



Oshuitoq, Peesee
Inuit; Nunatsiarmiut
Untitled [woman fishing], 1960 circa
Sculpture
Collection of the Glenbow Museum
2003.023.015 A-B.

Inuit: The Land and the People Teacher's Program Guide

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Teacher's Program Guide for School Visits

Inuit: The Land and the People is an introductory program designed for the Grade 2 Alberta Social Studies curriculum. This program explores traditional Inuit culture through the exploration of artifacts, photographs and other items included in Glenbow Museum's permanent *Native Cultures* gallery. The program begins with a discussion about how the Inuit meet their basic needs and how their environment, though seemingly harsh, provides the Inuit with everything necessary for survival. Students explore various furs, housing structures and natural resources commonly found in the Canadian Arctic. Students then explore traditional artifacts through an inquiry-based learning process to further discover how the Inuit have adapted to their environment. The program culminates in students participating in a traditional Inuit game, one that teaches the skills needed to be a successful hunter in the Arctic.

This guide will assist you in preparing for your visit to Glenbow Museum. It contains pre-visit lessons, vocabulary terms as well as follow up activities. Engaging in the suggested activities before and after your visit will reinforce the ideas in the program and link classroom learning to the Museum experience. Most activities require few materials and can be adjusted to meet the age and needs of your students.

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Social Studies

- 2.1.1 Appreciate the physical and human geography of the communities studied
- 2.1.2 Investigate the physical geography of an Inuit community in Canada
- 2.1.3 Investigate the culture and linguistic characteristics of an Inuit community in Canada
- 2.1.4 Investigate the economic characteristics of the communities in Canada
- 2.1.5 Demonstrate skills of decision making and problem solving
- 2.S.8 Demonstrate skills of oral, written and visual literacy

Art

Students will interpret artworks literally

Students will learn the shapes of things as well as develop decorative styles

Students will record of document activities, people and discoveries.

Students will illustrate or tell a story

VOCABULARY

Arctic – The northern-most point on Earth. The Arctic is made up of permanently frozen ice floating on the Arctic Ocean. It also includes Greenland, Spitsbergen, and the northern edges of North America, Asia and Europe.

Artifact - Something created by humans usually for a practical purpose

Basic needs – The elements needed by all humans for survival, includes food, clothing and shelter

Climate - The average course or condition of the weather at a place usually over a period of years as exhibited by temperature, wind velocity, and precipitation

Horizon line – The horizontal line across the picture.

Inuit – A member of any of several Aboriginal peoples who live in coastal regions of the Canadian arctic and in Greenland.

LESSON PLANS

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY

- Read “*A Promise is a Promise*” by Robert Munsch. It is a wonderful cautionary tale from the Arctic.
- Share the Inuit creation story of *Sedna*, included in this document.

POST-VISIT DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES

Materials: Paper, pencils, pencil crayons

The Arctic is a topsy-turvy land. Unlike much of the rest of the world where most animals live above ground and there are few underneath, the Arctic is teeming with life under the ground, beneath the ice. To the ‘untrained’ eye the Arctic may seem like an uninhabitable place but this seemingly barren landscape has supported human cultures for thousands of years through its vastness in natural resources.

ACTIVITY

1. After your museum visit, review and discuss what they learned. The responses can be written on a board or large piece of paper for the class to refer to later:
 - *Where is the **Arctic**?*
 - *Who are the **Inuit**?*
 - *What is the **climate** like in the Arctic?*
 - *How is the Arctic different from where we live? How is it the same?*
 - *Name some animals that live in the Arctic.*

Ask students to sort the animals into “Above the Ice” and “Below the Ice” categories. Show Pitseolak Ashoona’s *Untitled (Birds Fishing)* artwork:

- *What animals do you see in this artwork?*
- *What are they doing?*
- *How did the artist show “above the ice” and “below the ice” animals in this artwork?*
- *Why do you think the artist chose to draw this scene?*

Inuit artists often illustrate daily life. They show people hunting, children playing games, families living in igloos, and moving across the ice. Often animals become much like humans in the art work.

- *Why are animals important to the Inuit?*

Explain that students will have the opportunity to create their own Arctic-inspired artwork showing “above the ice” and “below the ice” animals.

Begin by drawing a **horizon line** across the page. If the horizon line is closer to the top, you can show more animals under the ice. If the horizon line is closer to the bottom you can show more animals that live above the ice.

Add the animals. Sketch with pencil first. Animals that are closer to the viewer are bigger than animals that are farther away. Overlapping shapes is another way to show distance.

Colour the artwork. Pitseolak Ashoona often used bright colours to show playfulness in her artworks. Add finishing touches. Using a marker or pen, add outlines to the objects in the artwork, colour in the background and add little details.

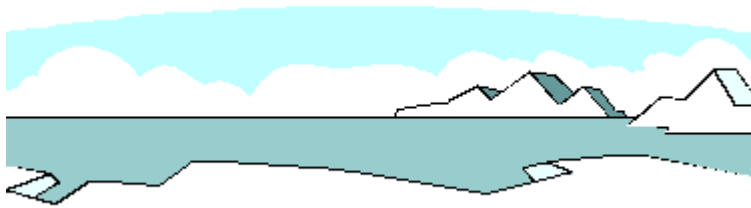
2. Refer back to the Pitseolak Ashoona’s *Untitled (Birds Fishing)* artwork. Can you identify the fishing tools the birds are using? Did you see them at Glenbow Museum?
3. Compare the information you learned at Glenbow Museum about traditional Inuit life to contemporary life of the Inuit who live in Canada today. What has changed? What has remained the same?



An Inuit Creation Story

This story is about Sedna, the Inuit goddess of the sea.

The Inuit (Eskimos) depend on the sea for food, so no god or goddess is more important to them.



At the beginning of the world there were giants.

They lived on the land and ate the fruits of the land. One year, as the days began to get shorter and colder, a baby girl was born to two of the giants. They named her Sedna.

Day by day, as the sun became weaker and smaller, Sedna grew stronger and bigger. She grew and grew very quickly until, in no time at all, she was huge. Soon she was bigger than her giant parents.

The bigger she got the more she ate and the more she needed to eat, but there were not enough plants on the land to satisfy her hunger. One night, ravenously hungry, she began to gnaw her parent's legs.

'Owww!' they cried, 'that's enough of that.' With a great struggle they bundled Sedna up in a blanket and carried her to their canoe. It was dark but they paddled out to sea in the light of a hazy moon. When they reached the middle of the ocean, they pushed Sedna overboard into the icy waters.

And that, they thought, was that. They started to paddle back towards the land, shivering for the cold and also for shame at what they had done to their own daughter. Yet before they had gone far, the canoe stopped - no matter how fast they paddled, the canoe would not move forward. To their horror they saw two hands, Sedna's hands, reaching out of the water to grip the canoe and then to rock it from side to side.

The giants felt the boat shaking. Soon they would be tossed into the ocean they would surely drown, unless they did something quickly.

Simply to save themselves, they pulled out sharp knives and chopped off Sedna's fingers. One by one the fingers splashed into the sea and, as they sank, they changed into swimming creatures. One became a whale, one a seal, another walrus, and another salmon. The fingers changed into all the creatures of the seas.



As for Sedna, she drifted through new shoals of fish to the bottom off the ocean. There the fishes built her an underwater tent. Above her, the cold waters formed a crust of ice and sealed Sedna in her wintry, watery world. She still lives there, and whenever the Inuit are short of food, they call on Sedna and she provides it, even in the depths of winter.

RESOURCES

Websites

Canada's Arctic www.arctic.uoguelph.ca

An interactive website with lots of information on animals and plants, down to the microscopic organisms that call the Arctic home

Arctic Wildlife – Arctic Studies Center www.mnh.si.edu/arctic/html/wildlife

Click on a tab to open the portfolio and learn about the animals of the Arctic! Biologist Doug Siegel-Causey shares his knowledge and special insights about this icy world and its inhabitants. A bit advanced for grade 2 level reading

Books

A Promise is a Promise by Robert Munsch.

Arctic & Antarctic by Douglas Kindersely, Eyewitness Books

Discover the icy wastes of the Polar Regions and the remarkable plants and animals that survive in such hostile conditions.

Artist Information

Pitseolak Ashoona, Inuit, Cape Dorset, Nunavut (1904-1983)

Pitseolak's difficult life is never apparent in her cheerful images. She was one of Cape Dorset's most beloved artists (and mother and grandmother to many others) and one of the most prolific, producing thousands of drawings and hundreds of prints during her long career. Birds were a preferred subject in her work and for them she reserved the most playful activities and often the richest colours. Here two birds with fishing leisters and one with a gaffe take to the air to help those line-fishing on the rocks below.

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<http://www.glenbow.org/collections/>