

**TRADITIONAL FOODS AND RECIPES: WHAT IS A TRADITIONAL DISH 6-8 (LESSON 1, 2)**

**Elder Quote/Belief:** “Growing up, my family lived of the land. We ate seal, clam, duck, salmon, herring, *uuqituks* (gumboots), sea cucumber, halibut, grouse, bear, and black seaweed.”  
K. Selanoff<sup>1</sup>

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Overview:** Ancestors of the Chugach people ate many parts of the animals that were harvested from the land and sea. There was no waste, as it was considered disrespectful to the animal who gave itself to you for survival. In this lesson students will learn about using the lung of the seal as a traditional food source.

**Standards:**

<i>AK Cultural:</i>	<i>AK Content Science:</i>	<i>CRCC:</i>
<b>D4-</b> Gather oral and written history and provide and appropriate interpretation of its cultural meaning and significance.	<b>A14a:</b> A student who meets the content standard should understand: a) the interdependence between living things and their environments.	<b>SS 3:</b> Be able to prepare and preserve gathered foods.

**Lesson Goal:** In this lesson students will learn about a traditional dish and the nutritional components that help our ancestors survive for generations.

**Lesson Objective(s):** Students will:

- Learn five Sugt’stun/Eyak vocabulary words.
- Learn about seal lungs being eaten as a traditional food.
- Research about traditional foods of their local area in the Chugach Region.
- Start a Traditional Foods Recipe book for the unit

**Vocabulary Words:** Sugt’stun Dialects

English:	Prince William Sound:	Lower Cook Inlet:	Eyak:
Seal	Qaigyaq	Qaigyaq	geeLtaaQ, keeLtaaQ
Fat	Uquq	Uquq	
Inflate	Suplluku	Rrurluku	
Lung Lungs	Qateq Qatet	Cupluq Cuplut	GAdlaalquh
Cook	Egaaluku	Egaaluku	’mahd

**Materials/Resources Needed:**

Elder/Recognized Expert  
Recipe Book format

**Websites:**

<http://www.eyakpeople.com/dictionary>  
<http://jukebox.uaf.edu/NanPG/nanwalek/html/23506.html>

**Books:**

- *Qaqamiiġux*
- *Imam Cimiucia Our Changing Sea*
- *Interview with Elders of the Chugach Region*
- *Fireweed Cillqaq Life and Times in Port Graham*
- *Alexandrovsk English Bay In Its Traditional Way*
- *We Are The Land, We Are The Sea*
- *Alaska Native Harbor Seal Commission copy of pamphlet (attached, make copies for students to use as a resource)*
- *Traditional Food Guide, For Alaska Native Cancer Survivors*

**Teacher Preparation:**

- Print attached pictures to share with class.
- Post and display the books and photos in the classroom.
- Invite an Elder/Recognized Expert to talk to the class about traditional foods; ask what kind of traditional foods would the Elder, or Recognized Expert, want to discuss and share.
- Make copies of the attached pamphlet for each student to use as a resource.

**Opening:** Share pictures of Elder with Seal Lung recipe and pictures of the seal lung being inflated. Remember there were not any stores to buy food for dinner and our ancestors had to be able to provide nutritious meals for their families by utilizing all parts of the animals. We are going to learn about one favorite traditional food and recipe that has been handed down for generations. With the information, we will conduct our own research on traditional foods, collect traditional recipes, interview for stories about traditional foods and compile all into one classroom *Traditional Foods Recipe* book that will be added to with the other lessons for a final product.

**Activities:****Class I:**

1. Explain to students that all parts had survival purposes; bones were used for tools, the skin for clothing, to cover kayaks, muscles/cartilages for thread, there was not much wasted, and food was preserved so it could provide through seasons and availability.
2. Even though this dish of stuffed seal lungs sounds strange and possibly unappealing to some, the Chugach people ate almost the entire animal.
3. Introduce Elder/Recognized Expert to the classroom.

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*“The food I liked best was any wild meat, such as ducks, seal, moose and fish.” –Mickey*

*Moonin*

*Fireweed Cillqaq, Life and times in Port Graham. Soldotna, AK: Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, 1982. Print*

4. Ask the following questions to create discussions about traditional foods:
  - a. What dish has been in your family from your Ancestors?
  - b. Is it still prepared, if so by who, why, and when?
  - c. Do you think traditional foods, such as, seal lungs are good to eat? Why/why not?
  - d. What type of nutrients do you think are in this dish?
  - e. Why do you think traditional foods like seal lungs were eaten?
  - f. Would you try this dish?
5. Direct students to take notes while Elder/Recognized Expert is presenting, and that they will be editing their notes so that any notes, quotes can be added to recipe book.
6. After discussion give students time to do some research with the resources available within the heritage kit and online.
7. Review the Sugt'stun/ Eyak vocabulary words.
8. Ask student to interview an Elder/ family member to share a family traditional food recipe.
9. After each student has completed their research, the class will review each other recipes, remind them to make only positive comments on the recipes.
10. Compile the recipes into one traditional recipe book.
11. Have students research the history of the Chugach Native people and their foods:
  - a. How were food preserved traditionally?
  - b. What foods were gathered?
  - c. How did they get their foods?
  - d. Were these foods available all year long?
  - e. Where were most of the foods gathered from?
  - f. When and why did the diet change?
  - g. What is your favorite traditional food?
12. Give students time to research and compile their information.

### **Class II:**

1. Once students have completed their research, share their information with others and determine where to place the information, recipes, and Elder quotes into the classroom Traditional Foods recipe book.
2. Allow students to review the recipe book and make comments.
3. Ask students what you have learned from this project, note comments on the board.
4. Share the Traditional Foods Recipe book that has been done so far. Remind them that they will be adding to it with the other lessons and when unit is over, we will share it with others and possibly host a traditional food potluck at the end of the unit.

### **Assessment:**

1. Student can pronounce and use five Sugt'stun/ Eyak vocabulary words from this lesson.
2. Student conducted research about Chugach Region traditional foods
3. Student successfully interviewed and submitted a traditional food from their family.
4. Students compiled their research, interviews, stories, notes and recipes into the classroom Traditional Food Recipe Book.



Photo by Anesia Sawden (daughter)

Seal Lungs  
Feona Sawden  
Elder from Port Graham, AK

After you remove the lungs and cut off the tubes, find the end of the tube and blow into it until the lung turns bright pink. Don't be alarmed if there's blood around your mouth.

Pierce lengthwise and push in the hole a piece of seal fat that is an inch thick and the length of the lung.

Put in a baking pan and cook for one hour at 350 degrees.

Remove from oven, slice and serve for dinner or snacks.



Desiree Swenning- Simmons, from Nanwalek, demonstrates how to inflate seal lungs “cuplut”, to be stuffed with organ meat and seal fat. When butchering the seal, remember to keep about 4 to 6 inches of the trachea attached to use to inflate the lungs.



### **Nancy Yeaton inflating seal lungs**

Photo of taken by Kari Brookover in Port Graham during Chugachmiut Heritage Retreat 2016

### **Seal Lungs Recipe** from Irene Tanape, Nanwalek

Seal fat	Potatoes, diced up
Seal liver	Onions, chopped
Little bit of seal meat	

Cut the lungs, where you blow the lungs (trachea tube and the other tubes surrounding the trachea), you make the holes bigger and stuff them, (with above ingredients), using the knife to push (ingredients) in.

Cook for one hour at 350. Slice and serve.



**Braided seal intestine "qilugyaq"**, photo courtesy of Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association, Suanne Unger

***"The intestines were weaved, sometimes stuffed with meats and fats into sausage."***

-Tabios, Derenty<sup>ii</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> (2007). A Lesson Learned. In *We are the land, we are the sea: stories of subsistence from the people of Chenega* (pp. 95). Anchorage, AK: Chenega Heritage, INC.

<sup>ii</sup> (2000). *Looking Back on Subsistence*, Interview with Elders of the Chugach Region, A Resource Book for Teachers and Students