



THE ALUTIIQ

A Companion Guide
For
Elementary and Middle School Teachers
(Grades 4–8)
By
Cecilia Mañosa, M.A.



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Front cover and page borders: by Sven Haakanson, Jr., Alutiiq Museum and
Archaeological Repository.

ACTIVITY SHEETS AND HANDOUT CREDITS

1. **“My Timeline” activity sheet.** Taken from Smith, Shelley J., Jeanne M. Moe, Kelly A. Letts, and Danielle M. Paterson. 1993. *Intrigue of the Past: A Teacher’s Activity Guide for Fourth through Seventh Grades*. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior, p. 24.
2. **“The Time of My Life” activity sheet.** Taken and adapted from Smith, Shelley J., Jeanne M. Moe, Kelly A. Letts, and Danielle M. Paterson. 1993. *Intrigue of the Past: A Teacher’s Activity Guide for Fourth through Seventh Grades*. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior, p. 25.
3. **“Origins of the Alutiiq People and their Homeland” handout.** Taken from an essay provided by the Alutiiq Community of Akhiok and the Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository for the National Museum of the American Indian’s Indigenous Geography Project.
4. **“Guidelines for Storytelling” handout.** Taken and adapted from Caduto, Michael J. and Joseph Bruchac. 1998. *Keepers of Life: Discovering Plants Through Native American Stories and Earth Activities for Children*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, pp. 11–14. www.fulcrumbooks.com
5. **Zaimka Mound Stratigraphic Section.** Taken and adapted from the Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository’s website at www.alutiiqmuseum.com.
6. **The Alutiiq Seasonal Cycle chart.** Used with permission of the Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository.
7. **“Alutiiq Elders” handout.** Taken from Crowell, Aron L., Amy F. Steffian, and Gordon L. Pullar (editors). 2001. *Looking Both Ways. Heritage and Identity of the Alutiiq People*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, p. 138; and the Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository.

EDUCATOR INFORMATION

Overview

This curriculum/study guide was prepared as an educational tool to accompany the Alutiiq Community component of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian's Internet-based **Indigenous Geography Project**. *The Alutiiq: A Companion Guide for Elementary and Middle School Teachers* will help educators in grades 4–8 teach about one modern Native Alaskan community: the Alutiiq, also referred to as the *Sugpiat* people.

A total of two lessons that explore in more depth selected topics addressed by the Alutiiq community in the Indigenous Geography Project have been developed. While preparing these lessons, we worked closely with members of the Alutiiq community to ensure relevance and accuracy of topics explored in the lessons. Also, efforts were made to reveal the interdependency of these topics and to target particular National Geography Standards and National Social Sciences Standards. These standards provide direction for helping students become geographically and historically informed and further understanding and appreciation of the complex web of relationships between people, places, and the environment through time.

What You Will Find

This Guide contains two lesson plans.

Lesson 1

Una nunagpet: This is Our Land brings together storytelling and archaeology to explore the depth and richness of Alutiiq heritage and the ancestral ties to the land the Alutiiq people have occupied over millennia. Students begin by reflecting on their own stories through an art-work exercise and then move into the Native American experience of storytelling when they listen to the “Origins of the Alutiiq and their Homeland,” a story told by an Alutiiq history keeper (*kas’aq*). Archaeology is closely intertwined with indigenous heritage movements, including the Alutiiq’s. Students begin by constructing a timeline representing events in their lives. Then they study the layers of Zaimka Mound, an ancient Alutiiq settlement on Kodiak Island, studied by the Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository, to understand the importance of artifacts, context, and chronology to reconstructing the Alutiiq past. They compare and contrast the stratigraphic section of Zaimka Mound with their own timeline. The lesson concludes with a reflection and discussion about the importance of sites in studying the past.

Lesson 2

Súgucihpet: Our Way of Living introduces students to the three main ecosystems found in Alutiiq territory and the flora and fauna that for generations have allowed the Alutiiq way of life to thrive. Through games, engaging class discussions, and the study of the Cycle of Life Chart of one Alutiiq community, students learn how closely intertwined the seasons are with Alutiiq subsistence practices. Then the students write a short essay comparing and contrasting the Alutiiq way of life with their own. The lesson concludes with the reading of personal accounts from two Alutiiq elders expressing their fears and concerns about the effects of the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill in their villages. This story encourages students to further investigate and reflect on the environmental consequences of this tragedy.

What's in Each Lesson

Each lesson consists of fourteen sections. **Lesson Objectives** highlights what the lesson is designed to achieve. **Estimated Time** provides an average estimate of lesson length. **Materials Required** lists the materials that will be needed to carry out the lesson. **Connections to the Curriculum** lists what curriculum areas the lesson touches on, for example, social sciences, geography, history, language arts, and/or language. **Connections to the National Geography Standards** lists what standards the lesson explores. **Connections to Students' Geographic Skills** describes what kinds of abilities students will acquire or develop further as a result of doing the lesson. **Connections to the National Social Sciences Standards** points out what strands this lesson examines. **Vocabulary** words are underlined in the background information and defined in the vocabulary portion of each lesson section. Words from the Alutiiq language are in *italics*. **Background** provides information that enhances understanding of the lesson topic and may be reproduced for classroom use, if needed. **Setting the Stage** serves as an icebreaker to introduce students to different themes. **Procedure** describes the different steps teachers need to follow to carry out the lesson successfully. The **Student Assessment** activities allow students to integrate what they have learned and communicate it to others. They also provide educators with ways to evaluate students' understandings of the topic. **Extension** suggests ways students can explore a similar topic in their own community. Finally, **Sources Consulted For Content** points out what bibliographical references were used to develop the lesson content.

How You Can Help

Let us hear from you. Email your comments to NMAI-IndGeog@si.edu.

Indigenous Geography Website:

www.IndigenousGeography.si.edu

LESSON 1

UNA NUNAGPET THIS IS OUR LAND

GRADE LEVEL: 4-8

“As we learn more about our past, however, we have come to respect and embrace our heritage, which has kept our culture alive and continues to guide us.”

— Sven Haakanson, Jr., 2002

Lesson Objectives

At the completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Introduce students to the depth and breadth of Alutiiq culture by bringing together knowledge generated by archaeology and oral history.
- Investigate the importance of artifacts, context, and chronology to gain a more complete picture of the past and the value of preserving archaeological sites.
- Compare and contrast the students’ timelines with the chronology of a stratified archaeological site.

Estimated Time

Two to three sessions of 45 minutes each

Materials Required

- “Origins of the Alutiiq People and Their Homeland” handout
- “Guidelines for Storytelling” handout
- Six strips of colored paper, scissors, glue
- “My Timeline” activity sheet
- The “Zaimka Mound Stratigraphic Section” handout
- “The Time of My Life” activity sheet

Connections to Curriculum Areas

- Social Studies
- Language Arts

Connections to the National Social Sciences Standards

Strand I: Culture. Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

Strand II: Time, Continuity, and Change. Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ways human beings view themselves in and over time.

Vocabulary

kas'aq In the past, each village had a wise man, an expert in Alutiiq history, someone who spent his life keeping the knowledge of the Alutiiq people. It was his responsibility to preserve traditional wisdom and pass it forward. While there are many knowledgeable Elders, there are no *kas'at* today.

Sugpiaq Meaning “real people,” is one name used by Alutiiqs for self reference.

Alutiiq Singular of *Alutiit*, it is another name used for self reference used today.

Archaeology A subdivision of Anthropology, archaeology is a social science dedicated to the study of human culture. Archaeology is the scientific study of human lifeways based on the analysis of material remains (artifacts and sites) that people left behind.

Chronology An arrangement of events in the order in which they occurred.

Stratigraphy The layering of deposits in archaeological sites. Cultural remains and natural sediments become buried over time. Usually the layer on the bottom is the oldest; the layer on top is the youngest.

Context The relationship artifacts have to each other and the situation in which they are found.

Timeline A visual representation of events in chronological order.

Background: Connecting with Alutiiq Heritage

There are multiple ways of learning about Alutiiq heritage. Storytelling (stories passed from generation to generation through the oral form), analysis of historic documents and objects (e.g., photographs, diaries, trade records, objects and artifacts in museums), interviews with Alutiiq people today, and archaeology all provide a wealth of complementary sources to learn about Alutiiq heritage.

In this lesson, students will have the opportunity to examine the contributions of two of these sources: storytelling and archaeology to learn about the Alutiiq people. In *Looking Both Ways: Heritage and Identity of the Alutiiq People*,

Amy F. Steffian, deputy director of the Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository, talks about the importance of stories for the Alutiiq and their concept of time. In her own words: “Westerners tend to think of time as linear. ... Gordon Pullar suggests that time is circular and more fluid for the *Alutiit*. From this perspective, the past is part of the present and events from distant times continue to inform daily life and shape the future. Ancestors remain a central part of contemporary society through their connections to families and through the stories, legends, songs, dances, artwork, and artifacts they have bestowed to the circle of time. Alutiiq stories and legends are links to ancestors and past events. ... Oral narratives remain an important way of sharing history, values, and cultural meanings. Through stories Elders provide younger generations with a sense of heritage and connection to previous generations” (Steffian 2001:100).

Archaeological research on Kodiak, the Alaska Peninsula, and Prince William Sound offer another window into the Alutiiq’s deep and rich history. The archaeological record shows that Native peoples have lived on this archipelago for at least 7,500 years. Archaeologists have located more than 3,000 sites in the Alutiiq homeland including camps, stone weirs to trap fish, and rock art, as well as the remains of houses, tents, hearths and storage pits. Also bone, ivory, shell, and antler tools, wooden artifacts and plant remains have survived in the ground for thousands of years, giving the Alutiiq people the opportunity to learn more about the lifeways of their ancestors. Changes in the styles of artifacts and the location in the soil where they rest illustrate different uses of the site over time.

Chronology

The proper sequence of events must be known when trying to understand the past. “The proper sequence” means that events are arranged in the order of occurrence, establishing a *chronology*. One way to display events visually in chronological order is with a *timeline*. A timeline is divided into equal time segments (month, year, or century, for example), with one end representing the oldest events and the other end the most recent events.

Chronology is something we use everyday. When somebody tells us a story or when we watch a news report, it only makes sense if we can understand the story as it happened. Archaeologists always try to establish the age of the sites, artifacts, or events they are studying so that they can place them in chronological order. Furthermore, they rely on the objects that people made (artifacts) and where they left them (context) to learn the story of past peoples. Each piece of information contributes some understanding to the overall story of the past, but only if the information can be placed in chronological order.

Artifacts and other evidence of the past are often buried. Sites become buried by the deposition of small-grained particles (e.g., sand, clay, silt) through the action of wind, gravity, and water. When archaeologists excavate a site, they record the location of what they find, so that chronological order can be established. Objects discovered at the bottom are the oldest, while those near the surface are the youngest.

When looters and artifact seekers dig in a site, they often remove objects that can help place the site in time. This makes it harder for archaeologists to learn the site's chronological placement. Looters also mix the stratigraphic layers together, making it difficult to place archaeological events in order. Looting is like destroying the pages of a history book; it tears apart information from the past.

Everyone can help stop this problem by actively protecting and preserving sites, by working under the guidance of a professional archaeologist, by leaving any artifact you find in place and reporting it to an archaeologist, by refusing to buy artifacts from people who dig and destroy sites, and by reporting people they see digging to law enforcement officials.

Community Archaeology at Zaimka Mound: Layers of History

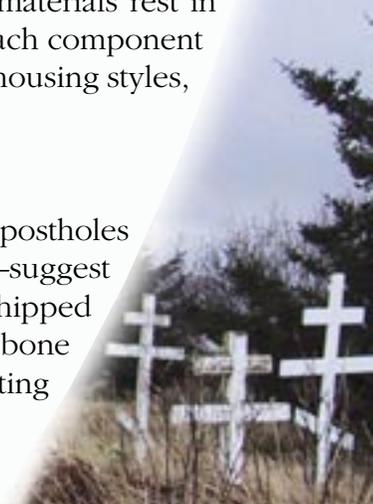
Now let's look more closely at Zaimka Mound, an ancient settlement near the city of Kodiak on Kodiak Island, Alaska, to better understand the importance of artifacts, context, and chronology and how the information gleaned from this site is helping to fill in some gaps in the Alutiiq past. Through a program known as Community Archaeology, professional archaeologists and volunteers from Kodiak's Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository work together to salvage information from threatened sites and to answer questions about Alutiiq history.

Zaimka Mound, a mound of debris about forty-five meters [148 feet] wide, eighty meters [262 feet] long and five meters [16 feet] tall, holds many clues about Kodiak's ancient past. At this site, archaeologists have found the cultural remains of a time period that was poorly known in Kodiak prehistory, the Early Kachemak Tradition (2,800-4,000 years old). Until recently, researchers believed that the Early Kachemak was an era of sparse population. Investigations at Zaimka Mound showed that Kodiak residents began to focus more intensively on harvesting and storing of fish during this period. The heavy reliance on salmon that characterizes Alutiiq society today has its roots 4,000 years ago.

Zaimka Mound has many layers of cultural debris that span 7,300 years. Archaeologists have found the remains of houses, hearths, stone tent rings, storage pits, and different stone tools used to harvest raw materials, food, and shelter. The styles of these materials rest in different types of soil which investigators have grouped into components. Each component is like a chapter in a book which tells a different story illustrating changes in housing styles, technologies and subsistence activities over 4,000 years of Alutiiq history.

Components 4&5: First Residents of Kodiak, 7,300 years ago

The first residents of Kodiak led a hunting and fishing way of life. A cluster of postholes and a layer of red ochre—a mineral that may have been used to tan hides—suggest that a fire may have burned next to a tent. Archaeologists have found chipped stone tools, known as microblades, which were used to line the edges of bone hunting lances. They also found a 7,300 year old sandstone oil lamp indicating that Zaimka's occupants burned seal oil for light.



Component 3: Hunting Communities, 6,300-5,000 years ago

Hearths surrounded by rings of stacked stones or clusters of postholes represent the remains of tents. The small size of the tent suggests that households consisted of nuclear family groups. The parents and children would have slept around the hearth to stay warm. Archaeologists also found evidence of hunting. The recovery of chipped stone points around the tents illustrates that these tools were used to pursue sea mammals as well as for cutting and scraping tools used to process the catch.

Component 2: First Houses, 4,500-5,000 years ago

Around 5,000 years ago, Zaimka’s occupants began to build sod houses, structures dug into the ground with a post and beam framework that supported a sod-covered roof, and to settle more permanently. A slate-lined hearth in this house provided heat and light. Hunting continued to be an important activity and residents developed a new weapon—long slate lances used for killing sea mammals.

Component 1: Fishing Communities, 4,000-3,400 years ago

The last residents were fishermen as noted by the appearance of two types of stone sinkers: plummets and notched cobbles. These tools were likely used to pursue cod and halibut and perhaps salmon in area streams. To process these fish, residents used another new type of tool: the *ulu* knife, as well as flakes of stone struck from beach cobbles. Pits indicate that the catch was dried for storage with the aid of fire and/or heated rocks.

Part A: *Quli’anguiciiqaken* “I will tell you a story”

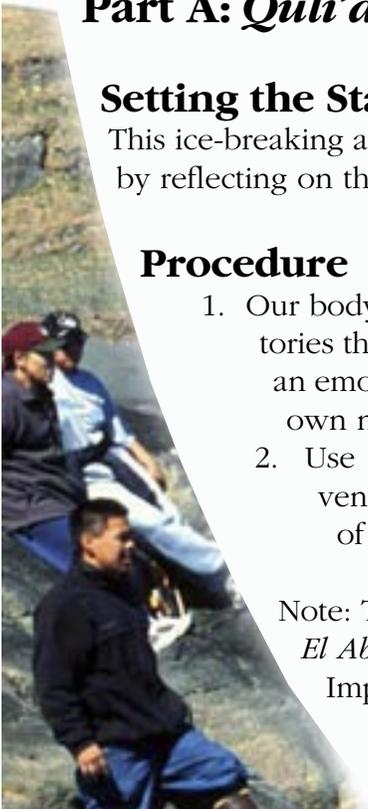
Setting the Stage

This ice-breaking activity provides students the opportunity to explore the importance of stories by reflecting on their own stories.

Procedure

1. Our body is a big map. Have students draw their silhouettes as if they were the territories through which they travel, remember, and live. Each corner of their bodies has an emotion, which helps them create their own individual spaces, a world with their own names and those they recover in the act of remembering their ancestors.
2. Use this exercise to reflect on the importance of remembering stories and as a venue to learn about themselves. You can display their silhouettes on the walls of the classroom to reflect back on the stories narrated on their bodies.

Note: This activity was taken from Borrero, María Isabel and Gloria Bejarano. 2004. *El Abuelo de Mi Abuela. Hace Cien Años Era Un Niño*. Carvajal, S.A., Colombia: Imprelibros, p.76.



3. Then write the following quote on the board: **“If we don’t remember who we are as people, we lose our pride, our dignity, our self-respect, our self-esteem, our morals and all our family values...”** Linda Amodo, Akhiok Resident, 2002. Have students reflect on the meaning and message of this quote and connect this to the importance of learning about one’s heritage.
4. Have students sit in a circle and tell them an Alutiiq *kas’aq* story recorded by a Russian fur trader in the 1800s, the “Origins of the Alutiiq People and Their Homeland.” Follow the “Guidelines for Storytelling” handout to engage students actively in the Native American storytelling experience.
5. Ask students to listen for the different elements of the story (e.g., raven, how the different parts of the man and woman and their children created the landscape).
6. Tell students that stories like this one have kept the Alutiiq worldview alive until now. By bringing in other ways of knowing, Alutiiqs are broadening the depth and richness of their heritage. Archaeological research plays a fundamental role in helping the Alutiiq revitalize their cultural traditions and restore a sense of dignity and pride to their people.

Part B: Digging into History:

Community Archaeology Reveals Deep History

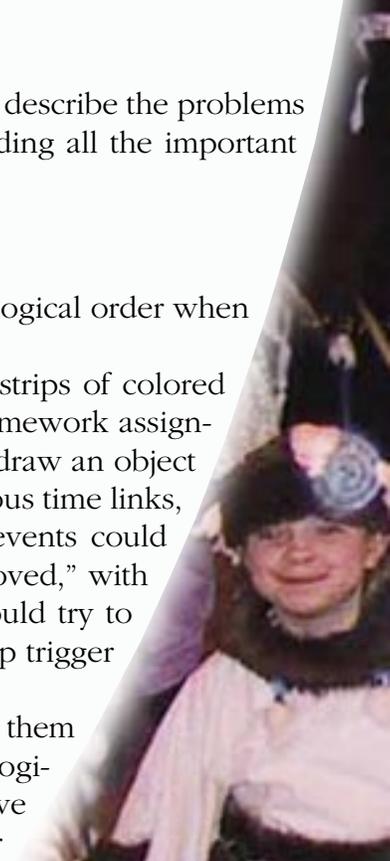
(Adapted from “Lesson 5: Chronology: The Time of My Life” in *Intrigue of the Past: A Teacher’s Activity Guide for Fourth through Seventh Grades*)

Setting the Stage

Tell a familiar story out of sequence leaving some parts out. Ask students to describe the problems with the story. Why is it important to relate sequential information, including all the important details?

Procedure

1. Define chronology and explain the necessity of establishing chronological order when studying the past.
2. Have students list six events in their lives, one on each of the six strips of colored paper. (Note: It may be helpful to have the students do this as a homework assignment with parental assistance.) Next to each event, ask students to draw an object that might symbolize that event. These events should not have obvious time links, such as “my eighth birthday party,” or “I started 4th grade.” The events could be things like “my sister was born,” with a rattle, or “the family moved,” with a moving van, or “we went on vacation” with a tent. Students should try to include events from their entire lives and if possible, events that help trigger ties with their ancestors (e.g., a special celebration).
3. Divide the class into pairs. Have them shuffle their strips and exchange them with their partner, who tries to lay the strips out in correct chronological order with the most recent at the top. The two students who have exchanged strips then tell each other their best guess of the proper

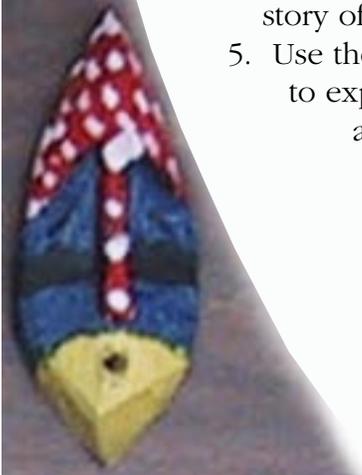


chronological order. The strips are then returned to their owners. This is usually a humorous experience for students.

4. Lead the class in discussion: Were students able to reconstruct the timeline correctly? Why or why not? It is difficult, sometimes impossible, to reconstruct a story if the order of events is not known.
5. Have students randomly remove two events from their personal timelines. Ask students if the chronological order would have been more difficult to reconstruct and if the story of their classmate would have been as complete if there were even fewer strips. Connect this activity to archaeological sites by stressing how archaeological information is usually impossible to place in chronological order if looters have destroyed a site (like mixing up the event strips) or if people have removed artifacts (equivalent to removing some of the event strips).
6. Distribute the “My Timeline” activity sheet (which forms the backing for their timeline). Students glue their own strips in chronological order, beginning with the most recent event at the top. They can write the year of the event (or they can number the events one through six) in the column to the left of their strips.

Closure

1. Distribute a copy of the “Zaimka Mound Stratigraphic Section” handout to each student. Have them lay their timelines next to it.
2. Use a drawing on the chalkboard, different colors of construction paper layered on top of each other, books of different color and thickness stacked together, or any other visual model, to demonstrate stratigraphy.
3. Using the artifacts (with dates) found in each layer, have students tell the story of the Zaimka Mound for each layer.
4. Using the “Zaimka Mound Stratigraphic Section” handout, erase or cross out one artifact for each layer and have students retell the story of the Zaimka Mound with the objects removed. Have students compare both stories (that is, the story told with all the objects and the story told with the missing artifacts) and discuss the effects of illegal digging on archaeological sites and its effect on reconstructing Alutiiq history. (Note: Students should conclude that if sites are vandalized and looted, we may never learn the full story of what happened at Zaimka Mound in Kodiak Island.)
5. Use the “Zaimka Mound Stratigraphic Section” handout and the students’ timelines to explore the following questions as a class:
 - a. In what ways is your chronology similar to an archaeological stratigraphic section? In what ways is it different?
 - b. Imagine that you cannot remember significant events in your life. How would that change the history of your life?
 - c. In what ways is a hole dug by looters in an archaeological site similar to a loss of significant events in your life?
 - d. In summary, what might you say to a looter about the importance of leaving sites undisturbed, as it relates to the importance of stratigraphy?



Suggested Student Assessment

Have students complete “The Time of My Life” activity sheet or use it for discussion. Alternatively, ask students to present an extemporaneous persuasive speech that defines chronology as used by archaeologists and explain the importance of intact sites.

“The Time of My life” Activity Sheet Answers:

- Students should express regret or a feeling of being upset. For someone to wantonly destroy the only evidence of another’s life indicates that they have little respect for the meaning of that person’s life.
- By extension of the previous question, students should link their feelings about destruction of their timelines to the destruction of evidence of past peoples’ lives.

Extending the Lesson

Because cultures view time in different ways, the teacher can have students compare and contrast the Alutiiq concept of time with their own. Students can repeat step 2 and arrange their strips of color according to the Alutiiq circular concept of time. Discuss differences and similarities between these two perspectives.

Sources Consulted for Content

Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository website: www.alutiiqmuseum.com

Crowell, Aron L., Amy F. Steffian, and Gordon L. Pullar (editors). 2001. *Looking Both Ways. Heritage and Identity of the Alutiiq People*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press.

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Mañosa, Cecilia. 2001. *History in Your Own Backyard. A Companion Guide for Elementary and Middle School Teachers*. Report No.59. Kentucky: Kentucky Archaeological Survey.

Smith, Shelley J., Jeanne M. Moe, Kelly A. Letts, and Danielle M. Paterson, “Lesson 5: Chronology: The Time of My Life” in *Intrigue of the Past. A Teacher’s Activity Guide for Fourth through Seventh Grades*. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Land Management, United States Department of the Interior, pp. 22–26.

LESSON 2

SÚGUCIHPET

OUR WAY OF LIVING

GRADE LEVEL: 4-8

Lesson Objectives

At the completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Observe and infer the characteristics of different ecosystems in the Alutiiq homeland
- Explore how the flora and fauna of Alaska provide the Alutiiq with the resources they need to live on the land and how humans and nature are linked and interdependent
- Examine the effects of an environmental disaster and its impact on the Alutiiq way of life

Estimated Time

Two to three sessions of 45 minutes each

Materials Required

- Map of Alaska
- “Where the Animals Come From” handout
- Our Way of Living Game:
 - * 4-5 sets of laminated images illustrating the land, the sea and the river ecosystems of Alaska. See “Alutiiq Ecosystems” handout.
 - * 4-5 bags containing images of different flora and fauna that live in these different ecosystems. See “Alutiiq Flora and Fauna” handout.
- “The Cycle of Life Chart” handout
- “Sun Rise Game”
- “Alutiiq Elders” handout

Connections to Curriculum Areas

- Geography
- Social Sciences



Connections to the National Geography Standards

Standard #8: The characteristics and spatial distribution of ecosystems on Earth's surface

Standard #14: How human actions modify the physical environment

Standard #15: How physical systems affect human systems

Standard #16: The changes that occur in the meaning, use distribution, and importance of resources

Connections to Students' Geographic Skills

- Describe ecosystems and differences about them.
- Identify the flora and fauna of an ecosystem and tell how they are linked and interdependent.
- Identify changes over time in the ecosystem in or near the student's own community resulting from human intervention.
- Explain ways that humans interact differently with ecosystems in different regions of the world.
- Explain how environmental changes made in one place affect other places.

Connections to the National Social Sciences Standards

Strand I: Culture. Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

Strand II: Time, Continuity, and Change. Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ways human beings view themselves in and over time.

Strand III: People, Places, and Environments. Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments.

Vocabulary

Ecosystem A collection of living things and the environment in which they live.

Background

Fishing, hunting, and collecting plants, eggs, and shellfish contribute a variety of resources to the diet of the Alutiiq today. People harvest these resources during different times of the year in accordance with rituals, ceremonies, and rules of behavior, which are practiced to show respect towards the animals and the land. For the Alutiiq, "The world will provide for us if we treat it well. The animals will give themselves to us if we use their gifts carefully, if we are not greedy or wasteful." (Living World essay)

The Alutiiq territory is a land of plenty. Like their ancestors, contemporary Alutiiq people continue to rely on many of the animals and plants consumed in the past. Subsistence harvesting is both culturally and economically important, especially in a territory that is served by few roads and stores, making bought foods very expensive. From the seashore, the Alutiiq gather a variety of shellfish, including clams and cockles, blue mussels and sea urchins, chitons and limpets, as well as seaweed and octopus. The cliffs and islands offer a wealth of sea birds such as puffins, seagulls, and cormorants which provide feathers and eggs. In the open sea, the Alutiiq fish for cod,



halibut, herring, salmon and also hunt for seals and sea lions. In the rivers, the Alutiiq hunt for ducks and harvest different types of salmon. Land animals are particularly important in the economies of Alutiiq communities. Depending on location, moose, caribou, grizzly and black bears, mountain goats, elk, and deer as well as snowshoe hare, marmot, marten, and mink are hunted or trapped for their food and furs. Plants found in forests, tundra, beaches and mountains also contribute raw materials, fuel, food, and medicines for the Alutiiq. Wood is used for fuel, construction and carving. Wild greens, berries, roots, and seaweed provide vital nutrients and seasonings for fish and game. Spruce root, grasses and birch bark provide raw materials for basket making, natural dyes and pigments. Plants are also the source of traditional medicines. Healers use herbal remedies to treat scrapes, swellings, fever, arthritis, and respiratory problems. Today, garden crops such as rhubarb, potatoes, turnips, carrots and raspberries are grown to supplement the diet.

In 1989, however, the Alutiiq livelihood became seriously compromised after the Exxon Valdez oil spill, which caused great destruction in Alaska. At least eleven million gallons [41.6 million liters] of oil were spilled, impacting approximately 1,300 miles [2,090 kilometers] of shoreline and causing the death of thousands of birds, sea otters, and harbor seals, several killer whales, and billions of salmon and herring eggs. Of thirty studied species that were affected by the spill, only seven have recovered to their pre-spill abundances. The oil spread westward on ocean currents to affect almost every Alutiiq village on the Gulf of Alaska coast. Prince William Sound was one of the most affected areas and still today, oil residues can be found along the beaches. Seals and herring populations, for example, continue to be scarce. In the less damaged areas of Kodiak, the Alaska Peninsula, and Cook Inlet, most Alutiiq communities have now fully resumed their consumption of wild foods.

Setting the Stage

This exercise is an icebreaker to explore students' preconceived ideas about Alaska and its native peoples. At the end of the lesson, the teacher may want to refer back to this exercise to check whether students' initial ideas were right or wrong.

- Show map of Alaska and ask students to infer the climate, geography, and the fauna and flora of Alaska.
- Discuss with students the concept of ecosystem and the different ecosystems found in Alaska (e.g., tundra, forest, mountain, coastal, riverine).
- Then have students close their eyes and picture what kind of life native peoples may lead on this land.
 - Elicit students' ideas and images and write them on the board.
 - As a follow up, have students sit in a circle and read "Where the Animals Come From" story. Draw students' attention to the close interdependence that exists between humans and animals in the Alutiiq worldview.

Procedure

Part A: *Our Way of Living Game*

- Divide the class into groups of four and give each group a set of four laminated pictures illustrating the sea, land and river ecosystems found in Alutiiq territory. (See “Alutiiq Ecosystems” handout.)
- Then give each group a bag containing pictures of the flora and fauna found in these ecosystems. (Note: The teacher may want to cut the images of the “Alutiiq Flora and Fauna” handout prior to class.)
- Tell students they will play a game to learn about the Alutiiq way of living. Their task is to infer which animals and plants live in these different ecosystems.
- Elicit students’ responses and keep a record of their correct answers.

[Answers to Game: *Land Ecosystem*: mountain goat, marmot, caribou, grizzly/ black bear, moose, porcupine, snowshoe hare, medicinal plants, roots, berries, wild greens, snails, spruce root, grasses, birch bark, wood. *Sea Ecosystem*: harbor seal, sea lion, whale, salmon, herring, halibut, cod, clams, sea urchins, chitons, octopus, seaweed, seabirds. *River Ecosystem*: ducks, salmon.]

Note: The teacher may want to glue a small magnet behind each land, sea, and river ecosystem image and do the same for each flora and fauna images of his/her own set. When a student responds, s/he can put the image of the flora and fauna next to the appropriate ecosystem. This will aid the display of students’ answers and encourage a more lively class discussion.

Part B

- Write the following categories on the board:
FOOD FUEL RAW MATERIALS MEDICINE
- Have students examine their bags containing images of the flora and fauna found in Alutiiq land to decide how the Alutiiq use these various resources to meet their everyday needs.
[Answers: *Food*: harbor seal, sea lion, whale, mountain goat, snails, salmon, marmot, caribou, grizzly/black bear, moose, porcupine, snowshoe hare, herring, halibut, cod, clams, sea urchins, chitons, octopus, wild greens, berries, roots, sea weed, seabirds (eggs). *Fuel*: wood. *Raw Materials*: wood, spruce root, grasses and birch bark (used for basket making, natural dyes, and pigments), seabirds, eagle, ducks (feathers). *Medicine*: plants.]
- Elicit students’ responses and take this opportunity to expand students’ knowledge on how these animals and plants are used by the Alutiiq today. For additional information, check the National Museum of the American Indian’s Indigenous Geography website: www.indigenougeography.si.edu and *Looking Both Ways: Heritage and Identity of the Alutiiq People* (2001) by Aron L. Crowell, Amy Steffian, and Gordon L. Pullar.

Part C: *Entangle the Sun Game and the Cycle of Life*

- Tell students that the changing of the seasons marked the rhythm of Alutiiq life. In some Alutiiq communities, children marked the first days of winter by making string figures. String games were intended to entangle the

sun, slowing its seasonal disappearance. In late winter, Alutiiq children played with a sunrise toy. This hand-held game featured a bead tied to a string stretched between two wooden handles. By making the bead jump, children encouraged the sun to return quickly. Spinning tops hastened the return of the sun.

Ùmayuwitstaq—The Sunrise Game

To speed the arrival of spring, Alutiiq children played a sunrise game using a long length of string, a bead, and a small stick. They tied the string to a nail in a wall, threaded a bead on to the string, and then tied a small stick at the bottom of the string to keep the bead from slipping off. Then, holding the string taut, they jerked it to make the bead run up. This trick required practice.

- Give out the “Cycle of Life Chart” representing the annual subsistence cycle in Alutiiq villages to each group of four students. Have students examine the chart and identify the different harvest activities that take place during the different seasons: summer, fall, winter, and spring.
- Elicit students’ responses.

Suggested Student Assessment

Have students write a short essay comparing and contrasting the Alutiiq way of life with their own.

Extending the Lesson: When the Balance of Nature is Broken

- Tell students that in 1989 a terrible environmental accident occurred off the coast of Alaska. The *Exxon Valdez* oil ship spilled millions of gallons of oil, destroying the habitat and lives of numerous sea species and affecting the livelihood of many Native and non-Native communities that depend on marine resources.
- Have students read the personal account of Ed Gregoriouff, an Elder from Prince William Sound in Alaska, and Nick Alokli, and Elder from Akhiok, describing their own fears and concerns on the effects of the oil spill in their villages. Have students reflect on the impact of this environmental disaster and elicit students’ thoughts.
- Then have students do research to obtain additional information about the damage caused by the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill.
- Have students write a skit comparing and contrasting the students’ own points of view and other peoples’ perceptions of this environmental tragedy that continues to impact Alaska today.

Sources Consulted for Content

Crowell Aron L., Amy F. Steffian, and Gordon L. Pullar (editors). 2001. *Looking Both Ways. Heritage and Identity of the Alutiiq People*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press.

Essays provided by the Alutiiq Community of Akhiok and the Alutiiq Museum for the National Museum of the American Indian’s Indigenous Geography Project.

Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council web page: www.evostc.state.ak.us

ORIGINS OF THE ALUTIIQ AND THEIR HOMELAND

***Kas'aq* story told to Russian trader Uri Lisianski in 1805**

Excerpted from the Origins Essay

Akiok Community

National Museum of the American Indian's Indigenous Geography Project

...A raven, he said, brought the light from heaven, while a bladder descended at the same time, in which a man and a woman were enclosed. At first, this pair of human beings enlarged their dungeon by blowing and afterward by stretching their hands and feet; and it was thus mountains were constructed. The man, by scattering the hair of his head on the mountains created trees and forests, in which wild beasts sprung up and increased; while the woman, by making water, produced seas and by spitting into ditches and holes formed rivers and lakes. The woman, pulling out one of her teeth, gave it to the man, who made a knife of it; and, cutting trees with the knife, threw the chips into the river, which were changed into fish of different kinds. At last this human pair had children and while their first-born, a son, was playing with a stone, the stone all of a sudden was converted into an island. On this island, which was the island of Cadiak, a man and a she-dog were then placed; and it was set afloat on the ocean, and arrived at its present situation. The man and the she-dog multiplied, and the present generation is their descendants.

GUIDELINES FOR STORYTELLING

Telling the Story

1. Read the story aloud to yourself several times before you try to read it to the students or tell it from memory. Remember to let the story become a part of you.
2. Once you have achieved this, you may wish to “bring your telling to life” with descriptions of the things you see as you tell the story aloud. Avoid, however, changing the ending or the overall story.
3. Be sure to look up the meaning of any unfamiliar words before you share the story with students.
4. To help you recall the story, you may want to carry some items that can act as mnemonic devices. For example, you and your students can make a storyteller’s bag by gathering things from the natural world. Feathers, stones, nuts, small carvings—anything that can be jostled around in a bag without breaking can be a part of your collection. Read the story carefully and then use your imagination to select what items should be chosen to be in the storyteller’s bag.
5. Then have a student in the audience pull an item out of the bag and tell him/her to show it to the whole class. This mnemonic device will mark the beginning of the story. This process also transforms the storytelling into a shared experience by bringing the student into the act of initiating the story.

The Setting of the Story

1. In many American Indian cultures, everyone was allowed to have a say and people listened with patience. People would sit in a circle during the time of storytelling, because in a circle no person is at the head. They are all equal.
2. Pay close attention to the setting in which you read or tell a story. A quiet place where people can sit comfortably is the best choice.
3. Be sure that you’re comfortable as you tell the story.

Speaking the Story

1. Breathing is one of the most important things for a storyteller. Your voice will be stronger, project farther and sound better when it comes from your tummy.
2. Resonance helps your speaking voice. Try humming as an exercise to develop your natural resonance.
3. Be careful not to let your voice trail away, especially on significant words.

4. Pace is important in telling a story. Avoid speaking either too fast or too slow.
5. You may want to use any of a number of formulaic beginnings and endings of different American Indian people use when telling stories. For example, a story may begin with the words: “Here my story camps,” “Would you like to hear a story?” and close the story with the words “That is the end” or “Then I left.”

Engaging the Listeners

Here are ways to bring the listeners into the story:

1. Use response words. For example, tell the listener that whenever you say “Ho?”, they are to respond with “Hey.” This will help you know that the listeners are still awake and listening. It also will help you pace elements in the story or make listeners feel themselves entering the story.
2. Make eye contact with all the children.
3. If there is singing, chanting, movement or hand clapping in your story, teach it to the children before the story begins. Then at the appropriate time in the story, have everyone join in.
4. While reading the stories, have the students:
 - assume a comfortable position
 - close their eyes
 - relax
 - take a few slow deep breaths
 - clear their minds to make them more receptive to the images conjured up.
5. Incorporate sounds into the story, such as music, a drumbeat or sound effects to enhance the experience. Use different voices to be dramatic!

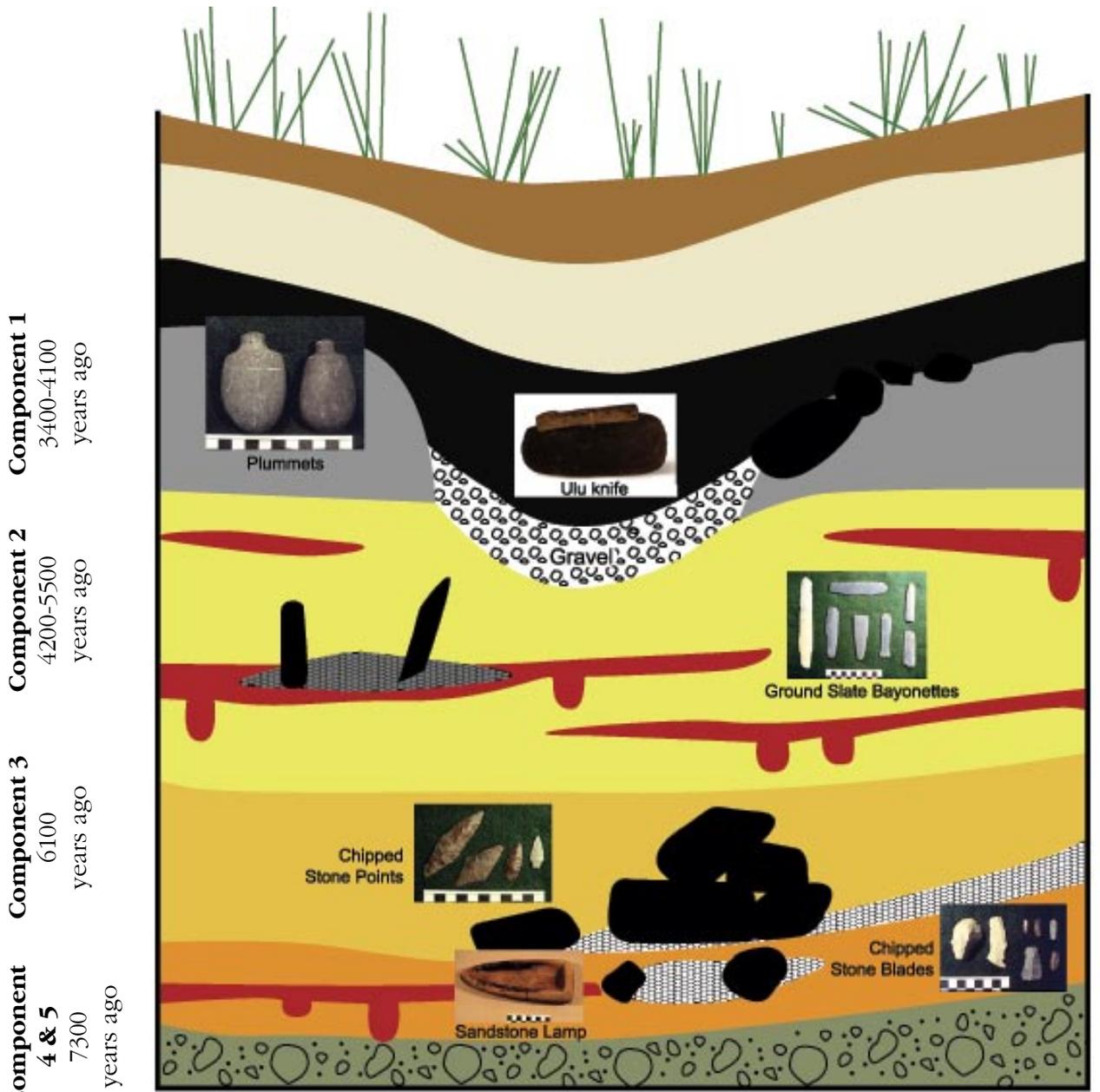
Taken and adapted from Caduto, Michael J. and Joseph Bruchac. 1998. *Keepers of Life: Discovering Plants Through Native American Stories and Earth Activities for Children*. Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, pp. 11–14. www.fulcrumbooks.com

MY TIMELINE

My Timeline

Name:

ZAIMKA MOUND STRATIGRAPHIC SECTION



Component 1
3400-4100
years ago

Component 2
4200-5500
years ago

Component 3
6100
years ago

Component 4 & 5
7300
years ago

- Grass
- Modern Soil
- Katmai Ash (1912)
- Volcanic Ashes
- Ancient Organic Soil
- Glacial Deposits
- Post Hole
- Slate Hearth
- Stack of Stones
- Ochre
- Charcoal Deposit
- Ancient Organic Soil

redrawn by Lina González

WHERE THE ANIMALS COME FROM

Excerpted from the Origins Essay
Alutiiq Community

National Museum of the American Indian's Indigenous Geography website

According to a legend recorded by an anthropologist, our animals came from the body of a young woman. One day she lay down and gave birth to all the creatures of the sea and land. As she delivered, her two uncles threw the animals into the water or onto the land – wherever they were meant to go. The woman was married to a star, a spirit man from the sky world, who told her that they would have to kill some their animal children to feed themselves.

Some of the animals made their way to Kodiak. Akhiok Elders say that the *urriitat*, that we pick off the rocks at low tide, are mice that tried to swim to Kodiak but were transformed into chitons. Elder Phyllis Peterson reminds us, that wherever the animals came from, bears (*taquka'aq*) are very different. They were once people.

“... My grandpa used to tell me ... people run away a long time ago. They wanted to be a bears. And they turned out to be ... bears. The bears, you talk to the bears, they'll understand you.”

– Phyllis Peterson, Akhiok Elder
Alutiiq Museum Archives, 2004

That's why we don't talk about those animals – they are always listening. They know what you are thinking.

ALUTHIQ ECOSYSTEMS



Top Alitak Bay, as seen from the Native Village of Akhiok. Photo by Amy Van Allen

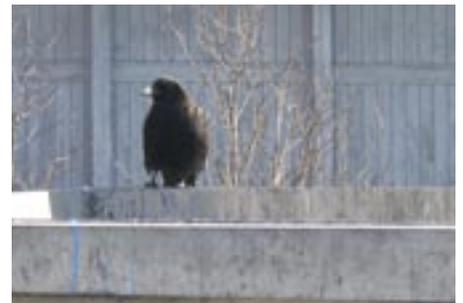
Lower left Mountains on the flight to Kodiak Island. Photo by Athena LaTocha.

Lower right Arctic tundra on the southern tip of Kodiak Island. Photo by Amy Van Allen

ALUTIIQ FLORA AND FAUNA



ALUTIIQ FLORA AND FAUNA



ALUTIIQ FLORA AND FAUNA

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Weaver Arlene Skinner displays beach rye grass collected and dried for use in weaving. Photo courtesy the Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository Archives

Jake Charliaga hold an octopus harvested from a beach near Old Harbor. Photo by Sven Haakanson, Jr.

A sea anemone from the waters along Cape Alitak on Kodiak Island. Photo by Athena LaTocha

A brown bear sow digs for clams in Halo Bay, mimicked by her three playful cubs. Photo by Patrick Saltonstall

Salmon being prepared for cooking. Photo by Athena LaTocha

Glaucous-winged gulls nesting on a rocky outcrop. Photo by Sven Haakanson, Jr.

Elder Clyda Christiansen of Larsen Bay holds a collection of beach chickweed. Photo by Patricia Russell (Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository Archives)

Lichen on the rocks along Cape Alitak on Kodiak Island. Photo by Athena LaTocha

Wild sweet peas. Photo by Athena LaTocha

Rolf Christiansen cuts red cedar for making Alutiiq paddles. Photo by Athena LaTocha

A young bald eagle in Kodiak. Photo by Amy Van Allen

Akhiok Elder Phyllis Peterson cleans a collection of beach fleabane. Photo by Sven Haakanson, Jr.

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Red salmon from the Karluk River. Photo by Patrick Saltonstall

A sea star from the waters along Cape Alitak on Kodiak Island. Photo by Athena LaTocha

Raven. Photo by Amy Van Allen

Ripe red salmonberries. Photo by Priscilla Russell (Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository Archives)

Sven Haakanson, Jr. pulls a halibut from ocean waters. Photo courtesy the Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository Archives

A mountain-goat, a species introduced to Kodiak in the early twentieth century climbs Three Sisters mountain. Photo by Zoya Saltonstall

“Beach spinach,” used in Alutiiq cooking. Photo by Athena LaTocha

A carver works a piece of alder into an adze handle. Photo by Sven Haakanson, Jr.

Nest of gull eggs on a rocky coastal perch. Photo by Sven Haakanson, Jr.

A harbor seal surfaces for a breath. Photo by Sven Haakanson, Jr.

A beach seine reveals a catch of bright salmon from the Karluk River. Photo by Kevin Smith, Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository Archives

Elder Lucille Davis explains the use of angelica as a bug repellent. Photo by Priscilla Russell (Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository Archives)

The Alutiġq Seasonal Cycle



- Inside the smallest ring: family activities around the year.
- Inside the middle ring: plants and animals gathered throughout the year.
- Inside the largest ring: the types of animals hunted at different times of the year.
- Outside the largest ring: the locations and conditions of various plant and animal resources during the yearly cycle.

This poster was created by the Alutiġq Museum and Archaeological Repository, 215 Mission Rd., Suite 101, Kodiak, AK. 99615

ALUTIIQ ELDERS HANDOUT

Nick Alokli
Akhiok, Alaska
2005

After the oil spill and all the fish prices went down, that's when I had to quit fishing. I didn't like it that we couldn't eat clams anymore. It was a hard time.

Ed Gregorioff
Prince William Sound, Alaska
1997

I miss the lifestyle. I mean my subsistence living...I miss it. Because that's a lot of what isn't there anymore, or it isn't like it used to be. You got to go a long ways for it if you get anything. And after the oil spill especially they say it didn't affect it but you could notice year after year this stuff is still disappearing slowly and it ain't going to be long before we ain't going to be able to have any of that stuff anymore. And that makes me feel bad. I like that native lifestyle. I mean the subsistence lifestyle.