Retelling Oral Histories with Digitized Visual Art

Developed by: Kristine King

**Lesson Topic/Subject(s):** This lesson includes preparing for and interviewing an elder or family member about typical seasonal activities associated with the Alutiiq subsistence calendar. Student groups will create artwork that represents key elements in the story. The visual art will serve as the assessment tool by demonstrating student understanding of key points and how well those points personify core values. This lesson kicks off a larger unit that will contain a stop motion lab and showcase of finished work. It comes after learning about basic design principles and other meetings with Culture Bearers.

**Summary:** Students will procure a story about their family or community history by speaking with an elder in their family or in our community. They will curate a defining moment from the story to visually represent with a stop motion video. The chosen moment will be demonstrative of an Alutiiq core value. As an elder will be the source of the story they will weigh in on final revisions and offer approval (or not) of sharing the story.

**Estimated time:** 10 class days

**Designed for grades:** 6-8

**Describe the specific group you will be teaching:** Ages 10-14, class size from 16-30.

**Lesson Objectives:**
- Student will be able to listen to a story, pick out key elements, and organize the information for retelling the story
- Student will use basic design elements to translate the key elements into visual art (another unit)
- Student will utilize technology in order to collaborate and communicate with peers to establish the importance of a group identity and core values
- Student will be able to link an activity to a core value

**Alaska Cultural Standards:** This lesson largely targets Cultural Standard A because of its potential for cultural connections. In Kodiak the primary core value would be Suuget, the people or social sphere honoring ancestors. Depending on the story told the potential to include all five Alutiiq core values is possible.
CA2 Integrate and connect traditions, customs, values and practices of the students when interacting with new content.

CA4 Use students’ traditions, customs, values and practices in order to inspire a highly motivated and engaged learner as a result of connections to personalized traditions, customs, values and practices.

Alaska State Art Standard(s):
VA: CR2c-8: Select, organize and design images and words to make visually compelling presentations
VA: CN10a-8: Make art collaboratively to reflect on and reinforce positive aspects of group identity

Other Subject Content Standard(s):
WHST.6-7-8.3: Use narrative writing to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequence.
WHST.6-7-8.7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Vocabulary: 5 Alutiiq Core Values
(for pronunciation: http://www.alutiiqlanguage.org/)

- nuna (Haa-Ani): place, physical sphere
- anereq (Haa-Latseeni/Wooch Yax): spirit - emotional space
- suuget (Haa Shuká/Wooch Yax): people - social sphere - elders
- lla (Wooch Yax/Haa Shuká/Haa-Latseeni): conscience, ethical sphere

Materials:
Ipad, phone (device that can download app and take pictures)
Ipad stand
Stop Motion app
Watercolor paper (one for background and one for support imagery)
Watercolor paint and brush
Scissors
Markers
Ticky tack (or other way to hold down paper for gentle removal during stop motion capture)
Stand or a way to secure the device to keep the framing consistent
Alutiiq subsistence calendar
Alutiiq core value poster
Seasonal/core value note taking grid
Sticky notes
Equipment/Technology:
Ipad, phone (device that can download app and take pictures)
Stop Motion app (check with tech to make sure it is available for student download)

Teacher Preparation:
• Check with tech and make sure that student will have access to a stop motion app (for a later lesson)
• At least one month before the lesson contact a local Culture Bearer and invite them to tell a story about their subsistence activities as a youth (preferably from the time when they were the same age as your students) Schedule for Day two of lesson.
• Download and familiarize yourself with StopMotion
• Make a stop motion story if you do not have access to other examples
• Ask the Culture Bearer how they prefer to be introduced
• Work with students to think of a thank you gift for the culture bearer after the class visit
• Place electronic copies of “great questions,” subsistence calendar, interview checklist and value poster in the lesson file or print out for student use.
• Make one large card season per wall (see resources)
• Put links and/or access to lesson resources in lesson file (or print copies for students)
• Test access to all links through student portal and test run the StoryCorp video prior to lesson

Lesson Sequence:

DAY 1: Preparing for an interview

Warm-up: TEN MINUTES (from StoryCorp lesson 2)
• Provide each student with an index card and sticky note. Hand out student copies of The Great Questions List or project it with available technology.
• Ask students to choose one question for someone else in the room to answer and to write it on their index card.
• Model how the activity will work. Approach a student and ask the question you wrote on an index card. The student answers it, then asks you their question. Both answer the question, trade cards, and move to find a different person to ask the new question. Explain that each time students talk to a new person, they will trade questions. Tell students they will all do this at the same time. Encourage students to talk to at least three different people.
• Collect the interview questions and set them aside to use later in the lesson.
• Ask students to move their chairs into a circle (discuss which questions stood out and why)

Video: FIVE MINUTES - Four tips for an effective video
https://youtu.be/G70rR2vG5wY
Activity: TWENTY MINUTES

- Tell students they will be working on a list of questions to ask a culture bearer about seasonal activities when the bearer was 10-14 years old.
- Review how to form an open-ended question - that if anyone can answer “yes” or “no” to think of another way to ask it.
- Ask for three or so examples of questions to check for understanding.
- Tell students they will work alone for a few minutes and then break into groups to share ideas and refine questions.

(What is your name, who are your parents, where were you born, do you have any favorite stories, what was something you did (looked forward to) in the winter (spring, fall, summer), what was the hardest/least favorite job you had growing up, how did you feel about contributing to your family, what was your proudest moment)

- Group students. Students share their list and give input to others while making notes to improve their list.
- Have students write one question on the back of their notecard for Culture Bearer
- Have students start a list of names on their list of questions of people they think would be available to interview.
- Wrap up and let students know they will be meeting a culture bearer next class.

Exit ticket: Write one interview tip on a sticky, put it on the door on your way out.

DAY 2: Culture Bearer visit

Warm-up: THREE MINUTES

- Students Greet Culture Bearer and thank them for coming as they enter class
- Students are directed to get question card out (turn and talk for practice)
- Student volunteer passes out seasonal/value grid

Introduction: FIVE MINUTES. Introduce the Culture Bearer as they prefer, give them more time if needed.

Interview: 40 MINUTES

- Students can hold on to card to ask their question or put in on a table (or box) to have someone else read their question
- Use a voice recorder or any recording device during interview (with permission)
- Have students take notes during the interview using their seasonal/value grid
- If there is time, have a student attempt to verbally retell a story and share connections made with core values. How many students agree or have made different connections?
Wrap up: 3 MINUTES
• Have a student present the Culture Bearer with a gift of thanks.
• Invite Culture Bearer back to see final projects

DAY 3: Mapping key details and planning visual representational needs

Warm-up: THREE MINUTES
• Have four corner game set up (one wall marked with one season each)
• Have students think about a favorite story from the day before
• On the count of three have students move to the wall that matches the season of the story told
• After they arrive at the wall, let them know which wall has the most students and that they will be mapping a story from that season as a class today
• Students return to seats

Stop Motion Videos: 10 MINUTES (Throwing Rocks, Raven’s Nose, Halibut Fishing)
• Tell students you will be working as a class to pick out key details from one story from yesterday’s culture bearers
• Tell students they will be looking for techniques/imagery used to tell the story
• Have them consider how much was verbal versus visual
• Show videos, lead a quick discussion to consider the points above.

Class Storyboard practice: 20 MINUTES
• Tell the students which story was chosen and have them turn and talk or work in small groups to retell the story.
• Have someone in the group write down key details to share with class
• Ask groups for their ideas. Use a beginning/middle/end format on board or projection technology to take notes for class (or have a student help write).
• From that linear organization ask the class if every part is important or can some be eliminated and still convey the story
• Circle the details they want to include - number them in the order to be told
• Project the storyboard and write the first detail. Ask the class what image would match this detail. Sketch in image quickly as an idea, not a finished work.
• Carry on through all of the details and then go back to see if there is any way to simplify the imagery.
• Talk about the universal background that will persist through every frame in the stop motion
• Discuss core values embedded in the story
Reflection and wrap up: 15 MINUTES

• Let students know they will be making their own storyboard
• Have them go back to their question lists to review potential interviewees and think about who they will be speaking with. Let them know this option earns additional points. **Remind them that an interviewee can be from any culture.**
• Tell them other options are listening to a pre-recorded oral history or using another story from the Culture Bearer.
• Let students know they may work individually or in groups and then give them time to move around, talk and find out what peers are wanting to do.
• Monitor the class, keep students on topic and support any students wanting help contacting leads.
• Give an interview checklist to students who are wanting to contact their own culture bearer.
• Write down what students have chosen before then end of class as an informal way of keeping them on track.

DAYS 4-8: Stop Motion Lab (tutorial [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_M468S86Hl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_M468S86Hl))

Warm up: FIVE minutes

• Have audio of the Alutiiq dictionary cued up. Listen and repeat seasons and core values. Have students help give ideas for motions to the words. *(núna, anereq, suuget, ili, keneq, Kayak, Ugnerkaq, Uksuaq, Uksuaq).* Alternate days can use visualization, air writing, turn and talk practice, etc.

Demonstration: TEN minutes

• Project image of example background and parts from Halibut Fishing
• Point out moveable parts, scale and replacement techniques
• Talk about joints as a place for movable parts
• Consider environmental movement (water, wind, clouds, fog, sun rays)

Studio time: 45 minutes

• Students waiting on interviews can work on navigating the stop motion app. If they do not have a story by the beginning of the second studio, assign them a recorded oral history or guide them through a personal story.
• Group work projects are expecting to be longer and with more details
• Walk around and monitor progress, troubleshoot and support students’ efforts
• Students will be working to figure out what is needed. Provide these prompts:
  - What single background would work for the entire story
  - What are the essential items needed to tell the story?
  - What elements will move
  - Review your story board to understand any missing components
  - Is there any way to simplify items?
Assign tasks
- Discuss scale of imagery so things are sized relational to each other
- Use colors to unify composition
- Draw, marker, paint, cut
- Practice story and movement as you work to support success

- Provide this checklist of what is required (modify as needed)
  - Name of season in Alutiiq (visual and verbal)
  - Name of core value(s) in Alutiiq (visual and verbal)
  - Story uses an activity to demonstrate a core value
  - Project uses two of the three techniques for animation (moving parts, scale, replacement parts)
  - The audio follows the visual in the story
  - The story has an organized and discernable flow and shows evolved ideas from the story board
  - The story is a positive portrayal of the event

Exit ticket: Student is to write down what they will be starting with for the next day’s work

Days 9-10: View projects and reflect (written or discussed) Projects are turned in at the beginning of class and shared.

- What part of the process was enjoyable?
- What part did you find challenging?
- What would you do differently next time?
- Which project do you think most strongly conveys Alutiiq core values?
- Which project most strongly utilized principles of design?
- Pick two projects and constructively suggest one thing to revise or or change.
- Work with the teacher to arrange a way to share your work with your Culture Bearer. Seek approval for sharing this project outside of the classroom
- Write thank you cards

What accommodations will be required to meet the diversity of your students?

Students will be given the option to choose a story from a culture bearer, family member, or oral history recording so that all personal choices are honored no matter what the family culture or structure is. Shy students can choose to listen to a pre-recorded oral history in order to eliminate anxiety about speaking directly to an unfamiliar adult.

Students will be able to choose individual or group work.
Students with limited dexterity will be able to contribute by painting items that are less detailed such as the background which may just be a field of color.

Students that are hearing impaired may read a transcript of a story.

Visually impaired students will work to their personal capacity and the assessment may be adapted according to their IEP.

Workload can be adjusted to a single visual image that represents fewer details in a story.

**Assessment/evaluation: Formative, Summative, Performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No evidence of requirement</th>
<th>Needs additional development</th>
<th>Meets requirement</th>
<th>Exceeds requirement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>VA: CR2c-8</strong> The overall composition of the storyboard utilizes basic principles of design.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WHST.6-7-8.3</strong> Details of the story are well organized, minimal, and essential to retelling.</td>
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<td><strong>WHST.6-7-8.7</strong> Narrative is well developed and derived from a primary source showing evidence of follow up questions.</td>
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</table>
WHST.6-7-8.7 Story board utilizes additional resources such as posters, seasonal names and language specific to the story’s culture.

CA2, CA4, VA: CN10a-8: The story is retold in a way that respectfully conveys core values, traditions, customs, values and practices of its culture.

Storyboard Rubric
Name: ________________________________ Score: ___/15

Extensions:
- Act story(ies) out
- Reach out to Museum to add visual representation to other archived oral histories
- Share the story and be available to younger grades for cultural foundations
- Make a contemporary personal story demonstrating Alutiiq core values
- Organize and present stories by seasonal subsistence activities and calendar
- Develop a NearPod matching game with a seasonal activity to a core value
- More extensively explore seasonal flora and fauna and the colors of each season as scientific drawings

Resources: In Kodiak the Alutiiq Museum and the Native Village of Afognak have many resources to support this lesson, including lists of culture bearers. Check similar types of organizations for information that will support the discovery of your local culture(s).

http://www.alutiiqlanguage.org/ (Alutiiq word search and pronunciation)

https://afognak.org/oral-history-archive/ (access to oral histories)

https://youtu.be/G70rR2vG5wY (StoryCorps: 4 tips to a successful interview)

https://alutiiqmuseum.org/learn/the-alutiiq-sugpiaq-people/values (Kodiak Alutiiq Values Poster)

https://alutiiqmuseum.org/learn/the-alutiiq-sugpiaq-people/subsistence (Alutiiq Harvest Cycle Calendar)
Great Questions List (StoryCorps)

Core value note sheet

Elder Interview KIBSD

Storyboard template

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X_M468S86Hl (tutorial for StopMotion)

2020 Juneau Virtual Basic Arts/Culture Institute

Lesson by: Kristine King
The Alutiiq Seasonal Cycle

Ugnerkaq
Spring
- 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.

All information provided for educational purposes. The Alutiiq Museum does not recommend experimentation with wild foods. Any experimentation is done at your own risk.

This handout created by the Alutiiq Museum and Archaeological Repository, 215 Mission Rd., Suite 101, Kodiak, AK. 99615
Cisllaat — Calendar
Alutiiq Harvest Cycle

Uksuaq
Winter

Uksuaq
Fall

Uqnuq
Spring

Kiak
Summer
| **Qik’rtarmiut Sug’ucirpet** |
| **Kodiak Alutiq Values** |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>nuna</strong></th>
<th>place - physical sphere</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>nunapet</strong></td>
<td>Ties to our Homeland “our lands”</td>
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<td><strong>nunapet carlia’arluki</strong></td>
<td>Stewardship of animals, land, sky &amp; waters “taking care of our lands”</td>
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<td><strong>unguwacirpet</strong></td>
<td>A subsistence lifestyle respectful &amp; sustained by the natural world “our way of being alive”</td>
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<td><strong>anernej</strong></td>
<td>spirit - emotional sphere</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>agayumaukut</strong></td>
<td>Faith and spiritual life from ancestral beliefs to the diverse faiths of today “we are prayerful”</td>
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<td><strong>englarstaisngukut</strong></td>
<td>Humor “we like to laugh”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>suuget</strong></td>
<td>people - social sphere</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>suupet</strong></td>
<td>Our people: we are responsible for each other &amp; ourselves “our people (community)”</td>
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<td><strong>cu qllipet</strong></td>
<td>“our Elders”</td>
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<td><strong>ilaapet</strong></td>
<td>Our family and kinship of ancestors &amp; living relatives “our family”</td>
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<td><strong>keneq</strong></td>
<td>fire; process - cognitive sphere</td>
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<td><strong>Sugt’stun niuwacipet</strong></td>
<td>Our heritage language “our ways of speaking like a Sugpiaq”</td>
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<td><strong>liicirpet</strong></td>
<td>Learning by doing, observing &amp; listening “our way of learning”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>piciipet uswituu’uq</strong></td>
<td>Traditional arts, skills &amp; ingenuity “our ways are wise”</td>
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**Walter Simeonoff teaching his son to shoot an arrow. Photo by Sven Haakanson, Jr.**

**Learn More:**
Liitukut Sugpiaq’s Tun (We are learning to be Real People): Exploring Kodiak Alutiq Literature Through Core Values. 2012, by Alisha Drabek. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

http://ankn.uaf.edu/Curriculum/PhD_Projects/Alisha_Drabek

**liila** | conscience - ethical sphere |
| **ilakuisngukut** | Sharing: we welcome everyone “we favor sharing” |
| **sugtanartukut** | Trust “we trust” |
| **ling’aklluki** | Respect for self, others & the environment is inherent in all values “we respect them” |
Creative Writing: Sense of Place  
Kodiak Island Borough School District  
Elder Interview

Select an Elder you would like to talk with individually, or in a small group, and politely request a time to interview them. Once granted, you should plan for your interview by thinking ahead about some of the questions you would like answered or topics you are interested in learning from them. You can choose to audio record your interview or take notes, as long as neither method is too distracting from the conversation or makes the Elder uncomfortable.

Things to Remember When Interviewing: (Borrowed from Ron Gleason, Creating Culturally Responsive Schools)

I. Show Respect for the Elders  
   A. Experiences:  
      1. They are different than yours  
      2. Their experiences are as valid as yours  
      3. Your experiences are as valid as theirs  
   B. Knowledge  
      1. It is greater than yours because they have lived longer  
      2. They are experts about Alutiiq people being Alutiiq  
      3. They may explain things in a way that you don’t fully understand but it is still valid

II. Show Respect for Yourself  
    A. Conduct yourself proudly but with deference to the Elders  
    B. Be polite and others will be polite to you

III. When Questioning  
    A. Get their attention  
    B. Speak clearly and slowly  
       1. Many Elders have lost some of their hearing  
    C. Wait until they are finished  
       1. Speaking styles differ. They may just pause and have not quite finished  
    D. Make certain you understand their answers  
    E. Don’t assume

   • Make sure you always acknowledge the person you get information from, and recognize the trust they have given you in writing about them.  
   • It is often a good practice to share what you write with the person you interview before you publish it or share it with others, so you’re certain you didn’t misunderstand them or write something that would make them upset.  
   • Your actions in working with Elders impacts everyone who wishes to learn from that Elder in the future.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEASON:</th>
<th>nuna place, physical sphere</th>
<th>anereq spirit- emotional space</th>
<th>suuget people - social sphere - elders</th>
<th>lla conscience, ethical sphere</th>
<th>keneq fire: process - cognitive space</th>
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<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
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Name: ____________________
Interview Checklist

Ask your parent/guardian if you may meet someone (preferable) or speak over the phone to conduct an interview. Explain the project to them in full. By signing this they are giving you permission to contact your interview subject and meet with them in person or over the phone.

Parent/Guardian signature ___________________________. Printed name ___________________________.

Before interview

- Call ahead or ask in person.
- Pick a day, place and time to meet.
- Tell them in advance you would like to hear stories about things they did, traditions, seasonal activities, anything that was a special memory when they were your age.
- Let them know you will need about 30 minutes, more if they need/want it
- Thank them and tell them you will see them (day, date, time, at location)
- Find a device to record with
- Gather a pencil and paper for notes
- Put your question list with the device and your note paper and don’t forget to bring it to the interview!

The interview

- Thank them again for meeting with you
- Explain the school project (core values, seasonal subsistence, or other traditions as mentioned before)
- Let them know you will be sharing your work with them to see and approve before sharing it
- Ask permission to record the session, tell them it will help you with more accurate notes. If they say “no” that is okay 😊
- Speak slowly and clearly when you ask your questions
- Give them time to answer and expect pauses for thinking
- Value their experience as different and do not judge, just record
- Be respectful
- If you find something of interest in what they are saying don’t forget follow up questions such as “can you tell me more about … why do you think you remember this day so well …”
- Try to keep track of time without looking at your phone/watch, etc. Saying 30 minutes during the initial contact call will be helpful.
- Thank them

After interview

- Use class time to write a thank you card
- Work with teacher to figure out a way to share your final project with your subject to give them a chance for input and fact checking.
- Ask for permission to share your work, with their story, with others.