



The White Faced Bear, An Aleut Myth

ALEUT INDIGENOUS MYTH & KNOWLEDGE IN MODERN DAY TIMES

Audience:

Social Studies Content Area

High School Students (Grades 9-12)

Time Needed:

3 - 45 minute lessons

Overview:

Students will investigate Aleut Myths to uncover universal themes within the indigenous knowledge framework specific to human relationships with the natural world and create a modern interpretation in story form, to perform in front of the class as a skit

Goal/Outcome:

Students will learn that indigenous knowledge is timeless and relevant to all people. Students will develop the ability to synthesize meaning from multiple culture's perspectives and find relevance in their own lives.

Objective:

Students will:

1. Read and analyze myths of the Aleut people

Essential Questions:

How and why is the natural world important?



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2. Interpret their understanding of the myth/story, discuss, and reflect upon its implications in today's times
3. Construct a modern day interpretation of the myth based off of their own interpretation and reflections
4. Choose one story from within each group and perform as a skit

Alaskan Cultural Standards:

Cultural Standard for Curriculum:

- B. A culturally-responsive curriculum recognizes cultural knowledge as part of a living and constantly adapting system that is grounded in the past, but continues to grow through the present and into the future.
1. Recognizes the contemporary validity of much of the traditional cultural knowledge, values and beliefs, and grounds students learning the principles and practices associated with that knowledge;
 2. Provides students with an understanding of the dynamics of cultural systems as they change over time, and as they are impacted by external forces;
- D. A culturally-responsive curriculum fosters a complementary relationship across knowledge derived from diverse knowledge systems.
1. Draws parallels between knowledge derived from oral traditions and that derived from books;
 2. Engages students in the construction of new knowledge and understandings that contribute to an ever-expanding view of the world.

Materials

Aleut Myths - see *Resources (below)*, paper + pen or computer, space to discuss + perform

Resources:

Aleut Myths

The Fight for a Wife - <http://web.archive.org/web/20080703215450/http://pyramidmesa.netfirms.com/aleut1.html>

The Girl who married the Moon - <http://www.indigenouspeople.net/girlwho.htm>

The Girl who searched for her Lover - <http://www.indigenouspeople.net/girlwhom.htm>

The Origin of the Winds - <http://www.indigenouspeople.net/winds.htm>

Raven and his Grandmother - <http://www.indigenouspeople.net/ravengra.htm>

The Two Inquisitive Men - <http://www.indigenouspeople.net/twoinqui.htm>

The White Faced Bear - <http://www.indigenouspeople.net/whitefac.htm>

Instructions:

Lesson 1: Students select an Aleut myth from the *Resources* section to read and discuss thoughts on how this can be related in their lives in small groups

Lesson 2: Discuss the following questions as a class: (*see scrolling sidebar*)

1. What importance do the Aleut place on the natural world?
2. What importance do you place on the natural world?
3. How has the world changed since the creation of these stories? Do the lessons from the Aleut stories still apply in your modern day life?

Students begin writing modern day interpretation in a skit version of their Aleut Story (See video for assistance)

Lesson 3: Students will perform skits for class

Assessments:

Students will be assessed by participation in group discussion and skit performance

Students will submit their stories for review on relating relevance of indigenous stories to modern time

REFERENCES:

The White Faced Bear Image, Banner, http://www.ya-native.com/Culture_Arctic/legends/TheWhiteFacedBear.html

Thinking Head Icon, Artist: Timothy Dilich, Noun Project, <https://thenounproject.com/search/?q=thinking+light+bulb&i=45234>

Raven Icon: Artist: Botho Willer, Noun Project, <https://thenounproject.com/search/?q=raven&i=160923>

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YouTube Film: How to Write Descriptively <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RSoRzTtwgP4>