This lesson plan was created by a classroom teacher in a See Stories PD course. They have generously agreed to share it with others via our website to help build a library of films and lessons created by and for Alaskan teachers.

The Elders' Wish

SeeStories

The film highlighted the two most unique cultures of the Siberian Yupik people: the traditional way of preserving food during summer for substantial needs when winter comes and the importance of Yupik as the language of the Sivuqaq people. Some Indigenous foods are tuuqtaq (fermented walrus meatballs), which were preserved and stored in the *siqlugaq* (ice cellar), and the *nunivak* plants, which were put in the pokes of seal skin and stored in a cache to form green *kaapelqaq* (sour/tart).

Film: The Elder's Wish

AUTHOR	SUBJECT(S), GRADE(S)	TIME
Luzviminda A. Dinglasan	Science 9th & 10th	45 - 90 minutes

PRIMARY SOURCES

TITLE	YEAR	SOURCE	LINK
Alaska Digital Archives/GAMBELL	1958-1979	Alaska Digital Archives	https://vilda.alaska.edu/digital/search/searchterm/Gambell

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. How did the Sivuqaq people use their traditional knowledge, skills, and practices to sustain their subsistence lifestyle?
2. What natural resources did they use to preserve their harvested *teghikusat* (animals) and *nunivagseghat* (plants)?
3. How does the changing environment affect the subsistence lifestyle of the Sivuqaq people?
4. What is the impact of translating Yupik into English? How does the translation change the dialect of the current generation?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	MATERIALS
Students will explain the impact of the changing environment on *tuuqtaq* (fermented walrus meatballs) and *kaapelqaq* (sour/tart) Students will build Yupik vocabulary by translating science concepts	Smartboard, laptop, climate change articles, internet. Yupik dictionary and/or vocabulary words

LESSON ACTIVITIES

Opener

Picture Analysis/Visual Learning:

Learners will be given images of Yupik foods in Yupik terms (*tuuqtaq* - walrus meatballs, *kaapelqaq* - green tart, *mangtak* - whale skin and blubber, *akutaq* - ice cream, and *neqa* - food and fish) and will be asked their knowledge of food preservation and storage.

A question will be posted for inquiry:

How did our great-grandparents store their food when electricity was not yet available in the village? What is the current status of the natural resources they use for subsistence living?

Main Lesson

1. Vocabulary Building and Yupik Translation
   Review these vocabulary terms with students
   a. Plants -(*nunivagseghat*) living things that have stems, leaves, roots, and flowers
   b. Animals - (*teghikusat*) living organisms that feed on organic matter
   c. Ice cellars - (ice cellar) an underground room that uses ice to keep food and drinks cool

2. Science Article about Ice Cellars
   Read the article and discuss these questions:
   a. Why are *siqlugaq* (ice cellars) important to the Arctic Region specifically at St. Lawrence Island?
   b. Does Sivuqaq (Gambell) have ice cellars? How many are still working?

3. Film: The Elders' Wish
   Watch the film and discuss these questions:
   a. What traditional food did Mike Apatiki wish to eat? What is its Yupik name?

b. How does the changing environment affect the ice cellars' natural structure and the marine animals' hunting activity?
c. What animal was used in preserving the nunivak plants?
d. Why do you think Yupik people are no longer using seal skin to preserve the plants as *kaapelqaq* (sour/tart)?
e. Based on the observations of Beulah Nowpakahok, how is the Yupik language important to the culture and tradition of the people in Sivuqaq?
f. What practice should be done to preserve the dialect of the Yupik people?

4. Think-Pair-Share on the Impact of the Changing Environment in Gambell.

Learners write one environmental observation in Sivuqaq (Gambell) that they have experienced, for example:

a. Number of hunted animal species
b. The hottest temperature they experienced last summer
c. Berries harvested in camp

Students share their observations or inferences on how the natural environment, the environmental factors, and the species are interchanging.

Based on your observations, what digital stories would you like to document?

Closing

1. How did the Sivuqaq people use their traditional knowledge, skills, and practices to sustain their subsistence lifestyle?

The unique cultural knowledge and skills of the great-grandparents that were put into practice, like food preservation of animals, designing and building ice cellars, and reusing seal skin for plant storage, have been adapting to the changing environment, which cannot be compared to what the current generation is practicing. *Tuuqtaq* (fermented walrus meatballs) are no longer the food of the Yupik people, while *nunivak* is preserved in a bucket.

2. What is the impact of translating Yupik into English? How does the translation change the dialect of the current generation?

The English language helped the native villagers communicate effectively with non-Yupik people; however, English became the language of the majority. Hence, the native dialect has not been put into practice, which is why the current generation has a lesser understanding of their own unique and beautiful language.

Assessment

Exit Card: I Care Because

The learners will be encouraged to explain the relevance of the traditional knowledge, skills, and language of the great-grandparents in building resilience in the changing environment.

Answers may be presented in a diagram, an interesting digital story to be filmed, a graphic organizer, or a concept map.

CONTEXT & RATIONALE

Context & Resources:

The actual observation and status of the ice cellars in Gambell.

Yupik dictionary.

National Geographic Article, These Ice Cellars Fed Arctic People for Generations. Now They're Melting. By Eli Kintisch, 2015

Rationale:

The environment is changing, the quantity of harvested plants and animals is gradually decreasing, the traditional knowledge and skills are no longer put into practice, and a majority of the learners in the school have a lesser understanding of the Yupik words.

STANDARDS

Alaska State Standards

HS-LS4-4. Construct an explanation based on evidence for how natural selection leads to the adaptation of populations.
HS-LS2-6. Evaluate claims, evidence, and reasoning that the complex interactions in ecosystems maintain relatively consistent numbers and types of organisms in stable conditions, but changing conditions may result in a new ecosystem.
HS-ESS2-4. Use a model to describe how variations in energy flow into and out of Earth's systems result in climate changes.
HS-ESS3-5. Analyze geoscience data and the results from global climate models to make an evidence-based forecast of the current rate of global or regional climate change and associated future impacts on Earth's systems.

Alaska Cultural Standards

A. Culturally knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community

4. practice their traditional responsibilities to the surrounding environment;
5. reflect through their actions the critical role that the local heritage language plays in fostering a sense of who they are and how they understand the world around them;

B. Culturally knowledgeable students can build on the knowledge and skills of the local cultural community as a foundation from which to achieve personal and academic success throughout life.
   2. make effective use of the knowledge, skills, and ways of knowing from their cultural traditions to learn about the larger world in which they live.

C. Culturally knowledgeable students can actively participate in various cultural environments
   1. perform subsistence activities in ways that are appropriate to local cultural traditions;

D. Culturally knowledgeable students can engage effectively in learning activities based on traditional ways of knowing and learning.
   5. Identify and utilize appropriate sources of cultural knowledge to find solutions to everyday problems.