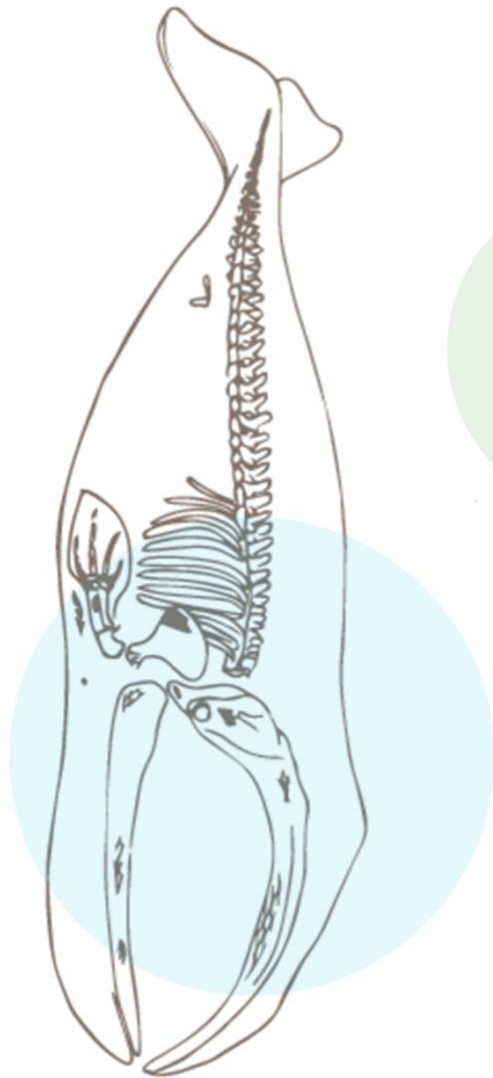


WHAT WE EAT

TRADITIONS PAST AND PRESENT
OF HARVESTING, COOKING AND SHARING FOOD

ALASKA EXHIBITION
SMITHSONIAN ARCTIC STUDIES CENTER
GALLERY LESSON PLAN



INTRODUCTION

The land and sea give sustenance in Alaska. From the ocean comes whale, walrus, seal and other sea mammals. From the land comes moose, bear, caribou, deer and musk ox. Plants and berries supplement all traditional Alaska Native diets and the five species of salmon that return every summer to rivers and streams provide a vital food resource. The regional diversity of foods influences the various traditions of Alaska's Indigenous peoples.

EXHIBITION LINK

anchoragemuseum.org/exhibits/alaska-exhibition

KEY THEMES

- Foodways are connected to identity and culture
- Objects connected to foodways from Alaska Native cultures offer ways of knowing about the landscapes and peoples of Alaska

KEY QUESTIONS

- What stories reflect our own experiences of foodways and celebrations?
- What ways do Alaska Native peoples utilize the landscapes of Alaska to gather, cook and celebrate with food?

VISUAL THINKING STRATEGIES

Visual Thinking Strategies, or VTS, is an approach to teaching from visual materials, typically paintings, drawings and photographs. Developed by museum educators Philip Yenawine and Abigail Housen, this approach to teaching and learning is a learner-centered methodology that seeks to support close looking and communication skills.

The teaching methodology centers around three questions:

1. What's going on in this picture?
2. What do you see that makes you say that?
3. What more can we find?

Educators use these open-ended questions to engage students in examination of images. Content or 'answers' are not provided, rather learners construct meaning individually and together. Educators reflect back what students respond and help facilitate the conversation moving forward.

VTS has been applied across disciplines. Extensive research on the strategy has demonstrated that students participating in multi-visit programs to museums using VTS techniques generated significantly more instances of critical thinking skills, said more and were more likely to provide evidence for their thinking.

Learn more: vtshome.org

INQUIRY BASED METHODS AT THE ANCHORAGE MUSEUM

The Anchorage Museum uses an expanded inquiry-based approach based in constructivist learning theory. Through facilitated conversations which may begin much like a VTS conversation, students are encouraged to bring their own bodies of knowledge to looking closely at an object or image. Unlike traditional VTS methodology, after some initial observation, educators at the Anchorage Museum also provide context and content. This may include information about an object's artist or maker, examination of materials, processes or uses of an object, as well as relevant cultural or historical information.

Examinations of objects create an open-ended dialogue. In dialogue, learner-driven questions and observations and facilitator provided content drive forward a process of meaning making between all participants.



TIPS FOR OBJECT-BASED TEACHING

LOOK CLOSELY

Invite students to look closely for several minutes before sharing observations or beginning discussion. Take different perspectives: encourage getting up close and stepping back. Sketching or writing about what students see invites close looking and engages the students directly with the object.

ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Invite students to share observations and what they notice from initial observations. In lieu of asking questions that have a right/wrong answer (ie *What color is it? When was this made? or How was this used?*) ask questions that allow students to bring critical and creative thinking to bear (ie *What colors do you notice? What materials do you see have been used to make this object? or What clues to how this object might be used to you observe?*).

PROVIDE CONTEXT

As questions or observations about an object arise in conversation, provide students with historical and cultural context or other relevant information. For example, if a student observes that a painting looks unfinished, you might share information that a painter was unable to complete his unfinished painting of Denali because his paints froze while painting *en plein air*.

GET HANDS-ON

Drawing and writing support students in looking closely and thinking creatively and critically. Prompts might include:

- *Sketch a detail.*
- *Sketch the object from multiple perspectives.*
- *[For paintings, drawings and photographs] Sketch what you might imagine happened before this image. Sketch what you imagine might happen after.*
- *[For objects] Where do you imagine finding this object? Sketch an environment where this object might feel 'at home.' Sketch an environment where this object might feel 'out of place.'*
- *Write down a phrase that captures your emotion when you look at this work. Share with a partner. Are your reactions similar or different?*
- *Imagine the story behind the painting or photograph tells, or the story of how this object traveled from its original maker to the museum. Write a brief short story to capture your imaginings.*

WHAT IS VISUAL LITERACY?

Fostering skills to make sense of today's increasingly visual world is critical. By looking closely at works of art, students develop visual literacy, critical thinking and communication skills.

Visual literacy is a set of abilities that enables an individual to effectively find, interpret, evaluate, use, and create images and visual media. Visual literacy skills equip a learner to understand and analyze the contextual, cultural, ethical, aesthetic, intellectual, and technical components involved in the production and use of visual materials. A visually literate individual is both a critical consumer of visual media and a competent contributor to a body of shared knowledge and culture.

- Association of College and Research Libraries



PREPARATION EXPERIENCE

Suggested in-class activities to engage students with the theme of food to prepare before your visit.

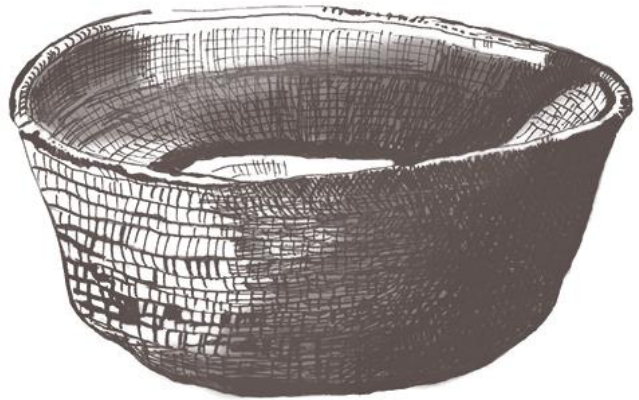
| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Activity 1 | Recipe Card |
| Time Frame | 20+ minutes |
| Materials | Index cards, drawing and coloring supplies |
| Discuss | Invite students to have a conversation about a favorite food with a partner. <i>What is your favorite food? What does it taste and look like? What memories do you have with this food? What are the ingredients?</i> |
| Prompt | On an index card, draw the favorite food. |
| Extension Activity | Describe the ingredients and recipe on the other side. Invite students to consider when and where the ingredients come from. <i>QUESTION Where do these ingredients grow? Where and how are they purchased or gathered?</i> Encourage students to name the food in the language that feels most comfortable. Share with the group. Photocopy the cards and distribute so each student has a copy of illustration and recipe. |



Engage students in the galleries with a close-looking activity.

Basket
Haida, Hydaburg (attributed), c. 1900
Cedar bark, spruce root
1980.105.1
Alaska exhibition

Kigw Haida term for "basket"



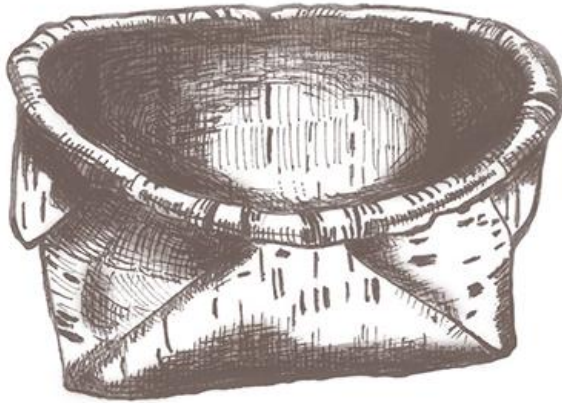
When we collected berries we put skunk cabbage leaves in the bottom of the basket, because they acted like wax paper to catch the juice. We didn't want the juice to drip down our backs and we saved it to use when putting the berries away.

—Delores Churchill, 2005

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Close-Looking | Invite students to look closely, quietly at the object. |
| Observe | Invite students to share observations about the object. |
| Prompt | <i>What do you see? What is it for? What is it made of? What do you see that makes you say that? Can you imagine and tell us how to use this? What do you notice about its design? What questions do you have about it? What more can we find?</i> <i>USE 20 Questions Deck for more discussion questions about the object.</i> |
| Learn More | <i>Kigw, a Haida basket at SASC: alaska.si.edu/record.asp?id=183 Haida culture: alaska.si.edu/culture_haida.asp</i> |

IN GALLERY EXPERIENCE: COOK

Engage students in the galleries with a close-looking activity.



Basket
Athabascan (Dena'ina), Susitna Station, c. 1916
Birch bark, willow root, wood
1997.48.1
Alaska exhibition

q'iyh tth'ok Deg Xinag Athabascan term for "birchbark basket"



Ulu
Prehistoric to c. 1930
Materials include bone, slate, ivory, wood, metal, horn, baleen, leather, antler, brass and cloth
Alaska exhibition

These versatile knives, or *ulus*, have been used for thousands of years for everything from butchering to sewing. They were originally made with ground-stone blades, which were replaced by steel in the last 19th century. Ulus vary in size depending upon the task, from small for precise cutting and sewing, to larger sizes for processing meat, blubber, fish and even ice. Ulus continue to be used today.

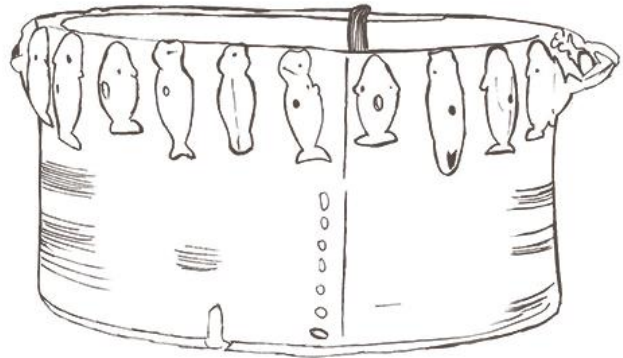
| | |
|---------------|--|
| Close-Looking | Invite students to look closely, quietly at the object. |
| Observe | Invite students to share observations about the object. |
| Discuss | USE <i>20 Questions Deck</i> for more discussion questions about the object. QUESTION <i>What kinds of pots, pans and utensils do you use to cook?</i> |
| Learn More | <i>Q'iyh tth'ok</i> , an Athabascan birchbark basket at SASC: alaska.si.edu/record.asp?id=340 Athabascan culture: alaska.si.edu/culture_athabascan.asp |



IN GALLERY EXPERIENCE: CELEBRATION

Engage students in the galleries with a close-looking activity.

Ceremonial Bowl
Iñupiaq (Cape Prince of Wales)
Driftwood, ivory, beads
Smithsonian Arctic Studies Center



Kayukaq Bering Strait Iñupiaq term for “bowl, dish, plate”

Puggutaq Bering Strait Iñupiaq term “bowl, dish, plate”

The person who made this has seen animals change into something else.... It could be years since they’ve seen it, but they can carve ivory to make the image of what they have seen.... Those aren’t just imaginary things.

—Jacob Ahwinona, 2001

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Close-Looking | Invite students to look closely, quietly at the object. |
| Observe | Invite students to share observations about the object. |
| Prompt | USE <i>20 Questions Deck</i> for more discussion questions about the object. QUESTION <i>What are celebrations in your life? What foods are shared in your community? What do those foods taste and smell like?</i> |
| Learn More | <i>Kayukaq</i> , an Iñupiaq bowl at SASC: alaska.si.edu/record.asp?id=279 Iñupiaq culture: alaska.si.edu/culture_inupiaq.asp |

POST-VISIT EXPERIENCE

Discuss and reflect upon the experience with in-class activities after your visit.

| | |
|------------|--|
| Activity 2 | Food Superheroes |
| Time Frame | 25+ minutes |
| Materials | 11X17" paper; drawing and coloring supplies |
| Prompt | <p>Our foods today tell a story about us.</p> <p>Invite students to create a comic telling a story based on their favorite foods. Cut an 11x17" paper in half horizontally and fold three times.</p> <p>On each panel of an 11x17" half-sheet trifold, draw three characters: your favorite breakfast food, favorite lunch food and favorite dinner food as a superhero. <i>CONSIDER What does your food wear? Where do you eat it? What might it say?</i></p> <p>On the back of each panel, write about the origins of your food superheroes. <i>Where do they come from? How did they get to your plate? Why is it your favorite?</i></p> <p>Share with a partner.</p> |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p><i>Draw your favorite breakfast food as a superhero.</i></p> | <p><i>Draw your favorite lunch food as a superhero.</i></p> | <p><i>Draw your favorite dinner food as a superhero.</i></p> |
|---|---|--|

| | |
|------------|--|
| Activity 3 | Recipe for Success |
| Time Frame | 15+ minutes |
| Materials | Paper; writing tools |
| Prompt | <p>Students are invited to create a 'recipe for success' for what they want to achieve. Consider what you want to achieve (this could be today or a bigger goal). Jot that goal down. Now, imagine that you are creating a recipe for this achievement—just like you would for a dish.</p> <p>Write down what <i>ingredients</i> might be needed to complete this goal. Write down the steps needed to achieve this goal.</p> <p>Share your aspirations and recipe for success with a friend, a family member or mentor.</p> |



For more teaching resources, visit anchagemuseum.org/teachingresources

RELATED ALASKA STATE STANDARDS

Alaska Standards for Culturally-Responsive Students

- B. 1.* acquire insights from other cultures without diminishing the integrity of their own;
- B. 2.* make effective use of the knowledge, skills and ways of knowing from their own cultural traditions to learn about the larger world in which they live
- E. 7.* determine how cultural values and beliefs influence the interaction of people from different cultural backgrounds;
- E. 8.* Identify and appreciate who they are and their place in the world.

Alaska Standards for Alaska History K-12

AH.PPE 2 demonstrates an understanding of the interaction between people and their physical environment by: using texts/sources to analyze the similarities and differences in cultural attributes, movement, interactions, and settlement of Alaska Native peoples

AH.PPE 5 demonstrates an understanding of the interaction between people and their physical environment by: comparing and contrasting the different perspectives between rural and urban areas

Alaska Standards for History K-12

Hist.A5 understand that history is a narrative told in many voices and expresses various perspectives of historical experience

Hist.A6 know that cultural elements reflect the ideas and attitudes of a specific time and know how the cultural elements influence human interaction

Hist.A8 know that history is a bridge to understanding groups of people and an individual's relationship to society

Hist.A9 understand that history is a fundamental connection that unifies all fields of human understanding and endeavor

Alaska Standards for Geography K-12

Geog.B1 know that places have distinctive geographic characteristics

Geog.B8 compare, contrast, and predict how places and regions change with time.

Alaska Standards for Visual Arts K-12

C.D 1-6 Culturally-knowledgeable students are able to engage effectively in learning activities that are based on traditional ways of knowing and learning.

C.E. 1-8 Culturally-knowledgeable students demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them,

VA:CN10a-K a. Create art that tells a story about a personal or cultural experience.

VA:RE7b-K b. Describe what an image represents.

VA:RE8a-K a. Interpret art by identifying subject matter and describing relevant details.

VA:REYb-1 b. Compare images that represent the same subject matter.

VA:RE8a-1 a. Interpret art by categorizing subject matter and identifying elements and basic principles.

VA:CR1b-2 b. Make art or design to explore personal interests, questions, and curiosity.

VA:CN10a-2 a. Create works of art about events in home, school, cultural or community life.

VA:CN10a-3 Develop a work of art based on observations of environmental surroundings.

VA:CR1b-3 b. Apply knowledge of available resources, tools, and technologies to investigate personal ideas or cultural background through the art-making process.

VA:RE8a-3 a. Interpret art by referring to contextual information and analyzing relevant subject matter, elements, principles, and use of media.

VA:CN10a-4 Create a work of art that reflects community or cultural traditions.

VA:RE7b-4 b. Analyze components in imagery that convey messages

VA:RE8a-4 a. Interpret art by referring to contextual information and by analyzing relevant subject matter, use of media, elements, principles, and/or artistic norms of cultures within which the artwork is made.

VA:RE7a-5 a. Use art-specific vocabulary to compare how artworks made in different cultures reflect times and places in which they were made.

VA:CR1b-6 b. Formulate an artistic investigation of personally or culturally relevant content for creating art.

VA:RE7a-6 a. Use art-specific vocabulary to identify how artworks/artifacts made in different cultures reveal the lives and values of the people living at that time and place.

VA:RE8a-6 a. Interpret art by analyzing elements and principles of design, visual characteristics of diverse cultures, and other visual characteristics, contextual information, subject matter, and use of media to identify ideas and mood.

VA:RE7a-8 a. Explain how artists' choices of visual characteristics are influenced by the culture and environment in which they live.

VA:CN11a-HSP a. Describe how knowledge of culture, traditions, and history may influence personal responses to art.

VA:CN11a-HSAC a. Compare and connect contemporary and/or local art through the context of society, culture and history.

VA:RE7a-HSP a. Speculate and analyze ways in which art impacts people's perception and understanding of human experiences.

VA:RE7b-HSAD b. Identify commonalities in visual images made in the same era or culture.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books below are available at the Atwood Resource Center, Anchorage Museum.

ALASKA NATIVE CULTURES

- Crowell, A. A., Rosita, W., Paul, O.C., Dawn, B.D. *Living Our Cultures, Sharing Our Heritage: The First Peoples of Alaska*. Washington: Smithsonian Books, 2010.
- Decker, Julie. *North: Finding Place in Alaska*. Anchorage: Anchorage Museum, 2017.
- . *Up Here: The North at the Center of the World*. Anchorage: Anchorage Museum, 2017.
- Kalifornsky, Peter. *Dena'ina Legacy: K'tl'egh'i Sukdu: The Collected Writings of Peter Kalifornsky*. Fairbanks: Alaska Native Language Center, 2003.
- Heth, Charlotte. *Native American Dance: Ceremonies and Social Traditions*. Washington: National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, Starwood Pub, 1993.
- Jones, Anore. *Plants That We Eat: Nauriat Nigiñaqtuat*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2010.
- Jones, Suzi, James A. Fall and Aaron Leggett. *Dena'inaq' Huch'ulyeshi: The Dena'ina Way of Living*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2013.
- Roderick, Libby. *Alaska Native Cultures and Issues: Responses to Frequently Asked Questions*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2010.
- Williams, Maria. *The Alaska Native Reader: History, Culture, Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2009.

VISUAL LITERACY

- Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin Books for Art, 1990.
- Burnham, Rika and Elliott Kai-Kee. *Teaching in the Art Museum: Interpretation as Experience 1st Edition*. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2011.
- Elkins, James. *How to Use Your Eyes*. New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Greene, Maxine. *Landscapes of Learning*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1978.
- Leborg, Christian. *Visual Grammar*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2004.
- Kubler, George. *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things*, revised edition. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.
- Yenawine, Philip. *Visual Thinking Strategies: Using Art to Deepen Learning Across School Disciplines*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2013.

WEB RESOURCES

- Anchorage Museum Collections onlinecollections.anchagemuseum.org
- Anchorage Museum Resource Center anchagemuseum.org/collections/archives
- Smithsonian National Museum of American History [Engaging Students with Primary Sources](http://www.si.edu/EngagingStudents)

Educational resources at the Anchorage Museum are made possible with the support of the Hearst Foundations, the Atwood Foundation and the Alaska Humanities Forum.

HEARST foundations

