

Documentary Lens Lesson Plan for *Land of The Long Day*

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Curriculum Connections

Land of the Long Day (1952) is a 37-minute film shot in the Pond Inlet area of North Baffin Island. It documents the Tununermiut Inuit people during the short Arctic summer as they prepare for the long winter ahead. It is narrated in English by an Inuit man, as a first-person account of the many tasks involved in surviving the harsh realities of arctic life. Highlights of the film include a seal hunt and a whale chase involving several generations of hunters.

Lesson Objectives

This lesson is appropriate for secondary school. The activities include brainstorming how one could survive in the Arctic; using a graphic organizer to illustrate the Tununermiut seasonal round; creating a radio news report on Tununermiut knowledge and skills; and researching and participating in a discussion about a lawsuit brought by the Inuit Circumpolar Conference against the United States.

Canadian Social Studies Themes in *Land of the Long Day*

Theme/Strand/ Key Concept	Connection to <i>Land of the Long Day</i> —Applications and Discussion Points
Culture and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the land influence the culture of the Tununermiut people? • Why is community important to the survival of these Inuit peoples? • How are responsibilities within the community dictated by age and gender? • What are some distinguishing features of childhood in this community? • What difficulties might this community have in preserving traditions in the future? • Why do you think most Inuit groups were small in numbers, compared to other First Peoples of Canada?
Time: Change and Continuity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would the lifestyle of the Tununermiut have been different before European contact? • If <i>Land of the Long Day</i> was filmed in 2005 instead of in 1952, how might life be different for the people? How might it be the same? • What events might lead these people to abandon their traditional territory and move to more urban or settled areas?

Theme/Strand/ Key Concept	Connection to <i>Land of the Long Day</i> —Applications and Discussion Points
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do the Inuit in this film work together to ensure that they will have enough food and supplies to make it through winter? • Why is it important that the Tununermiut accomplish certain tasks at specific times of the year? • How is an understanding of wild animal behaviour important to the survival of these people? • How did Inuit people meet their dietary needs, considering the lack of fruits and vegetables in their diet? • How did the Tununermiut cope with the harshness of their environment to exist successfully in the Arctic? • How would a reduction in the number of seals or whales in the area affect the group’s seasonal round of activities? • How might climate change affect these people? • What might be used for light during the winter period of continual darkness?
Global Connections: Interdependence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What items did the Tununermiut use in this film that were not produced in their immediate environment? • Were the Tununermiut dependent on other people outside of the Arctic? • How might the NFB film crew have influenced the community during the filming?
Power and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What evidence is there in this film of power or governance of these people in 1952? • What might be some rules and regulations that the Tununermiut had to govern their lives? • How might crime and punishment have been dealt with? • How might the absence of formal schooling have affected the culture and community? How were Tununermiut children educated?
Economics and Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would the Tununermiut get money to buy things from the wider Canadian society? • What were the most important resources to the survival of this community in 1952? • Discuss the importance of dog teams to the Tununermiut people in 1952.

Assessment Strategies

For Activity 3 (Creating a Radio News Report), you could assess students’ ability to

- work together (their capacity to cooperate and their willingness to divide tasks equitably)
- plan their radio report (awareness of their purpose and audience; ability to collect information from the film)
- organize their ideas (the clarity and purposefulness of their outline, script, drafts and revisions)
- give an oral presentation (clarity and ability to keep their report to the allotted time)

For Activity 6 (Inuit Class Action Lawsuit,, you could assess students'

- critical thinking related to a) evaluating the information from the different sources based on objectivity and reliability; b) expanding their appreciation of the complexities of the issues involved; c) developing an informed position; and d) analyzing current issues from multiple perspectives
- skills related to participating and negotiating to resolve differences and respecting other people's viewpoints
- communication skills related to expressing their own point of view and listening respectfully to other people

Activities for *Land of the Long Day*

Introductory Activities

ACTIVITY 1: Brainstorming Survival in the Arctic

Before showing *Land of the Long Day*, have the class brainstorm:

- How have Inuit people coped with the harshness of their environment through the years?
- What items do Inuit people have now that they might not have had in the past?
- If students were to move to the Arctic, what would they take with them from their present lives?

You may also wish to take this opportunity to discuss some of the common stereotypes regarding Inuit peoples.

Developing Concepts

ACTIVITY 2: Cycle of the Seasons, The Tununermiut Seasonal Round

Encourage students to take notes during the film to help them with this post-viewing activity.

Divide a large circle into sections representing the seasons of the year. In each section of the circle, include an illustration and a written text that describes one or more activities integral to the culture of the Tununermiut at that time of year. The more details, the more complete their diagram will be.

Alternatively, students could make this a poster project with or without further research. Remind students doing research that the Tununermiut culture is distinct from other Inuit cultures in Canada.

ACTIVITY 3: Creating a Radio News Report on Tununermiut Knowledge and Skills

Ask students to imagine that it is 1952, and they are members of the film crew of *Land of the Long Day*. They have finished their film and have been asked by a radio station back home to produce a 5-minute news story on the survival knowledge and skills of the Tununermiut people. Have students work with a partner to research, plan, script, practise and present their radio news report.

Students may want to view parts of *Land of the Long Day* again. Also, the following questions may help them get started.

- What do the Tununermiut people know about the effects of climate and weather?
- What do they know about the habits and habitats of the animals that they hunt and fish?
- What hunting, fishing, and trapping skills do they have?
- What about skills for making clothing, sleds, tools and equipment?
- What skills of cooperation, sharing, and conflict resolution do they have?

Applications

ACTIVITY 4: Creating a Trading Post Catalogue

Have students imagine they are the marketing agents of a trading post in a given time period, for example, the early 20th century when many new technologies were being introduced into Canadian society. The task is to create a catalogue of items that would be useful to a Native community in the Arctic, from clothing to vehicles and various hunting and fishing devices. It should be understood that many of the items that students list in their catalogues could be considered damaging to fragile Arctic ecosystems or Inuit traditions.

Caution: This activity should only be undertaken with students mature enough to take it seriously. In no way should students trivialize or marginalize the Inuit way of life.

Extension: A follow-up activity might be a response from a leader in an Inuit community who offers his or her opinion of how these items could influence the traditional practices of his or her people. The response might also offer the leader's feelings about the existence of a trading post close to the community and what that might mean.

ACTIVITY 5: Naming Aboriginal Peoples

A note about terminology: In Canada, *First Nations* refers to Indian bands or communities but does not include the Inuit or Métis. *First Peoples* refers to all the Aboriginal peoples of the country, including Indians, Inuit and Métis.

Prior to European contact, Aboriginal people referred to everything in their own languages. Since European contact, however, many Aboriginal languages are on the verge of extinction and very few Aboriginal words have entered English.

The words First Peoples use to refer to themselves has become a contentious issue. For example, the Carrier people of British Columbia traditionally called themselves the *Dakelh*. Ask the class why they think the term *Eskimo* has been replaced by *Inuit* in Canada. What about the term *Indian*? As a class or in small groups, brainstorm a list of terms or expressions that were commonly used in the past but are no longer considered appropriate. Why has society changed?

Caution: Remember that discussing race relations in the classroom can be a sensitive subject. Use your own discretion.

ACTIVITY 6: Inuit Class Action Lawsuit, A Critical Challenge

In this activity, students will discuss issues related to the effects of climate change on peoples of the circumpolar world.

Step 1: Review the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The document is online at the United Nations Web site at [//www.un.org/Overview/rights.html](http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html).

Students should familiarize themselves with the Articles 1 through 30. Ask students to read the Declaration with a view to how being responsible for climate change might impinge on the rights of people living in the Arctic.

Step 2: Have the class read the article “Inuit to Charge U.S. for Climate Change.” This is an Inter Press Service article of February 15, 2005, written by Stephen Leahy. You can find it at [//www.climateark.org/articles/reader.asp?linkid=39055](http://www.climateark.org/articles/reader.asp?linkid=39055).

Your students may also be interested in finding out more about the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC), the group that is making this charge against the U.S. The ICC is made up of people in the Arctic regions of Canada, Russia, Greenland and the USA. The Web address for the ICC is [//www.inuitcircumpolar.com/](http://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/).

Step 3: Individually, in small groups or as a class, have students consider the following:

1. Is the ICC justified in charging the United States, the world’s leading producer of greenhouse gases, of being responsible for global warming?
2. Do you think this threat will cause the United States to substantially reduce its greenhouse gas emissions?
3. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, would you find the United States guilty of human rights violations in this case? Explain.
4. What about other countries such as Canada?