

Introduction to Inuit Culture (3-5)

Lesson Plan (1 hour)

Materials:

- Flag
- Inuit regalia coat
- Map of area
- Igloo template
- Water colour paper
- 5 cups of water
- Traditional village picture
- Soapstone carving
- Muckluck picture
- Ice fishing picture
- Multi-coloured tissue paper
- Water colour crayons

Introduction (5 groups of students prep 5 cups of water, separate tissue paper for each group):

1. Introduce Yourself

- Introduce yourself (name, title, where you are from, who you are as an Indigenous Person)
- Acknowledge the territory. "We acknowledge that we reside on the traditional ancestral unceded shared territory of the Sumas and Matsqui First Nations, Sumas and Matsqui First Nations have lived in the Fraser Valley for at least 10,000 years.
- Ask who are Indigenous people? (Answer: 3 groups, First Nations Métis and Inuit People).

2. Introduce the Presentation

- **People & Clothing** - Parka was invented by the Inuit's - long Jacket with hood and fur around it. It is now all over the world, Mukluks, Snow pants. How do you think your body would Feel in the winter? Would you wear your bathing suit in the winter? Ocean freezes over, Icy, cold, windy for days on end, and continuous darkness for days on end. How do you think you would feel in the summer? It's sunny and a bit warmer, not bathing suit weather but t-shirt weather, ice all year round, no night, no real fall or spring. Mukluks are a soft, knee-high boot traditionally made of sealskin, caribou or reindeer skin were originally worn by the indigenous people of the Arctic.
- **Artwork** – Though their artwork, the Inuit tell stories of their past and their feelings. "When you look closely at the birds and animals in Inuit art, you will see that each one often has its own special character. The individual appearance of the creatures in Inuit art grows out of respect that Inuit gave to all living things."
An individual birch bark basket takes many hours to make. The bark, decorated with porcupine quills, is folded and shaped into baskets. The baskets are stitched together using spruce root and sinew. Today, they are considered collector's items and are highly valued throughout Canada. Purchase online today and support Indigenous handicraft. Makes a great gift.
Soap Stone Sculpture carving is an ancient practice dating back more than 3000 years ago. An art gallery has commissioned you to create a soapstone sculpture reflecting a specific animal or Inukshuk. The final work must show clear evidence of an influence from the Northern Canadian style/period.
- **Flag** – the official flag of Nunavut was proclaimed on 1 April 1999, along with the territory of Nunavut in Canada. It features a red inuksuk—a traditional Inuit land marker—and a blue star, which represents the Niqirtsuituq, the North Star, and the leadership of elders in the community.
- **Location** - The Inuit are a tribe of American Indians which live all around the Arctic Circle, reaching from Alaska, across Canada, and over to Greenland.
- **Land** - Start by writing the word Landscape on the board. Ask, what do you think their landscape was like? Icy ocean, snow, glaciers, lots of hills and lakes. Tundra is a large open space where very few trees grow. The soil is very thin and freezes and thaws with weather warming, the permafrost (just under the soil stays frozen all year around. The plants and animals living in the Tundra are very

different from the animals and plant life here as they have adapted to long, cold, dark winters and short, cool summers. The sea is the most important water form. The Inuit kayak and umiaq (boat) in summer and live on the sea ice in the winter. Today Inukshuk is used mostly as a landmark. These are rocks that they find in nature. They stack them and use to point out migration routes of caribou and trails. They use these as "navigation aids" which help travelers across the tundra.

- **Food** – What do you think the Inuit people could you eat?
 - The Inuit hunt sea mammals and fish in the rivers
 - Bird eggs, seal, whale, caribou, walrus, polar bear, arctic hare, fish, birds, and berries. (Because they ate raw food, and every part of the animal, they did not lack vitamins, even though they had almost no vegetables to eat. With the introduction of modern Western-style food, including fast food, over the past two to three decades, the Inuit diet has changed, and not for the better).

Housing

- Show picture with the Igloo and summer home made of animal hides and the difference between how the seasons were different (summer nomadic homes to hunt and gather for the long cold winter months).

Culture

- They do not gather in groups, they gather in families, there is no hierarchy.
- I am going to read you a story about the Northern Lights. The Northern Lights are a lovely sight to see and after the story we can discuss and make a Northern Lights art project.
- Short amount of time Read Warren Whistles at the Sky
- Enough time to read story and finish project Read Sky Sisters

Northern Lights and Igloo Art Project

(Have steps printed on board)

- Cut out and tape gently to art paper
- Cut out bleeding tissue squares
- Wet Tissue and place all around the igloo (not on top or covering igloo)
- Mention colours will bleed onto the paper
- When dry remove the igloo shape to reveal white space underneath.
- Use pencils to add in detail to the igloo.

Closing

- Thank you/ Kw'as h:oy. Ask for any questions.
- Thank the class and the teacher for having you.

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