



## EDUCATIONAL SUPPLEMENT #2

### THE ARCTIC'S INUIT PEOPLE

#### **Learning Objectives:**

For students to gain an understanding of the Inuit people, including: location, population, lifestyle and history.

#### **This Packet Contains:**

- Teaching Materials
- Activities and Worksheets
- Supplemental Media and Resource Sheet
- Visual Aids (Separate Download)

**Teaching Materials:** A detailed look into the Inuit culture intended as background information for the teacher.

**Visual Aid:** A PowerPoint presentation that compliments the teaching materials with maps, photographs, charts, fun facts and other visual aids.

#### **Activities and Worksheets:**

- Inuit Word Search
- Inuksuk Art Project
- Scrimshaw Art Project
- My Scrimshaw Story
- Inuit Quiz



## TEACHING MATERIALS

**The Inuit People:** *Inuit, which simply means “The People” in their own language, refers to the indigenous people of the Arctic. This word has replaced “Eskimo” in Canada and Greenland, where it is now considered pejorative; however in Alaska and Russia it is still accepted as a collective term to describe the Arctic’s Native inhabitants.*

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### **Population**

- Altogether about 150,000 Inuit inhabit the Arctic.
- They live in Greenland, Canada, the United States (Alaska) and Russia.

### **Language**

- Inuktitut is the traditional language of the Inuit and is still widely used.
- English and French are also now spoken by the Inuit.

### **Inuit Homes- Igloos**

- The word igloo means any type of house, not just a snow house.
- Snow block houses were never used in Alaska.
- Alaskan and many Russian Inuit lived in cabins made of driftwood covered in soil.
- In Greenland, Inuit often lived in permanent stone houses.
- Some Inuit did live in snow block houses during the winter, but moved into animal skin tents during the short summer months.
- In recent years, many Inuit homes have become more modern. Prefabricated wooden houses with heat provided by oil-burning stoves are common. However, Inuit housing styles continue to vary greatly depending on location.

### **Transportation**

- Dog Sled “Komatik”- a sturdy frame on runners with reins attached to multiple huskies was the main mode of transportation for the Inuit. Today many dogsleds have been replaced by snowmobiles.
- Kayak “Qajaq”- which means hunter boat, was an Inuit invention that is still widely used today. It was traditionally a one person boat made of a light weight driftwood or whale bone frame, covered with stretched animal skins, and finally made watertight with whale fat. The hunter would fasten his outer layer- an annuraaq made of seal skin around the cockpit to seal out any water.

- Umiak- larger and more open boat covered with animal skins. Made to carry larger loads, including entire families.
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## Hunting and Diet

**Hunting** *The Inuit have traditionally been hunters and fishers.*

- They hunt whales, walruses, caribou, seals, polar bears, muskoxen and birds.
- In the winter they would hunt seals through their air holes in the ice. They would stand above the holes, harpoon in hand and await the seals return to their breathing hole.
- In spring the Inuit were able to navigate the thawed surface and hunt for food in their one-man kayaks.
- Caribou are an important source of sustenance for the Inuit; they are used not only for food, but their skins and antlers are used for clothing and tools as well.
- They hunted with bow and arrow, harpoons, fishing spears and traps.
- Today the Inuit use modern fishing rods, hooks, nets and traps as well as firearms.

## Diet

- Because of their food source (only what they killed) the Inuit diet is very high in protein and very high in fat- 75% of their daily energy intake is from fat.
- It is not possible to cultivate plants for food in the Arctic; the Inuit have always gathered what is naturally available.
- They collect grasses, tubers, roots, stems, berries and seaweed. They preserved these depending on the season and their location.
- Because it is much harder to get food in the freezing winter months, the Inuit will dry large supplies of fish in preparation.

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**Clothing** *was an important factor in the ability of the Inuit to dwell in such a harsh environment.*

- All clothing was made from various animal skins and hides.
- In winter they wore two layers of caribou fur clothing- with the fur on the outer layer facing out and the inner layer facing in for ultimate warmth.
- Their outer garments were hooded fur jackets called parkas which we still use commonly today.
- They also wore jackets called Atiqiks. They were made with goose down from geese that were hunted during the spring months.

- Their boots called “kamiks” were made from seal skin which was warm, durable and waterproof.
- The Inuit still wear traditional clothing during the winter and during any long outdoor activity, however modern ready-made clothes are also popular, especially amongst teenaged Inuit.

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**Art, Music and Games** *The Inuit kept very little other than what was necessary for daily living, which meant much of their entertainment involved no equipment. What they did have they made from natural materials and carved in miniature so they could be carried around or worn.*

**Carvings** *The Inuit are famous for their soapstone, bone and ivory carvings.*

- Most carvings were pieces used to tell legends or small figures that served as toys for children.
- The Inuit also carved and decorated their handmade tools.
- Pieces were often of animals, especially polar bears, seals and walruses, as well as people and other wildlife.
- The Inuit use a specific style in creating the animals they carve- this style is mimicked in the shapes of the animals in Venture Arctic.

### **Scrimshaw**

- The Inuit engraved pictures that told stories in ivory walrus tusks and whale bones.
- When their engraving was completed they rubbed the carving with lampblack to make their picture stand out.
- These tusks depicted stories of whale hunts, dog sledding, caribou, and other various animals and people.

### **Inuksuk**

- An Inuksuk is a monument made of un-worked stones used for communication and survival.
- They have been used by the Inuit as guides and markers, pointing out trails, nearby people or even the migration routes of caribou.
- These markers have been vital to the Inuit, marking landscapes that would be otherwise indistinguishable, and constantly changing because of ice and snow.
- Inuit tradition celebrates the importance of and forbids the destruction of these monuments.

**Throat Singing** *The Inuit's traditional music.*

- Throat singing is usually performed by two women facing each other, but recently men have begun to take part as well.
- It is not traditional singing; it uses the voice in a different way.
- One singer will make deep breathy sounds and produce a short rhythm that she repeats with small breaks in between. The second singer responds during the leader's breaks and they engage in a sort of competition.

**Games** *The Inuit played a variety of traditional games and sports. They usually emphasized skills required for survival in the harsh Arctic environment, though some were simply played for fun. No matter what the purpose of the game, it usually requires no special equipment.*

- Iglagunerik – an Inuit laughing game. Each player faces a partner, generally holding each other's hands. At an agreed upon time everyone begins to laugh. The couple that laughs the longest and hardest are declared the winners. *Try this one in class!*
- The Musk ox Push- With both players on their hands and knees, and heads bent down against each other's shoulders, they attempt to push each other forward out of a designated area. Hands must be kept on the floor.
- Games played using small pieces included: darts and cribbage boards made of caribou antlers, juggling balls made from caribou hide, bone dominoes and other small bone game pieces.



# MAKE YOUR OWN INUKSUK

A heavy snow is falling and soon you will no longer be able to see your trail. Create a monument to mark your path, just like the Inuit did so you will be able to find your way back home through the storm!

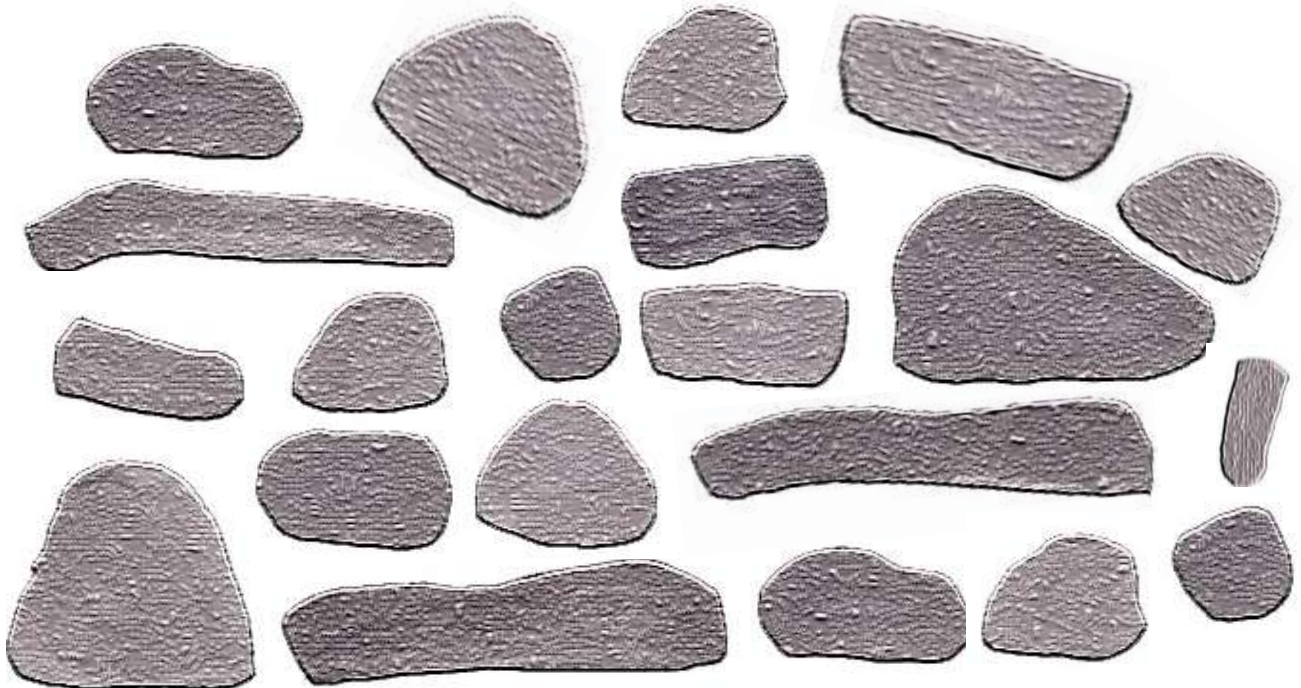
**You will need:**

White construction paper

Scissors

Glue stick

Carefully cut out the rocks below and arrange them however you like to form your very own Inuksuk. When your pattern is ready, glue the rocks in place on a piece of white construction paper.





## MAKE YOUR OWN SCRIMSHAW



### You Will Need:

- Bar of Ivory soap
- Toothpicks for carving
- A story you would like to tell!



- Pressing lightly, use a toothpick to carve your story into the Ivory bar.
- If you make a mistake, gently rub unwanted lines out with your thumb.



- When you are finished carving, carefully brush off any soap flakes and wipe the surface of your design clean.



- When you take your scrimshaw home, ask an adult if they will help you blacken the lines with some shoe polish, for a more realistic piece of Inuit art!



# TELL THE STORY OF YOUR SCRIMSLAW

A large, light green, curved shape resembling a piece of parchment or a scroll, containing ten horizontal black lines for writing.

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**Title**

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**Name**



## INUIT QUIZ

### Multiple Choice

1. The Inuit people live in \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Alaska
  - b. Russia
  - c. Antarctica
  - d. A and B are both correct
2. The Inuit use caribou for \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Transportation
  - b. Pets
  - c. Clothing
  - d. Plowing
3. The Inuit use \_\_\_\_\_ instead of cars.
  - a. Kayaks
  - b. Umiaks
  - c. Komatiks
  - d. All of the above

### True or False

1. The Inuit are famous for their beautiful scrimshaw. T / F
2. Inuksuk were very detailed paintings only done by skilled Inuit artists. T / F
3. The Inuit lived simple lives and had few possessions. T / F

### Fill in the Blank

1. Komatiks, also called \_\_\_\_\_ were the main mode of transportation for the Inuit.
2. The word \_\_\_\_\_ means any type of house in Inuktitut.
3. Most traditional Inuit clothing is made of \_\_\_\_\_.



**SUPPLEMENTAL MEDIA  
& RESOURCES**

**Fun extras for the classroom:**

- The Encarta encyclopedia provides an audio clip of traditional Inuit throat singing.  
[http://encarta.msn.com/media\\_461532835\\_761561130\\_1\\_1/Inuit\\_Throat\\_Game\\_of\\_Canada.html](http://encarta.msn.com/media_461532835_761561130_1_1/Inuit_Throat_Game_of_Canada.html)
- The Arctic photo website has an extensive Inuit gallery.  
<http://www.arcticphoto.co.uk/gallery2/arctic/peoples/greenlandw/greenlandw.htm#>