

**CLOTHING: HOW WARM AND DRY ARE FURS AND FEATHERS GR: PREK-2 (LESSON 3)**

**Elder Quote/Belief:**



*“I have read somewhere  
that there are a million  
hairs per square inch on a  
sea otter hide.  
Sea otter makes a nice hat,  
mittens, or parka because  
it is so warm.  
It is the nicest fur  
around.”*  
-Peggy McDaniel,  
Cordova

**Grade Level: Pre K - 2**

**Overview:**

Sugpiat and Eyak people were able to create beautiful clothing from animal hides, fur, fish skin, bird skin and feathers, even trees! They made their clothing as comfortable as possible while making sure that it was warm in cold weather, cool in the summer, and dry in the rainy season.

**Standards:**

<i>AK Cultural:</i>	<i>AK Content Science:</i>	<i>CRCC:</i>
<b>A3:</b> Culturally-knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community.	<b>F1:</b> Develop an understanding that culture, local knowledge, history and interaction with the environment contribute to the development of scientific knowledge, and local applications provide opportunity for understanding scientific concepts and global issues.	<b>CE2:</b> Students should have knowledge of traditional and contemporary sewing and clothing using skins and furs.

**Lesson Goal:**

To become aware of the different types of traditional materials available to the Sugpiat and Eyak people for making clothing and exploring their properties.

**Lesson Objective(s):**

Students will:

- Learn which resource (furs, fish skin, feathers, etc.) the Chugach Region people used for clothes during each season.

- Learn what materials held in body heat, which materials let your body breathe, and which material protected you from the wet and cold to get a better understanding of why the Chugach people chose the materials they did for clothing.
- Learn four Sugt'stun/Eyak words.

**Vocabulary Words:** Sugt'stun Dialects

English:	Prince William Sound:	Lower Cook Inlet:	<a href="#">Eyak:</a>
clothes	atkunka	atkunka	<a href="#">(si)la'q'Aya</a>
Cold (snow)	pet snertuq	pet snertuq	kihd (xAtl')
Rainy	qiteq	qiteq	k'u leh
Warm (sun)	meqertuk	meqertuk	yaX'iLi'ahL <a href="#">(GAdAgiL)</a>

**Materials/Resources Needed:**

- Book- *Color Chugach Clothing A to Z* (Make copies of the pages to color)
- Ice cubes or snow.
- In kit: Cup holders made out of different types of fur local to the Chugach region, grass, gut skin, leather, wool, and feathers.
- In kit: Fur samples, booties, otter pelt, seal skin pelt, fur muffs, trapper hat.

**Teacher Preparation:**

- Invite an Elder/Recognized expert who can share their knowledge of traditional materials used to stay warm and dry in our climate.
- Review with students the proper ways to show respect for the guest speaker.
- Review the activities plan.
- Make copies of the *Color Chugach Clothing A to Z* for students to color.
- Locate and display the cup holders made out of different types of local materials on the table. Review the information sheet on the materials and what they are made of.
- Display the fur samples, booties, sea otter pelt, seal skin pelt, and fur muffs on the table. Each sample will have a tag attached with information on what it is and what it was used for.

**Opening:**

(Ask students to sit in a half circle around the display table of various traditional materials used.)

Encourage discussion regarding clothing with the students with the following questions:

- Why do you wear a coat?
- Why do you wear boots?
- Why do you wear a hat?
- Why do you wear a rain coat?
- Why do you wear gloves?
- Where do you get these items?

Today, we are going to talk about the furs, feathers, and fish skin and what was traditionally used to make clothing for the Sugpiat and Eyak people of our region. We will also examine why the materials were chosen for the different types of weather.

Now let's imagine that you are a Sugpiat/Eyak boy or girl. Your parents didn't have any stores in town to buy you a warm coat, boots, rain coat, gloves, and all the items that help to keep you cozy and dry. Your parents would have to use the local materials they caught like animals, birds, fish, roots from a tree, and even grass to make your clothing. They had to be creative and used their skills to figure out what material was best to make clothing. Imagine that!

### **Activities:**

1. Pass around the fur samples and other resources out of the kit and talk about what each item was used for and why. Allow the students touch and feel. Encourage the students to wrap themselves with the sea otter fur. Let them try on the ear muffs as this will be a good example of the insulation properties of fur- as it will be hard for the students to hear people talking. Discuss how that is due to the fur's density.
2. Pass around the cup holders and ask students the following questions about the materials:
  - Are they soft?
  - Are they hard?
  - Are they smooth?
  - Are they scratchy?
  - Could these materials be used to make clothing to keep you warm?
  - Could these materials be used for clothing to keep you dry?
  - Could these materials be used for clothing to keep you cool?
3. Inform the students that we will be doing a science experiment with these items. Explain the experiment on insulating properties of the materials. To do this, we will put ice water into each cup and let sit for ten minutes. We will then feel the outside of the cup to find out what material is best for the winter and cold days. Before we do this experiment, let's guess which material is best for the summer and warm days? Which material is best for rainy and wet days? Which material is best for cold and windy days? Now let's find out.
4. Place cup holders on a table or flat surface.
5. Fill with snow or ice
6. Pour in very cold water.
7. Cover cup with lid.
8. Check time and allow sitting at least ten minutes.
9. While waiting for ten minutes to pass, hand out the *Coloring Chugach A to Z* book and crayons. The students can work on a few drawings. Each drawing has a description of how it is used with the clothing. The teacher may choose a few pages out of coloring book to read to the students.
10. At the end of ten minutes, teacher can now pass around the cups one at a time. Students can feel the cups. After the students have the chance to pass them around, ask students:
  - Which cups felt warm?
  - Which cups felt cold?
  - What material would be better in the summer?
  - What material would be better for wet and rainy days?
  - What material would be better for the winter?

11. Discuss with students about insulation and what types of clothes they wear for seasons and weather. Correlate it with the traditional clothes worn by Sugpiat and Eyak kids in the different seasons and weather.

**Assessment:**

- Students can correctly identify the samples of fur, fish skin, seal intestine, and the other traditional clothing resources shared.
- Students can explain which furs and resources were used for the different seasons and weather in the Chugach Region.
- Students can correctly say and point to the different Sugt'stun/Eyak words for clothing, cold, rainy, and warm.