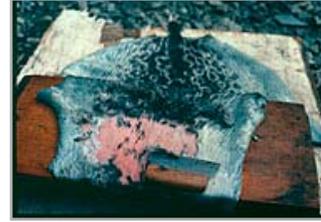


Activities & Projects

Seal Hunt Debate

Level: Grade 10 Civics



Preparation: Print images if required. Make 'continuum line'. Print *Questions to Consider about the Seal Hunt* and *Seal Hunt Debate Questionnaire*

Duration: 240 minutes (four periods)

Materials: Coloured paper for continuum line. Small pieces of paper (3" x 3" approx) and paper clips for each student.

Goals:

- compare the varied beliefs, values, and points of view of Canadian citizens on issues of public interest
- analyze a current public issue that involves conflicting beliefs and values, describing and evaluating the conflicting positions
- demonstrate an ability to research questions of civic importance, and to think critically and creatively about those issues
- communicate their own beliefs, effectively using discussion skills.

Description:

Begin: Have a discussion with the students about what they know about the environment of the Inuit and their traditional lifestyle. Create a mind map with the students on the blackboard or chart paper. See Glossary for a definition of a mind map. [Click here](#) for an example of a mind map. (Alternative graphic organizers such as webs, fishbone diagrams etc. could be substituted, depending on the knowledge and experience of the students.)

Print or project the [tapestry by Mina Napartuk](#) made of appliquéd sealskin on cloth. (It is also featured on the [Introduction page](#) of the web exhibition *Our Boots: An Inuit Woman's Art.*) Mina Napartuk was born in Kuujuarapik in 1913. Trained in the traditional way of life, she was an expert in the making of skin and fur garments. At the age of sixty-one she turned her talent to the creation of wall hangings made of pieces of sealskin appliquéd on cloth. Her tapestries depicted vignettes of traditional Inuit life on the land.

This tapestry was commissioned by The Bata Shoe Museum in 1979. It shows the steps that are needed to make a pair of warm, dry boots for a very cold climate, from the seal hunt to the sewing and finishing of the kamiks. Explain that this tapestry shows an important event in life of an Inuit family. Tell the story using *The Order of the Day* resource. Refer to *Worksheet 1 – The Order of the Day – Answers* for the sequence on the tapestry. Also, project and read with the class *The Land, Skin Clothing and Skin Footwear* sections of the exhibition to give the students a sense of the arctic climate and traditional Inuit clothing.

Inform students that they will be participating in a debate about the seal hunt. Explain that a debate is a formal discussion between two teams who take opposite sides on a particular issue.

In this debate, students will either be arguing for or against the seal hunt. You may wish to provide more details about debate strategies, and even give students the opportunity to practice debate procedures and behaviours before they proceed with the seal hunt debate.

To measure if the debate will change students' current opinion about the seal hunt, create a line using coloured paper and post along a wall in the classroom. Label one end "Strongly Agree" and the other end "Strongly Disagree". Hand out small pieces of paper and a paper clip for each student. Ask students to write their names on the paper and clip it to the part of the line that most closely reflects their opinion about the seal hunt. They will have the opportunity to move their marker if their opinion has changed after the debate. Acknowledge that they may be debating positions that are opposite to their own beliefs, and add that this is a useful skill to develop.

NOTE: Be sensitive to the fact that the nature of the issues around the seal hunt, and the graphic details associated with it may be disturbing to some students.

Learn: Outline the structure of the debate (see below). Divide the class into two teams. Distribute *Questions to Consider about the Seal Hunt* to help students begin their research. Each team member must participate in the research and in the discussions about strategy. Each team should appoint:

- a Lead, who will make the opening arguments
- three Questioners, who will pose one question each to the opposing side
- five Question Responders, who will make one response each to the opposing team's and the Moderator's questions
- one or more Rebutters, who will respond to the opposing team's answers
- a Closer, who will make the closing arguments.

(**NOTE:** the teacher may combine these roles or create more of them so that each student has the opportunity to participate in the debate.)

The teacher should also choose one person in the class to act as the Moderator. This person should research the role of a moderator and prepare the questions they will ask of each side. Make sure that students understand your expectations of each team member.

Students will have two class periods to divide the research areas, discuss their strategy, write possible questions to ask the other team, and consider rebuttals. Distribute *Questions to consider about the seal hunt* to help students begin their research.

NOTE: The teacher should preview the websites suggested on *Questions to consider about the seal hunt* to ensure they are still accessible and relevant. The school or school board policy should be followed by students when using the Internet.

Apply: The debate will take place during the final class. The teacher should point out that while the issue and views presented may be contentious, the debaters' demeanour should be polite and friendly at all times. The Moderator, with the teacher's assistance, can cut short a presentation that is disrespectful or otherwise inappropriate.

Teachers can use the following points in a rubric to assess student achievement. Go over the list with students before they begin the debate activity.

- organization and clarity of arguments
- whether arguments were supported with facts and examples
- the effectiveness of the rebuttal
- general persuasiveness of the arguments
- teamwork

Suggested Debate Structure:

Introduction of Ideas

- Each side has five minutes, timed by the Moderator, to state their view on the topic.

Question Period

- Each side asks three questions of the other side.
- Moderator can then ask two questions of each side.

Rebuttal

- Each side will then have the opportunity to comment on their opponents answers to their questions. Each side will have approximately five minutes.

Closing Arguments

- each side can make a five minute closing statement

When the debate is over, ask the students to reflect on the various arguments and to fill in the *Seal Hunt Debate Questionnaire*. A vote on which team won the debate may also be held. Finally, give the students the opportunity to change the position of their marker on the continuum line if their opinion has changed.

Research Project

Ask students to research a different contemporary issue affecting the Inuit, such as global warming, sustainable development, language protection etc.



Wall hanging of appliquéd sealskin on cloth made by Mina Napartuk with visual stories showing the steps in making kamiks: hunting, scraping and sewing.
Wool felt, sealskin, cotton thread, cotton backing, nylon Velcro
Kuujuarapik, Quebec
BSM P79.272

Mind Map - The Inuit and their Environment

