

Let's Visit Nunavut

Grades 2-4

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LET'S VISIT NUNAVUT



Expectations

Students will:

- be provided with the opportunity to study the territory of Nunavut.
- be familiarized with the location of Nunavut in Canada, North America, and the World.
- have the opportunity to use mapping skills to locate towns, communities, and bodies of water by using different types of maps.
- be made aware of the importance of Nunavut and its relationship to the rest of Canada.
- be acquainted with famous people and landmarks of Nunavut.

List of Resources

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Teacher Input Suggestions

On April 1, 1999, the Nunavut territory and government came into being after 13 years of careful negotiations. It was the largest land claim in Canadian history and was the culmination of a dream for Inuit. At last they had control over their own lives, after years of being governed from afar by people who did not understand their culture. The territory may be introduced in any of the following ways:

- a) Use a good film, filmstrip, or DVD about Inuit to arouse student interest and curiosity. On a map, show your students the area that has become the territory of Nunavut.
- b) Collect pictures of places found in the Territory of Nunavut and pictures of Inuit from the past to the present. Cut out the pictures; mount them on a sturdy backing, and laminate.
Display pictures of Inuit places and people on a bulletin board or on a chalkboard. Make up name cards for the pictures. Have the students match the word on the card to a picture on the bulletin board. Riddles could also be used in the same manner.
- c) Try to locate books on Nunavut and on Inuit. Display them at a centre for the students to look at and use for research purposes. Above the books, place a sign that says "Our Land - Nunavut!"
- d) At a mapping centre, place several maps of Canada for the students to explore and peruse.



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Information Card Eleven

Education

Children also were taught through experience. The family educated the children inside the family. The children learned by following their parents' example. They were taught to be self-sufficient and to deal with the environment.

Early Inuit did not have a written language, so skills and knowledge were passed down by word of mouth. For example, when hunters returned from a successful hunt the details would be shared with the community. Boys especially listened to reports of the hunters' trips and learned from them. The children also enacted their own hunts by watching animals and observing their behaviour. The boys tried to stalk animals. This required great patience. Being patient was part of Inuit life and children learned this, too.



Inuit children learned to entertain themselves inside the igloos during bad weather. Orienteering was an important tool that all Inuit children learned. They had to know their surroundings well and to memorize the landscape.

There were no strict laws in the traditional Inuit society as we know them. Taboos and rituals did restrict behaviour. The fear of criticism and of rejection were two strong forces that controlled people's actions.



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Information Card Twelve

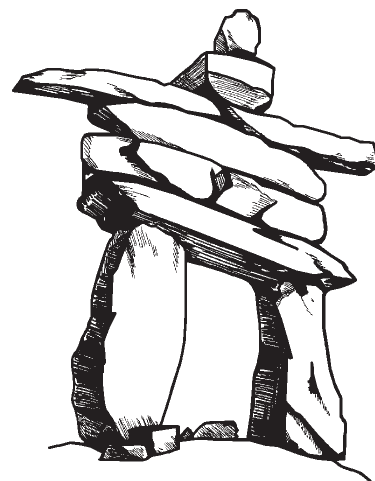
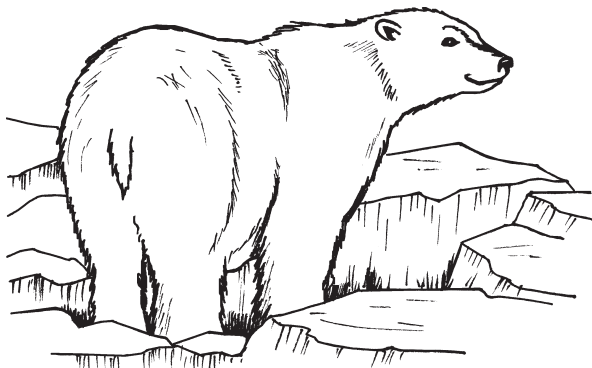
Language

Inuit language (Inuktitut) had no written form until missionaries went north in the 18th and 19th centuries. Inuit not only had an oral language but they also maintained a non-verbal language that relied on body expression and other cues to display feelings. Inuit could interpret human behaviour in the same manner as they read animal behaviour.



Inuktitut today, as in the past, reflects and reinforces Inuit culture and their value system. They place a strong emphasis on nature and its elements. In the north, the weather can produce a wide range of snow conditions and there are dozens of words to describe snow. The quality of snow is of great importance to Inuit as only certain types of snow make good igloos.

In Inuktitut there is no distinction between animate and inanimate objects. There is a distinction made between things that are named and those that are not. The land and people have many names and therefore there is a relationship between them.





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Information Card Thirteen

Inuit Religion

Inuit saw themselves as part of nature. Their lifestyle was bound to the natural environment and they believed that unpredictable forces of nature were thought to be controlled by powerful spirits. The angry spirits had to be made happy and the responsibility of protecting the people from the spirits fell to the shamans who were Inuit medicine men or women.

The shaman was the person who went between the human world and the spirit world. When a god became angry, it was the shaman's duty to find out what caused the god to be angry and what would make it happy. The shaman had to perform certain rituals and observe certain taboos.

Inuit also believed that human spirits lived on after people died. The dead person's spirit would eventually occupy the body of a newborn who had received the spirit's mortal name. The child would acquire the soul and abilities of its namesake.

With the coming of Anglican and Roman Catholic missionaries, the religious practices of Inuit changed. Today, every community has at least one church and many people attend church regularly. Bibles and hymn books were among the first books to appear in Inuktitut syllabics, and many people who are adults today learned to read by reading the Bible.





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Reading Activity Ten

Read the Information Card called "Nunavut's Schools".

Answer each question with a good sentence.

1. How are the Inuit protecting their culture from disappearing?

2. What are some of the life skills Inuit children are taught?

3. At what times of the year do the Inuit students hunt, fish, and trap with their families?

4. In what languages are the children taught?

5. Why do some Inuit children become teachers?





LET'S VISIT NUNAVUT



Phonics Activity One

The Short Vowel "i"

Inuit is the name for people who live in Canada's Arctic.

The word Inuit begins with the short vowel "i".

In the igloo below, underline all the words that have the short "i" vowel sound.

