



ALASKA
NATIVE
HERITAGE
CENTER

Cultural and Educational Services

ANHC School Programs

**Extending Your ANHC School Visit
Program 4: Whales and
Whaling (K-12)**



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After your Whales and Whaling visit, you can undertake a number of activities to complement your visit. Four types of activities are described below.

1. Story/Legend: Have students read or listen to a whale story or legend. After listening to the tale, students can respond by acting it out, writing about how they feel about it, or do an art response.

Stories that can be downloaded from the Internet include: “Iti Vyaat”, “Katauq”, “Nannuna”, and “Apakiina”, from Whaling a Way of Life. “Katauq” and “Apakiina” are appropriate for all grades and “Iti Vyaat” and “Nannuna” are appropriate for middle and high school students.

<http://www.alaskool.org/projects/traditionalife/whalingawol/WHALING-English.html>

The article “Gift from the Whales” by Bill Hess is appropriate for middle and high school students.
http://www.nativepeoples.com/np_features/np_articles/1998_summer_article/whales_feature.html

“A Whaling Story” by Bobgerard Paniguiq Akootchook is a short story about his first whaling experience. It is appropriate for middle and high school students.

http://www.kaktovik.com/a_whaling_story1.htm

The First Whaling Trip written by elementary students is in the Whaling Lending Box.

The Whale Hunt by Pete Lisbourne, also in the Whaling Lending Box, is appropriate for all students.

2. Art Activities: Some of the following art activities replicate whaling equipment, while others can be used in a celebration (Nalukataq).

Snow Goggles-Students can make snow goggles out of wood or paper and leather lashing or string. See the websites listed at the end for goggle ideas.

Small Harpoons-Students can make small harpoons using sticks, rounded points, and lashing. See the websites listed at the end for harpoon ideas.

Small Bags: Students can make small bags out of canvas or leather, imitation sinew, beads, and feathers. Bags can be pre-cut and punched.

Soap Carving: Students can carve a whale out of soap.

Drums: Students can make drums out of small to medium sized embroidery hoops, airplane fabric, lashing material, feathers, beads, and a dowel for the drumstick.

Rattles: Students can make a rattle using canvas type material, stick, pebbles, feathers, and beads.

3. Science Activities: Whales are able to survive in the cold Arctic waters because of their thick layer of fat or blubber.

- a. As a demonstration on how well fat works as insulation, you will need Crisco shortening, two buckets of ice water, and a number of pairs of rubber gloves.
- b. Prepare a bucket of ice water.
- c. Divide the class into pairs. The students will coat their right hands with Crisco or shortening and leave their left hands clean. In order to keep the left hand clean, students will have to coat the hand of their partners using their own right hands.
- d. Students then place rubber gloves on their hands and dip both hands simultaneously into the bucket of icy water.
- e. When a hand begins to feel uncomfortably cold, the student removes it from the water. The partner times the procedure and writes down the times that each hand is removed.
- f. When all students have completed the experiment, compare the notes. Which hand was most often removed from the water first? What was the average amount of time students could keep each hand in the water?
- g. Discuss the results.

4 Websites:

Umiak (spelled “umiak” on this handout): Click on the monograph of umiaks and download.
<http://www.museum.state.ak.us/Sheldon%20Jackson/SJhome.html>

Harpoon Points: Photograph of ancient harpoon points.
<http://www.gi.alaska.edu/ScienceForum/ASF15/harpoon@20points.html>

Information on Whales: Information on different kinds of whales, biology and anatomy of whales, and pages that can be printed is found at:
<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/whales>