

ANCHORAGE MUSEUM

ALASKA IS: WHAT NOURISHES US



Untitled

Ink, paper

Don Horter Collection, Anchorage Museum, B2017.11.138



UNIT AT A GLANCE

Learn more about our relationship with the foods, drinks, and activities that sustain and nourish us in Alaska.

Social Studies: Students will examine 3 photographs from the Anchorage Museum Collection and embellish a map of Anchorage or Alaska by creating postcards pertaining to activities that people can participate in the year.

English: Students will view 3 photographs from the Anchorage Museum Collection and create a dialogue relating to foods and activities that nourish us.

Science: Students will view 3 photographs from the Anchorage Museum Collection and explore our relationship with food and animals by creating food webs.

STANDARDS

Alaska Geography Standards:

- B3 relate how people create similarities and differences among places
- B4 discuss how and why groups and individuals identify with places
- B5 describe and demonstrate how places and regions serve as cultural symbols, such as the Statue of Liberty;

Alaska English Standards:

Writing Standards

2c. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

2d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

Alaska Science Standards:

MS-LS1-6.

Construct a scientific explanation based on evidence for the role of photosynthesis in the cycling of matter and flow of energy into and out of organisms.

MATERIALS

Science:

- Writing utensils
- Paper

Social Studies:

- Writing utensils
- Coloring utensils
- Colored paper
- Glue
- Postcard sized card stock
- Scissors
- Large map of Anchorage or Alaska with place names
- Yarn
- Tape or magnets



Language Arts:

Writing utensils
Coloring utensils
Paper

KEY TERMS

<i>food web</i>	a diagram of the relationships or connections among species in an ecosystem
<i>producer</i>	organisms that get their energy directly from sunlight and inorganic nutrients (i.e., plants and algae)
<i>primary consumer</i>	organisms that eat the producers and are herbivores or vegetarians
<i>secondary consumer</i>	organisms that eat the primary consumers and are meat eaters' such as carnivores or omnivores
<i>carnivore</i>	animals that survive on a primarily meat-based diet
<i>omnivores</i>	animals that have ability to survive on both a plant and meat-based diet
<i>neqlilleq/neqlivik</i>	Central Yup'ik terms for fish camp
<i>c'aan</i>	Ahnta term for food
<i>shan qayeh/chaqenq'a</i>	Dena'ina terms for fish camp (literally 'summer home/smokehouse')
<i>tr'il</i>	Gwich'in term for a fish wheel
<i>uqiquq</i>	Central Yup'ik term for a throw party
<i>communal</i>	pertaining to something shared by all members of a community
<i>seasonal</i>	something that repeats for a period of time yearly
<i>nourish</i>	to sustain growth or good condition

CLOSE-LOOKING

TIME FRAME	Approximately 40 minutes
MATERIALS	Photograph 1: <i>Untitled</i> Don Horter Collection, Anchorage Museum collection B2017.11.138 Photograph 2: <i>Untitled (Women of a Tununak family conduct a seal party in which a young man's first bearded seal is distributed)</i> , James H. Barker, Anchorage Museum collection; 2014.31.8 Photograph 3: <i>Untitled (Helen, Maggie and Shirley Wasuli pick salmonberries, Kotlik)</i> , James H. Barker, Anchorage Museum collection; 2014.31.20
DIRECTIONS	1. Begin by looking closely at provided photographs. Use the questions below to guide discussion. [30 min.] CLOSE-LOOKING: Look closely, quietly at the objects for a few minutes. OBSERVE: Share your observations about each photograph.





Photograph 1: *Untitled*, Don Horter Collection, Anchorage Museum; B2017.11.138

ASK: *What do you notice about this image?
Describe the objects and person that you see in this image.
What might the person in the image be doing?
In what time of year do you think this image is set?
What does this remind you of?
What more can you find?*



Photograph 2: *Untitled*, James H. Barker; 2014.31.8

ASK: *What details do you notice in this image?
What do you think is happening?
What do you notice about the people in this image?
What tells you in what time of year this image might be set?
What words would you use to describe this image?
What does this remind you of?
What more can you find?*



Photograph 3: *Untitled*, James H. Barker; 2014.31.20

ASK: *What details do you notice in this image?
What might the people in the image be doing?
Why might the people be dressed the way they are in the image?
How would you describe the people in this image?
What does this remind you of?
What more can you find?*

DISCUSS: Use the [20 Questions Deck](#) for more group discussion questions about the photographs.

2. As a class, discuss group activities that students find enjoyable with their peers and cross-generationally. Invite students to share the activities that they do on a seasonal basis, or as traditions with family, community members, or with friends.

[10 min.]

SCIENCE: FOOD WEBS

TIME FRAME Approximately 50 minutes

MATERIALS Writing utensils
Paper

DIRECTIONS **1.** Food is a part of daily life and when we eat food from our local environment, we strengthen our connections to that environment. Food webs are a way to visually represent the connections among species in an ecosystem or environment. Using their own experiences and understanding of local food, students will construct a food web to see the interconnected relationship they have with the natural world around them.



2. Invite students to think of a food that comes from Alaska that they know or enjoy eating. (i.e., salmon, blueberries, or devils club). Invite students to draw or write about that food.

[10 min.]

3. Ask students: How does the food that they selected get its energy? What does it eat? Invite students to name other Alaskan animals that eats that food as well, then ask which animals might eat those animals previously mentioned.

[5 min.]

4. Invite students to draw a food web starting out with the food that students first selected, then by drawing lines to connect the animals that eat that food, then an additional line to connect animals that eat those animals. Encourage students to write or draw additional organisms. Once finished, invite students to label the producers, primary consumers, and secondary consumers in their food web.

[15 min.]

5. As a class, create and label a second food web with the following foods and animals:

- salmon
- black bear
- blueberries
- herring
- dandelion
- mayfly
- algae

[10 min.]

6. When finished, invite students to try and connect their first food web with the second. Encourage students to share with one another how and why they choose to connect the organisms from the two food webs in the way that they do.

[10 min.]

ASSESSMENT

Students will be assessed based on participation in class discussion and completion of food web.

LEARN MORE

WATCH:

California Academy of Sciences - [Exploring Ecosystems: Coastal Food Webs](#)

Ted-Ed - [Dead stuff: The secret ingredient in our food chain - John C. Moore](#)

READ:

The Nature Education Knowledge Project - [Food Web: Concepts and Applications](#)

National Geographic - [Food Web](#)

LEARN:

Anchorage Museum - [What We Eat](#)

Anchorage Museum - [Forage](#)

Anchorage Museum - [Stewardship](#)



SOCIAL STUDIES: POSTCARD MAP

TIME FRAME Approximately 115 minutes

MATERIALS Writing utensils
Coloring utensils
Colored paper
Glue
Postcard sized card stock
Scissors
Large map of Anchorage or Alaska with city names and place names
Yarn
Tape or magnets
Photograph 1: *Untitled* Don Horter Collection, Anchorage Museum collection B2017.11.138
Photograph 2: *Untitled (Women of a Tununak family conduct a seal party in which a young man's first bearded seal is distributed)*, James H. Barker, Anchorage Museum collection; 2014.31.8
Photograph 3: *Untitled (Helen, Maggie and Shirley Wasuli pick salmonberries, Kotlik)*, James H. Barker, Anchorage Museum collection; 2014.31.20

- DIRECTIONS**
1. Put up a large map of Alaska or Anchorage on display. Inform students that they will create postcards for places and activities that are meaningful to them.
[1 min.]
 2. Return to the photographs listed in the materials section. Discuss ways in which the activities seen in the images may be meaningful to the people participating in them.
[5 min.]
 3. Discuss with students the definition of the word nourish, and ask what they associate with it. Create a list of these associations on a board. Prompt students to make connections with places and activities from the map and add them to the list.
[15 min.]
 4. Ask students about activities that they enjoy in certain places. Encourage students if they feel comfortable to explain what makes these places and activities enjoyable.
[10 min.]
 5. Invite students to form groups of two to three students and pass out card stock, coloring utensils, scissors and glue for students to design postcards of activities of places that are nourishing.
[45 min.]
 6. Once finished, invite students to present on the activities and places on their postcards. At any point in the presentation, allow students to affix one end of yarn to the postcard with the other end onto the place in which the activity takes place on the map.
[20 min.]
 7. After all postcards are affixed to the map, invite students to share with each other and the class what they observed from others about their ideas of nourishing places.
[20 min.]



ASSESSMENT

Students will be assessed based on participation in class discussion, completion of postcards, and postcard presentation to the class.

LEARN MORE

SEASONALITY: ACTIVITIES AND SEASONS IN ALASKA

The seasons play a large role in life for all Alaskans. Summer is broadly synonymous with the salmon runs throughout most of the state, with harvesting and preparing of fish being common group activities. Likewise, winter is also a time for many activities, both recreational and functional. Winter conditions necessitate preparation such as putting on snow tires and wearing warmer clothing to allow people to best participate in activities.

In areas outside of the road system, winter allows for more accessible intercommunity travel as lakes and rivers become frozen solid. Snow machines, and sometimes cars, reliably transport people over frozen waterways to connect with one another and celebrate holidays during the winter season.

THROW PARTIES

In Yup'ik communities, one's first successful seal hunt of the season is a time for celebration. This celebration, *uqiquq* (throw party or seal party), denotes the first of an accomplishment such as catching one's first salmon or harvesting berries for the first time in the season, but often refers to the first time one successfully hunts a seal. Women from the family of the person who had the successful first catch distribute items from the first catch, as well as items like soap, candy, and other gifts to other women in the community who gather for the throw party to invite luck and abundance.

FISH CAMP

In many Alaska Native communities, fish camps for catching and preparing fish are visible along riverbanks. Here, families or groups of families typically catch and prepare salmon and other fish for long term storage. Families divide the tasks of catching, splitting, cutting, and hanging fish to individuals and tasks can last entire days depending on the amount of fish caught at fish camp. For many families, fish camp is an opportunity to harvest fish for consumption throughout the winter, as well as a time to spend with each other, share stories, and pass down methods of preparing fish to future generations.

WATCH:

Anchorage Daily News - [At Kuskokwim River fish camp, smokehouses fill with fish and tradition](#)

American Indian Film Gallery - [The Way We Live Part 2](#)

READ:

Yungnaqpiallerput - [Uqiquq, aruqsaq-llu](#)

Yungnaqpiallerput - [Neqliyalriit](#)

Dena'inaq' Huch'ulyeshi - [Putting Up Dry Fish](#)

A NOTE ABOUT TERMINOLOGY

The Anchorage Museum refrains from using the terms Eskimo, Indian, and Aleut and instead uses language identified by the Alaska Native language groups. Due to these words' complicated history, the Anchorage Museum does not use these terms. However, it is important to note that Indigenous communities and individuals are at different places of healing and self-identity and may use these terms.

The largest Indigenous language family in North America is the Dene language family, which is commonly identified as 'Athabaskan'—a word that is not native to any of the Indigenous languages to which it refers. Dene is a word for Indigenous peoples belonging to several cultures whose languages belong to the Dene language family with traditional homelands in Interior Alaska and into Western Canada; the word Dene means 'people' in several Dene languages.



LANGUAGE ARTS: DIALOGUE AND DRAWING

TIME FRAME	Approximately 70 minutes
MATERIALS	Writing utensils Coloring utensils Paper Photograph 1: <i>Untitled</i> Don Horter Collection, Anchorage Museum collection B2017.11.138 Photograph 2: <i>Untitled (Women of a Tununak family conduct a seal party in which a young man's first bearded seal is distributed)</i> , James H. Barker, Anchorage Museum collection; 2014.31.8 Photograph 3: <i>Untitled (Helen, Maggie and Shirley Wasuli pick salmonberries, Kotlik)</i> , James H. Barker, Anchorage Museum collection; 2014.31.20
DIRECTIONS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Return to the photos listed in the materials list. Invite students to think and discuss the activities in the images with a partner, then to think about similar ones in which they participate. [5 min.]2. Announce to students that they will be creating a dialogue like that in a play. [1 min.]3. As a class, discuss what type of conversations might take places when doing activities like those in the images. Encourage students to talk about why we might use language when participating in activities. Additionally, briefly review how plays set the scene in writing and the mood in dialogue. [15 min.]4. Invite students to collaborate in pairs. Announce that each student will be drafting their own dialogue of themselves and others set during an activity that they enjoy. [20 min.]5. Once finished, pass out blank paper and coloring utensils and invite students to trade dialogues with one another and to either sketch or create a comic of their partner's dialogue. [10-15 min.]6. Afterwards, invite student pairs to present on their dialogues and of the sketch they created. Ask students what they thought of the collaborative process. Encourage students to talk about what was challenging and rewarding in the process. [15 min.]

ASSESSMENT

Students will be assessed based on participation in class discussion, completion of dialogue and sketches or comic, and presentation to the class.



LEARN MORE

TELLING STORIES

Storytelling is a rich and diverse tradition in Alaska Native culture. Some stories embed morals and remind those listening of important cultural values, while others are meant to teach about cosmology, navigating the land, and historical events.

QANEMCIT & QULIRAT

Classical Yup'ik storytelling distinguishes *qanemcit* from *qulirat*. *Qulirat* tend to have fantastical elements similar to western epics and fairytales whereas *qanemcit* are more factual accounts. Oftentimes, the boundaries between these two types of stories can blur as storytellers add embellishments over time. As such, *qanemcit* take on new details in retellings over many years and can become *qulirat* themselves.

SUKDU

The Dena'ina word *sukdu* comprises stories of all kinds. In precolonial times, storytellers could only tell certain *sukdu* when the time of year or activity relating to it was relevant. Like *qanemcit* and *qulirat*, *sukdu* were exclusively oral until the introduction of western style orthographies. Today, *sukdu* from all four Dena'ina dialects exist in publication.

MEDIA:

Koahnic Broadcast corp & Rising Indigenous Voices Radio - [The Storyteller](#)

PBS Terra - [Alaskan Native Elders Tell Their Climate Change Story | After the Ice](#)

Anchorage Daily News - [Yup'ik storyteller John Active shares a scary story](#)

Dena'inaq' Huch'ulyeshi - [Traditional Sukdu](#)

READ:

Johnson, W. (2005). *Sukdu Net Nuhtghelnek/I'll tell you a story: Stories I recall from growing up on Iliamna Lake*. Fairbanks: Alaska Native Language Center.

Kalifornsky, P., Kari, J., & Boraas, A. (1991). *A Dena'ina Legacy. K'tl'egh'i Sukdu. The Collected Writings of Peter Kalifornsky*. Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks, PO Box 900111, Fairbanks, AK 99775-0120..

Kari, J., & Fall, J. A. (Eds.). (2016). *Shem Pete's Alaska: The Territory of the Upper Cook Inlet Dena'ina*. University of Alaska Press.

