



**Social Studies
School Service**

www.socialstudies.com

Downloadable Reproducible eBooks

Thank you for downloading this eBook from
www.socialstudies.com

To browse more eBook titles, visit
<http://www.socialstudies.com/ebooks.html>

To learn more about eBooks, visit our help page at
<http://www.socialstudies.com/ebookshelp.html>

For questions, please e-mail eBooks@socialstudies.com

Free E-mail Newsletter—Sign up Today!

To learn about new eBook and print titles, professional development resources, and catalogs in the mail, sign up for our monthly e-mail newsletter at
<http://socialstudies.com/newsletter/>

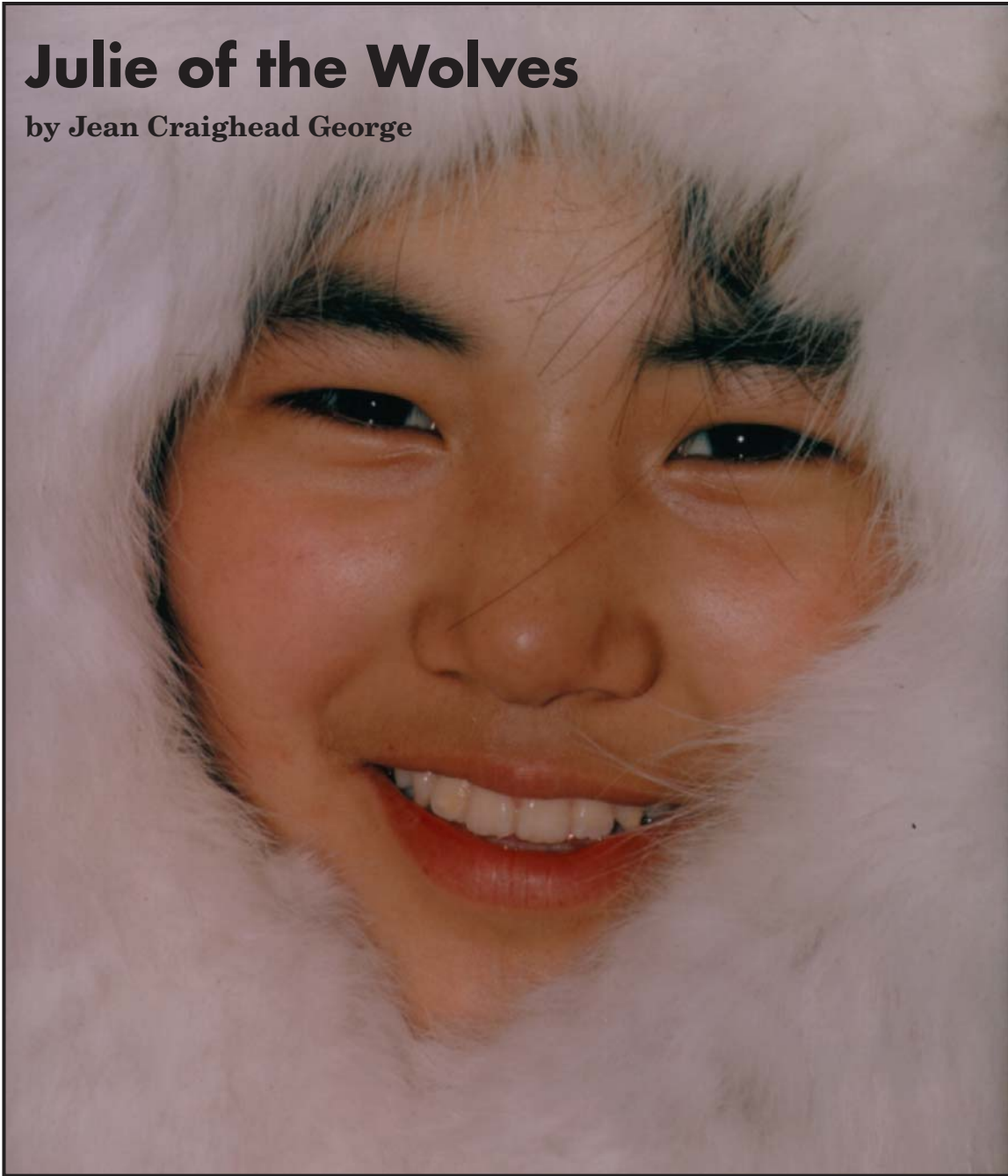
REPRODUCIBLE SERIES

LATTITUDES[®]

Resources to Integrate Language Arts & Social Studies

Julie of the Wolves

by Jean Craighead George





Julie of the Wolves

Jean Craighead George

**Reproducibles
and Teacher Guide**

Senior Editor: Marsha James
Editor: Cecelia Munzenmaier
Permissions
Coordinator: Cynthia M. Martin
Book Design: Randy Messer
Nancy Nafziger
Cover Photo: Steve McCutcheon

Reviewers: **Margaret Drew**
Hyde Park, Massachusetts

Lorraine Hall
Charleston, West Virginia

Ken Holmes
Caseyville, Illinois

Rebecca Neuheidel
Massapequa, New York

Dr. Ann K. Wilson
Storm Lake, Iowa

The purchase of this book entitles an individual teacher to reproduce pages for use in the classroom. This permitted use of copyrighted material does not extend beyond the building level. Reproduction for use in an entire school system or for commercial use is prohibited. Beyond the classroom use by an individual teacher, reproduction, transmittal, or retrieval of this work is prohibited without written permission from the publisher.

©1994 Perfection Learning Corporation, Logan, Iowa

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the Novel

Introduction.	6
Story Synopsis	8
About the Author.	10
Critics' Comments	11
Voices from the Novel	12
Glossary	13
A Time in History	14
The Geographical Picture	15

The Inuit and the Traditional World

The Inuit and Their Land.	16
The Language of Snow.	18
Eskimo Houses	20
Shamanism and Religious Beliefs	22
Breathing My Song.	23
Partners in Life.	24
Eskimo Wealth	27
The Wolf Pack.	28
Wolf Talk.	29

The Inuit and the Modern World

Encounters	31
The Purchase of Alaska	32
They All Had Two Names.	33
Pipelines and Politics	34
The Hunting of Wolves	35
Time and Cultural Change	37
Between the Stone Age and the Space Age.	38
Child of the New Arctic	39
Viewpoints About the Inuit Today	40

continued

TABLE OF CONTENTS

continued

Comparative Works

"To Build a Fire"	42
Voices from Other Works	43
Poems from the Far North	45
Suggested Reading and Viewing List	46

Suggested Activities

Using <i>Latitudes</i> in Your Classroom	49
Student Projects	58



Alaska Pictorial Service; photo by Steve McCutcheon

Acknowledgments

Excerpts from *The Secret Language of Snow* by Terry Tempest Williams. Copyright © 1984 by Terry Tempest Williams. Reprinted by permission of Brandt & Brandt Literary Agents, Inc.

From *Kusiq: An Eskimo Life History from the Arctic Coast of Alaska* by Waldo Bodfish, Sr. Copyright © 1991 by the University of Alaska Press. Reprinted with permission of the University of Alaska Press.

From *Eskimo Realities* by Edmund Carpenter. Copyright © 1973 by Edmund Carpenter. Published by Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. Reprinted with permission of Harcourt Brace and Company.

From *The Cama-i Book* edited by Ann Vicks. Copyright © 1983 by Kalikaq Yugnek, Kwikpagmiut, Tundra Marsh, Uutuqtwā, and Elwani. Reprinted with permission of Doubleday, a division of Bantam, Doubleday, Dell Publishing Group, Inc.

From *Wolf Pack: Tracking Animals in the Wild* by Sylvia A. Johnson and Alice Aamodt. Copyright © 1985 by Lerner Publications Co., Minneapolis, MN. Used with permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

From *The Wonder of Wolves* by Sandra Chisholm Robinson. Copyright © 1989 by the Denver Museum of Natural History. Published by Roberts Rinehart, Inc. Publishers, Boulder, CO. Reprinted with permission of the publisher.

From *The Wake of the Unseen Object: Among the Native Cultures of Bush Alaska* by Tom Kizzia. Copyright © 1991 by Tom Kizzia. Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company, Inc.

“My Sister the Wolf” by ’Asta Bowen. Copyright © 1992 by ’Asta Bowen. Reprinted with permission of the author.

From *Nunaga; Ten Years of Eskimo Life*. Copyright © 1971 by Duncan Pryde. Reprinted by permission from Walker and Company, 720 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10019, 1-800-289-2553.

“Fall of the Wild” by John Husar. Copyright © 1986 by the *Chicago Tribune*. Reprinted with permission of the *Chicago Tribune*.

From *Eskimos, Chicanos, Indians: Volume IV of Children of Crisis* by Robert Coles. Copyright © 1977 by Robert Coles. By permission of Little, Brown and Company.

“The Last Wolf” by Mary Tall Mountain. Reprinted with permission of the author.

“My Little Son” reprinted by permission of Smithsonian Institution Press from Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 24. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 1894.

“Ijajee’s Story” by Charlotte DeClue. Reprinted with permission of the author.

Every effort has been made to properly acknowledge ownership of all excerpts used. Any omissions brought to the publisher’s attention will be corrected in future editions.



TEACHER INFORMATION

Welcome to *Latitudes*

Latitudes is designed for teachers who would like to broaden the scope of their literature and history study. By providing fascinating primary source documents and background information, the ***Latitudes*** collection of reproducibles helps your students link a fiction or nonfiction book with its historical framework.

The series broadens students' understanding in other ways too. Each packet offers insights into the book as a piece of literature—including its creation, critical reception, and links to similar literature.

The ***Latitudes*** selections help readers draw on and seek out knowledge from a unique range of sources and perspectives. These sources encourage students to make personal connections to history and literature, integrating information with their own knowledge and background. This learning experience will take students far beyond the boundaries of a single text into the rich latitudes of literature and social studies.

Purposes of This Packet

The material in this ***Latitudes*** packet for *Julie of the Wolves* has been carefully chosen for four main purposes.

1. to help students connect contemporary and historical events
2. to encourage students to pose questions about the effects of conflicting cultures on individuals and society
3. to provide resources that help students evaluate what's "real" in a fiction novel
4. to help students use the skills and content of both social studies and language arts to search for meaning in a novel

Contents of This Packet

The reproducibles in this packet have been organized into five sections.

- About the Novel
- The Inuit and the Traditional World
- The Inuit and the Modern World
- Comparative Works
- Suggested Activities

About the Novel

The resources here introduce students to the contextual and historical dimensions of the novel. Selections include

- a plot synopsis
- a biography of Jean Craighead George
- critics' comments about *Julie of the Wolves*
- a glossary of historical and technical terms from the novel
- a timeline of events in Alaskan history
- a map showing Native Alaskans' land

The Inuit and the Traditional World

These reproducible familiarize students with the Inuit culture and environment. This section includes

- a dictionary of Eskimo words for snow
- oral history and interviews
- observations by anthropologists
- information about wolves and wolf "language"

The Inuit and the Modern World

These resources help students understand how the Inuit are trying to retain their identity as they adapt to modern Alaska. Selections include

- legends of first encounters
- Seward's agreement to purchase Alaska
- editorial about wolf hunting
- background on the Alaska pipeline
- information about Inuit life today

Comparative Works

Selections in this section give students a literary dimension to their study. The reproducible offer

- part of a famous story about the Arctic
- excerpts from theme-related novels
- theme-related poems
- suggestions for further reading and viewing

Suggested Activities

Each reproducible in the packet is supported with suggestions for student-centered and open-ended student activities. You can choose from activities that develop reading, writing, thinking, speaking, and listening skills. Projects are suitable for independent, collaborative, or group study.

Use of the Material

The pieces in *Latitudes* can be incorporated into your curriculum in any order you wish. We encourage you to select those resources that are most meaningful and relevant to your students.

Story Synopsis

A young Inuit girl survives alone in the Arctic because she knows the old Eskimo ways. The heroine's English name is Julie. But, lost on the tundra, she thinks of herself as Miyax.

As the story opens, Miyax has set up camp somewhere on the North Slope. It is her thirteenth summer, and she has run away from her unhappy "marriage of convenience."

The marriage had been arranged long before her father, Kapugen, vanished. Miyax had already lost her mother. She remembers that she and her father then moved to a seal camp. Kapugen wanted to live in traditional Eskimo fashion, so he gave up his important job as manager of a reindeer camp. He taught his daughter how to live off the land. And he told her about wolves, the "gentle brothers" who kept him from starving when he could find no game on the tundra.

Miyax lived happily in the camp until she was nine. Then Kapugen's Aunt Martha took her away to attend school. One day Kapugen did not return from a seal hunt. His daughter then lived permanently in Barrow, where she was called Julie.

One of the owners of the Reindeer Corporation invited Miyax/Julie to be a pen pal to his daughter Amy. Julie eagerly agreed and soon was living vicariously through the letters Amy sent from San Francisco.

Meanwhile, Julie grew increasingly unhappy living with Aunt Martha. When she was thirteen, her father's former partner sent for her. He wanted her to marry his son Daniel, as her father had arranged. Julie went to live near the Arctic Ocean with her new husband's family.

Julie soon discovered that her marriage to the slow-witted Daniel was just a formality. But, driven by his friends' taunts, Daniel tried to rape Julie. Frightened, she ran away, intending to live with her pen pal in San Francisco. Instead she wound up lost and alone on the North Slope, with winter approaching.

As the story returns to the present, Miyax remembers that her father survived a similar situation by asking wolves for food. She learns to speak the "language" of a pack of Arctic wolves. Eventually, the wolves accept her. With their help, she obtains food and skins for clothing. Her love and admiration for the wolves grow.

Miyax's favorite wolves are the powerful leader, Amaroq, and his playful son, Kapu. She is puzzled by how Jello fits into the pack. Later she learns that he is a lone wolf, tolerated by the others until he threatens the youngest members of the pack.

Miyax knows that the wolves will move on, so she sharpens her hunting skills. Small birds, edible plants, and meat from the wolves' kills keep her alive.

continued

When winter sets in, the wolf pack migrates. Unable to follow, Miyax faces life in the wilderness alone. Her situation becomes even more desperate when she finds her camp demolished and her supplies gone. Miyax suspects Jello. She tracks the lone wolf, hoping to at least recover her backpack. Finding the pack beside Jello's body, Miyax realizes that Amaroq has killed him to protect her.

Miyax then treks toward the coast. At one point, hunters mistake Miyax for a bear and shoot at her. She manages to hide behind an oil drum. However, the hunters kill Amaroq and wound Kapu. Miyax cares for the new pack leader until he is healed.

Convinced she would rather live by the old ways, Miyax builds a house of ice. She lives in traditional Eskimo style and listens for her wolf pack. When she shelters travelers from a coastal village, she learns that her father is still alive. Her wolves invite her to travel with them again, but she tells them she must go to Kangik to find her "own Amaroq."

To her dismay, her father's life now combines the Eskimo and white worlds. Julie/Miyax must then examine her values and choose between two worlds.

About the Author

Jean Craighead George

Julie of the Wolves began when Jean Craighead George read a scientific study of a wolf pack. She discovered that wolves are “social animals, with a leader, and a vice president...and a language that held this together. I thought, I’ve got to know more about this and I’ve got to see these animals in action.”

So George and her son Luke traveled to Barrow, Alaska. “As we came into Barrow out of a fog to land on that lonely landscape, we looked out and a little girl was walking out along the tundra all by herself.”

Scientists in Barrow were studying wolves. Watching them, George learned to “talk wolf.” When she finally “spoke” to a wolf, she decided, “I’ve got to write a book about that lonely little girl who communicates with the wolves in their own language and survives on the open tundra.” She added, “Luke and I were lost for three or four hours on the tundra, so I know how it feels!”

Her son was also fascinated by the wolf study. As adults, he and his brother both became natural scientists. George’s daughter makes films about nature.

As the George children were growing up, their house was filled with animals. George estimates that she and her children have had 173 pets. She remembers, “Every time I wrote a book, I’d bring the animal I was writing about into the house and raise them and study them...I never had them in cages. These were young animals that I fed and then they were free to go.” Her favorite was a crow that learned to talk.

George likes to feel close to nature when she writes. So she keeps her word processor on a sun porch with lots of windows. She says she writes best with “children and wild things around me.” Usually George is at work by seven a.m. She researches and writes until about three p.m. Not only does she write, she rewrites. In fact, George calls herself “the rewrite queen.”

Her research is as careful as her writing. George travels to many exotic places to make her novels believable. “I...will not write what I have not seen or experienced,” she explains. As a result, her books are known for their attention to details about wildlife and the natural environment.

Almost all of George’s novels deal with characters who learn about themselves from nature. *My Side of the Mountain* is about a young boy who runs away to the Catskill Mountains and learns to live off the land. The book was runner-up for the Newbery Medal in 1961 and was later made into a motion picture. *Julie of the Wolves*, about a young Eskimo who survives alone in the Arctic, won the Newbery Medal in 1973. *The Talking Earth* focuses on a Seminole Indian girl who survives in the Florida Everglades by learning to listen to the swamp.

George’s love of nature began when she was a child. She was born in Washington, D.C., in 1919. As a child, she explored the wilderness along the Potomac River. Her trips to the woods inspired her to write poetry. Later she began to study painting. She then worked as a writer and artist for several news organizations. During World War II, she was one of the reporters covering the White House.

“Reporting taught me how to discipline myself,” she remembers. “I was always interviewing people who should have been doing the writing because they knew all about it. So I decided to go into depth more in my own research.”

The first book to come from her own research was *Vulpes the Red Fox*. She wrote it with her new husband in 1948. The couple wrote six animal stories together. Later George started writing on her own.

Her research has taken her to Alaska, where she spoke with wolves, and to a desert island, where she swam with sharks. George’s adventures in the wilderness become part of her books. And so her readers learn to hear the talking earth.

Critics' Comments

*When books are published, critics read and review them. The following statements are comments that have been made by the critics of **Julie of the Wolves**.*

The wolf lore is plainly correct, and there is a compelling reality to this story that forces one to believe in it, however inconceivable it may seem.
—*Books and Bookmen*

No one reading the book can ever again think of wolves as frightening, shadowy predators; Mrs. George shows them capable of brotherly love and her story, moving and strange as it is, is firmly rooted in fact.
—*Times Literary Supplement*

Though remarkable, Miyax and her experience are totally believable, her spirit living evidence of the magnitude of the loss.

—*Kirkus Review*

...I am not sure that an orderly exposition of events, with the graphic detail that Mrs. George has at her command, would not have made the book a richer one and, in the end, a more dramatic one too.
—*Children's Book Review*

George has captured the subtle nuances of Eskimo life, animal habits, the pain of growing up, and combines these elements into a thrilling adventure which is, at the same time, a poignant love story.
—*School Library Journal*

The story touches all bases gracefully and richly—cultural, ecological, natural, emotional. But personal experience tells me that it will only be read by the omnivorous bookworm....[Unless] all librarians and teachers plan to execute a most comprehensive "Introduction to Julie" program, it will die on the shelf as has many a magnificent medal winner before.

—*Best Sellers*

Mrs. George assumes readers will instantly accept the idea of Julie exchanging thoughts, bites, [even] kisses... with an Arctic wolf....However, the Eskimos I know don't think that way. They would want plenty of white man's firewater before trying to kiss wolves. Still as Mrs. George portrays the wolf pack in almost-human terms the reader slowly comes to think of these wolves as dear friends.
—*The New York Times Book Review*

A book of timeless, perhaps even of classic dimensions, the story of the phenomenal adventures and survival of Julie (Miyax in Eskimo)....The whole book has a rare, intense reality which the artist [John Schoenherr] enhances beautifully with animated drawings.

—*Horn Book*

V

oices from the Novel

*As you read **Julie of the Wolves**, use this page to record four or five passages that you find particularly interesting or meaningful.*

A large rectangular box with a decorative border. The border consists of a light gray outer frame. Inside this frame, there are four decorative elements at each corner: a circle with a dot in the center and four lines extending outwards, and a set of three vertical lines. The central area of the page is a large white rectangle, intended for writing.



GLOSSARY

*Understanding who the following people are or what the following terms mean may be helpful as you read **Julie of the Wolves**.*



ulu

bounty: reward for killing or capturing escaped criminals or for killing wild animals

Bureau of Indian Affairs: government agency responsible for issues that affect Native Americans and their reservations

carrion: the flesh of dead animals

Distant Early Warning System: government's military radar system that warns of attacks by missiles and other aircraft

Eskimo: any of the original peoples of Alaska, northern Canada, and Greenland; Alaskan Eskimos include twenty-one tribes, some consisting of only a few hundred members; means "eaters of raw flesh" in the language of the Algonquins in eastern Canada

nomadic: moving about from place to place with no permanent place to live

northern lights: stream of light in the polar sky caused by rapid movement of atoms; often called "aurora borealis"

permafrost: ground below the surface (subsoil) that is always frozen in high elevations

quonset: metal building with an arched roof

semaphore: system of sending visual messages with flags, one in each hand

shaman: priest or priestess; a medicine man or woman

totem: object or animal that symbolizes a clan or family among certain peoples

tundra: treeless plain in the extreme north, usually with permanently frozen subsoil

viscera: internal organs (for example, the liver, heart, and kidneys) of an animal (always plural)

Inuit terms

amaroq: wolf

gussaks: white-faced people

i'noGo tied: house of the spirits

kuspuck: woman's dress

mukluk: boots made of animal skin, usually sealskin or reindeer hide

ookpick: white owl of the north

tornait: bird spirit

ulu: half-moon-shaped woman's knife, used for scraping skins

A Time in HISTORY

This timeline will help you place the novel in its historical perspective.



Alaskan hunter doll

1850

1848- American whalers invade the Arctic

1867- Russia sells Alaska to the United States

1878- Largest salmon-canning industry in U.S. begins

1884- Congress provides laws and a federal court for Alaskan territories

1896- Gold discovered in the Yukon; Alaska gold rush begins

1900

1903- Boundary dispute between U.S. and Canada settled

Early 1900s- Measles and flu epidemics wipe out many Inuit

1912- Alaska becomes U.S. territory

1942- Alaska invaded by the Japanese in World War II
Alaska Highway built as a military supply route

1950

1950s- U.S. installs defense radar systems throughout the North

1956- Alaska state constitution adopted

1959- Alaska becomes the 49th state

1968- Oil discovered in Prudhoe Bay

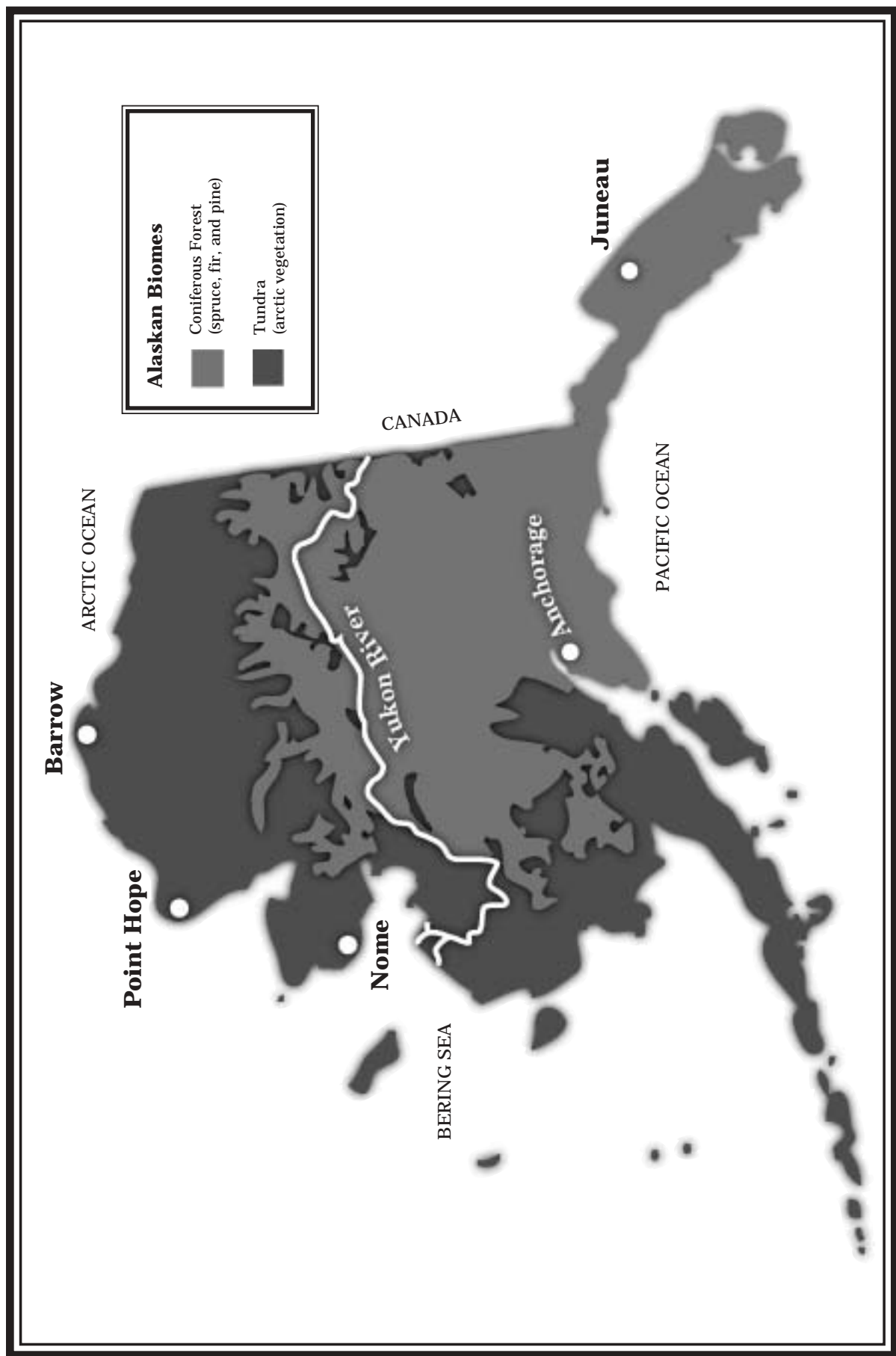
1971- Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act organizes Native villages into corporations

1977- Alaska oil pipeline completed after three years of work

1989- *Exxon Valdez* spills 11 million gallons of oil into Prince William Sound

2000

The Geographical Picture



The Inuit and Their Land



Alaska Division of Tourism

Ice fishers will tap a hole in the ice with an ice pick and then lower an unbaited hook into the water. At just the right moment, a jerk on the line hooks the fish and flips it onto the ice.

Who are the Eskimos? The word “Eskimo” is still widely used to refer generally to groups of original peoples in Alaska, northern Canada, and Greenland. The Arctic Eskimos living in Alaska call themselves “Inuit” (meaning “the people”).

No one knows for certain when people first began living in the Arctic. Scientists believe that many thousands of years ago, North America and Asia were connected. A narrow strip of land lay between the lands that are now Siberia and Alaska. In 900 A.D., wandering hunters from Mongolia may have crossed this land bridge in search of game. The descendants of these ancient hunters became the Inuit.

The first people who lived in Alaska survived because they learned to use its limited resources. They carved tools and weapons from stone and ivory. They made

igloos, or dwellings, from snow, sod, or animal skins. Most importantly, they learned to live in harmony with nature.

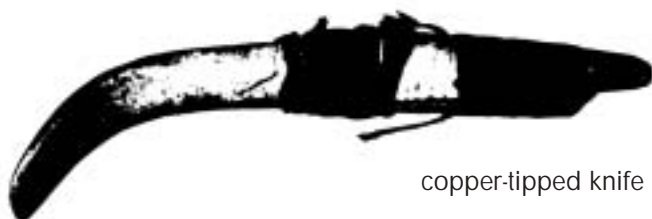
The Inuit adapted to Alaska's many different environments. Some hunted caribou and moose on the *tundra*, which is a vast plain of tough grass and moss in northern Alaska. Others stayed on the coast, living primarily on fish and seals. Still others lived in the northeastern forests, where they trapped small game.

Those who lived in the Arctic learned to cope with its varied weather. The Arctic has six seasons—early spring, late spring, summer, autumn, early winter, and late

continued

winter. In late winter, the sun does not shine at all. In August and September, the sun never sets. Temperatures drop to 40 degrees below zero in the winter but climb as high as 60 degrees in the summer.

In each season, the Inuit use whatever resources the land offers. Each summer, those who follow tradition travel to summer



copper-tipped knife

hunting camps. There the men hunt migrating animals, such as caribou and wild ducks. The women and children gather berries and dry meat for the long winter ahead. During the darkest days of winter, these families settle into houses insulated against the bitter cold. The men mend tools and weapons, while the women repair warm clothing to protect them from bone-chilling winds.

The harshness of Alaska's environment shaped traditional Eskimo values. In many areas, the idea of war was almost unknown. Survival was more important than conflict. Women were valued as partners in the business of making a living, and children were cherished as a valuable



woven-grass socks

resource. Eskimo hospitality, even to strangers, was famous. People shared whatever they had, knowing that their neighbors would return their generosity. Although many Inuit still live in the traditional way, three events have brought major changes to their environment. The first was World War II. Since Alaska is near Russia and Japan, United States military planners feared the area would be invaded. For protection, the army built airstrips and docks. These made Alaska less isolated. Modern ideas and new technology, like snowmobiles, began to enter Inuit life.

Another major change came in 1968, when oil was discovered in Prudhoe Bay. Many large oil fields were found on the bottom of the ocean off the Alaskan coast.



ivory comb

Large corporations began to move into Alaska. Both these businesses and the government made money from the oil.

In 1971 some of the profits were shared with the Inuit. Congress passed the Alaskan Native Claims Settlement Act. The act returned 40 million acres of land to the native peoples of Alaska. Also, \$962.5 million in oil profits were set aside to be paid to them over several years. This decision caused the biggest change of all. Many Inuit became landowners for the first time.

In the old Arctic, the Inuit were masters of survival. Today, their world has changed so much that their traditional way of life is threatened.



Alaska Pictorial Service: photo by Steve McCutcheon

THE LANGUAGE OF SNOW

*People who aren't used to Alaska can easily get lost or caught in storms. But the Inuit survive because they know the Arctic so well. For example, they have many different words for "snow." **The Secret Language of Snow** explains some Kobuk words for snow. The Kobuk people live in northeastern Alaska in the forests along the Kobuk River.*

Snow means something very different to the Eskimos (or Inuits, another name for Arctic peoples) than it does to us. When we look outside and see snow, we call it just that: *snow*. Most of us don't realize there are many different kinds of snow, just as there are many different kinds of flowers and trees and clouds.

The Inuits recognize various kinds of snow, and they have given each particular kind its own special word in their own language. To us, these "snow words" may sound strange, or pretty and poetic. But to the Inuit, these words are full of meaning. These words tell stories.

...For example, the Kobuk word *siqoq* gives a one-word image of a kind of blowing, swirling snow. To describe the same scene, we might have to say: "Snow that looks like smoky haze as it is blown upward by the wind." Quite a difference!

continued

<div>❄</div> SNOW WORDS <div>❄</div>		
Words for snow	Type of snow	Effects
<i>annui</i>	falling snow	returns moisture to earth
<i>api</i>	snow on the ground	changes into many different types of snow
<i>pukak</i>	loose, unstable snow that can cause avalanches	insulates animals from the cold
<i>qali</i>	snow that collects horizontally on trees	breaks off old branches so young trees can grow
<i>kanik</i>	layer of frost formed when warm air freezes on a colder object, such as trees	shows the direction of storm winds
<i>upsik</i>	hard, wind-beaten snow	supports sleds, used for igloos
<i>siqoq</i>	swirling or drifting snow	confuses travelers
<i>kimoagruk</i>	snow drift	provides shelter in hollowed-out drifts; forms ponds when melted
<i>qamaniq</i>	bowl-shaped hollow around the base of a tree	makes it easy for predators to attack
<i>siqoqtoaq</i>	sun crust	makes caribou breaking through the crust easy prey; signals coming of warm days
Pronunciation guide		
<div> <i>a:</i> ah as in “saw” <i>e:</i> ey as in “prey” <i>ai:</i> i as in “hide” </div> <div> <i>i:</i> i as in “stick” <i>o:</i> o as in “bone” </div> <div> <i>u:</i> oo as in “tool” <i>au:</i> ow as in “how” </div>		

ESKIMO HOUSES

*Housing is very important in the extreme cold above the Arctic Circle. In his oral life history, Eskimo Waldo Bodfish, Sr., explains the sod houses he built when he was young. This excerpt is from **Kusiq: An Eskimo Life History from the Arctic Coast of Alaska.***

Afterward, I started to build sod houses. It's more comfortable when you live in a sod house. I use a frame of willows, big willows.... There's a lot of willows around, nice and straight when I cut those, enough to build a house. I frame it with big willows, long ones. Tie them together and put them in the ground. After I lash every willow, then I start to put the sod around it. You start it from the bottom all around and then go to the top, until you finish the top part of the house. Cover it all up and then you put another layer on top of that *ivruq*.¹ I cover it with a nice soft... what you call that? *Nuna*,² we call it *nuna*, *ivruq*. We use that soft ground, soft sod about four inches thick. You cut it in blocks behind the willows....

Boy, it's really warm that way. I cover it with soft snow all around, on top, everywhere. Boy, it's really warm there, that top snow, when you put *niñnuq* on top of it. That's what they call it in Eskimo. Soft snow, when you are putting it on top of the sod, is *niñnuq*. Inside that house you could dry everything.... I stand up inside, walk around without my parki. It's a big room. That's how I build my sod houses.

*In their book **Alaska: The Land and the People**, Evelyn Butler and George Dale describe sod houses in more detail. (The Eskimo word igloo means "house"; it does not refer just to snow and ice houses.)*

Many people believe that all Eskimos build igloos of blocks of ice and snow.... This is not true in Alaska.... Alaskan igloos are usually constructed of rectangular chunks of sod, carefully cut from the tough, grassy tundra. These igloos are similar to the sod houses built by the early pioneers on the prairies in the West. Partly underground, the igloo is ordinarily a single room reached through a long, low tunnel. Hunting and fishing equipment, frozen meat, driftwood, and blubber for fuel are stored in this tunnel, and sometimes a favored mother dog is allowed to have her pups in this sheltered entry. Whale bones... and driftwood are used to make the frame of the house.

A well-built igloo is covered with tightly packed sod, with only a couple of holes left for the wooden ventilator and a simple chimney. Windows of seal



This Alaskan sod igloo is similar to sod houses built by early prairie settlers.

Alaska Division of Tourism; photo by Ernest Schneider

¹ *ivruq*: block of sod

² *nuna*: ground, sod

continued



National Archives of Canada

An Eskimo constructs a temporary shelter from blocks of ice and snow.

gut are placed in the roof, as high as possible above the snow level. A fence around the window keeps people and stray dogs from falling through the gut-covered opening when the snow is drifted high and pathways run over the houses.... Doors must be hinged so they will swing inward; otherwise a person would be locked in by the mass of snow at the entrance.

Although permanent houses are made of sod, temporary shelters are made of ice and snow when Eskimos move inland. Again Waldo Bodfish, Sr., describes the process of building a snow house.

My uncle taught me lots of things. When I was a kid growing up at the reindeer herd, I learned how to build a snow house from my uncle and other people, just watching them. When we were going to move we always...built a snow house.

We always moved inland in January. The first thing when we were going to move [the men built] the snow houses. They fixed snow houses with a tent

inside. All you had to do was put your tent inside when you reached there. All the family men went up there....

When you make a snow house, you have to have a saw, a shovel, and a big knife. That's all you need. When you are fitting snow blocks in the wall, you fit it with a big knife. You put the blocks flush against the other blocks that you put on already. Then put soft snow between those blocks and fill it up from the outside. You have to put soft snow on every seam so it will be nice and cozy when you go inside. The wind or draft won't go in through the seam on the snow blocks you put up.

When you have no *taluk*³ for an entrance you have to build a new block of snow to cover it, put the hole in the center. And pull it in after you go in, close it. We put a rope in the center and pull it in when we close it. And in the morning, just push it out and go out.

³ *taluk*: a skin placed over the entrance to an igloo

SHAMANISM AND RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

*Anthropologist Wendell Oswalt describes two elements of traditional Eskimo religion in **Alaskan Eskimos**. Shamans are Inuit religious leaders. The Bladder Feast is one of the most important traditional celebrations.*

...Just as no clear line divided the natural from the supernatural sphere, so also no clear boundary separated shamans from ordinary persons....

The principal duties [of Alaskan Eskimo shamans] were to cure the sick, influence the weather, predict the future, and promote the general welfare by helping to make animals amenable¹ to capture. During his performance, a shaman usually sang songs which he had composed obtained from another shaman, or acquired by supernatural means. The tambourine-type drum which furnished accompaniment was played by the shaman or an assistant.

When a shaman danced, his face might be covered by a mask which had been made by him or by someone else under his direction. A performance often included sleight-of-hand, trances, and spirit flights. Most powerful shamans were male, but females did on occasion become shamans. The most successful shamans controlled diverse categories of spirits and were able to convince villagers of their powers over the years....An individual became a shaman after first seeing spirit beings in dreams or

when alone. He sought informal instruction from a practicing shaman and was likely to serve as a shaman's assistant before performing independently.

A shaman served his community and might in the process accumulate greater wealth than most persons. He was an individual with real authority and supernatural powers....

The Bladder Feast was an extremely complex ceremony. The bladders of game animals

were saved by each hunter, for it was in the bladder that an animal's inua² dwelled. The inflated bladders were painted and hung in the kashgees,³ to be honored during the Bladder Feast by rituals and offerings of food and water. The human participants



A group of Eskimos perform the Drum Dance.

purified themselves with smoke from wild celery stalks and by taking sweatbaths. The climax came when the bladders were taken down, deflated, and pushed through a hole in the ice so that the inuas could be perpetuated.⁴ This feast was the most elaborate means for honoring animals killed. It was also common and widespread to return animal skulls to the sea or throw animal bones in water to prevent their being chewed by dogs.

¹ *amenable*: ready to give in

² *inua*: spirit

³ *kashgee*: communal house, or sometimes a dance house

⁴ *perpetuated*: continued

BREATHING MY SONG

*Edmund Carpenter is an anthropologist who studied the people of the Arctic. In **Eskimo Realities**, he recalls what he discovered about the importance of songs.*



Andrew Tooyak ornaments ivory with a breath-powered drill.

The land is snow-covered most of the year. It never thaws. Winds exceed seventy miles-an-hour. Yet, when life is reduced to its barest essentials, art and poetry turn out to be among those essentials.

In Eskimo, the word “to make poetry” is the word “to breathe”; both [come from the word] *anerca*—the soul, that which is eternal: the breath of life. A poem is words infused with breath of spirit: “Let me breathe of it,” says the poet-maker and then begins: “I have put my poem in order on the threshold of my tongue.”

“ ‘ My Breath’—this is what I call this song,” said Orpingalik, “for it is just as necessary for me to sing as it is to breathe,” and then began: “I will sing this song/A song that is strong....”

“Songs,” he added, “are thoughts, sung out with the breath when people are moved by great forces and ordinary speech no longer suffices.¹ Man is moved just like the ice floe sailing here and there out in the current. His thoughts are driven by a flowing force when he feels joy, when he feels sorrow. . . . And then it will happen that we, who always think we are small, will feel still smaller. And we will fear to use words. But it will happen that the words we need will come of themselves. When the words we want to use shoot up of themselves—we get a new song.”

ABOVE: Alaska Pictorial Service; photo by Steve McCutcheon

¹ *suffices*: is enough

Partners in Life

*Julie married when she was thirteen years old. Such arranged marriages were an Eskimo tradition. In **The Cama-i Book**, Ann Vicks and her team of student writers record Eskimo women's memories about marriage.*

The traditional way of choosing a wife or husband varied somewhat depending on the parents, the children, the ages and talents of the children to be married. Sometimes the dealings were between parents only, with the children not having a choice in the matter; sometimes the children could choose a spouse if they chose wisely and sought the approval of the parents involved.

The woman should study the man's attributes. The man should not pick a girl by her looks. A woman is not to pick a man by his looks either.... Some parents used to pick a girl for a wife for their son even though she was young (about the age of eight)....

Getting Ready for Marriage

[Young couples] never really got married in those days. Their parents would pick a husband for [the



Alaska Pictorial Service; photo by Steve McCutcheon

An Eskimo girl crimps a sealskin mukluk (boot) with her teeth in traditional style. Today, many Eskimos use pliers instead of their teeth.

girls], but it all depended on how the boys worked. They judged by the way [the boys] worked. Sometimes the boys would be surprised when they found out that they had a wife to take care of. They also didn't let a young man choose his own wife....

Working Things Out

Before the girls got too old, they'd let them get married. As for the boys, they'd wait until they were

old enough. When a woman wanted to remarry, she could do it. But they never really got married in those days. The men would leave their wives when they thought there was something wrong between them. Sometimes they left when they couldn't get along. After all, they were not even married.... They would just get a husband or a wife and go away for a new life.

continued

An Inuit proverb says, "A good hunter has a good wife." In the challenging environment of the Far North, men and women must work together to survive.

Clothing and Family Life

In Inuit tradition, a woman's main responsibility is to care for her home and family. When the hunters return to the camp, the women clean and skin the game. Using only an *ulu*, or woman's knife, a woman can expertly skin seals, caribou, even whales.

A husband who hunts well makes his wife proud. But it would not be good manners to brag. So if a man kills more game than she can clean, his wife stands outside and complains, "Oh, life is hard. Someone has a man who brings home game like it was snow. Someone cannot clean all of this. A man does not care if someone dies from work." The other women then come to help her. In return, they receive a share of the meat.

The women use almost every part of the animal. Much of the meat is eaten

immediately. What remains can be smoked, dried, or placed in a frozen storage room for later use. The food, whether fresh or frozen, is shared with anyone who needs it.

Although men do much of the hunting, women also bring home food. During the short warm season, women gather berries, lichen, and other greens. They fish and hunt birds. If necessary, some women will even hunt seals.

continued



Alaska Pictorial Service; photo by Steve McCutcheon

A U.S. Public Health Service doctor examines a waterproof Eskimo parka made from seal intestines.

The seal skins are made into weatherproof clothes. Many hunters owe their lives to their well-made clothing. On long trips, a ripped seam or soaked mittens can be fatal. Even today, when modern factory-made parkas are available, hunters prefer the waterproof, lightweight clothing made by the women. Traditional jackets, trousers, and boots are cut without a pattern. The women use sinew for thread. Their needles are carved from bone or ivory.

Women also maintain the home. The Inuit have several types of dwellings. They might find shelter in a snow house, an earth hut, or a tent. Wherever the family lives, the wife sets up a cooking platform. Usually she puts a woven rack over the platform to dry wet clothes.

An Inuit woman has few cooking utensils. Her pots are made of stone. Her most important utensil is the oil lamp that gives heat and light. Caring for this lamp is always the woman's responsibility. At night, she sleeps next to the lamp so she can keep it from going out. She also puts boots, boot liners, and mittens on a special rack nearby. After hanging over the lamp all night, these items are dry the next morning.

When a man travels, he always takes a woman along to help manage the camp. She will help build a shelter, make meals for

the hunter and his dogs, and provide warm, dry clothing. If his own wife cannot travel, a hunter will often "borrow" a friend's wife for the trip. Often, the woman will go with him to visit friends or relatives in other places.

Family life is important to the traditional Inuit. Before a man can marry, he must prove that he can provide for a wife and children. Young women learn the skills they need to make a home. While Inuit parents often help their children find mates, forced marriages are rare. The parents know that in order to live together in this harsh land, couples must be compatible. A newly married couple usually lives with one set of parents for a few years. Eventually they acquire enough possessions to set up their own home.

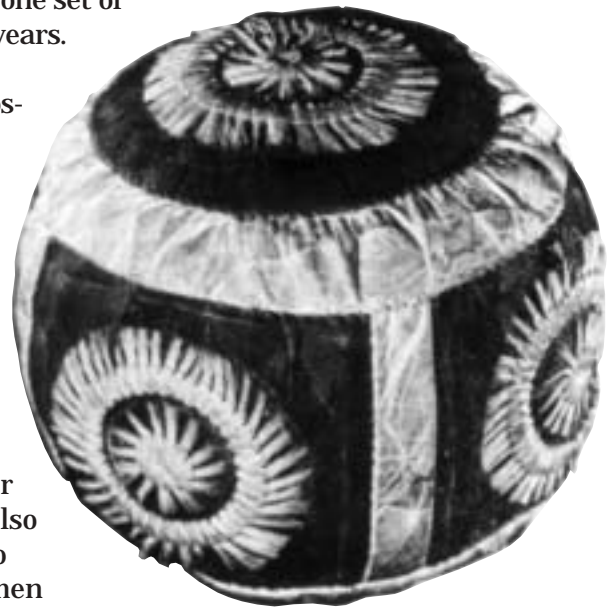
Children are a valued part of family life. An Inuit woman with no children of her own will often adopt an orphan. Her sister or cousin might also give her a child to raise. Native women carry their children in a pouch on their backs, hidden under the warm, loose-fitting parka.

Eskimo children have few responsibilities when they are young and receive little formal discipline. Children are neither

scolded nor spanked. If they are too naughty, they are teased and shamed into good behavior. Most children learn at an early age that it is important to get along with everyone.

As children grow, they learn many important skills. Many of these skills are learned through the games they play. Girls play games that teach them how to cook, sew, and store food. Boys often play hunting and fishing games.

Eventually a woman will be able to make a home wherever her husband goes. She will be a valued partner in the struggle to stay alive in the Arctic.



This soft, leather-covered ball is used in an Eskimo game similar to soccer or hackysack. The ball measures about five inches in diameter.

ESKIMO WEALTH

*At one point Miyax reflects on the “old Eskimo hunters” who admired people who had “the riches of life...intelligence, fearlessness, and love.” Waldo Bodfish, Sr., describes a rich hunter in **Kusiq: An Eskimo Life History From the Arctic Coast of Alaska.***

Shaglook was kind of a chief at Icy Cape. It was there that I first came to know him. He was a well-to-do Eskimo in those days. He was a good hunter. He caught lots of foxes and bought some foxes besides that, and he made a good living on furs. He even bought extra lead and black powder in case somebody was short of those. That’s what he always did when I was a kid.

I learned lots of things from old Shaglook. He always told me what to do on hunting trips. That’s how I learned from him—part of my experiences. He told me how to build a snow house real quick and things like that. He taught me to make a spear and a dart for birds. He had all kinds of equipment....

He was smart, that old Shaglook. He was a good hunter all around. And he was kind of a leader to the Eskimo people. He was kind of *umialik*, chief, around Icy Cape when I used to know him.

The editor of Mr. Bodfish’s narrative is Dr. William Schneider. Here Dr. Schneider comments on the term “umialik.”

The term *chief* is best characterized by the Inupiaq [northern Alaskan Eskimo tribe] expression *umialik*.

Umialik literally means “boat owner.” This term is used among the Inupiat to signify a person of wealth, one who can



Two Eskimo women display the wealth of fish they have dried for the winter.

Alaska Division of Tourism

support a lot of people, and therefore is capable of being considered a chief.

The term *umialik* was reserved for those men who had both power and wealth.... The two attributes are intricately linked. Power was derived from amassing and controlling wealth in the form of resources which could be shared, or used for payment, loans, or gifts.... Our western concept of “chief” assumes authority over others, but in the Inupiaq case, men *choose* to associate with the *umialik*.

His ability to provide for others contributed to his status and position in the community.

THE WOLF PACK

A wolf pack is a highly organized society, as Sylvia Johnson and Alice Aamodt describe in their book **Wolf Pack**.



most experience in hunting, defending territory, and other important group activities. The other pack members respect their positions and follow their leadership in almost all things...

If you are lucky enough to see wolf tracks in the wild, you will probably not see the footprints of a single animal. Wolves travel in groups; they hunt in groups, and they perform almost all the other activities of their lives in the company of fellow wolves. This is one of the most important facts that modern science has learned about wolves and one of the things that most clearly explains their way of life.

The *pack*, the basic unit of wolf social life, is usually a family group. It is made up of animals related to each other by blood and family ties of affection and mutual aid. The core of a pack is a mated pair of wolves—an adult male and female that have bred and produced young. The other members of the pack are their offspring: young wolves ranging in age from pups to two- and three-year-olds. Most packs have six or seven members, although some may include as many as 15 wolves.

Like members of all families, the individual wolves in a pack play different roles in relation to the others in the group. Just as in a human family, the parent wolves are the leaders of the pack. Scientists refer to them as the *alpha male* and *alpha female* to indicate their superior position within the *dominance hierarchy*, or pack social structure. (Alpha is the first letter in the Greek alphabet.)

The alpha male and female are the oldest members of the pack and the ones with the

The other pack members all have positions in the hierarchy inferior to those of the alpha

male and female. The young adult wolves, who are the grown-up offspring of the alpha pair, have their own special roles under the leadership of their parents. Some of them are able to “boss around,” or dominate, their sisters and brothers because they have established themselves as superior in some way... *Dominant* wolves in the pack usually have more aggressive and forceful personalities than their relatives of the same age.

The juveniles and pups...do not occupy permanent positions within the pack hierarchy. They all take orders from their parents and older brothers and sisters....During their play and other activities, they are constantly testing one another to find out who will eventually be “top wolf” in their age group.

As the young wolves grow into adulthood, they assume different roles within the pack. Some become what scientists call *biders*.¹ They stay in the pack, waiting for an opportunity to move up the hierarchy and take the alpha position themselves. This may happen when the alpha wolves die or become too old and weak to act as leaders.

Other young wolves, often the more aggressive ones, are *dispersers*. They leave the pack and become *lone wolves*, wandering and hunting by themselves. If they can find mates and available territories, they will become the founders of new packs.

¹The phrase *bide one's time* means “wait patiently.”

WOLF TALK

*Do wolves really have a language? Most naturalists believe that they do. In **The Wonder of Wolves**, author Sandra Chisholm Robinson describes how wolves communicate.*

How do wolves communicate with each other? Wolves use their eyes, ears, mouths, fur and tails (in fact, all of themselves) to share information and even feelings.

Let's try "talkin' wolf."

You want to play. But how do you communicate this to one of your pack members? Simple! You bow, that is, you **PLAY BOW**.

In a play bow, the wolf extends its two front legs and raises its hindquarters. Its tail is wagging, its ears are up, and it is wearing a

PLAY GRIN. A play grin is a big open-mouthed "smile." The wolf is often panting. When it jumps onto the pack member with whom it wants to play, the wolf will know that this grinning, panting animal does not want to fight.

A behavior that you may recognize from your own dog is the **GREETING CEREMONY**. When the leader returns to the pack or when the wolves wake up from a rest they will gather around the alpha animal¹ and lick or gently grasp its muzzle.² In this "ceremony" the wolves may be saying, "You are our leader, you are like a father to us," or they may be communicating, "We're hungry, let's hunt."

Let's imagine that you are an alpha wolf, and you encounter a strange wolf in your territory. Your territory must be protected from outsiders, because there is only so much food....How would you want to appear

to this intruding animal—small and weak or big and strong? If you appear big and strong, perhaps the stranger will leave without a fight.

With your whole body, you "tell" the stranger "to go away." You tense your legs and make yourself look as tall as possible.

The fur on your back and tail stands up. Your ears are up and forward and you stare directly at this intruder. Your lips are raised and you display your "weapons"—your teeth.

The stranger gets the message and leaves. You relax.



continued

¹ *alpha animal*: most powerful, dominant animal

² *muzzle*: nose, mouth, and jaws of a four-footed animal

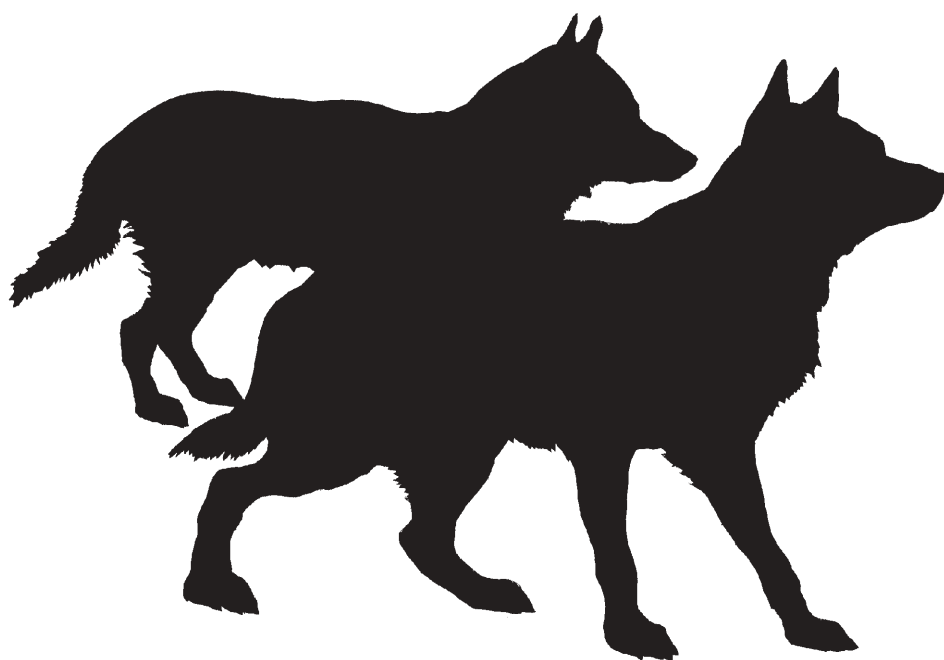
To avoid such “meetings,” wolves communicate by SCENT MARKINGS. They mark their territories by urinating on rocks, trees, etc. One sniff of a marked tree tells an “outsider” that this is not an odor of his family, and that he is trespassing.

Wolves also communicate by howling. Howling may occur day or night and allows pack members to locate each other when they are separated. It pulls the family together before and after a hunt, and serves as an alarm. It is a warning to outsiders; it alerts other wolf packs and lone wolves that this territory is taken. Scientists still do not know all the reasons that wolves howl—sometimes they seem to do it just for the joy of it!

*In **Wolf Pack**, Sylvia A. Johnson and Alice Aamodt provide more detail about the role of the tail in wolf communication.*

One of the clearest symbols of a wolf’s rank in a pack is the position of its tail. Unlike the tails of many breeds of dogs, a wolf’s long, bushy tail normally hangs down rather than curling up over its back. The alpha wolves in a pack, however, usually hold their tails high in the air instead of letting them droop.

In any pack, the wolf carrying its tail high like a hairy banner will almost always be the alpha male. The alpha female also holds her tail high, although usually not as high as that of her mate. Wolves occupying positions below the pack leaders keep their tails correspondingly low, especially in any confrontation with the alpha pair. The lowest-ranking members of the pack tuck their tails between their legs to express their inferiority to the wolves above them in the hierarchy.³



³ *hierarchy*: group organized into ranks, from highest to lowest

ENCOUNTERS

"The First White Men" retells the legend of a northern Canadian Indian tribe's first encounter with white explorers from lands to the south.

In old times, there were no white men around. Then a few boats arrived. The white men were on the boats. The boats moored¹ a ways out, never touching land. When the fog lifted, the boats would be there. They must've been eating fish, fishing from the other side of the boat where the Indians couldn't see them.

The men were monsters, really. They were white men, but also monsters. They sharpened their teeth on the wood-burning stove made of iron. The Indian people could hear this at night. They figured out what the sound was. . . .

Then one night the sound of their teeth stopped. The Indian people noticed this.

The white men swam to shore, and walked until they were at the edge of the Indian town. The dogs got nervous, they barked and snapped like they had lice. All the dogs.

Then the white men started barking and snapping with those sharp teeth sharpened on the iron stove. They rolled on the ground, snapping like they had lice. They thought what the Indian dogs were doing was an Indian greeting.

A few of the white men bit themselves almost to death and had to return to the boat. They swam back out.

These men were truly monsters, big and merciless, but that time they didn't get past the dogs who greeted them. Finally, they returned to the boat. Out in the fog, Indian people heard their teeth against the iron stove. The white men continued to fish for a number of days off the far side of their boat.

Then one day, when the fog lifted, the boat was gone. The few boats were gone. By the time I grew up into a man, white men were all over that Indian town, and every one of their houses had an iron stove in it.

Canadian explorers Joseph and James Tyrrell seem to have encountered a very different attitude in 1893, when they came across the home of an Eskimo family. Here is their account.

Toward evening we sighted, some distance ahead of us, the solitary lodge of an Eskimo. In front of the doorway stood a man gazing toward us and, behind and around, excited women and children were gathered. They were all quickly chased inside the tent and the doorway laced up securely. But the man remained outside, watching us intently. Our canoes were no doubt taken to be those of the *Itkilit* (the Indians) from the south—their hereditary enemies—so they expected nothing good from our coming.

Our own men, recalling the stories of the "savage Eskimos who would undoubtedly eat them," were scarcely less fearful than the solitary native who, as we drew near, was observed through our glasses to be nervous and trembling. As soon we had approached within calling distance, I stood up and shouted, "Chimo! Chimo! Chimo!" (Hello, Hello.) Before my words were finished the doorway of the tent was torn open and with great rejoicing and excited gestures all the inmates scrambled out to meet us at the shore as we landed.

The male Eskimo was a tall, well-built, stalwart man with a shrewd, intelligent face. With him were his two wives and six children. The tent was a large, clean-looking one made of deerskin parchment supported by stout spruce poles.

We were cordially invited inside and seats of deerskin were offered by the hostess, and venison placed before us, while we in return handed around presents. . . .

After a pleasant but brief visit, during which time we received some valuable information about the route, we parted. As we did so, Louis, my Iroquois steersman, with an expression of pleasant disappointment, exclaimed, "They are not savage, but real decent people."

¹ moored: anchored

THE PURCHASE OF ALASKA

Here are excerpts from Russia's agreement to sell Alaska to the United States. The sale took place in 1867 and was negotiated by Secretary of State William Seward. The cost was \$7,200,000, or about 2 cents per acre. Many U.S. citizens were critical of the purchase, calling Alaska "Seward's folly" or "Seward's icebox."

Convention for the Cession of the Russian Possessions in North America to the United States

Article I: His Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias agrees to cede¹ to the United States, by this Convention, immediately upon the exchange of the ratifications² thereof, all the territory and dominion now possessed by his said Majesty on the continent of America and in the adjacent islands, the same being contained within the geographical limits herein set forth.

Article II: In the cession of territory and dominion made by the preceding article are included the right of property in all public lots and squares, vacant lands, and all public buildings, fortifications, barracks, and other edifices which are not private individual property. It is, however, understood and agreed, that the churches which have been built in the ceded territory by the Russian Government, shall remain the property of such members of the Greek Oriental Church resident in the territory as may choose to worship therein.

Article III: The inhabitants of the ceded territory, according to their choice, reserving their natural allegiance, may return to Russia within three years; but, if they should prefer to remain in the ceded territory, they, with the exception of uncivilized native tribes, shall be admitted to the enjoyment of all the rights, advantages, and immunities of citizens of the United States, and shall be maintained and protected in the free enjoyment of their liberty, property, and religion. The uncivilized tribes will be subject to such laws and regulations as the United States may from time to time adopt in regard to aboriginal tribes of that country.

Article VI: In consideration of the cession aforesaid, the United States agree to pay at the Treasury in Washington...seven million two hundred thousand dollars in gold.

¹ *cede*: give or turn over to someone else

² *ratifications*: formal approvals

They All Had Two Names



Alaska Pictorial Service; photo by Steve McCutcheon

Eskimo schools teach traditional language and skills to give students a sense of their own culture.

*There is no one “Eskimo” language. Rather, there are a number of languages and dialects. In **The Wake of the Unseen Object**, journalist Tom Kizzia details some of the problems that arise as Alaskan schools struggle over the question of which language to teach.*

Sophie Kasayulie was a teacher’s aide. Her job at the school was to teach English to the youngest students, so they can understand the teachers.

“We’ve held onto the language more than other villages.... When I travel out of town, people think my kids are so cute because they speak in Yup’ik¹....”

...When Sophie and Willie [her husband] were children, the BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs] schools were taught in English. A few students, like the Kasayulies, prospered and went away to high school; many never got past the language barrier....

...Here was a village where children could still understand their elders. But between the influence of television and the increasing use of everyday English by young parents, Sophie said, people feared for the language of their ancestors. She was dismayed by the steady absorption into Yup’ik conversation of English hybrids² such as “mail plane-aq” and “TV-aq.”

I dropped in on a father.... It was important to have his son speak Yup’ik in school, he said. The family had moved...from a village on the Yukon [River], where children had already lost the ability to speak the language because all steamboats and miners passing through at the turn of the century had left too much white culture....

Then he...seemed to take the opposite line. The system wasn’t working. It was

fine for each village to have a school, but they needed to provide a stronger education in English. Graduating from bush schools³ were students who couldn’t read and write enough to pass a college exam, much less to succeed in the real world.

“But didn’t you say you wanted your son to grow up speaking Yup’ik?” I asked.

“I don’t want to discuss *technological* things in that language,” he said.... “That’s the mistake white people make. We need to speak English for those things. But if we can’t speak Yup’ik, we can’t understand our own value system and the things around us.”

Two worlds, two languages. “When I go down to the Kuskokwim with my boy, he has to know how to dig through the ice and put his traps in for blackfish.... Those kinds of things we need to talk about in Yup’ik.”

¹ *Yup’ik*: language of southern Alaska

² *hybrids*: combinations

³ *bush schools*: schools in the interior of Alaska, far away from cities

PIPELINES AND POLITICS

*In 1974 construction began on a large oil pipeline running from Prudhoe on the north coast of Alaska to Valdez on the south. In **Alaska: Indians, Russians, and the Rest**, Cora Cheney summarizes the controversy about the pipeline.*

Almost everybody has heard of Alaska's oil and the big pipeline that was built in the 1970s to carry that oil from the Arctic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean.

In 1967 so much oil was discovered at Prudhoe Bay that corporations fought to get leases to drill and sell it. In 1969 the State of Alaska sold \$900,000,000 worth of oil and gas rights to corporations. The Eskimos, Aleuts,¹ and Indians, Alaska's first people, had been raising their voices about their rights to their ancient land.

"This land is ours," many of them said. "Our people were here first, long before the Russians or the Americans came. This land has been taken from us, and as American citizens, we object!"... The Native people and their supporters were so determined that their traditional hunting and fishing lands should not be taken from them that government officials said, "Hold it! There will be no more sales or leases or land transfers until the Native land claims are settled."

Oil executives fumed in their air-conditioned offices, for this meant that no pipeline could be built to carry out the profitable oil until the Native claims were settled by Congress. Eskimos... met in angry groups, discussing the organizing for action.

The most unlikely set of partners that could be imagined, the oil people and Alaska Natives, were working for the same end. The Native people wanted their land assured to them for their own use, and the oil people wanted the Native rights settled so they could

begin pumping and piping oil. So the oil people put mighty pressure on Congress to settle the Native land claims....

Congress acted in a hurry and passed a law, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act. The Natives of Alaska, descendants of Stone Age migrants from Asia, were organized into twelve regional corporations. All

United States citizens with one-fourth or more Alaska Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut blood... were made members of a corporation. Over forty million acres of land and nearly ten million dollars would be paid to the corporations.

And now the way was cleared for the building of the controversial pipeline. Many American environmentalists, including Alaska Natives, objected vigorously to opening up the wild interior of Alaska. As a consequence, many safeguards for the animals and land were required of the pipeline builders.

Skilled and unskilled workers, women and men, came to Alaska to work in the killing cold of winter... to complete the ten-billion-dollar Alyeska pipeline....

In a boom as big as all the gold rushes combined, the pipeline was finally finished, and oil ran through it to be delivered to waiting tankers in the summer of 1977.

Was it all worth it? Did America need the oil? Were the animals and the land and the Native peoples helped or hurt by it all? Probably only Raven² knows—and who can understand what he is saying as he flaps around the oil rigs spouting his opinions?

The Natives of Alaska... were made members of a corporation.... And now the way was cleared for the building of the controversial pipeline.

¹ *Aleuts*: native tribes in the southern part of Alaska, especially in the Aleutian Islands

² *Raven*: mythical creator of Alaska

THE HUNTING OF WOLVES

*The issue of aerial wolf hunting in Alaska and other places is still controversial. Miyax regarded the wolves as her “brothers,” but some people see wolves as dangerous hunters. In this 1993 editorial from **The Des Moines Register**, Asta Bowen takes a strong stand against wolf hunting.*

My sister faces a firing squad. She and her extended family—elders and youngsters included—are members of a small, remote community that has been marked for death.

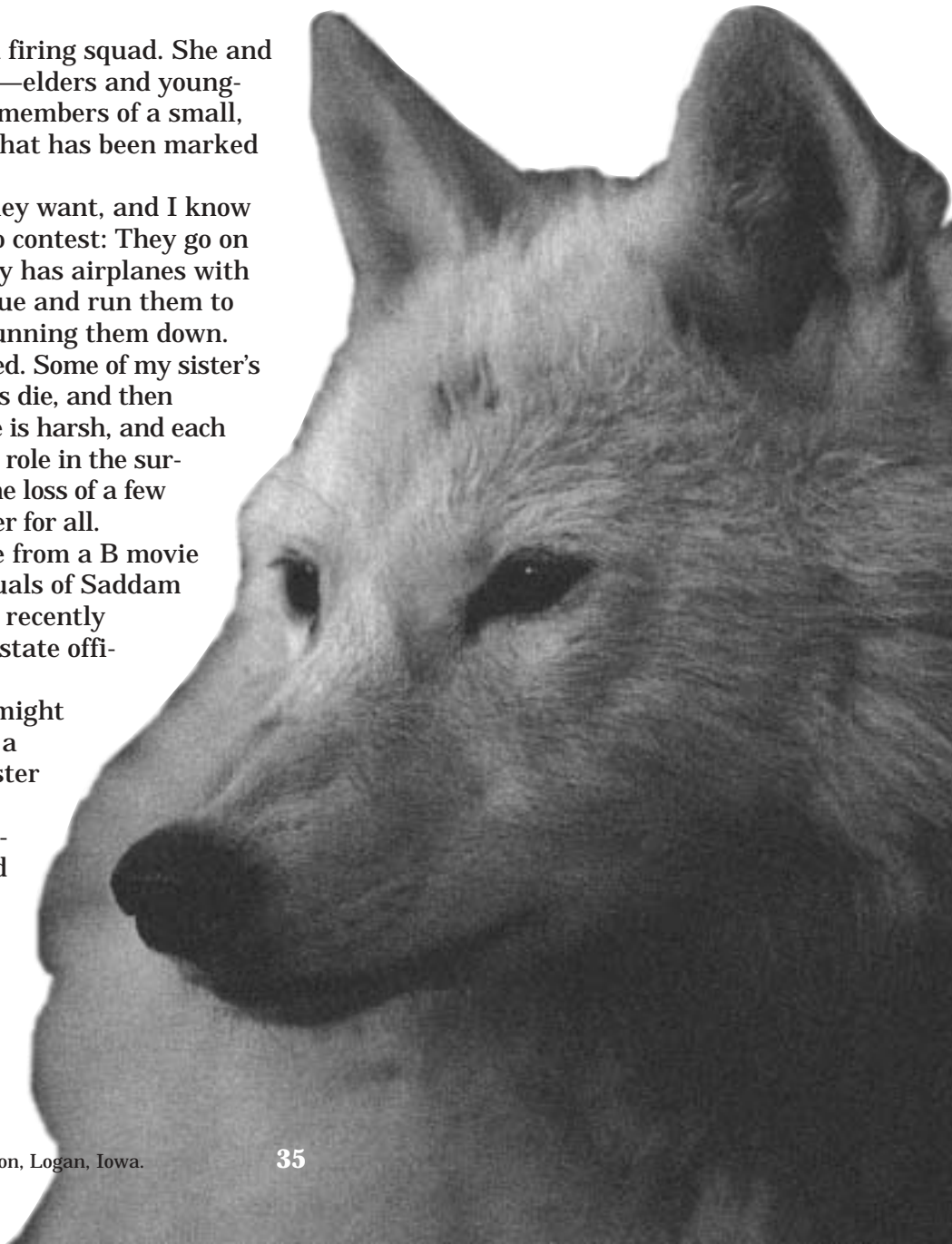
They can run if they want, and I know they will, but it is no contest: They go on foot, and their enemy has airplanes with which to track, pursue and run them to exhaustion before gunning them down.

Not all will be killed. Some of my sister's clan will watch others die, and then escape—but their life is harsh, and each member plays a vital role in the survival of the group. The loss of a few lives can spell disaster for all.

This is not a scene from a B movie or the training manuals of Saddam Hussein. It is a plan recently approved by Alaska state officials.

My sister, as you might have guessed, is not a human sister. My sister is the gray wolf. Member of a community that once served a pivotal role in the ecology of North America, she and her species have been pushed to the edge of civilization

continued



and the brink of extinction. By destruction of their natural habitat and food supply, and by systematic programs of elimination, her numbers have been reduced from millions to thousands; Alaska, Canada and northern portions of Minnesota are home to most of the survivors.

Now, after a 10-year moratorium,¹ the Alaska Board of Game again has approved aerial hunting of wolves. Remember the last scenes of "Never Cry Wolf," where the big bad hunters fly in with their high-powered rifles to make pelts of the story's four-footed heroes? According to a report from the New York Times News Service, Alaska's plan calls for wolves to be shot from the air by game officials; "sport" hunting is allowed for amateurs,² but they can only track the animals from the air, and must presumably land before making the kill.

The objective, say the Alaskan officials, is to increase the populations of moose and caribou in the state, creating "a wildlife spectacle" that will draw hunters and tourists (and one assumes, money) from all over the world.

In the next 10 years, the state wants one caribou herd of 5,000 to double, and another herd of 22,000 to reach 60,000 animals; all this, at a price of only 300 wolves. Biologists say it's not that simple, but the issue goes beyond ecology and into ethics.³

Call it hunter ethics or human ethics, the problem is the same: The wolves don't stand a chance. These last survivors of ravaged species, racing to live against horrendous odds, now can be terrorized across miles of Alaska wilderness before being executed, thank you, shot in the back by hunters who won't even work for their prey.

Yes, wolves kill; but they do not execute. Yes, wolves compete with us for food; but we have supermarkets. They do not. Sure, hunters like to be able to shoot a moose from the road and drag it straight to the truck; but is that sport?

The reason for the wolf kill becomes clear in the words of a spokesman for the Alaska wildlife department: "What's happening is some hunters feel they are being shortchanged. They think a few more moose and caribous ought to die by bullets instead of by teeth."

Unlike the trigger-happy hunter, there is a dignity in wolves. They have a warmth and a wildness that echo our own; their devotion to mate, to young and to pack are legendary; their spirit of play and sense of survival we would do well to imitate, not eliminate.

The wolf I call sister is shy and strong and almost never seen. She has seen the slaughter of her mate, the capture of her young, and she has run for her life over miles no truck can travel. She and her kind have been around for years, and they still sing to each other long into the night; the same will not be true, I suspect for Alaskans and their airplanes, no matter how many wolves they kill.

You hunters of caribou and moose: If you want the best meat, don't fire on my sister; follow her. She knows the way.

¹ *moratorium*: delay or suspension of activity

² *amateurs*: people who do something for pleasure, not for money

³ *ethics*: moral principles or values



Time and Cultural Change

*Most people in the Western world live by the clock and the calendar. However, Miyax found that "time in the Arctic was the rhythm of life." In **Nunaga: Ten Years of Eskimo Life**, Duncan Pryde describes how the Eskimo sense of time is changing.*

The Eskimos of today, young and old alike, are turning more and more to the whiteman's culture....Already the changes are apparent in numerous small ways, such as...the Eskimo engineer I saw on the Great Slave Railway preparing for bed by...setting his alarm for six o'clock in the morning. The spectacle of an Eskimo setting an alarm clock strikingly points up the cultural revolution that has swept [the] Eskimos in a single lifetime.

The time concept is the most important concept the Eskimo has been forced to accept, and represents the biggest change in his life style. The Eskimo hunter of old ate when he was hungry, slept when he was sleepy, lived a life attuned to his physical needs rather than to an artificial concept of time. He was concerned with the larger aspects of his environment, with days and seasons, the arrival of sandhill cranes and the departure of caribous, not with hours and minutes. He thought the whiteman a strange being indeed, a man who had to look at a clock to find out when he was hungry, when he was sleepy and should go to bed. It seemed strange that a whiteman would jump up in the morning when the alarm sounded, whether he felt rested or not.

Today that old Eskimo's children live by the clock. Before the school bell rings, they have risen by the clock to have breakfast. When the school bell sounds again at noon it tells them, just as it tells their white peers, that they are hungry and that it is time to be sleepy....The old Eskimo realizes that his people are living just like the whiteman, whose ways once seemed beyond understanding.

[Pryde goes on to summarize the changes in Eskimo life and culture.]

Yet less than a man's lifespan ago, the Eskimo was a Stone Age man, a nomadic hunter pursuing caribou with crude bow and arrows, taking seals from the sea with a remarkable but primitive harpoon, a people eking out an existence in as cruel an environment as one could find in the world. Only the Eskimo's remarkable ability to adapt to new conditions, new techniques and new tools has enabled him to survive for so long. And he continues to adapt.

Within a decade of the coming of the whiteman, according to the old people who lived through those changes and are still alive, the Eskimos abandoned a style of life that had been their tradition for centuries and adapted to a new life made possible by a better weapon, a new tool which they were quick to recognize and to adopt.

Between the Stone Age

and the Space Age



Alaska Pictorial Service; photo by Steve McCutcheon

*The Canadian Eskimos used to be able to support themselves by hunting. However, by the 1950s, caribou herds were becoming smaller. So the Eskimos began moving into villages. But there were not enough jobs in the villages, as John Husar explains in this 1986 article from the **Chicago Tribune**.*

The dearth¹ of jobs for increasingly skilled natives is emphasized on a three-day camping trip....At each stop we encounter men who claim special training—an electrician, a plumber, a teacher, a failed businessman. All now are jobless, with no hope of steady work unless they leave home.

"But I don't want to live anywhere else. I want to be home. I am an Inuit. I want to live with Inuits, the Inuit way," says a young man in his mid-20s who says he was an electrician....

"So they hunt—what else is there?" says our guide...."They try to live the old ways, to bring home meat, to remain Inuit...."

They are a generation caught between the Stone Age and the Space Age, forced to think in terms that many still resist....

..."We can't go back," says Guy Alikut, president of the Eskimo Point Chamber of Commerce. "We would not want to go back." [Alikut believes in] encouraging young people to move away if that is necessary to grow and develop....

"But very few move away," Shouldice says. "They feel lost in the south. It is too much of a change. They become homesick

for the land and their families, and they invariably come home. They want the freedom to hunt and fish, to live like Inuit. And so they go on welfare."

Immaroituk, a stocky, bronzed, shaggy man of 52, is from the old school, grandson of an Inuit chief....His guide service brings in outside income. He also is employed by the local cultural center to teach the old traditions—the language, legends and the ceremonial drum dancing as well as the hunting skills. His students are urbanized neighbors who in other times would have learned from endless days and nights on the ice.

"Children in school...never learn to follow the stars or the patterns of winds in the snows. They do not learn how the animals think and how to make the tools that subdue them. They do not learn even how to butcher a caribou, how to train a dog, how to protect themselves from storms and starvation. Now we have to teach them formally, or they will never learn, and the old ways will be lost."

And the old ways, he adds, "are what we are. They are our heritage. They make us unique."

¹dearth: lack

Child of the New Arctic

*Dr. Robert Coles' writing about "children of crisis" won him a Pulitzer Prize. In **Eskimos, Chicanos, Indians**, Dr. Coles explores how young Eskimos think about their futures. This is the story of twelve-year-old Jean. When the book was published in 1977, Jean lived in a coastal city where her father worked for the Coast Guard.*



[Jean] wishes, every once in a while, that her parents would one day become tired of the city, despite its advantages, and decide to return to the life of her ancestors. Other Eskimos, she knows, live such a life, more or less. They have a relatively clear-cut idea of what the future holds for them. In contrast, she is torn by various ideals or wishes.... "I was told by one teacher last year that after a while there won't be any Eskimos left in Alaska. I mean, we'll still be here, but we'll be like all the other people in America. I said I didn't think so, because some of our people live far from the city, and they won't want to live the way we do. But the teacher said that they won't stay in the villages too much longer; and besides, even the people there don't live the way they used to live, and if they didn't get money from the state of Alaska, and the planes didn't come with food, they'd be in trouble, and they'd all move here. My father says she is right. He says a lot of Eskimos are having trouble; they don't know how to live the way our grandparents did, but they don't know how to live like the white people do.

"I think my mother and father live the same way white people do. My father says he'd like a better job at the base, but they don't have any. My mother says she heard that when the pipeline is built, there will be more jobs for our people—because there will be offices and a refinery, maybe, and big places to store the oil. And the company wants to be friends with our people. Sometimes I hope the company will come here tomorrow, and take over the whole city. Then they'll make us equal with the white people, and they'll have jobs for everyone, and we'll be like the people on the television programs. They might even have a television program made right here in this city! But the next day I'll be talking with my friends, and we decide that we want to go out way beyond the city and find someplace where we could stay and be away from people here—except our mothers and fathers. All the older boys want is to ride motorcycles. All the older girls want is to fix their nails with polish, and get their hair set, so that they have curls for a day or two. In a year or two, that's what we'll be like, too, unless we get out of here! My mother says that when she goes to bed, she worries all the time about us. She's afraid that we'll end up in trouble. She's afraid we won't be Eskimos, and we won't be white people, and we'll always be taking orders from the navy people, or the people who come here from Fairbanks or Anchorage. I told her not to worry: we can escape; we can go to Hawaii! She doesn't like my jokes. I don't know what else to say."



VIEWPOINTS

About the Inuit Today

These quotes show how the Native peoples of the Arctic are protecting their culture.

Like our ancestors, the Inupiat¹ today are trying to live in harmony with the earth. We love our way of life—our seasons, the weather, the land, and the animals of the sea and tundra.

Although I am only ten years old, I know that I will return each spring to hunt for seals on the ice and take fish from the waters of Sadie Creek. Even though more changes will come, I will continue to live as my parents have taught me—the Iñupiaq way.

—**Reggie Joule**
Arctic Hunter

When outsiders ask Kuskokwim Eskimos how their own culture can be strengthened, they commonly say that this goal can be achieved if they are left alone. This response



Snowmobiles are one sign of the changes that have come to the Arctic.
Alaska Pictorial Service; photo by Steve McCutcheon

reflects a deep-seated and often bitter resentment of American intrusion on all aspects of their lives. Yet on further inquiry one soon learns that to be left alone does *not* mean that they seek an end to most social and economic support programs, health services, or wage-earning opportunities....To many Eskimos being left alone means the capacity to live by their own values if they so desire, including a return to their spiritual life of old, to exploit local resources free from outside intrusion, and above

all else to have full and lasting control over their land. They are tired of being told by outsiders what to do and how to do it. They... resent being the victims of subtle or blatant racism.

—**Wendell H. Oswalt**
Bashful No More

Some people say that a man without education might as well be dead. I say, a man without identity, if a man doesn't know who he is, he might as well be dead. This is why it's a must that we include our history and our culture in our schools before we lose it all. We've lost too much already.

—**Margaret Nick**
testimony before the Senate,
1969

People in the South—and whites in the Arctic—who decry the passing of the

¹The Inupiat live in northern Alaska. Their language is Iñupiaq.

old ways and customs in the North forget one vital factor—Eskimos are human beings....Most Eskimos vastly prefer to live in a settlement, to live where they have the excitement of community life, where they have daily contact with friends and relatives, where they have movies and a dance hall and a big, well-stocked store....None wants to return to a life where he must live out on the land, isolated from neighbors and kin....

—**Duncan Pryde**
Nunaga: Ten Years of Eskimo Life

The Alaskan Eskimos are members of the “Fourth World”—indigenous peoples locked into nations they can never hope to rule. Along with the Australian aborigines... and the tribal peoples of the Soviet Union...and Southeast Asia, the Eskimo people are minority populations within their own lands. Once the only inhabitants of their homelands, they have been overwhelmed by settler populations.

The past 100 years or so have seen the Eskimo people taken from nomad camps to villages and cities, their family ties strained, and an old but effective technology replaced by the new technologies of the dominant society. Subsistence foods—such as berries and greens and the flesh and

oil of fish, birds, and land and sea mammals—are being abandoned for spaghetti, candy bars, and soda pop. Hunters have discarded their teams for the “iron dog”—the snowmobile.

—**Douglas A. New**
principal, Tukurngailnguq School, Stebbins, Alaska

In the 1960s, unknown to the Inupiat Eskimos at Point Hope, the government conducted secret atomic experiments to learn how nuclear contamination spreads in an Arctic environment. After dumping atomic nuclear debris from the Nevada test site, the government then buried thousands of pounds of radioactive soil in the area. The site was abandoned, unmarked by any warning signs; the Inupiat who live and hunt in the area were never told. In 1992, declassified documents finally revealed the danger. Native leaders no longer trust the government scientists and are working with Greenpeace to establish their own test and monitoring programs....

—**Indigenous Women's Network**
Point Hope Nuclear Project

My routine in the village centered on daily hunting activities. In the course of a year I participated in hundreds of hunts....

...The Eskimos correct foolish errors by teasing,

and I made many errors. On occasion I grew impatient with this and became sullen. Or I felt lonely and homesick and retreated from their kindness.

But as time passed I began to see that my Eskimo companions were giving me the most important lessons of my life. I developed tremendous respect and admiration for them, feelings I still hold strongly. They taught me to become self-sufficient, to live off the land and sea, to respect the wisdom of the old, to appreciate the knowledge of other people, to persevere in all endeavors, to laugh when things go wrong, and to find deep pleasure in sharing.

—**Richard K. Nelson**
Shadow of the Hunter

[Native people's] determination to retain their own cultures and their own land does not mean they wish to return to the past; it means they refuse to let their future be dictated by others.

—**Thomas Berger**
Village Journey

To Build a Fire

The excerpt from Jack London's story gives a realistic picture of the dangers of Arctic cold.

When the man had finished [eating], he filled his pipe and took his comfortable time over a smoke. Then he pulled on his mittens, settled the earflaps of his cap firmly about his ears, and took the creek trail up the left fork. The dog was disappointed and yearned back toward the fire. This man did not know cold....But the dog knew; all its ancestry knew, and it had inherited the knowledge. And it knew that it was not good to walk abroad in such fearful cold. It was the time to lie snug in a hole in the snow....

[The man broke through the ice and] wet himself halfway to the knees before he floundered out to the firm crust....

He worked slowly and carefully, keenly aware of his danger. Gradually, as the flame grew stronger, he increased the size of the twigs which he fed it. He squatted in the snow, pulling the twigs out from their entanglement from the brush and feeding directly to the flame. He knew there must be no failure. When it is seventy-five below zero, a man must not fail in his first attempt to build a fire—that is, if his feet are wet. If his feet are dry, and he fails, he can run along the trail for half a mile and restore his circulation. But the circulation of wet and freezing feet cannot be restored by running when it is seventy-five below. No matter how fast he runs, the wet feet will freeze the harder.

Voices from Other Works

*Compare these characters and situations to the people and events in **Julie of the Wolves**.*

There in the fading light stood a great gray wolf. The wolf's rounded ears were forward, his furry tail waved gently from side to side and his mouth opened in what almost looked like a smile.

The boy did not move, or blink or even take a breath. Kwaht-yaht met the wolf's yellow stare. And in the eyes of the wolf the boy saw a great hunter who fed his family, a chief who kept peace in his own tribe, and a father who protected and taught and played with his children. Kwaht-yaht returned his wild brother's smile.

—*"The Mask of the Wolf"*
by Sandra Chisholm Robinson

Kakivik stood there briefly, staring at the animal he had just killed, then looked over the land to where the others lay. "*Quyanaq*," he spoke softly, a single word that expressed thanks for what they had been given.

They had killed six [caribou] and would have taken more—all of them—had they been able. Hunting, after all, was life for these men. But there was something beyond this, for life was hunting as well. Perhaps this was why they sometimes killed beyond their need, so powerful inside them was the urge to hunt. And from the elders they had learned that what was killed would become living flesh again through reincarnation of its soul.

—*The Moon for Bleaching Skins*
by Richard K. Nelson

Before the ledge door I stop, afraid, I wonder if my people will remember me. I wonder—"Am I Indian or am I white?" I stand before the door a long time. I hear the ice groan on the lake, and remember

the story of the old woman who is under the ice, trying to get out, so she can punish some runaway lovers. I think to myself, "If I am white, I will not believe that story; if I am Indian, I will know that there is an old woman under the ice." I listen for a while, and I know that there is an old woman under the ice.

—*Blue Winds Dancing*
by Tom Whitecloud

"Has he showed up yet?" she wanted to know.

Jake didn't have to ask who "he" was. "Don't worry," he told her gently, "I bet he'll show up any minute now."

"Maybe not. He's part wolf," she reminded him. "It could be he just reverted, went back to the wild. I've heard of it happening. That's why some racers wouldn't have a wolf-dog cross in their teams no matter how fast he could run."

—*The Hour of the Wolf*
by Patricia Calvert

"It is as I told you," [the Eskimo hunter] Ootek said. "The caribou feeds the wolf, but it is the wolf who keeps the caribou strong. We know that if it were not for the wolf there would soon be no caribou at all, for they would die as weakness spread among them."

Ootek also stressed the fact that, once a kill had been made, the wolves did no more hunting until the supply of food was completely gone and they were forced by hunger to go back to work.

—*Never Cry Wolf*
by Farley Mowat

continued

A bobcat caterwauled from far, far away.
A fox yipped. Billie Wind lifted the mats
and sat up.

"I hear you, animals," she said. "You
talk very well. It's just that I don't under-
stand you. But I know you are telling me
something important. Something very,
very important." She found her star in the
domed sky. "I will listen until I know
what it is.

"I resolve here and now not to leave the
beautiful pa-hay-okee until I can tell
Charlie Wind what you are saying."

—***The Talking Earth***
by Jean Craighead George

"I like Eskimo talk," Bartok said. "White
talk goes along smooth like a racing sled
on an icy trail. Then there's a big loud
bump that jars the teeth in your mouth."

"This English is hard to learn," I said.
"Words like 'write' and 'right' sound the
same but aren't. I still think in Eskimo.
Then I translate the Eskimo words into
English. My teacher wants me to learn to
think in English first and not have to
translate."

Bartok frowned. "If that happens you
will be a white girl, not an Eskimo girl.
This, I do not like much. What are you now,
Eskimo or white? One thing or the other?"

—***Black Star, Bright Dawn***
by Scott O'Dell

"The poor Eskimos!" [the pilot said.]

"They've had an awful time of it. Long ago
they carefully worked out a way of life as
seal hunters and igloo builders in a quiet
frozen world."

"Why did they change?" asked Matthew.

"Because suddenly the war came, and
we flung a whole new, noisy, crazy world
at them, and now we wonder why they
have such trouble getting used to it.
When this place, Frobisher,¹ was built, a
lot of Eskimos gave up hunting and
stopped living off the land and came and
helped us win the war at our request.
Now the jobs they used to do have mostly
vanished....We are the ones who helped to
cause their troubles. No one knows how
it'll end."

—***Frozen Fire***
by James Houston

Then Annette spoke to Grandmaw. "The
English school has poison—it looks down
on our people and their values. I feel it
when I'm there. It makes me angry. It
makes me want to run away and hide.
But anger only makes the poison stronger
and hiding makes life smaller. Hiding
leads nowhere except to more hiding....So
I think I shouldn't forget the English
school. But as I take what it has to offer,
I'll try to put it to good use. I'll remember
what you taught me today."

—***A Woman of Her Tribe***
by Margaret A. Robinson

¹Frobisher is on Baffin Island.

Poems from the Far North

*Compare the themes in these poems with similar themes in **Julie of the Wolves**.*

The Last Wolf

the last wolf hurried toward me
through the ruined city
and I heard his baying echoes
down the steep smashed warrens
of Montgomery Street and past
the few ruby-crowned highrises
left standing
their lighted elevators useless
passing the flicking red and green
of traffic signals
baying his way eastward
in the mystery of his wild loping gait
closer the sounds in the deadly night
through clutter and rubble of quiet blocks
I heard his voice ascending the hill
and at last his low whine as he came
floor by empty floor to the room
where I sat
in my narrow bed looking west, waiting
I heard him snuffle at the door and
I watched
he trotted across the floor
he laid his long gray muzzle
on the spare white spread
and his eyes burned yellow
his small dotted eyebrows quivered
Yes, I said. I know what they have done.

—Mary Tall Mountain

My Little Son

My little son,
you will put a whale harpoon
and a sealing spear into your canoe,
not knowing what use you will make of them.

—Anonymous

Ijajee's Story

When you are traveling
and find yourself alone,
it is not wise to think of yourself as ignorant.
Because when you travel alone
you have no one to depend on
but yourself.
And would you trust someone
you thought to be ignorant?
Just say, "I do not understand."
These things that you do not
understand...
put them into a bag
and carry them over your shoulder.
As time goes on,
the bag will get empty.

—Charlotte DeClue

Suggested Reading and Viewing List

*If you enjoyed reading **Julie of the Wolves**, you might want to explore other works about traditional cultures. The following list offers some suggestions for further reading and viewing.*

Novels

The Abduction by Mette Newth. Based on the actual kidnapping of Inuit Eskimos by European traders in the 17th century, this story describes both the violence and cruelty inflicted upon the Inuit and the beauty of traditional Eskimo life. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1989. [RL 7 IL 9-12]

Black Star, Bright Dawn by Scott O'Dell. A young Eskimo girl takes her father's place in the most challenging dogsled race in the world. Fawcett, 1988. [RL 5 IL 6-12]

The Call of the Wild by Jack London. The dog Buck is stolen from his comfortable home and forced to be a sled dog in the Klondike, where he finds both abuse and love. Macmillan, 1903. [RL 7 IL 7-11]

Dogsong by Gary Paulsen. Inspired by an Eskimo shaman, Russel takes a dog team and sled to escape the modern ways of his village and to find his "song" of himself. Puffin, 1985. [RL 7 IL 5-9]

Drifting Snow: An Arctic Search by James A. Houston. As a child, Elizabeth is taken from her Inuit parents by whites to save her from tuberculosis. Later, Elizabeth returns to the Arctic and stays with an Inuit family while she searches for her family and culture. Macmillan, 1992. [RL 5 IL 5-9]

Frozen Fire: A Tale of Courage by James Houston. Matthew and his Eskimo friend, Kayak, set out on a dangerous journey to rescue Matthew's father, who becomes lost in the Arctic during a geological mission. Based on the actual experience of a boy lost in the Canadian Arctic. Atheneum, 1977. [RL 6 IL 7-12]

Mother Earth, Father Sky by Sue Harrison. Rich in cultural and anthropological detail, this novel offers an astonishing view of early Alaska as it tells the story of a young woman who faces the brutality of her world with courage, determination, and joy. Avon, 1990. [RL 8 IL 9+]

My Side of the Mountain by Jean Craighead George. Teenager Sam Gribble runs away from his New York home to live in the wilderness. While there, he makes a hollowed-out tree his home, trains a falcon, and makes his own fishing and trapping equipment. Dutton, 1959. [RL 5 IL 5-9]

The Sign of the Beaver by Elizabeth George Speare. Left alone to guard the family's wilderness home in 18th-century Maine, a boy is hard-pressed to survive until local Indians teach him their skills. Houghton Mifflin, 1983. [RL 6 IL 5-9]

Water Sky by Jean Craighead George. While in Alaska searching for his uncle, a young boy joins an Eskimo whaling crew and learns the importance of whaling to the Eskimo culture. Harper and Row, 1987. [RL 7 IL 6-12]

When the Legends Die by Hal Borland. Tom, a Ute Indian, searches for his own identity both in the traditions of his tribe and as a rodeo rider living in the white culture. HarperCollins, 1964. [RL 7 IL 7-10]

A Woman of Her Tribe by Margaret A. Robinson. Annette moves from her Nootka village to Vancouver and adapts

continued

to the city. Then she returns to the village and confronts her confusion over being both Nootka and white. Scribner's, 1990. [RL 7 IL 7-12]

Nonfiction

Eskimos by Jill Hughes. A highly readable and lavishly illustrated examination of Eskimo life and culture, with sections on igloos, survival, travel, and recreation. Gloucester Press, 1978. [RL 5 IL 4-8]

Happily May I Walk: American Indians and Alaska Natives Today edited by Arlene Hirschfelder. This outstanding book challenges stereotypes of Native Americans and shows the differences among Native cultures. Fawcett, 1990. [RL 6 IL 6+]

Houses of Snow, Skin and Bones by Bonnie Shemie. An illustrated account of shelters in the Far North explains how Eskimos build their homes with snow, stones, skins, bones, and sod. Tundra Books, 1989. [RL 5 IL 3-7]

The Inuit by Elizabeth Hahn. This highly readable account of Eskimo history, life, and culture discusses the changes brought about in Eskimo culture by contact with whites. Rourke Publications, 1990. [RL 5 IL 5-8]

Never Cry Wolf by Farley Mowat. In this story, the author explodes many old myths that wolves are savage killers. Bantam, 1963. [RL 7 IL 7+]

Wolf Pack: Tracking Wolves in the Wild by Sylvia A. Johnson and Alice Aamodt. This brief, illustrated book presents wolves in their natural habitat and shows how scientific research on wolves is conducted in the wild. Lerner Publications, 1985. [RL 6 IL 5-9]

Oral Histories and Legends

Arctic Memories by Normee Ekoomiak. Remembrances of Inuit ways learned from the author's grandfather, the book

includes family life, play, beliefs and customs, and interaction with the environment. Holt, 1992. [RL 3 IL 3-7]

The Cama-i Book edited by Ann Vicks. These accounts are written entirely by high school researchers who have interviewed people about virtually every aspect of Eskimo life. Anchor, 1983. [RL varies IL 7-12]

Never Cry Wolf by Farley Mowat. One of the world's best-known naturalist writers describes an Arctic summer he spent watching and tracking the activities of a wolf family. Little, Brown, 1963. [RL 7 IL 7+]

Northern Tales: Traditional Stories of Eskimo and Indian Peoples edited by Howard Norman. Like *A Kayak Full of Ghosts*, this is a collection of fairy tales and legends. Pantheon, 1990.

Tundra edited by Farley Mowat. These firsthand accounts tell of exploring Alaska and Canada in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. Peregrine-Smith, 1989.

Poetry

Dancing Teepees: Poems of American Indian Youth edited by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve. These poems come from both the oral traditions of Native Americans and contemporary tribal poets. Holiday House, 1989.

I Breathe a New Song: Poems of the Eskimo edited by Richard Lewis. A collection of traditional and modern Eskimo poetry. Simon and Schuster, 1971.

Songs of the Dream People: Chants and Images from the Indians and Eskimos of North America edited by James Houston. The book includes chants from various Indian tribes, including the Eskimos, and information about the songs, dreams, masks, and other art objects. Atheneum, 1972.

continued

Winter News by John Haines. This collection of poems is by a non-Eskimo who left California to live in a cabin in Alaska. His writings record his observations about the Eskimos' world. Wesleyan University Press, 1966.

Short Stories

"Blue Winds Dancing" by Tom Whitecloud. The narrator is torn between the values of his Indian heritage and those of the white culture. By returning home, he rediscovers the rhythm of the dance and the beauty of sharing a mood with his people.

"The Mask of the Wolf" by Sandra Chishom Robinson. After his grandchildren discover an old wolf mask in the attic, an aging Eskimo man recalls how his father used the wolf as an example of pride, strength, and family loyalty to teach him the "old ways."

"Scars of Honor" by Dorothy Johnson. There was a time when it was a good thing to be an Indian. But Charley Lockjaw was almost cheated of his honors because he lived at the wrong time.

Shadow of the Hunter: Stories of Eskimo Life by Richard K. Nelson. This collection of stories is based upon the author's experiences with hunters and their families in an Eskimo village. University of Chicago Press, 1980.

"To Build a Fire" by Jack London. A man traveling in the Arctic with only a dog tries to battle the extreme cold.

Videos

The Bear. An orphaned bear cub and a wounded grizzly trek over dangerous mountains and through icy rivers to escape their worst enemy—humans. RCA/Columbia Pictures Home Video. (VHS, 92 min., color)

Dances with Wolves. Lt. John Dunbar is assigned to an abandoned fort near a Sioux tribe. Dunbar and the Sioux overcome their mutual distrust and the language barrier to become friends. Orion Home Video. (VHS, 181 min., color)

Nanook of the North. This silent documentary focuses on Nanook, an Itivimuit hunter, as he struggles to survive in a hostile environment. This film also depicts Eskimo family life, igloo construction, a fishing expedition on the ice floes, and a walrus hunt. Home Vision or International Historic Films, Inc. (VHS, 55 min., B&W)

Never Cry Wolf. A government biologist working alone in the Arctic faces difficulties as he studies the habits of wolves. Based on Farley Mowat's book. Walt Disney Home Video. (VHS, 105 min., color)

White Fang. During the Alaskan Gold Rush, Jack seeks his father's claim and befriends the solitary wolf dog called White Fang. Based on Jack London's classic novel. Walt Disney Home Video. (VHS, 109 min., color)

Using Latitudes in Your Classroom

*The following discussion topics and activities are suggestions for incorporating pieces from **Latitudes** into your curriculum. Most suggestions can be adapted for independent, small group, or whole class activities. In addition, the list includes activities that can be done before, during, and after reading the novel. The variety of choices allows you to modify and use those activities that will make **Julie of the Wolves** meaningful to your students.*

About the Author

1. Ask students whether being from the “lower forty-eight” states would be a disadvantage to an author writing about Eskimo life. Does knowing that George has actually been to the Arctic influence students’ reaction to *Julie of the Wolves*? How important is firsthand knowledge to a writer? Can George, who is not Inuit, accurately depict Inuit culture?
2. Compare journalism and novel writing. Newspaper writers rely on close observation and accurate detail to make their stories believable. How are news stories different from a novel like *Julie*? How are they similar to a novel?
3. Students who want to find out more about Jean Craighead George can read about her in *Something About the Author* and *Speaking for Myself*.
4. If your students would like to write to Jean Craighead George, send their letters and a self-addressed envelope to

Jean Craighead George
20 William St.
Chappaqua, NY 10003

Critics’ Comments

1. Invite students to write their own critical statements about *Julie of the Wolves*. Remind them to support their opinions with evidence from the book. Then post unsigned comments written on large sheets of paper. The class can discuss the different views.
2. The reviewer for *Children’s Book Review* writes that *Julie* would be a better novel if it followed “an orderly exposition of events.” Ask students to discuss how the book would be different if George had done as the reviewer advised. Students could then write a brief essay explaining their preference.
3. The reviewer for *Best Sellers* writes that *Julie* “will die on the shelf” unless librarians and teachers take action. Invite students to discuss what they believe the reviewer means. Why does the reviewer believe this will happen? Will the book be read only by the most “omnivorous bookworm”?
4. Some of the reviewers stress the “reality” and “believability” of *Julie*. As students read, ask them to keep a record of the details that contribute to these characteristics.

continued

Voices from the Novel

1. After students have read the book, ask them to write about how one quote or a group of quotes relate to one of the novel's themes.
2. Encourage students to share the quotes they have selected. Help them find common themes among their choices.
3. Ask students to write about why they selected one or more quotes.

A Time in History

1. Note with students the historical events on the timeline that provide the setting for the novel. Ask students what they know about these events. Encourage interested students to find more information in texts or resource books. Ask students to imagine how these events might directly affect the life of a young boy or girl and his or her family.
2. Discuss with students whether George used background information about Alaska effectively in *Julie*.
3. Since the 1970s, the oil industry has had a profound effect on Alaska and on the Eskimo culture. Ask students to investigate the Alaskan oil industry. They might debate whether the Alaskan oil pipeline should have been built. Other questions to consider might be: Has the pipeline been good or bad for Alaska and for the United States as a whole? How harmful was the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill?

The Geographical Picture

1. As students read, ask them to locate on the map towns and other points of interest mentioned in the novel. Students might investigate the importance of one of these places to the history and development of the Inuit culture.
2. Discuss the location of the novel. Ask students to keep a record of their thoughts about how the isolation of the Alaskan tundra and of its small settlements might have affected family life, leisure activities, and community life.
3. The author frequently refers to the "rhythms" of life and how the Eskimos live in tune with a natural order. Ask students to imagine a similar novel in a different setting (jungle, desert, prairie, even a large city). How might the rhythms of those settings be different from the Arctic?

The Inuit and Their Land

1. Before reading, ask students to list what they already know about Eskimos and Alaska. Then have students list any questions they have about these topics. As they read, students can record answers they find. They might use a three-column chart: What I Know, What I Want to Find Out, and What I Learned.
2. If you teach this selection before students read the novel, each student could be made responsible for one of the characteristics of Eskimo life described. As they read, each student can trace George's depiction of that characteristic throughout *Julie* and summarize his or her findings.

continued

3. After students have read the novel, ask which of the features of Eskimo culture described are included in *Julie*. In a brainstorming session, students can call out how these features are included in *Julie* while the teacher or a student lists them on the board.
4. Invite students to compare and contrast Eskimo culture with a culture they know. For example, students could examine how marriage customs differ or examine differing attitudes toward the extended family.

The Language of Snow

1. As students read the novel, have them find places where Julie uses knowledge of her environment to survive. After they have read the book, help them compare the dangers in Julie's environment to those in their own environments. They might make a chart, with one column listing what Julie needed to survive in her environment and another listing what they need to survive in their environments.
2. Invite students to investigate the ecology of tundras. As a class project, students can research questions such as where tundras are located, what kinds of plant and animal life they support, and how they developed.
3. Ask students to assemble a collage of images depicting a faraway natural environment (e.g., a desert, the rain forest, the ocean, the rural Midwest), then attempt to write a brief description of that place that would enable the reader to form a mental picture of it.

Eskimo Houses

1. Invite students to discuss how closely these descriptions of Eskimo houses compare to popular images of "igloos." Ask students to express their views about how these popular images developed.
2. Each student can be asked to investigate other types of houses, with emphasis on how the house type is an outgrowth of natural or other conditions. The student can find pictures, then write accompanying text describing the house, how it is typically built, and how that kind of house "works" in that environment. Students can also be invited to build models of their chosen house type.
3. Ask students to trace how Julie/Miyax meets her needs for shelter throughout the novel. How successfully does she adapt to her environment? If students had to spend a night outside, how would they meet their need for shelter?

Shamanism and Religious Beliefs

1. As students read, ask them to note references to traditional Eskimo beliefs. After students have read these selections, discuss how accurately George portrays traditional Inuit religion. Since George is not Inuit, can she truly understand the Inuit culture?
2. Invite students to investigate shamanism in other parts of the world. What are some beliefs about shamans? What are some of the customs and rituals associated with shamanism?

continued

3. Invite students to offer opinions about the origins of shamanism. Why is shamanism practiced in regions like the Arctic? What beliefs among the people (e.g., about the spirit world, about relations between animals and humans, about the environment) give rise to shamanism?
4. Invite students to investigate the role of dance in religious rituals throughout the world.

Breathing My Song

1. Before reading this selection, ask students about times when they might use special language. Help them identify situations where ordinary language isn't enough and what kinds of language are appropriate to those situations. Students might consider situations such as great sports victories, as well as funerals and other ceremonial occasions.
2. Encourage students to find some of Julie's songs. Discuss what her songs are about. Invite them to speculate about whether Julie would agree with Orpingalik.
3. Help students analyze whether any elements of their culture resemble Inuit songs.

Partners in Life

1. Before reading the selection, ask students what it means to be partners in a marriage. After students have read the piece, ask them if their ideas have changed.
2. Discuss with students the Eskimo attitudes toward marriage portrayed in the novel. How realistic is it that Julie would be paired with Daniel by the agreement of their parents? that Julie would flee the marriage? that she cuts and chews the hide?
3. Encourage students to investigate traditional marriage customs in their ancestors' cultures, perhaps by interviewing an older person who remembers those traditions. They might also investigate marriage customs and beliefs in other cultures.

Eskimo Wealth

1. Ask each student to write a personal essay called "The Riches of Life" in which the student describes what he or she has learned from a parent, an older sibling, or a trusted adult. As an alternative, the student could write an essay called "An *Umialik* in [name of town or city]" describing how a person in that community is recognized as a leader.
2. In *Julie of the Wolves*, Inuit "wealth" is associated with "intelligence, fearlessness, and love." Ask students to discuss and debate whether the book unfairly stereotypes white culture as interested only in the pursuit of money.

continued

3. Ask students to discuss how Julie's Inuit values influence her reaction to her father's marriage to a "gussak." How would they recommend that Julie handle her negative feelings?
4. A question that *Julie* leaves unanswered is why Kapugen abandons the "old ways" if, as Julie says, "the old ways are best." Invite students to speculate about how George might have answered this question if the book continued.

The Wolf Pack

1. With students, explore the idea of "pack" behavior in humans. Discuss whether George wants her readers to see a comparison between the behavior of the wolf pack she depicts and human behavior in the novel.
2. Ask students to find passages in *Julie of the Wolves* that depict the wolves as a pack. From the information in the selection and their own observation of pack animals (such as dogs), help students judge how realistically George has depicted the wolf pack.
3. Invite students to investigate how other animals (e.g., gorillas) form communities. What roles do the animals adopt? How do the animals decide who the leader is? How do young animals learn to adopt their roles?
4. Ask students to think about Julie's relationship with the wolves in the context of shamanism. Are wolves her "power animal"? In carving a totem of Amaroq, is Miyax acting like a shaman?

Wolf Talk

1. Before reading this selection, ask students who have pets to describe how those pets communicate their needs and wants. Urge students to closely observe how the animals use body language to make their needs known.
2. After reading this selection, invite students to compare wolf communication with human communication. What kinds of "greeting ceremonies" do humans have? Do humans have subtle ways of telling strangers to "go away"? Do humans mark their territories? How do humans show dominance or submission through body language?
3. Invite students to investigate communication among other animals. For example, students can present an oral or written report about communication between dolphins or bees.
4. Interested students might compare Julie's fictional encounters with wild animals with some real-life encounters. Meetings with a bear and a wolf are recounted in "Alone Across the Arctic Crown" (*National Geographic*, April 1993).

continued

Encounters

1. Discuss with students the significance of the “iron stove” in “The First White Men.” What does the stove symbolize? Similarly, why does the legend make so much of the “sharpened teeth”?
2. Invite students to role-play a first encounter between two peoples who do not speak each others’ language. How will they establish communication? What misunderstandings might arise? How can each side work for peace?
3. Ask students to find and read a first-person account of an early explorer of a “faraway” place like the Arctic, Africa, or the South Pacific. What happened when that explorer first met local people? How did they react to the explorer? Students could also analyze science fiction stories of encounters between different worlds.
4. Invite students to consider why the steersman in the Tyrrell account was “disappointed” to discover that the Eskimos were “real decent people.”

The Purchase of Alaska

1. Ask students to speculate about how much Alaska cost per acre (approximately 2 cents per acre). Discuss whether Alaska has been a good financial investment for the United States. Students can investigate the economic resources the United States has gotten from Alaska.
2. Encourage interested students to investigate the purchase of Alaska. Why was William Seward interested in it? Why did Russia want to sell it? Why did people refer to the purchase as “Seward’s folly”? Why were the “uncivilized native tribes” not made citizens?
3. Invite students to investigate other major territorial purchases, for example, the Louisiana Purchase or the Gadsden Purchase. What were the attitudes of United States citizens towards these purchases?

They All Had Two Names

1. Ask students to trace the passages in *Julie of the Wolves* that deal with language. Discuss with students how well George uses language as a way of showing how Julie/Miyax is torn between Eskimo and white culture.
2. Yup’ik has a rich vocabulary for family relationships. Ask students to brainstorm classes of English words that probably have no equivalent in the traditional Eskimo languages. Ask students to speculate why. Lead a discussion about how language reflects the needs and conditions of the people who speak it. (You might refer students to the many Eskimo words for snow.)
3. Invite students to investigate the language problem in other areas of the United States where different cultures live side by side (for example, English and Spanish in the Southeast). What languages are used in the schools? What problems do students have when the school language is different from their home language? How important is language to cultural identity?

continued

Pipelines and Politics

1. As they read the novel, ask students to keep a record of all of the signs of Western culture that appear in *Julie of the Wolves*. Discuss how these things have changed traditional Eskimo culture.
2. Encourage interested students to investigate some aspect of the Alaskan oil pipeline. Questions to explore might include the following: What “safeguards” for the animals and land were required of the pipeline builders? Have these been successful? What effect has the pipeline had on the environment? (Remind students of the *Exxon Valdez* disaster.) How much oil comes through the pipeline? Has the pipeline reduced America’s dependence on foreign oil? What benefits, if any, have the Eskimos gained from the pipeline?
3. Discuss with students why Cora Cheney makes reference to the oil executives’ “air-conditioned offices.” Is it fair for her to imply that the companies’ desire to make profits is bad? Use this discussion as a springboard for a discussion of how difficult it can be to balance environmental concerns with the need for energy. Encourage students to include current issues in their discussion.

The Hunting of Wolves

1. Before reading this selection (or the novel), brainstorm with students about how wolves have been pictured in the popular imagination. Ask students if wolves are somehow considered “evil” (for instance, “The Big Bad Wolf” and the werewolves of legend and movies). Interested students can write a report on “Wolves in History, Myth, and Legend.”
2. ‘Asta Bowen condemns the hunting of wolves from planes. Would Julie agree with her? Would Jean Craighead George? Have students find evidence from the novel to support their opinions. Then invite students to give their own opinions and defend them.
3. Help students examine the language of ‘Asta Bowen’s article. Ask students to identify places where the author uses emotionally charged language to make her point. Ask them to discuss whether this kind of language strengthens or undermines her argument.
4. George uses attitudes toward wolves to symbolize the differences between the white culture and the Eskimo culture. Help students compare and contrast the cultural values of the Inuit and the Americans. Aspects to be compared might include attitudes towards nature, religion, use of natural resources, sense of time, and ownership of things.
5. Ask students to investigate the fate of wolves in North America over the last few centuries. What has happened to the North American wolf population? What efforts have been or are currently being made to restore the wolf population?

Time and Cultural Change

1. Before reading this selection, brainstorm with students all the ways in which they depend on the “clock and calendar” (TV schedules, holidays, etc.).

continued

2. Discuss with students whether it's true that the Eskimos "can't go back." Is it true that "the hour of the wolf and the Eskimo is over"?
3. Ask students to trace or record the passages in *Julie* that touch on time and the passage of time. Invite students to discuss why Eskimos would have the attitude to time discussed in Pryde's account. Encourage them to share what they know about how other cultures view time. Interested students could research this topic further.

Between the Stone Age and the Space Age/Child of the New Arctic

1. Before reading, ask students if they, or anyone they know, experience conflict between the old and the new. For example, perhaps someone they know is afraid of learning to use a computer. Help students list the strategies they use for coping with change.
2. The main character in *Julie of the Wolves* has two identities. Sometimes she is "Julie," at other times "Miyax." Invite students to record in two columns how the character thinks as "Julie" (white) and how she thinks as "Miyax" (Eskimo). Discuss with students how these ways of thinking are different.
3. After students have read the novel, ask them to write a brief essay explaining their interpretation of what it means to be "caught between the Stone Age and the Space Age."
4. Dr. David Maybury-Lewis, president of Cultural Survival and host of the PBS Millennium series, believes "tribal wisdom teaches us to connect—and stay connected to—our social responsibilities." Help students summarize Inuit tribal wisdom. Discuss whether Maybury-Lewis' comment applies to the Inuit.
5. Immaroituk describes the "heritage" the Inuit are in danger of losing. Discuss how important this heritage will be to the Inuit growing up today. What do students think will happen to Julie's people?

"To Build a Fire"

1. In London's story, a man dies because he does not understand his environment. Help students make a chart analyzing the Arctic environment. The first column might list dangers in this environment. In the second column, they should list ways to cope with these dangers.
2. Students might extend the environment chart by analyzing their own environment as well. One column might list dangers they face. In the next column, students could list ways to cope with the dangers in their environment. Students might then compare the skills needed to survive in the two environments.
3. Discuss with students which is more powerful: humans or the environment? What have been the results of humans' attempts to control and change nature?
4. Interested students might read the rest of "To Build a Fire" or explore some of London's other works about the Arctic.

continued

Viewpoints/Voices from Other Works

1. With students, cluster or map similar themes or conflicts in the quotes, such as being torn between two cultures or learning from animals and their behavior.
2. Encourage students to identify and write about the connections they see between *Julie of the Wolves* and the quotations.
3. Invite students to read one of the featured books and share their reactions to it with the class.

Poems from the Far North

1. Discuss with students their interpretations of each of the three poems. Interested students can bring in other books of Eskimo and/or Native-American poetry and read and discuss other poems with similar themes.
2. As a class project, groups of students can assemble their own anthologies of poems about themes raised in *Julie of the Wolves*. For example, one group can assemble poems about endangered species, another can assemble poems about journeys, etc.
3. Ask students to look for connections between themes and ideas presented in the poems and *Julie of the Wolves*.
4. Invite students to write poems that express their own feelings about the environment, about who they are, or any of the themes raised in *Julie of the Wolves*.

Student Projects

The suggestions below will help you extend your learning about Alaska, the Eskimos, and the clash between “old” and “new” Eskimo culture. The categories give choices for reading, writing, speaking, and visual activities. You are also encouraged to design your own project.

The Historian’s Study

1. Identify and research some aspect of the exploration and settlement of Alaska. Possibilities include
 - origins of the Eskimo people and the earliest migrations of people to Alaska from Asia
 - 18th-century explorations of Alaska by Russian explorers such as Vitus Bering
 - Russian rule of Alaska
 - explorations of Alaska by miners and traders
2. Not all Eskimo peoples are the same. Explore some of the differences between people, particularly the differences between those living in northern and southern Alaska. Do they speak the same language? Do they have different customs and beliefs? What accounts for these differences?
3. Many laws and court rulings have affected the lives of American Indians. Choose a law or ruling that has affected the Eskimos and investigate it. Has it helped or hurt the Eskimos? Do you agree with the law or ruling? You could also explore how a Canadian law has affected the Eskimos living in northern Canada.
4. Prepare a brief report on the Bureau of Indian Affairs and how the bureau has affected Eskimo life.
5. Find out more about Alaska today. Possible topics include
 - Alaska’s strategic importance
 - wildlife conservation
 - relations between the government and native peoples
 - problems of contemporary Inuit, such as unemployment, alcoholism, and suicide
6. Research current controversies affecting Alaskans, such as wolf-hunting, government nuclear tests on Inuit land, and the environmental consequences of the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill.

The Artist’s Studio

1. Imagine that you have been chosen to illustrate a new edition of *Julie of the Wolves*. Select two or three scenes from the novel and draw illustrations that would highlight the action.
2. Most people associate Eskimos with igloos—that is, with houses built from blocks of snow or ice. But *Julie* makes reference to other kinds of shelters, including Miyax’s own sod house early in the novel. Illustrate one of these shelters. Include an explanation of the shelter.
3. Prepare a display to help your class learn more about Alaska. You might include a map and significant facts about Alaska’s population, weather, and natural resources.

continued

4. Miyax uses two primary tools: needles and her *ulu*, or curved knife. With these tools she makes many of the things she wants or needs. Using simple materials (leftover pieces of cloth, blocks of wood) construct one or more of the objects Miyax makes. One possibility would be to carve a totem from wood or a bar of soap.
5. Again using simple materials, design a game that you might imagine Eskimos would play indoors during the long dark periods of winter. Imagine yourself using materials that would be at hand for the Eskimos. Show your classmates how the game is played.
6. Create a collage showing the main character's two worlds—the traditional world of Miyax and the modern world of Julie. As a variation, prepare a collage that would illustrate the differences between Miyax's life (either on the tundra or in Barrow) and Amy's life.

The Writer's Workshop

1. Write a "color wheel" of your own memories. That is, re-create a pleasant episode from earlier in your life and attach to the events colors that you think convey the feelings you experienced.
2. Write your own story about survival. Where would you be? What objects would you want to have with you? What do you think would be the one most precious object you'd need? What dangers would you face, and how would you overcome them?
3. Interview a friend, relative, or neighbor who would be old enough to remember the "old" ways of doing something. It might be old ways of farming, hunting, providing warmth, cooking, or amusing children. Ask the person to recall when "new" ways of doing the same thing developed and what the person's reaction was. Ask the person to explain why either the old or the new way is better.
4. Write a descriptive essay about a natural environment that's different from Julie's.
5. Imagine that you are an Eskimo living in Alaska during the 18th or 19th centuries. Try to envision your very first encounter with a white explorer or settler. Record your reactions.
6. Julie and Amy were pen pals. Imagine that each is writing a letter to the other describing a typical day at school—Amy in San Francisco, and Julie at the mission school in Barrow. Write their letters, trying to make your description as vivid as possible.
7. Write a poem that expresses Miyax's feelings about her father after she has had time to think about her reaction to his marriage and his new life.
8. Each of the wolves has a unique personality. Describe an animal in a way that shows its unique traits. Rereading some of George's animal descriptions might help you.
9. Late in the novel, Miyax thinks that civilization is "this monster that snarled across the sky." She then rejects civilization in favor of the traditional Eskimo ways. If you had a choice, which would you choose—the old ways or "civilization"? Why? Write a personal essay explaining your choice.

continued

The Speaker's Platform

1. Imagine that *Julie of the Wolves* has one more chapter. Six months have passed and Miyax once again encounters her father. She desperately wants to explain to him her feelings after their last meeting. Similarly, Kapugen would like explain to his daughter why he has abandoned the old ways. With a classmate, re-create the scene that would take place.
2. Imagine that George's animal characters can talk. With a group of your classmates, re-create a scene from the novel from the point of view of the wolves. Try to re-create in words the different "personalities" that George has created for Julie's wolf pack.
3. Stage a debate about the issue of wolf hunting in Alaska. On one side are those who argue that wolf hunting is unethical. On the other are members of the Alaska Board of Game (see "The Hunting of Wolves" on page 35) who defend the hunting. The rest of the class can judge who wins the debate.
4. Imagine that you are an Eskimo shaman. One of your roles is to pass down legends about the creation and early history of your people. Using the myth in *Latitudes* or another that you find yourself, write a poem/story that you can present orally to your classmates as though they were members of your tribe.
5. Invite a person who has visited Alaska to share his or her experiences with your classmates. Plan an introduction for your speaker and lead a class discussion after the presentation.

Sample selections from
***Julie of the Wolves* LATITUDES®**

About the Novel

Story Synopsis
About the Author
Critics' Comments
Voices from the Novel
Glossary

The Inuit and the Traditional World

The Inuit and Their Land
The Language of Snow
Eskimo Houses
Traditional Marriages
Eskimo Wealth
The Wolf Pack
Wolf Talk

The Inuit and the Modern World

Encounters
The Purchase of Alaska
They All Had Two Names
Pipelines and Politics
Between the Stone Age and the Space Age
Viewpoints About the Inuit Today

Comparative Works

Voices from Other Works
Poems from the Far North
Suggested Reading and Viewing List

#75178 ISBN 1-56312-304-5