



Jonam

Orthography

2023

JONAM LANGUAGE BOARD



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FIRST EDITION

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The Writers

No.	Name	Designation	Contact
1)	Amb. George P. Ufoyuru	Board Chair	0772435275
2)	Mrs. Elizabeth Nyivuru Jawoko	Vice Chair	0772427599
3)	Ms. Giramia Faith	Secretary	0787653399
4)	Ms. Akello Night	Publicity Secretary	0784636929
5)	Hon. Acayo Christine	Panellist	0773663118
6)	Ms. Oyenboth Francesca	Representative from PTC	0772835382
7)	Ms. Irene Pacoryema	Panellist	0782468596
8)	Mr. Oloya Patrick	Linguist	0782430540
9)	Mr. Awel Wilson	Panellist	0779169390
10)	Mr. Okello Polla Angula	Rwoth Cak	0785560756
11)	Mr. Jacan Oyanya Ismail	Representative from PTC	0782867600
12)	Ms. Akidi Beatrice	Panellist	0775699156
13)	Mr. Orom Charles	Representative Headteacher	0775858437
14)	Mr. Ocircan Nobert	Representative Headteacher	0772980702
15)	Mr. Ongeyowun Nasur Hassan	Panellist	0772931187
16)	Hon. Namugaya Dinah	Secretary for Social Services	0781811710
17)	Mr. Nyeko Edmond	Panellist	0788077588
18)	Mr. Onencan Robert	Facilitator	0783278541

Preface

The third edition of the Jonam Orthography was revised on 28 October 2023 after a review by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC). It is the noble achievement and endeavour of the Jonam District Language Board (JDLB) to produce a standard Jonam Orthography. This revised Orthography Guide attempts to provide rules for writing and reading in Lebjonam.

Indeed, this third draft has been realised through dedication, critical analysis, linguistic patriotism and dynamism exhibited by the current members of the Jonam Language Board in consultation with the key stakeholders, including cultural leaders, language experts and educationalists. We would like to thank the Lebjonam Language Board, Jonam Development Forum and all thepanellists for their concerted, technical input and the feedback we received from the teams at NCDC.

The revised orthography endeavoured to be explicit on the rules governing the current sound and grammatical structure of the Jonam language. Lebjonam shall use five vowels in writing: a, e, i, o, u; and 18 consonants in writing: b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, ŋ, p, r, t, v, w, y. Appropriate illustrations were provided bearing in mind the fact that the orthography as culture has the unlimited potential to develop from and within generations. Thus, this orthography has been and will continue to be tested. This edition will tackle the additional aspects based on feedback from schools, the community and the government.

The Jonam have the pride and honour to develop, protect and promote the linguistic heritage with Lebjonam as our mother tongue. Therefore, it is envisaged that this input will greatly impact the cultural, socio-economic and educational lives of the people. Further, it will strengthen the teaching profession and the Jonam learning outcomes; enhance the knowledge, skills and values in the mother tongue; lay the foundation for concept development, social and life skills; promote oral and written literature in Lebjonam; and promote the production of relevant educational resources, books, local newspapers, local materials translation, local music production and electronic journalism, the jonam cultural heritage and identity, among others.



Acayo Christine

District Education Office, Pakwach District

1.0 Summarised Spelling Rules in Lebjonam

- 1) Lebjonam shall use five vowels in writing: a, e, i, o, u .
- 2) Lebjonam shall use 18 consonants in writing: b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, ŋ, p, r, t, v, w, y.
- 3) Tone will not be marked except in dictionaries and specialised books.
- 4) Nouns should be written as a separate word form except in the possession of body parts.
- 5) Pronouns are distinct categories which should be graphically represented as separate words.
- 6) Personal pronoun prefixes should always be attached to verbs and adjectives while personal pronouns should be written disjunctively.
- 7) Possessive pronouns should be written disjunctively unless phonological processes like assimilation take place.
- 8) Relative pronouns should be written disjunctively except in the case of assimilation.
- 9) Demonstrative pronouns should be written independently.
- 10) All verbs and adverbs should be written independently from all the other words in the sentence.
- 11) Tense markers should be attached to the verbs.
- 12) Adjectives shall be written disjunctively.
- 13) Genitive particles, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections shall be written as separate words.
- 14) Ideophones should be written distinctively but limited to three vowels. In case of repeated ideophones, the repetition should be made three times.
- 15) Negative markers should be written disjunctively.
- 16) Locatives should be distinctively written from other words.
- 17) Reduplicated words should be graphically represented as a single unit and should be at the end of the sentence only.
- 18) Gerundive constructions should be written conjunctively or as one word not separately.
- 19) Compound words should be written conjunctively.
- 20) Borrowed words shall be written as pronounced by Jonam speakers except for scientific borrowed words that should be written the way they are.

- 21) Names of places which are established should be written as they are currently spelt.
- 22) Names of languages should be written preceded by the prefix 'leb' which means 'language of'.
- 23) Names of nationalities, tribal or clan references shall be written beginning with the agentive prefixes 'Ja-', 'Nya-' and 'Nyi-' in all cases.
- 24) Lebjonam shall use base ten in its counting system.
- 25) Days of the week shall be written as a single word preceded by the prefix 'ceŋ-' and the initial c- shall be capitalised.
- 26) Months of the year shall be preceded by the word 'Dwey', in which case the initial letter D for 'Dwey' is capitalised. All months shall be counted in base ten.

2.0 Lebjonam Alphabet/Sounds

The Lebjonam alphabet consists of 23 letters, that is, five vowels and 18 consonants (including semi-vowels). These are:

Aa, Bb, Cc, Dd, Ee, Ff, Gh, Hh, Ii, Jj, Kk, Ll, Mm, Nn, ŋŋ, Oo, Pp, Rr, Tt, Uu, Vv, Ww, Yy.

2.1 Vowels

Rule 1: Lebjonam has five vowels: Aa, Ee, Ii, Oo, Uu. These vowels have different qualities: closed, open, short and long.

2.1.1 Closed vowels

There are five closed vowels to be used in writing Lebjonam: a, e, i, o, u. These vowels can occur in any word environment, i.e. beginning, middle and end.

Vowel	Word	English
a	lac	urine/wide
e	rec	fish
i	ic	stomach
o	ot	house
u	kumo	sorrow

2.1.2 Long vowels

Lebjonam has five long vowels: aa, ee, ii, oo, uu as shown in the following examples:

Vowel	Word	English
Aa	laam	curse
Ee	cwee	soup
Ii	pii	water
Oo	dool	rolling/folding
Uu	cuul	payment

Long vowels may occur in the following environments:

- i) **CVC** as in *jaar*
- ii) **VC** as in *ot*
- iii) **CV** as in *moo*
- iv) **CVCV** as in *baba*

C = Consonant; **V** = Vowel

Rule 2: Vowel length shall be contextually predictable.

Vowels can occur at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of a sentence or word.

2.1.3 Tone

Rule 3: Although Lebjonam is largely tonal, and tone has grammatical implications, to avoid excessive use of the diacritics, tone should not be used in non-technical texts because the meaning of words in most cases is discernible from sentential and discourse context.

2.1.4 Consonants

Rule 4: Lebjonam shall use 18 phonemes for its consonant representation. These include: b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, ŋ, p, r, t, v, w and y.

These consonants can either be in capital or lower-case forms; hence:

Bb Cc Dd Ff Gg Hh Jj Kk

Ll Mm Nn ŋŋ Pp Rr Tt Vv

Ww Yy

Example:

Consonants	Word	English
b	bal	evil/spoil
c	cal	picture
d	dano	people
f	fur	digging
g	gari	bicycle
h	haka	open
i	jobo	collect
k	kata	sweet potato
l	lum	grass
m	mar	love
n	nam	river
ŋ	ŋom	land
p	pii	water
r	rech	fish
t	too	death
v	vul	drum
w	wayo	aunt
y	yabo	opening

2.1.5 Consonant clusters

Rule 5: Two or more consonants can come together to form a cluster as shown below:

by : byelo (carry on the back), byey (anthill)
cw: cwalo (to send/to push)
dr: dre (truly)
dw: dwey (moon), dwalo (mingle)
dy: dyan (cow), dyere (middle)
gw: gweno (chicken), gwok (dog)
gy: gyero (build),
ny: nyelo (chipping), nyedo (milking),
jw: jwero (slashing), jwan (hut)
kp: kpak (raspy sound)
kw: kwete (local brew), kwer (hoe)
ky: kyaru (village), kyewo (writing)
lw: lwak (crowd), lwor (sell), lworu (afraid)
ly: lyet (hot), lyec (elephant), lyewo (visit)
mb: mamba (type of snake), mbata (duck)
mbw: mbwan (without; empty-handed),
mby: mbyet (flash off saliva)
my: myel (dance), myeno (mingle)
nd: ndara (dance), andaa (truth), nduru (alarm)
ngb: ngban (without)
ny: nyok (bull), nyako (girl), nyelo (chipping)
py: pyelo (lay; defecate), pyem (argument)
ry: ryeyo (straighten), ryedi (razor blade)
tw: twak (bubbling), two (disease)
ty: tyelo (leg; support), tyeko (to finish)
yw: ywayo (pulling)

3.0 Word Divisions

All words in Lebjonam are/may be categorised in the following nine groups: nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, interjections and ideophones. Word division therefore tells us about how to observe the spellings and punctuations of these words when used in the context of other words, that is, in sentences or phrases. While using phrases and sentences, words maybe written in two ways: separately (disjunctively) or as combining forms (conjunctively).

3.1 Nouns

Rule 6: Nouns should stand alone and be written disjunctively except in the possession of body parts.

- Awobi obedo iwi kom pa wone. (The boy is sitting on his father's chair.)
- Tyenda oberema. (My leg is aching.) In tyenda, the -a is a possessive marker.
- Ite okwot madit. (His ear is swollen.) In ite, -e is a possessive marker.

3.2 Pronouns

Rule 7: Similarity, pronouns are distinct categories which should be graphically represented as separate words. However, pronominal affixes should be attached to the respective word forms. These pronouns include a, e, i, wa, wu and gi.

3.2.1 Personal pronouns

Rule 8: Personal pronouns (an, wan, gin and wun) should always be written disjunctively.

	Singular	English	Plural	English
First person	an	I	wan	we
Second person	in	you	wun	you
Third person	en	she/he	gin	they

3.2.2 Personal pronoun prefixes

Rule 9: Personal pronoun prefixes should always be attached to verbs and adjectives.

- 1) An amaro kwan: *Singular:* I like reading
Wan wamaro kwan: *Plural:* We like reading
- 2) In imaro kwan: *Singular:* You like reading
Wun wumaro kwan: *Plural:* You like reading (plural)
- 3) En emaro kwan: *Singular:* She/he likes reading
Gin gimaro kwan: *Plural:* They like reading

3.2.3 Possessive pronouns

Rule 10: Possessive pronouns should be written conjunctively unless phonological processes like assimilation take place.

Example: Buku + na = bukuna (My book)

Ot + na = otna (My house)

	Singular	Plural
First person	mega/na	mewa
Second person	megi / ni	mewu
Third person	mege/ ne	megi

3.2.4 Relative pronouns

Rule 11: The relative pronoun ‘ma’ should be written disjunctively except in the case of assimilation, which should be indicated by an apostrophe.

- i) Endi nyako ma oyeyo pii na ni. (This is the girl who carried my water.)
- ii) Jadit ma dyel mege gikwalo ni. (This is the man whose goat was stolen.)
- iii) Jal ma ogoya ni eburingo ca. (The man who beat me is there running away.)
- iv) ηati ma utimi rach, wek ire. (Forgive s/he who offends you)

‘Ma’ in assimilation:

- i) Endi nyako m’utiŋo pii na ni. (This is the girl who carried my water.)
- ii) Jal m’ug-oya ni eburingo ca. (The man who beat me is there running away.)
- iii) ŋati m’utimi rach, wek ire. (Forgive s/he who offends you.)

3.2.5 Demonstrative pronouns

Rule 12: Demonstrative pronouns should be written disjunctively.

Singular		Plural	
e	this	e gi	these
ca	that	ca gi	those
no	that	no gi	those

Example:

- a) Kalamu e mega. (This pen is mine.)
- b) Kalamu e gimega./Kalamu e gini mega. (These pens are mine.)
- c) Latin ca ryek. (That child is clever.)
- d) Awia ca giryek. (Those children are clever.)
- e) Buku no leŋ. (That book is beautiful.)
- f) Buku no gileŋ. (Those books are beautiful.)

3.3 Verbs and Adverbs

Rules 13: All verbs and adverbs should be written independently from all the other word categories in the sentence.

Examples of verbs:

- a) Kel ira pii (Bring for me water.)
- b) Tin kori malu (Lift up your chest.)
- c) Cam kwen (Eat food.)
- d) Coy maleŋ (Write well.)
- e) Kwan matek (Read hard/loud.)

Examples of adverbs (Lapor pa layung tim)

- a) Akello okelo pii pon kopo. (Akello had brought a cup full of water.)
- b) Owechi tiño wiye malu moot/yoo. (Owechi lifts up her head slowly.)
- c) Ocama ocama kwen wen. (Ocama ate **all** the food.)

3.4 Tense Markers

Rule 14: Tense markers should be attached to the verbs.

- (a) Abineno tek waew. (I will see when we arrive.)
- (b) Ebidok inindo munge. (He will go back another day.)

3.5 Negation

Rule 15: Negation should be written disjunctively from the verbs.

- a) Pe ibin injet mach. (Don't come near fire)
- b) Pe itembi. (Don't try)
- c) Pe ilok kabedo pa piny no gi. (Don't alter the positions of those items.)

3.6 Adjectives

Rule 16: Adjectives should be written disjunctively.

Rule 17: When the qualifier 'ma' is to be used in the sentence, it must be attached to the qualified forms.

Examples of adjectives without the qualifier

- a) Dek ne mit. (The sauce is tasty.)
- b) Ringu ne moo. (The meat is fatty.)
- c) Yen ne bor. (The tree is tall.)
- d) Dek ne bot. (The soup is tasteless.)

Examples of adjectives with the qualifier

- a) Dek mit (A tasty sauce.)
- b) Riño moo. (Fatty meat.)
- c) Yen bor. (A tall tree.)
- d) Cwe bot. (A tasteless soup.)

3.7 Prepositions

Rule 18: prepositions should be written disjunctively from the other words in a sentence.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| a) Pii otiye <u>i</u> cupa ne. | (There is water <u>in</u> the bottle.) |
| b) Nyako obedo <u>iwi</u> kom ne. | (The girl is sitting <u>on</u> the chair.) |
| c) Meja otiye <u>iney kom</u> ne. | (The table is <u>behind</u> the chair.) |
| d) Acungu <u>inet</u> gar ne. | (I am standing <u>behind</u> the home.) |

3.8 Conjunctions

Rule 19: Conjunctions should be written as separate entities in all classes.

- | | |
|---|---|
| a) Odongo <u>kud</u> Opio. | (Odongo <u>and</u> Opio) |
| b) Wawoto maber <u>ento</u> wadwogo nono. | (We travelled well <u>but</u> came back with nothing) |

3.9 Interjection

Rule 20: All injections are written disjunctively from the other word forms in sentences.

Examples:

Ema !
Iki !
Mayee !
Ewunu !
Oyee !
Eeh !
Awobe yaa !
Ma ato !
Akaa !
Ekyee !

3.10 Ideophones

Rule 21: Ideophones should be perceived as a single word. They should be written disjunctively as separate word forms.

Examples:

Tuch !	Duu !	Mbwek !
Ndinj !	Kak !	Bwubulu !
Paah !	Twach !	Kpingili !
Tep !	Trak !	Wuuk !
Mbyet !	Nywany !	Tiu !

3.11 Locatives

Rule 22: Locatives should be disjunctively written from other words.

- | | |
|--|---|
| a) Tim ber kud icid <u>kunu</u> . | (Please, don't go there.) |
| b) Cor <u>kuca</u> . | (Move <u>there</u> .) |
| c) Aketo pala para <u>kakae</u> . | (I put my knife <u>here</u> .) |
| d) Awo be ni giwok <u>caa</u> ! | (The boys are <u>there</u> !) |
| e) Okello oai ibote <u>eca</u> . | (Okello has been <u>there</u> with him.) |
| f) An abedo loka kulu <u>caa</u> . | (I live across the river over <u>there</u> .) |

3.12 Reduplications

Rule 23: For total reduplication of words, the resultant form should be graphically represented as a single unit and should be at the end of the sentence only.

- Examples of complete reduplications: Ewoto lworolworo. (She/he is walking fearfully.)
- Pii ne ket ebed deydey. (Let the water be lukewarm.)
- Kawa para e mormor. (My coffee is warm.)
- Acamo mango ma limlim. (I have eaten sweet mangoes.)

Examples of partial reduplications:

- Cam ne tye mabeber. (The food is fair.)
- Pii ne ket ebed dedey. (Let the water be lukewarm.)
- Nuka e tye momor. (The porridge is warm.)

3.13 Gerundive Constructions

Rule 24: Gerundive constructions should be written conjunctively and not separately.

For example

- a) Koma tye ka myelamyela. (My body is shaking.)
- b) Jal eno mito gi goyagoya. (That man needs to be beaten.)
- c) Can mito gi ciracira. (Hardship needs endurance/patience.)
- d) Awia kwan omako gi ringaringa. (School children need to run.)

3.14 Compounds

Rule 25: Compound words should be written conjunctively.

- a) Min + ot = Minot (Woman of the house or wife)
- b) Rwot + cak = Rwotcak (Clan/cultural leader)
- c) To + lit = Tolit (Death is painful)
- d) Lwit + yen = Lwityen (Tree tip)

3.15 Genitive Particles

Rule 26: Genitive particles should be written disjunctively. Note that the possessive genitive does not always denote real possession. It is also used to donate kind, authorship and origin. The prepositions used to express the possessive genitive is ‘pa’.

Examples:

- a) Wo pa jadit Opoka. (The son of Mr. Opoka.)
- b) Nom pa Panyango. (The land of the Panyango people.)
- c) Kom pa rwot. (The chief’s throne.)
- d) Wer njige pa Jonam (The njige song of the Jonam.)

3.16 Borrowed words

Rule 27: Borrowed words should be written as they are pronounced by the Jonam except scientific borrowed words, which should be written the way they are written scientifically.

Example:

- a) torojji (trousers)
- b) mutukari (motorcar)
- c) waiya (wire)
- d) distwik (district)
- e) tawun (town)
- f) citi (city)
- g) cati (shirt)
- h) jenereta (generator)
- i) spiracle (spiracle)
- j) microscope (microscope)
- k) stomata (stomata)

4.0 Names of Places

Rule 28: Names of places and people which are established should be written as currently spelt, e.g. Sudan, Uganda, Entebbe, Kampala, Juba, Okwairworth.

Rule 29: Names of places which are foreign should be written the way they are pronounced by Jonam, e.g. Caina, Amerika, Afirika, Furanc.

5.0 Names of Languages

Rule 30: All names referring to specific languages of people should be conjunctively written preceded by the prefix 'Leb', which literally means 'Language of'.

Rule 31: The initial of the prefix for the language should be capitalised, whereas the words for people should be in lower case.

For example:

- a) Lebjonam (Jonam language)
- b) Lebalur (Alur language)
- c) Leblugwara (Lugbara language)
- d) Lebcbwayili (Kiswahili)
- e) Lebmundu (English language)

6.0 Names of Nationalities, Tribal or Clan References

Rule 32: In reference to place of origin, tribe or clan, the agentive prefix ‘Ja-’, ‘Nya-’ and ‘Nyi-’ shall be used in all cases as prefixes to country of origin, tribe and clan references.

Rule 33: The initial letter of the prefix for nationality, tribe or clan references should be capitalised, whereas the word for the people should be in lower case letters.

For example:

- a) Jamundu (European man)
- b) Jamuyindi (Indian man)
- c) Jaocol (African man)
- d) Nyamundu (European woman)
- e) Nyamuyindi (Indian woman)
- f) Nyaocol (African woman)
- g) Nyialur (Alur women)
- h) Nyijonam (Jonam women)
- i) Jumundu (European men)
- j) Juucol (African men)

7.0 Numbers

Rule 34: Lebjonam shall use base ten in its counting system. All numbers from one (1) to ten (10) shall have a prefix ‘a-’.

Lebjonam	acel	ariyo	adek	anjwen	abic	abuciel	abiro	abora	abunjwen	apar
English	one	two	three	four	five	six	seven	eight	nine	ten
Digits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Rule 35: The following words will be used to represent the following values for counting in Lebjonam and each place value shall be written disjunctively.

i) **‘pyer’ or ‘pyeru’** for tens

Lebjonam	pyer ariyo	pyer adek	pyer anjwen	pyer abunjwen
English	twenty	thirty	forty	ninety
Digits	20	30	40	90

ii) **‘dak’ for hundreds**

Lebjonam	dak acel	dak ariyo	dak adek	dak anjwen pyer abic
English	one hundred	Two hundred	three hundred	four hundred and fifty
Digits	100	200	300	450

iii) **‘rubanga’ f or thousands**

Lebjonam	rubanga acel	rubanga ariyo	rubanga adek	rubanga anjwen dak abic
English	one thousand	two thousand	three thousand	four thousand and five hundred
Digits	1,000	2,000	3,000	4,500

iv) ‘rubanga dak’ for hundreds of thousands

Lebjonam	rubang dak aciel	rubanga dak ariyo	rubanga dek adek	rubang dak arjwen pyer abic
English	one hundred thousand	two hundred thousand	three hundred thousand	four hundred and fifty thousand
Digits	100,000	200,000	300,000	450,000

v) ‘Milyon’ for millions

Lebjonam	milyon acel	milyon ariyo	milyon adek	milyon arjwen rubanga dak abic
English	one million	two million	three million	four million and five hundred thousand
Digits	1,000,000	2,000,000	3,000,000	4,500,000

vi) ‘bilyon’ for billions

Lebjonam	Bilyon acel	bilyon ario	bilyon adek	bilyon arjwen ku million dak abic
English	one billion	two billion	three billion	four billion and five hundred million
Digits	1,000,000,000	2,000,000,000	3,000,000,000	4,500,000,000

vii) ‘trilyon’ for trillions

Lebjonam	trilyon acel	trilyon ario	triyion adek	trilyon arjwen bilion dak abic
English	one trillion	two trillion	three trillion	Four trillion and five hundred billion
Digits	1,000,000,000,000	2,000,000,000,000	3,000,000,000,000	4,500,000,000,000

Rule 36: In Lebjonam, all numbers greater than the values of tens, hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions, tens and hundreds of millions, billions, tens and hundreds of billions, trillions, tens and hundreds of trillions, shall be joined by the preposition ‘wiye’, as illustrated below:

Lebjonam	apar wiye acel	pyer abora wiye abic	Dak abuciel wiye apar aŋwen	Rubanga abunwen dak ario abiro wiye abuciel
English	eleven	eighty-five	six hundred and fourteen	nine thousand two hundred and seventy-six
Digits	11	85	614	9276

Lebjonam	Rubanga pyer aŋwen wiye abic dak ariyo ku pyer abunwen	Rubanga dak adek pyer ariyo wiye aŋ wen dak abi pyer abuciel wiye abunwen	Milyon abora rubangadak dak adek pyer ariyo wiye aŋwen dak abiro pyer abora wiye abunwen	Milyon pyer adek wiye acel rubanga adek pyer adek wiye aciel dak abora pyer abunwen wiye abiro
English	forty-five thousand two hundred and ninety	three hundred thousand five hundred and sixty nine	eight million three hundred twenty four thousand seven hundred and eighty nine	thirty-one million three hundred and sixty-one thousand eight hundred and ninety- seven
Digits	45,290	324,569	8,324,789	31,361,897

Lebjonam	Milyon dak acel pyer, ario wiye acel rubanga dak abunwen pyer abora wiye abiro dak adek pyeru abuciel wiye abic	Bilyon acel million pyer abic wiye abuciel rubanga abora pyeru a bunwenwiye aciel daqk abiro ku pyeru adek wiye abora	Trilyon abuciel bilion dak abora pyer abiro wiye adek million dak aciel wiye apar ario rubanga dak abunwe pyeruanwen wiye abic ku pyeru abunwe n wiye abora
English	one hundred and twenty-one million nine hundred eighty - seven thousand three hundred and sixty-five	one billion and fifty -six million eight hundred and ninety-one thousand seven hundred and thirty-eight	six trillion eight hundred and seven three billion one hundred and twelve million nine hundred and forty-five thousand and ninety-eight
Digits	121,987,365	1,056,891,738	6, 873,112,945,098

8.0 Days of the Week

Rule 38: In Lebjonam a day of the week shall be written as a single word beginning with a capital letter for the prefix ‘ceŋ’. Except for Sunday, Monday to Saturday shall use the numbers 1–6 counting order.

Lebjonam	English
Ceŋcabit	Sunday
Ceŋbaraja	Monday
Ceŋkacariyo	Tuesday
Ceŋkacadek	Wednesday
Ceŋkacawen	Thursday
Ceŋkacabic	Friday
Ceŋkacabuciel	Saturday

9.0 Months of the Year

Rule 39: Months of the year in Lebjonam shall be written capitalised using the counting numbers 1–12 with a prefix ‘dwei mer’ added to the name of each month.

Lebjonam	English
Dwei mer acel	January
Dwei mer ariyo	February
Dwei mer adek	March
Dwei mer anwen	April
Dwei mer abic	May
Dwei mer abuciel	June
Dwei mer abiro	July
Dwei mer abora	August
Dwei mer aburwen	September
Dwei mer apar	October
Dwei mer aparacel	November
Dwei mer aparariyo	December

10.0 Sample Text:

The purpose of the sample text is to guide the reader on how the specified rules can be applied in writing.

The Babies and the Bird

Long ago, in a rural village, mothers left their babies home as they went to their gardens which were far away. They returned late every evening. The mothers would then settle down to breastfeed their babies before they could begin to cook food for the family. All the babies would begin to hum the same but nice tune as they breastfed. This melody was strange. The mothers wondered where the babies learnt the strange but sweet melody from.

The mothers became curious and attempted to inquire from young the girl who always remained behind to watch over the babies. Since the girl had challenges walking, talking and hearing, they could only use gestures. So, the mothers failed to understand what actually happened at home each time they were away.

They got curious. Eventually they agreed to do something so that they could find out the truth!

One day, all the mothers decided to hide in a nearby bush to observe what actually took place at home while they were away. And behold! That morning a huge strange bird with a long compound-sweeping tail swiftly landed in the compound with a sweet melodious song. It sang the song that the babies usually hummed. They could hear their babies hum the same melody as they sat in the warm morning sun. The women sprang and caught the bird and caged it so that it could sing and entertain their babies while they would be away. The babies, too, remained happy as they echoed the chorus tune '*Kamulere mulere...*' while the bird sang.

Mukere kud Owinyo

Yan con i adura moko, meg awiya gibed giweko mukere meg ubed udon igan nonjo gin gicidu i podu kamabor .Mon ne gibed giri ipodu gidwogu utyenu. Kegidwogu, giketu mukere ne gidotu cak mafodi gicaku tedu cam kuu. Mukere eca gigam gicaku nur kudwal mamit ka gidotu cak pa meg nongu gineno wang meg kuvonju. Wer ne bedu nyen, man ke ewinjere mamit i it meg. Megu eno gitamu kwee ka ma mukere enu giwinju wer enu iiye.

Megu enu ginenj, man gitamu kwee kama wer eno oai iiye. Kite me penju japidi pa mukere ecagi uloyu gi pien japidi ne ubedu nyaku ma afuta, loku kuu man ite de udi. Afuta eca ebed egwoku mukere negi maber makwe! Megu eca gigam giwinjere gitimu ryeku. Cenj acel, mon eca gicokere nia gicidu ipodu ci gigam giran kacok. Gikandere ikind lum cok ku gang eca. Gibedu lin, giciku itgi, nongu gikiyu gang.

Cut, owinyu moku madit ma ibe yweyu nom ku cen odye opyei idye laro cok kukama gipyelu iye mukere ne gi. Egam ecaku weru wer mege... Mukere ne gigam gicaku kavonju nongu ginur, taptap... '*wun awia awia, kamulere mulere...*'. Mon ne gigam giwok, gilibire yoyo. Glgam gimaku owinyu eca gicaku kagwoke igang kara ebed epid mukere ku wer mege ne.



CONTACT US:



National Curriculum Development Centre
Plot M838, Kyambogo.
P.O.Box 7002 Kampala, Uganda
+256-393-112-088
www.ncdc.go.ug



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