

Qallunaat

Why White People are Funny



"A must-see...laugh out loud funny"
- *Native Vue*

**Teacher's Guide
and
Student Worksheets**

Background for Teachers

Canada's vast northern regions are home to unique geographic and social treasures that enrich our collective history. The cultural exchange goes both ways, however, and even the northern frontier is not immune to the social problems found in the rest of Canada. Prejudice and discrimination have tainted the story of the North.

For centuries, a sophisticated semi-nomadic society flourished in present-day Nunavut and other polar areas. The Inuit used their knowledge and skills to hunt, fish and build the tools, shelter and other necessities to survive in a harsh environment. Inuit enjoyed a deep spirituality and a strong community organization. Profound respect for, and cooperation with the environment, animals and one another influenced their entire society.

Early contact with whalers, explorers and others from the south seemed benign, if not mutually beneficial. But over time, there were cultural clashes. Eventually, a completely foreign way of living and even thinking was forced upon the Inuit. Many of their traditions were unceremoniously trampled by outsiders convinced of their own racial and cultural superiority.

Qallunaat! Why White People Are Funny explores the ramifications of colonization using a humorous approach. Discrimination and prejudice by the "Qallunaat" are highlighted through role reversal and a mockumentary cinema style. Teachers can use the film to discuss a number of social and historical subjects such as colonialism and multiculturalism and to promote respect and understanding.

For this lesson the terms "prejudice" and "discrimination" are used in a narrow sense. Prejudice here refers to any interpretation or judgment of a person, place or thing using one's own limited experience and ignoring other perspectives. Discrimination entails the negative treatment of someone based on their age, race, culture, religion, language, gender or other factor.



Ideas for Grades 7-12

Integration into curriculum

This lesson can be incorporated into any social studies or history curriculum. It can also be integrated into areas such as Guidance and Career Education, Religious Education, Health and Family Studies.

Focus

When we treat others as equals and work to understand and accept their differences, we strengthen ourselves as individuals and as a society.

Preparing the classroom for cooperative learning

These activities work best if the classroom climate respects different opinions, so cooperative warm-up activities are recommended. Teachers may need to move desks or rearrange the room to encourage small or large group discussions. Establish ground rules for discussions such as:

- no putdowns
- no interruptions
- everyone participates in all activities in some way

★PRE-LESSON (OPTIONAL)

Teachers who feel the need to study the terms prejudice and discrimination with their class can use Worksheet 1.

- Have students complete the worksheet in class or at home.
- In class, have students share some of their definitions and discuss what the terms mean.
- Introduce the definitions found in the background information above.

★LESSON

Duration: three approximately 45-minute lessons

Teacher preparation

- While viewing the film, fill out Worksheet 2.
- After watching the film, complete Worksheet 3.
- Review the sheets marked “Instructions for Visitors” and “Instructions for Locals.”
- Plan how you will rearrange the classroom for the activities.
- Photocopy all the necessary worksheets.
- Order a DVD player/projector for the classroom.

Learning objectives

Students will:

1. Come to appreciate the challenges of encountering unfamiliar cultures.
2. Recognize problems with forcing your own values and other perspectives onto others.
3. Think about the meanings of prejudice and discrimination.
4. Identify how both Inuit and Qallunaat suffer discrimination and prejudice in the film.
5. Speculate on the possible outcomes had prejudice and discrimination against the Inuit not occurred.
6. Recognize and identify prejudice and discrimination in their environment. Discuss how things might be changed.

Activities

A. Preview activity: Unfamiliar Territory (30-45 min) [RECOMMENDED]

- Divide the class into two groups, sending one out of the room to a designated waiting area with the Visitors' Instructions. They are to read it while they wait for you.
- Distribute the Locals' Instructions sheet to the group in the room and have everyone get into position. Silently, choose an object to be negotiated.
- Go out to the Visitors group and review their instructions. Tell them what object they must negotiate for. Accompany them back to the room, checking quickly that the Locals are still in place. This begins the activity.
- After 5 to 10 minutes, stop the activity and ask each member of the Visitors to pair off with one of the Locals to discuss what happened.
- After another 10 minutes bring everyone back together for a class discussion.
- Talk about the need to approach an unfamiliar culture with an open mind to communicate successfully.
- Talk about what can go wrong when you don't approach it this way.

B. View Qallunaat! Why White People Are Funny (50 min) [RECOMMENDED]

- Distribute Worksheet 2 before starting the film, and make sure everyone understands the task.

Examples of Discrimination/Prejudice in the film

AGAINST THE INUIT

- The assumption that they knew nothing of basic human biology. Demonstrated by "The Book of Inuit Knowledge" segment.
- Names replaced with numbers for convenience of others.

AGAINST THE QALLUNAAT

- Belief that all Qallunaat smell funny.
- Assumption that all Qallunaat are bumbling and in need of rescue whenever they go out on the land.
- Names replaced with numbers for convenience of others.

C. Post-viewing Activity: Changing Things (15-30 min) [OPTIONAL]

This activity can either be done as a class discussion or as an assignment using Worksheet 3. Ask students to suggest at least one way that the Qallunaat could have treated the Inuit better. They should speculate as to how this might have made things different then and now.

D. Closing Reflections: Bringing it Home (15 min) [OPTIONAL]

Distribute Worksheet 4 to students and assign it for homework.

Suggested assessment and evaluation

- Completion of worksheets.
- Participation in large group discussions.
- Participation in class activity.
- Evaluation of worksheets, class discussions and participation to determine if learning objectives were met successfully.

Suggested resources

- Government of Nunavut Web site <www.gov.nu.ca>
- Music CD: Susan Aglukark, *Unsung Heroes*
- Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated <www.tunngavik.com>



Name: _____

Qallunaat! Worksheet 1

Defining Prejudice and Discrimination

1. In a few sentences define what each word means to you.

a) PREJUDICE

b) DISCRIMINATION

2. In a dictionary look up each word and copy the definitions you find most useful.

a) PREJUDICE

b) DISCRIMINATION

Name: _____

Qallunaat! Worksheet 2

Examples of Discrimination and Prejudice in the Film

While watching Qallunaat!, note three instances of prejudice and/or discrimination happening in the film.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Name: _____

Qallunaat! Worksheet 3

Overcoming Prejudice and Discrimination

1. Suggest one way newcomers to Canada's Far North could have treated Inuit with less prejudice or discrimination.

2. What positive effects might this have had back then and now?

Name: _____

Qallunaat! Worksheet 4

Bringing it Home

Think of a current example of discrimination or prejudice. It could be in your school, the community, your province or anywhere else in the world. What is the situation? Who is involved? Who are the victims? What are some of the effects? How might this problem be solved or improved?

Express this in whatever form you think would be most effective. You can write an essay, create a painting or drawing, compose a poem, write a song, make up a story, create a skit or play—what-

ever you prefer!

Qallunaat! Unfamiliar Territory

INSTRUCTIONS FOR “VISITORS”

Please review these instructions while waiting for your teacher.

In this exercise, you are explorers coming upon a new land (your classroom) and a new people (your classmates) you’ve never encountered before.

These people possess an object that you want. Your teacher will tell you what it is.

You do not speak or read the same language. Regardless, you must find a way to negotiate for possession of the object in the time given.

Qallunaat! Unfamiliar Territory

INSTRUCTIONS FOR “LOCALS”

Once your classmates have left the room, arrange yourselves so that all of the girls are sitting on chairs or standing, while the boys are sitting on the floor.

Imagine that you are the inhabitants of the land represented by your classroom. The other group are explorers making their way through your territory for the first time.

Your societies have never encountered each other before. You don't speak or read the same language.

They will be trying to ask you for something. They might use words, gestures, drawings or any number of ways to communicate what they want.

However, until they arrange themselves like your group, with boys on the floor and girls in chairs or standing, you will not respond to their advances at all. Do not speak or react in any way until they are arranged properly. You cannot prompt them to do this; they have to figure it out on their own without any hints!

If they do arrange themselves properly, you may then acknowledge their efforts to talk. Remember, though, that you do not understand their language, nor they yours.