



# NFB FILM

## STUDY GUIDE

### ABOVE THE TIMBERLINE

*Color or Black & White — 16 minutes  
Produced by the National Film Board of Canada, 1960.*

**Suggested Uses:** Nature Study classes in junior and senior high schools. Auditorium and curriculum enrichment.

### SYNOPSIS AND BACKGROUND

ABOVE THE TIMBERLINE explores the Alpine Tundra Zone where nature must adapt and readapt itself to meet the challenge of extremes in climate. This challenge must be met by both the animal and plant kingdoms, and only the fittest can survive. Here, specialization must be on the highest level as both kingdoms fight to survive.

### SUGGESTED METHODS OF USE

As this film offers a detailed exposition of life in the plant and animal kingdoms of the Alpine Tundra Zone, it can most profitably be used as follows:

- (a) As an introduction to plant and animal life in this zone.
- (b) To instil an understanding of the effect of geographical conditions on plants and animals, as well as to examine one of nature's most rigorous laws — the survival of the fittest.

### SUGGESTED CLASS PREPARATION

**(a) Introduction:**

The teacher should find many ways to focus the attention of the class on the Alpine Tundra Zone. Students should locate the zone in their atlases. Students should also be familiar with members of the plant and animal kingdoms shown in the film. Survival of the fittest as a law of nature could be treated at a less specialized level before treating overspecialization in the Alpine Tundra Zone.

**(b) Words Which May Cause Difficulty:**

altitude  
latitude  
lichen  
Alpine Tundra Zone  
rosette

dominants  
sedges  
staple  
corries  
dormant

self-perpetuation  
perennial  
germination  
viviparous  
vegetative spread

prostrate  
runners  
hibernate  
chamois



**(c) Directive Questions Raised in the Film:**

1. To what extent does the law of "survival of the fittest" apply to the Alpine Tundra Zone?
2. What role does specialization play in plants and animals in this zone? Give examples.

**SUGGESTED FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES**

1. Compare the degree of specialization by plants and animals in the Alpine Tundra Zone as compared with those found in more temperate climates.
2. Compare the law of "survival of the fittest", as applied in the Alpine Tundra Zone, with other geographical regions. Give examples.
3. Draw a map of the world, noting both temperate and colder zones.

**RELATED VISUAL AIDS**

**Films:**

ANGOTEE  
(NFB—32 minutes)

HIGH ARTIC—LIFE ON THE LAND  
(NFB—22 minutes)

**Filmstrips:**

ESKIMO CHILDREN ON BAFFIN ISLAND  
Parts I and II (NFB—B&W)

EXPLORATION OF ARCTIC CANADA  
(NFB—B&W)