

## Module 1:

### The Cultural and Anthropological History of Adak



from "Qajaq, kayaks of Siberia and Alaska"

#### Content to be Covered:

- Native tribes are unique and derive their culture from traditions, environment and physical surroundings. The Aleut culture is ancient and has its own set of traditions.
- The Aleut culture shows respect for nature and an appreciation for the interrelatedness of humans and nature.
- The traditional knowledge of the Aleut people has been recorded through literature, traditions, and artifacts.
- Artifacts show the means of survival on Adak years ago. Like today, safety issues of the past were also a concern on Adak because of weather, wild animals and ocean travel.

**Objective:**

Review aspects of the Aleut culture, then and now. Review the safety issues for the people of Adak 6000 years ago.

**Teacher's Guide:**

The teachers of kindergarten through 5th grade can use literature, on-line informational web sites and books to disseminate the contents and concepts of this unit. Through the use of oral history and archeological discoveries, and the ensuing discussions and activities, the student can appreciate the interrelationship and respect that the Aleut culture has had and currently has, with nature. It is also a good learning guide for thoughts about how safety is always an issue in the North because of weather, geography and many other concerns. The children can brainstorm safety concerns of the ancient people of Adak. This lesson also is a good learning guide for thoughts on how geography, culture and history are related.

In addition to literature, the teacher can integrate this unit with other disciplines. The children can be encouraged to tell stories or to develop them in writing. They can also role-play the hunters of the past venturing forth on an expedition. What might be of concern for them? How could they prepare? During another activity, the children can explore the role of a mother from long ago teaching her children how to live safely on Adak.

**Historical Facts:**

The Aleutian Islands, including Adak are the home of the Unangan, "the original people." The term "Aleut" was introduced by Russians and comes originally from the Koryak or Chukchi languages of Siberia. Some archaeologists suggest that contemporary Aleuts are the descendants of a population which first established itself more than 7,000 years ago. There are archeological sites on Adak that are currently believed to be at least 6000 years old.

Many of the old ways of hunting and fishing, of tool making, of house building and of ceremonial traditions of the Aleuts who lived on Adak can be understood through archeological discoveries at these sites.

### **Extensions and Enrichment:**

- Paint a mural using the information gathered from the archeological sites about everyday life on Adak 6000 years ago. What might their safety issues be?
- Have the children practice the art of storytelling. Perhaps a story of a great hunt, or a day preparing food for the family.

### **Resources:**

Aleut History by Charles Hughes

<http://www.alaskan.com/akencinfo/aleuts.html>

Aleut Heritage

[http://alaskan.com/docs/aleutian\\_heritage.html](http://alaskan.com/docs/aleutian_heritage.html)

The Aleut Regional Corporation: Brought to you by Aleut Corporation

<http://www.aleutcorp.com>