



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1991 Volume II: The Family in Art and Material Culture

The Inuit Family: A study of its history, beliefs, and images

Guide for Curriculum Unit 91.02.07
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This unit was designed for use with art students and so that it also can be integrated into a Social Studies, Home Economics, or Woodworking curriculum. The history, beliefs, and images form three objectives with background and activities provided for each. The objectives of this unit are: 1.) To understand the Inuit (Eskimo) in terms of their geographic location and its influence on their way of life. 2.) To investigate Inuit imagery as a reflection of their belief system. 3.) To focus on the objects of the Inuit to introduce three-dimensional activities in the classroom.

As the forty-ninth state of the United States, Alaska as a subject for study can easily be introduced through the study of the Inuit. Activities are provided for both discussion and hands-on so that even with few materials a classroom teacher could easily utilize the concepts presented. Three dimensional activities are suggested, however the same lessons could be successfully implemented two-dimensionally with paper, crayon, scissors and glue.

A set of 16 slides accompanies this unit which will be on file at the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute office. Please do not hesitate to use this unit without the slides as in many of the school libraries you may find comparable images for use in acquainting your students with the Inuit.

Some of the activities included in this unit are making a floor plan, creating a vessel which will float, making amulets or charms, and mask making. Through the study of an unfamiliar culture it is my hope to initiate the excitement of discovery in the study of the Inuit for my students, leading towards the study of other cultures as well.

(Recommended for Art, Social Studies, Woodworking and Home Economics, Grades 5-12)

Key Words

Alaska Geography History Art Instruction Sculpture Family Life Alaskan Inuit American Masks

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