

LUMAAJUQQ

Duration: 7 min 36 s



LESSON PLAN

OBJECTIVES

To help students appreciate the narrative form of a legend, based on the animated film *Lumaajuq*. To introduce students to Inuit traditions. To increase their understanding of the cultural holdings of Arctic peoples.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Students in grades 3 to 6.

SUBJECT AREAS

- ◆ First Nations
- ◆ English
- ◆ Visual Arts

DESCRIPTION

The activities in this lesson plan will awaken students to the narrative form used in Inuit folktales as well as to the spiritual nature of these tales.

START AND PREPARATORY ACTIVITY: THE CHAIN

Approximate duration: 45 minutes

STEP 1

We suggest you begin by discussing the magical and symbolic properties of animals — a key component of Inuit folklore — with your students. You can address the subject by sharing the following legend:

*In the beginning of Time,
There was no difference
Between mankind
and the animals.
All creatures inhabited
the Earth.
People could turn themselves
into animals
If they wanted to
While animals could turn into
human beings.*

Invite your students to share their thoughts on this mysterious legend, guided by the following questions:

- ◆ What did humans and animals have in common?
- ◆ How do you think people could turn themselves into animals?
- ◆ How do you think animals could turn themselves into humans?

STEP 2

After the students have had a chance to speak, offer some insights about the legend. Inform them that, according to ancient Inuit beliefs, animals were the symbolic doubles of mankind. Man and animal were inseparable. The link between them was one of transfer: by eating animals, humans gained their vital life force. Everything was intertwined and connected to a vast chain of events. Have the students reread the legend and discuss its meaning once again.

ACTIVITY: THE EYE OF THE MOON

Approximate duration: 70 minutes

STEP 1

Tell the students that they are about to see *Lumaajuq*, an Inuit animated film. The film, which is about a family under a dark spell, translates the magic of the ancient legend through its animation. Ask students to pay careful attention to the human/animal relationships in this tale.

STEP 2

Watch the first part of the film with your students, stopping just after the loon restores the boy's sight (pause during the brief fade to black immediately after the sentence, "Now you can see as well as a loon"). Ask students to speculate on what they've just seen. How did the boy regain his sight? What did the loon give him? What will he do now that the curse has been broken?

STEP 3

Resume the film and watch it right to the end. Have the children form small groups, and instruct them to write down the roles played by each character and symbolic element.

- ◆ The boy
- ◆ The loon
- ◆ The mother
- ◆ The whale oil
- ◆ The narwhal
- ◆ The sister
- ◆ The music
- ◆ The moon, at the very end

Have each team draw connections between the film's characters and symbolic elements and share their findings with the rest of the class.

RECAP: THE STRANGE MUSEUM

Approximate duration: 60 minutes

Have your students organize an exhibition of masks inspired by Inuit art and beliefs. Using magazine cutouts, cardboard and/or recycled paper, ask students to create their own masks, incorporating both human and animal features. Display the masks in the classroom, then ask each student to explain his or her creation, describing the techniques used to make it. The mask exercise can lead to more in-depth research on Inuit art to allow students to further explore its richness.

REFLECTIVE SHARING

Give the students time to comment on their activities, and above all, what they have learned about this culture. By way of conclusion, invite them to think about why it is useful — and important — to hand down folk tales or legends from generation to generation.

