni: tan nasin kiwen la

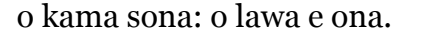
(6) 

wawa li lon poka wile.

(7) sina ken utala e wile nasa sina, li anpa e ona.



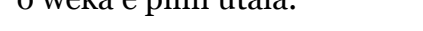
o kama sona: o lawa e ona.



o moku ala mute; o pali wawa; o awen tan unpa.

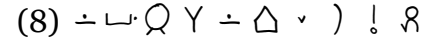
o weka e pilin utala.

(8) lon poka jan anu lon tomo lili la o pali ala e ijo ike.



taso nanpa wan la o awen pona tawa sina.

(9) sina wile toki anu pali la o sona sin lon lawa sina.



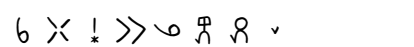
o pali kepeken nasin pona.

(10) o awen sona e ni: wawa pi anpa ala li pana e moli.

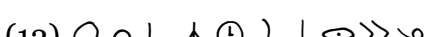
(11) mani en nimi suli, sina kama jo e ona kepeken pali lili la,

(11)

sina weka kin e ona kepeken pali lili.



(12) ijo ike pi nasin tenpo la o lukin e ona sama ona.

(12) 

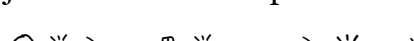
o awen wawa lon ona; sina ken la o ante e ona lili.

sewi li pana ala e ijo ike pi suli mute tawa jan sona.

(13) lon li jo e jan olin; pakala li jo e jan olin kin.

(13)

jan sona li lukin kepeken sona: ona li toki pona anu toki ike.

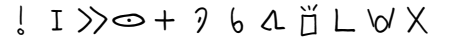


pakala li kama wawa la ona li weka, li awen.

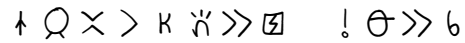
(14) o kute e toki mi, li awen jo e ona lon pilin sina.

(14)

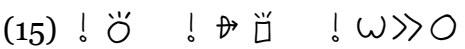
o pini e lukin en kute sina tawa sona pi wawa ala.



nasin jan ante li ken pana e pakala: o lawa e sina.

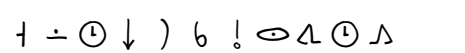


(15) o toki; o alasa sona; o wile e ijo kepeken lawa sina.

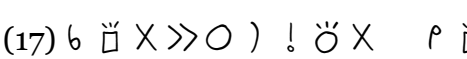


(16) jan nasa li pali weka, li pali tan ala.

taso lon tenpo ni la sina o lukin tawa tenpo kama.

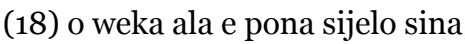


(17) sina sona ala e ijo la o toki ala: “mi sona.”

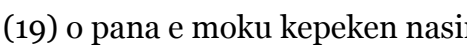


o pana e tenpo, o awen, o kama sona: tenpo en awen li pona tawa pali ale.

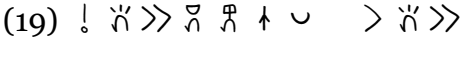
(18) o weka ala e pona sijelo sina; o awen pona e sijelo sina.



(19) o pana e moku kepeken nasin pona, li pana e lape tawa lawa.



(20) o awen lon meso; o awen weka tan mute en lili.

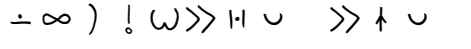


tan tu la pilin ike pi wile jo li kama.

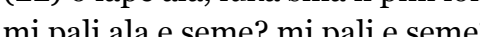
(21) wile pi ijo mute en wile pi jo awen, ona li kama e pakala sama.

(21)

lon ale la o wile e meso pona, e nasin pona.



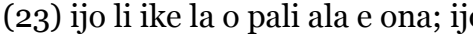
(22) o lape ala, luka sina li pini lon oko, la sina o toki insa: mi pali ala e seme? mi pali e seme?

(22) 

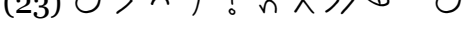
(23) ijo li ike la o pali ala e ona; ijo li pona la o awen pali e ona.

(23)

(24) o toki insa lon toki mi; o olin e ona; o tawa kepeken ona:

(24) 

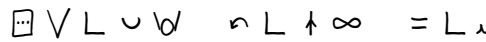
ona li ken tawa e sina tawa pona sewi.



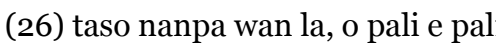
(25) mi toki wawa kepeken wan, li sitelen e nanpa tu tu sewi lon pilin mi mute:

(25)

sitelen suli pi pona wawa, tan pi nasin ale, sama pi sewi.

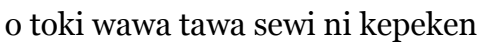


(26) taso nanpa wan la, o pali e pali pona sina:

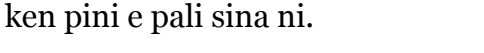
(26) 

o toki wawa tawa sewi ni kepeken wawa pilin; sewi taso li ken pini e pali sina ni.

(27) sewi li pana e sona la, ijo ala li ken nasa e sina.

(27) 

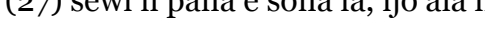
sina li ken sona e kon pi ijo ante; sina li sona e open en pini pi ale.



(28) sewi li wile la sina kama sona e ni: nasin pi ma ale li sama lon ale;

(28)

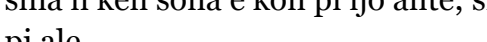
lon ma ale la ona li sama.



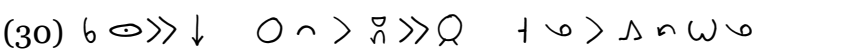
(29) tan ni la sina kama sona e ken pona sina;

(29)

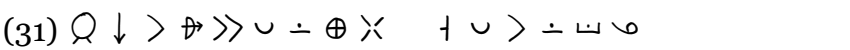
pilin sina li kama wile ala e wile pi lon ala.



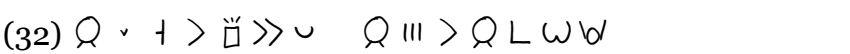
(30) sina lukin e ni: ijo ike li moku e jan, taso ona li kama tan wile ona.

(30) 

(31) jan ni li alasa e pona lon ma weka; taso pona li lon insa ona.

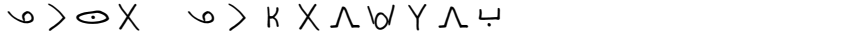
(31) 

(32) jan lili taso li sona e pona. jan mute li jan pi wile wawa.

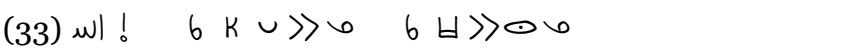
(32) 

tenpo ale la wawa li pana e ona tawa ni tawa ante, sama telo utala lon telo suli pi pini ala.

ona li lukin ala; ona li ken ala awen wawa anu awen anpa.



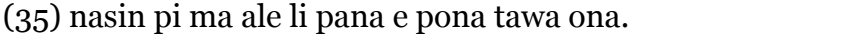
(33) sewi o! sina ken pona e ona, sina open e lukin ona.

(33) 

(34) taso ala: ni li pali pi jan pi sewi insa — o lukin e pakala, o lukin e lon.

(34)

(35) nasin pi ma ale li pana e pona tawa ona.

(35) 

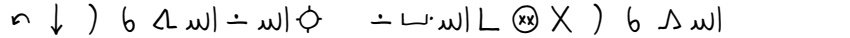
(36) sina sona e nasin ni la, jan sona pona o awen lon ona.

(36)

taso o awen e nasin mi: o weka tan ijo pi pilin sina li ken ike, li sona pona e ona;

o lawa e sijelo sina kepeken lawa.

tan ni la sina tawa sewi lon sewi suno; lon poka sewi pi moli ala la sina kama sewi.



6.2 — The Golden Verses of Pythagoras (English reference text)

(1) Render to the Immortal Gods the consecrated cult;

(2) Guard then thy faith: Revere the memory

(3) Of the Illustrious Heroes, of Spirits demi-Gods.

(4) Be a good son, just brother, spouse tender and good father

(5) Choose for thy friend, the friend of virtue;

Yield to his gentle counsels, profit by his life,

And for a trifling grievance never leave him;

(6) If thou canst at least: for a most rigid law
Binds Power to Necessity.
(7) Still it is given thee to fight and overcome
Thy foolish passions: learn thou to subdue them.
Be sober, diligent, and chaste; avoid all wrath.
(8) In public or in secret ne'er permit thou
Any evil; and above all else respect thyself.
(9) Speak not nor act before thou hast reflected.
Be just.
(10) Remember that a power invincible
Ordains to die;
(11) that riches and the honours
Easily acquired, are easy thus to lose.
(12) As to the evils which Destiny involves,
Judge them what they are: endure them all and strive,
As much as thou art able, to modify the traits:
The Gods, to the most cruel, have not exposed the Sage.
(13) Even as Truth, does Error have its lovers:
With prudence the Philosopher approves or blames;
If Error triumph, he departs and waits.
Listen and in thine heart engrave my words;
Keep closed thine eye and ear 'gainst prejudice;

(14) Of others the example fear; think always for thyself:

(15) Consult, deliberate, and freely choose.

Let fools act aimlessly and without cause.

(16) Thou shouldst, in the present, contemplate the future.

(17) That which thou dost not know, pretend not that thou dost.

Instruct thyself: for time and patience favour all.

(18) Neglect not thy health: dispense with moderation,

Food to the body and to the mind repose.

(19) Too much attention or too little shun; for envy

Thus, to either excess is alike attached.

Luxury and avarice have similar results.

(21) One must choose in all things a mean just and good.

(22) Let not sleep e'er close thy tired eyes

Without thou ask thyself: What have I omitted and what done?

(23) Abstain thou if 'tis evil; persevere if good.

(24) Meditate upon my counsels; love them; follow them;

To the divine virtues will they know how to lead thee.

(25) I swear it by the one who in our hearts engraved

The sacred Tetrad, symbol immense and pure,
Source of Nature and model of the Gods.
(26) But before all, thy soul to its faithful duty,
Invoke these Gods with fervour, they whose aid,
Thy work begun, alone can terminate.
Instructed by them, naught shall then deceive thee:

(27) Of diverse beings thou shalt sound the essence;
And thou shalt know the principle and end of All.
(28) If Heaven wills it, thou shalt know that Nature,
Alike in everything, is the same in every place:
(29) So that, as to thy true rights enlightened,
Thine heart shall no more feed on vain desires.
(30) Thou shalt see that the evils which devour men
Are of their choice the fruit; that these unfortunates
(31) Seek afar the goodness whose source within they bear.
For few know happiness: playthings of the passions,
Hither, thither tossed by adverse waves,
Upon a shoreless sea, they blinded roll,
(32) Unable to resist or to the tempest yield.
(33) God! Thou couldst save them by opening their eyes.
But no: ‘tis for the humans of a race divine

(34) To discern Error and to see the Truth.

(35) Nature serves them. Thou who fathomed it,

O wise and happy man, rest in its haven.

But observe my laws, abstaining from the things

Which thy soul must fear, distinguishing them well;

(36) Letting intelligence o'er thy body reign;

So that, ascending into radiant Ether,

Midst the Immortals, thou shalt be thyself a God.

6.3 Mini-glossary for The Golden Verses of Pythagoras (final, after full text)

Core words (used often in this text)

awen

ᚐ

— stay; remain; continue; steady; keep

alasa

ᛇ

— search; seek; try

ala

— not; no; none (also used in question patterns)

ale

— all; everything; the whole

anpa

— below; lower; humble; to lower; to defeat (in context: “bring down”)

ante

— change; other; different

awen (pi)

— stable; steady (often used as “keep/maintain”)

ike

— bad; harmful; wrong; to worsen

ijo

— thing; something

insa

— inside; inner; within

jan

— person; human being

jo

— have; hold; possess

kama

— come; become; happen

ken

— can; possible; able

kepeken

— using; with (a tool / method)

kon

— air; breath; spirit; essence

kute

— listen; hear

la

)

— context / condition marker (“if…”, “when…”, “given…”)

lape

⊸

— sleep; rest

lawa

⟃

— head; mind; control; guide

li

〉

— main statement marker

lili

˅

— small; little; minor

lon

∴

— in/at; real; true

luka

— hand; five (also appears in imagery about eyes closing)

mani

— money; wealth

meso

— middle; moderate; balanced

mi

— I; we

moku

— eat; drink; consume

moli

— death; to die; dead

mute

— many; much; too much (when contrasted with moderation)

nanpa

— number; ordinal marker (“first/second…”)

nasin

— way; path; method; practice; rule

nasa

— strange; foolish; confused (in the text: “foolish / misguided”)

ni

— this; that

nimi

— name; word (in the text: “name/fame”)

o

— advice / command marker (“should…”)

oko

— eye (used in the English note; if you keep “oko”, gloss it as eye)

olin

— love; care; affection

ona

— he; she; it; they

open

— open; begin; start

pakala

— broken; mistake; damage; error

pali

— do; act; work; make

pana

— give; offer; provide

pi

— grouping marker

pilin

— feeling; inner reaction; sense

pini

— end; finish; stop

pona

— good; beneficial; right; to improve

sama

— same; like; similar

seme

?

— what? which? (question word)

sewi

— sacred; holy; above; higher principle

sijelo

— body; physical form

sin

— new; again; additional

sina

— you

sona

— know; understand; wisdom; knowledge

suli

— big; important; great

taso

— but; however; only

tawa

— to/toward; for; in relation to; movement

tenpo

— time; moment

toki

— speech; words; message; talk

tu

— two (used in number phrasing)

unpa

— sex (used in the “abstain” line)

utala

— fight; struggle; conflict

wawa

— power; strong; energy; intensity

weka

— remove; away; let go; leave

wile

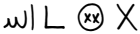
— want; desire; need; must

Recurring phrases (project-style “anchors”)

moli ala

— immortal; not dying

sewi pi moli ala



— immortal gods / immortal sacred ones

pali sewi

— sacred duty; consecrated act; ritual practice

awen pona tawa …

— behave well toward …; show respect to …

jan pona

— good person; virtuous friend

jan sama

— sibling / a “same-level” person (brother/sister idea)

jan olin

— spouse / loved person (partner)

wile nasa

— foolish desire; irrational impulse; passion (in the Stoic sense)

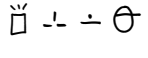
o moku ala mute

— eat/drink not too much; moderation

pilin utala

— anger; fighting-feeling; wrath

sona sin lon lawa



— reflect first; “new knowing in the mind” before speaking/acting

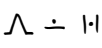
nasin kiwen

— rigid law; hard rule

nasin tenpo

— destiny / the way time unfolds (fate-like framing)

awen lon meso



— stay in the middle; keep balance

toki insa

— inner talk; self-review; reflection

tenpo lape la …

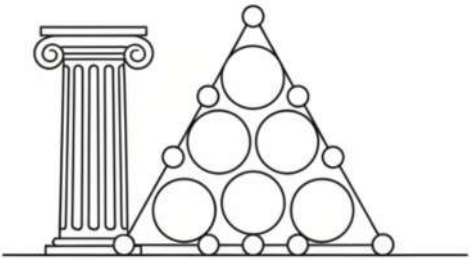
— before sleep / at sleep time …

open e lukin

— open the sight; help someone see clearly

lawa e sijelo

— let intelligence rule the body; self-governance



Back matter

7.1 Get updates & downloads (links, QR note)

This book is free and updated over time (small fixes, clearer wording, improved consistency).

Stoic Wisdom in Toki Pona (series page)

stoic.abvx.xyz/series

The Toki Pona Reader's Kit (this book)

toki.abvx.xyz/kit

toki.abvx.xyz/kit.pdf

toki.abvx.xyz/kit.epub

Translate into Toki Pona (free tool)

A browser-based translator that accepts (almost) any input language and outputs toki pona in Latin, sitelen pona, and an experimental emoji script. It's designed for learning and experimentation (not as an "official" translation).

toki.abvx.xyz

7.2 About the creator (ABV)

Nton Biletskyi-Volokh (ABV) is a publication and a set of projects at the intersection of applied AI, machine intelligence, and decision-making under uncertainty. The focus is validation: not demos and hype, but the point where ideas meet real constraints — incentives, human behavior, incomplete data, and time pressure.

Alongside AI work, I build experimental books and reading tools around minimal languages. Toki pona is especially interesting here: it is small enough to force clarity, and that makes it a strong medium for both philosophical texts and practical thinking.

More links and projects: **abvx.xyz**

7.3 More toki pona projects and books (short promo block)

If you enjoyed this kit, you may also like these related books and experiments.

Meditations of Marcus Aurelius — in Toki Pona

A minimalist Stoic classic reimagined in the world's simplest language, with parallel sitelen pona passages and reader guidance.

Kindle: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0FV3F1RC5

Paperback: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0FVLPD69K

Dao De Jing (Tao Te Ching): Chinese text with Toki Pona in sitelen pona

A quiet two-script dialogue: classical Chinese on one side, toki pona rendered visually in sitelen pona on the other.

Kindle: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0G4XNRS4W

Paperback: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0G5MCFN2T

A Christmas Carol — in Toki Pona

Dickens' story retold with radical simplicity, paired with sitelen pona and illustration plates.

Kindle: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0G1N2YHD8

Paperback: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0G1XVNPSL

Toki Pona and the Machine Mind

A practical field guide: using constrained language ideas (inspired by toki pona) to design cleaner prompts, smaller models, and more inspectable AI systems.

Kindle: https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0G44JSMR2

Paperback:
https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0G5MQKZTX