

LISA WILEY

IDITAROD TEACHER ON THE TRAIL™ FINALIST



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Brief Introduction
- Lesson #1: The Amazing Sled Dog
- Lesson #2: The Historic Iditarod Trail
- Lesson #3: Tales from the Trail
- Lesson #4: The Iditarod and Climate Change
- Questions/Resource Share





Houston

I MOVED TO NOME, ALASKA, IN
1993 AND LIVED OFF THE GRID
FOUR MILES FROM TOWN.



FELL IN LOVE WITH ALASKA AND SUBSISTENCE LIVING





ALARIS

Sport

112.90

EPIC ADVENTURES ABOUNDED!
KAYAKED FROM PILGRIM HOT SPRINGS
TO BREVIG MISSION



IDITAROD FEVER BEGINS!



CLOSE RACE! WATCHING THE MUSHERS FROM THE SHORE IN NOME





I BECAME
FRIENDS WITH
MARTIN BUSER,
WHO HAS
GIVEN ME
THREE SLED
DOGS.



MARTIN BUSER

TWO TIME CHAMPION



1994





SKIJORING
AT DUSK

A light-colored puppy with blue eyes standing on a white surface. The puppy is looking directly at the camera with a calm expression. Its fur is a mix of cream and light tan, and its ears are pointed upwards. The background is a plain, bright white surface.

BORN TO RUN
athletes of the iditarod

**LESSON PLAN #1:
THE AMAZING SLED DOG**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALBERT LEWIS



LESSON SUMMARY:

Subject: Language Arts/Social Studies/Science

Grade Level: 1-12

Students will learn about the unique nature and scientific enhancements of sled dogs. Students will start by learning about the breed overall. Students will learn about the unique roles played by the dogs on the team. Students can choose a role to play on the team. Then, we will ask students to write a profile of a sled dog, modeling from examples. Optional extension assignments exist.

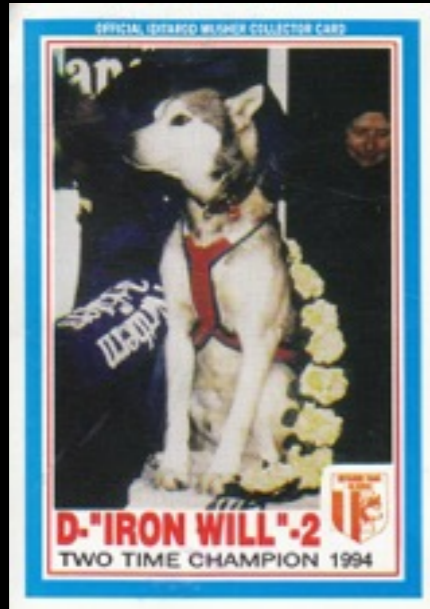


PROCEDURAL ACTIVITIES

Teachers should review and select the curriculum for age-appropriate resources.

Introduce the amazing sled dog by sharing pictures from Born to Run by Albert Lewis.

**Show the attached presentation, which is a great overview: <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/sled-dogs-an-alaskan-epic-interactive-dogsledding-101/4355/>

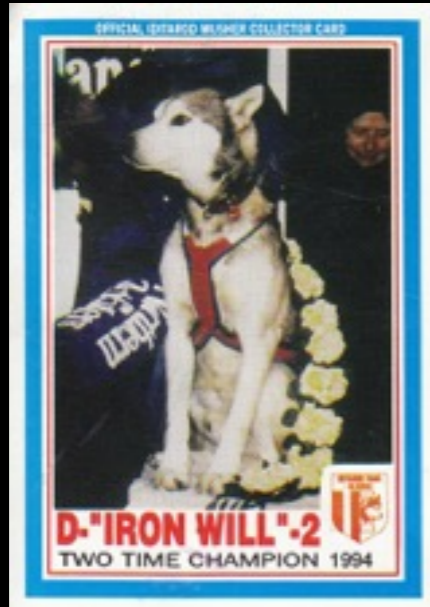


PROCEDURAL ACTIVITIES

Teach the positions the dogs play on the team. Have students choose which role they'd play and why. Extensions could include having the class accomplish a role as a hooked-up team.

Show the Iditarod video "Why Do They Run?" Discuss the incredible endurance of sled dogs compared to humans. Compare/contrast abilities.

Teach about the breeding history of the dog.

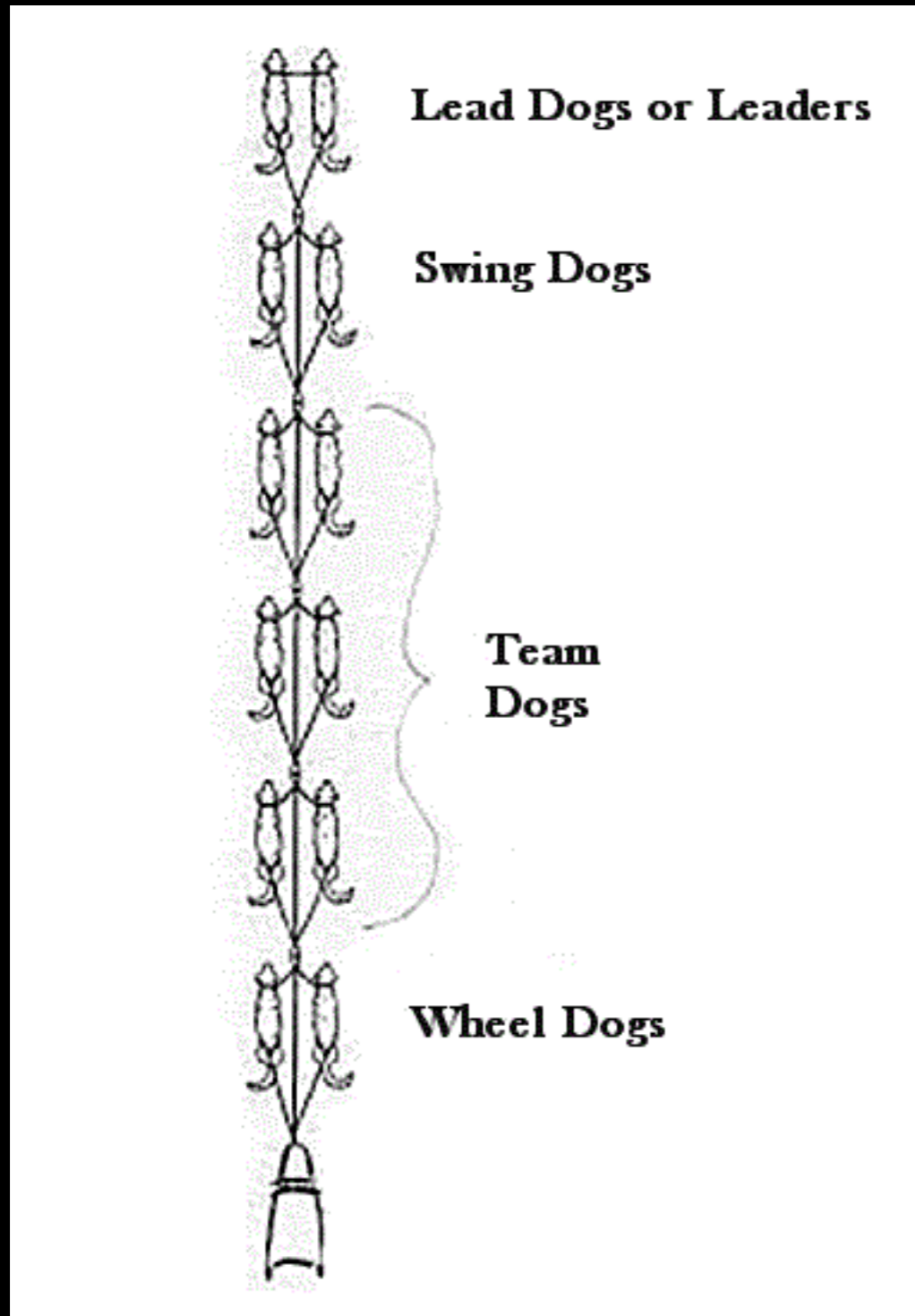


PROCEDURAL ACTIVITIES

Pass out the new articles from Outside Online and/or Scientific American. Have students read the article on their own after starting to read it as a group, or read the entire article as a group. Take notes on the attached worksheet.

Discuss the implications if humans could metabolize like sled dogs.

<http://iditarodoutsider.wordpress.com/tag/sled-dog-positions/>



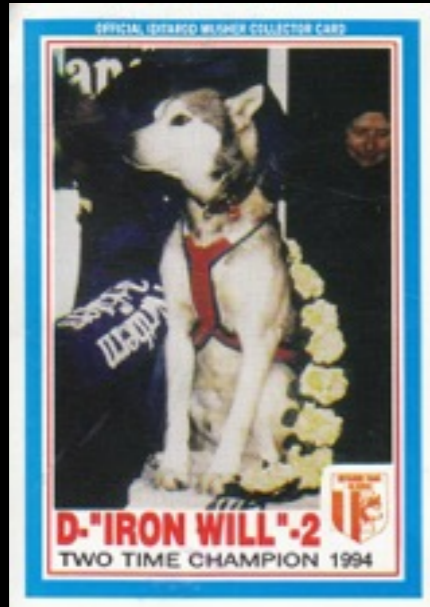
Where would you be on the team?

The Dream Team

Now, the students in Ms. Wiley's first period class have many talents, abilities, and feats they can do. When it comes to the Iditarod, the dogs are expected to have the best mentality, to be extremely skilled, and to be perseverant. It's tough to choose just a small amount of students to be on my spectacular dream team, but like many Iditarod participants, choosing dogs exclusively is hard too. In my defense, having a team full of more than 30 dogs would be extraordinary, but it's against the rules. Really, feeding 30 dogs would be a nightmare. Imagine how loud and assertive you'd need to scream when they're pulling the sled faster than Santa? My dream team is consisted of nice people who share many of the same qualities, while being unique.

A leader is the most important role on a team. The leader helps others navigate in the plan, holding full responsibility. There are great candidates in first period, but it's been narrowed to two people: Megan and Jessica. Both seem to keep their cool when the situation is boiling. To me, Megan is responsible and can pull of anything. For crying out loud, she's involved with BCA meetings, yet is more chill than ice. Megan's able to think fast, to think outside the box, and to put things into perspective. She has intelligence, works hard, and is admirable. Jessica Hong, on the other hand, is a great speaker and isn't afraid to call out on what's wrong. She's assertive, great at improvising, and is one of the smartest human beings I know. Jessica is able to pull things off and is impressive. She might say that she's similar to a lazy cat, but she's more beyond that! Both beings have qualities to make great leaders, and they are very fun to get along with.

Next, behind the lead dogs are the swing dogs. Swing dogs need a lot of control, and from my knowledge, Penelope and Isabella are dancers. I know that dancers have a lot of balance, muscle, and strength. Penelope and Isabella are great candidates because they're both smart, are in great control of their bodies, and can manipulate their surroundings. Dancing takes a lot of energy, and so does having to swing a whole sled around! These feisty gals are the perfect swing dogs! Their personality energizes the whole group, and they are diligent.



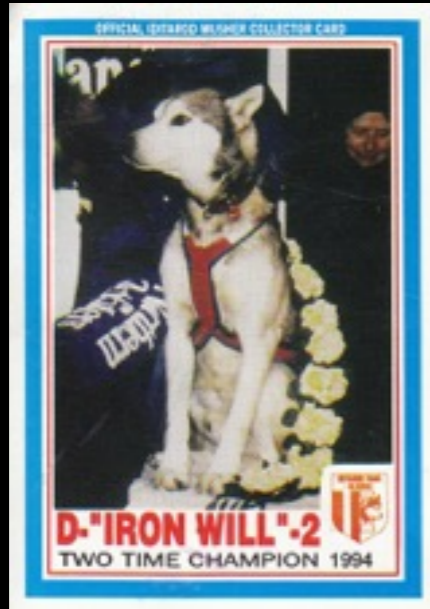
RESOURCES/REFERENCES/ MATERIALS:

Elementary School

****Born to Run, by Albert Lewis (excellent sled dog picture book)**

*http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/iditarod/dogs_life/index.asp?article=for_dogs (good overview on sled dogs, their endurance, and drive)

* <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/sled-dogs-an-alaskan-epic-interactive-dogsledding-101/4355/> (great interactive power point about sled dogs and equipment for dog mushing)



RESOURCES/REFERENCES/ MATERIALS:

Middle School

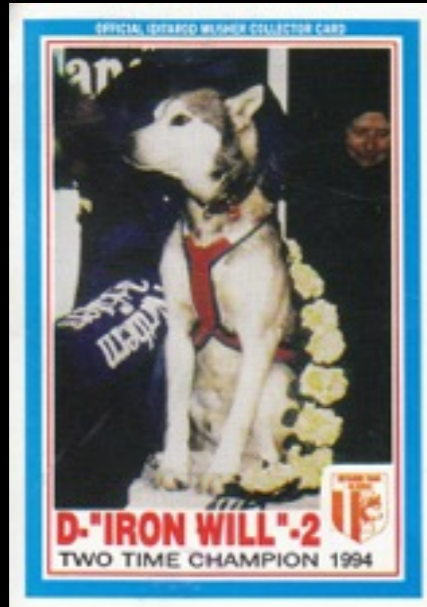
- * <http://iditarod.com/video/why-do-they-run/> (professional video showcasing sled dog endurance and drive)
- *<http://iditarodoutsider.wordpress.com/tag/sled-dog-positions/> (great resource detailing sled dog positions on the team)
- ***<http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/news/150130-sled-dogs-race-vin> (great current video from National Geographic about sled dogs)



RESOURCES/REFERENCES/ MATERIALS:

Middle School, continued

*<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/sled-dogs-an-alaskan-epic-balto/3145/> (history of Balto with photos)



RESOURCES/REFERENCES/ MATERIALS:

High School

******<http://www.outsideonline.com/fitness/endurance-training/It-s-the-Dog-in-You.html> (scientific article involving current studies of sled dog metabolism and glucose)

*****<http://www.scientificamerican.com/magazine/sa/2009/06-01/> (scientific article on sled dog fat metabolism)

******<http://www.adn.com/article/20130314/long-journey-home-may-missing-itarod-sled-dog> (feature article about Runaway May)



SLED DOG PROFILE

Your name _____

Date _____ Period _____ Due date _____

Write at least one page with your best writing, telling the audience about an amazing dog. Describe the dog physically in detail, and include a photo or drawing if possible. Describe the personality traits of the dog, modeling from the writing samples shown in Born to Run, Martin Buser's profile on his dog Seattle or an article in the newspaper with more details, i.e. Runaway May.

OFFICIAL IDITAROD MUSHER COLLECTOR CARD



D-"IRON WILL"-2

TWO TIME CHAMPION 1994



Iditarod Bound - SEATTLE

3-year-old male. He's given name was really Chief Seattle but Chief sounds too mush like gee (right turn command) so we shortened his name to Seattle. However, he really acts like a Chief. He's a great lead dog but doesn't line the team out at rest stops. He likes to wander back into the team, which results in quite a tangle. Still young and learning. He is sort of spring-loaded and can easily head-butt a person when he jumps up to visit with you. He just sees it as a sign of affection but it can be really painful in the chin. Ideally built dog, 60 pounds, long legs, long body and great angulation – big shoulder blades, long humorous bone, sloping croup in rear and well-placed hocks. Went on Iditarod with James Volek as a yearling. Seattle litter theme.



[http://www.adn.com/
article/20130314/long-
journey-home-may-
missing-iditarod-sled-
dog](http://www.adn.com/article/20130314/long-journey-home-may-missing-iditarod-sled-dog)





Name: Swiper

Gender: Female

Age: 2 ½

About Swiper: Lackadaisical, lethargic, and slow moving, except on walks. Doesn't like to be moved. Eats and chews on everything except dog food. Likes to sneak treats from the closet as well as steal food left on the counter. Enjoys playing with her sister and chasing the cat. Loves running in the woods (has been lost a couple times out there). Believes every toy is hers and will protect it at all

costs (been in a few dog fights). Not the sharpest tool in the shed, which makes her funny. Strangely enjoys walking between peoples legs.

Sled Dog/Animal Profile

This picture you see here is Jeb, short for Jedediah. Jedediah is a 1997 Wellsarosa Cuz Thoroughbred. Jeb had a big heart and deeply loved his two favorite people, Riley (his owner) and I. Thoroughbred's generally are race horses, but due to injuries and not being well taken care of before Riley owned him, he could not become a



race horse, but that didn't change his love for running. He took it out on his favorite sports which were trick riding and jumping.

Thoroughbred's have a very long, tall, and thin build. Jeb was 16.2 hands high. Equaling to 5 feet and 4 inches (standing taller than I). We would always say if Jeb was a human he would be a cross country runner

because he has long, gangly legs.

I met Riley back in 2010 and started riding Jeb in 2012. He became my trick and drill horse and was until he had to retire. His sweet and goofy personality "stole" my heart from the second I met him. Even though I don't ride him anymore, he still has it and always will. He always showed his affection for the people he loved and cared for by whinnying when I got to the farm to taking care of me when I was on his back. He was absolutely 100% a goof ball. I even have a picture of him sticking his tongue out one time when I visited him.

If you look at his coloring, it is a very light grey (the color white isn't a color in horses). That is very hard to achieve as he loved to roll in the mud and turn a nice

Tse and Hli

I had an incredible and amazing beta fish known as wild-type Plakat. The name I gave him was Tse; it means fish in Hmong. Tse was very handsome and any female beta fish that got near him would fall in love with him immediately. Tse was very colorful like the rainbow. He was an incredible swimmer, and he loved to challenge other male betas. He always won in challenges against other male betas, and they somehow did not like him at all since his athleticism was way beyond theirs. Although he always won his challenges, he never bragged about it; he just acted "normal" and did not see his opponents weak at all.

One day, he swam underneath a bunch of seaweeds and saw a female beta got stuck on the seaweeds and could not escape from it. He dived into the seaweeds at the speed of light and rescued her. At that very moment, the female beta thought that he was a "god-fish" and fell in love with him at that very second. Tse got nervous and eventually went with the flow because the female beta was too much into him.

This female beta was another wild-type Plakat I bought a few weeks after I bought Tse. Her name was Hli; it means moon in Hmong. Hli was very colorful just like Tse being the color of rainbow. However, she is smaller than Tse. The reason she got stuck on the seaweed was because when I got home from the pet store, I just simply put Hli in the fish tank without thinking that I have a tremendous amount of seaweed in the tank and did not think she would get stuck. Anyways, Tse saved her and both of them were not injured.

A week later, I noticed that Tse and Hli were becoming closer. They would race with one another near the place where Tse rescued Hli; Tse won two times and Hli won once because Tse was "slower" than her after the second race.

Not too soon, maybe two weeks later, there were some baby betas in the tank. I thought to myself, "what happen? Are Tse's and Hli's poops swimming?" I squinted my eyes and moved closer to the fish tanks and saw about 7 small baby betas. I was really happy that Hli and Tse got along with one another and had their own kids now.

*well done!
very
creative!*





The Amazing Sled Dog! Sled Dog Physiology Worksheet

Your name _____

Date _____ Period _____ Due date _____

Use the Scientific American and Outside online articles to complete the following questions. Answer the questions on a separate sheet of paper with complete sentences.

1. What unique strengths (attributes) make the sled dog "Born to Run"?
2. What are the breeds that run on modern dog teams?
3. How and why have sled dogs changed genetically over time?
4. What is an Alaskan Husky and what is the genetic background?
5. What are modern scientists currently studying about the sled dog?
6. What are they hoping to apply to humans?



Assignment Enrichments

- Make a fantasy Iditarod team.
- Draft a team from your favorite musher's dogs. For an extra challenge, tell which position (lead, wheel, swing, or couch dweller) you think the dog would perform best.
- Make a blog from the perspective of your favorite sled dog, ie. Zuma's Paw Prints: <http://iditarod.com/zuma/meet-the-k9-journalist-team/>
- Make a set of husky or dog mushing trading cards.
- Pick which role students would play on a dog team and write down why. If time, have the students line out as a team and accomplish a goal together.
- For more advanced students, write a paragraph telling what animal you think humans would benefit from studying more and perhaps adapting some of the animal's qualities? Tell why. Propose a scientific study.

**Patron****Age:** 3 years old**Position:** Team**Bio:**

Handsome with blonde and white coat. He keeps a low profile, works hard, eats well, behaves, and blends into the team. He doesn't stand out early on, but is always there, strong and steady. His patience with his brother Cuervo is an admirable trait.

**Casper****Age:** 3 years old**Position:** Team**Bio:**

Perfect build and gait. He has star potential, besides his long toes, which are his only weaknesses. One of the three two year olds last year who finished the Iditarod. Is identical to his brother Ears, besides their ears.

**Ears****Age:** 3 years old**Position:** Team**Bio:**

His unique ears and friendly face makes him a favorite to fans and tourists. A solid and easy going dog who trainers love to race and train. His favorite running mate is his brother Casper. They have the same build and look almost identical besides the ears.

**Cuervo****Age:** 3 years old**Position:** Team**Bio:**

Canine version of his trainer Dallas Seavey. Small, confident, and has a hard time keeping still. Likes to pick fights with dogs twice his size. He can run... and run and run. Loves to eat; he'll steal other's food too. Aggressive, but easy to get along with.

**Hero****Age:** 4 years old**Position:** Wheel**Bio:**

The classic Hollywood Husky. The biggest dog on the team, but is surprisingly fast and is willing to lead. Hard working, very handsome, and has a friendly personality. He will be a rookie this year if he makes the team, but will qualify as an Iditarod finisher.

**Diesel****Age:** 7 years old**Position:** Main Lead**Bio:**

A father to most of the young dogs in the kennel. Usually runs swing or team the first few hundred miles in races before lead when the runs get longer. Very experienced, fast, and can be counted on to keep the team moving.

**Beatle****Age:** 6 years old**Position:** Finishing lead**Bio:**

Very experienced in the team. His father is the famous Zorro from Lance Mackey's kennel. Fluffy, happy, always smiling, always up for anything, even if it means dangerous weather and trail conditions.

**Glitter****Age:** 4 years old**Position:** Swing**Bio:**

Usually called "insane" in a good way. Almost identical to her matriarch mother, Guinness, she also has the same spirit. Goes hard 100% of the time and never seems to tire. Small, but a big bundle of mischief and usually has excess energy even after a long run.

**Schooner****Age:** 4 years old**Position:** Wheel**Bio:**

Laid back; a real couch potato. Spends most of his days lounging by his house with his hind legs spread out in front of him. He has long legs, a long back, and a long trot. One of the larger dogs on the team. He provides much of the power to help get Dallas up and over the Alaska Range.

**Hombre****Age:** 3 years old**Position:** Swing**Bio:**

The son of Guinness. His fuzzy coat gives him the old dog appearance. He's insisted to sleep outside of his house his entire life. He proves to be more talented than he looks. Has the raw talent and athletic ability that helped him finish the Iditarod as a two year old last year.

**Sequoia****Age:** 4 years old**Position:** Team**Bio:**

Always picks fights with any other dog she comes across even though she's one of the smallest on the team. Since she's so small, she has to be the best athlete to keep up with the bigger dogs. Her main advantage is that she recovers quicker between runs.

**Whisper****Age:** 3 years old**Position:** Team**Bio:**

Another daughter of Guinness, she is one of the sweetest dogs in the kennel. Perky and friendly, she's fun to train and race. Despite being the only girl in a litter of five big boys, she's built like a greyhound, extremely tough, and amazingly fast.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If teachers want to modify these lessons , several reputable articles exist online about current sled dog research. Here's a link to great upper level sled dog genetics curriculum by Teacher on the Trail™ Martha Dobson and Susan Harrington: <http://iditarod.com/teacher/science-lessons/>.

AFTER FOUR YEARS IN NOME, I
MOVED TO ELIM TO FURTHER
EXPLORE SUBSISTENCE LIVING.





What's In a Name? Place Names Along the Iditarod Trail

Seward

For Secretary of State William Seward, who arranged the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867 for \$7.2 million, or around 1.9 cents per acre.

Portage

Named for a bay on the Prince William Sound side of a mountain pass covered by a glacier of the same name.

Girdwood

For Colonel James Girdwood, who found and formed a number of mines in Glacier Creek valley.

Anchorage

First known as Ship Creek, the waters off the creek were charted as "Knik Anchorage." The U.S. Post Office later shortened the name to Anchorage.

Wasilla

Named for a respected local Dena'ina Athabaskan chief.

Ophir

Named by miners for the lost country of Ophir, the source of the King Solomon's gold in the Old Testament.

Ruby

Named after the red-colored stones found on the riverbank, which were thought by prospectors to be rubies.

Iditarod

Originally 'hidehod' or 'Haiditarod', meaning a "distant place" in the Ingalik Native language, or "clear water" by the Shageluk Natives for the river of the same name.

Unalakleet

Means "from the southern side."

Nome

Town name created as a result of a spelling error. A government draftsman noted a prominent unnamed point on Norton Sound as "name?" The map engravers mistook the "a" for an "o", thereby naming the landmark Cape Nome.









WATCHING THE DOGS PLAY IN ELIM, ALASKA







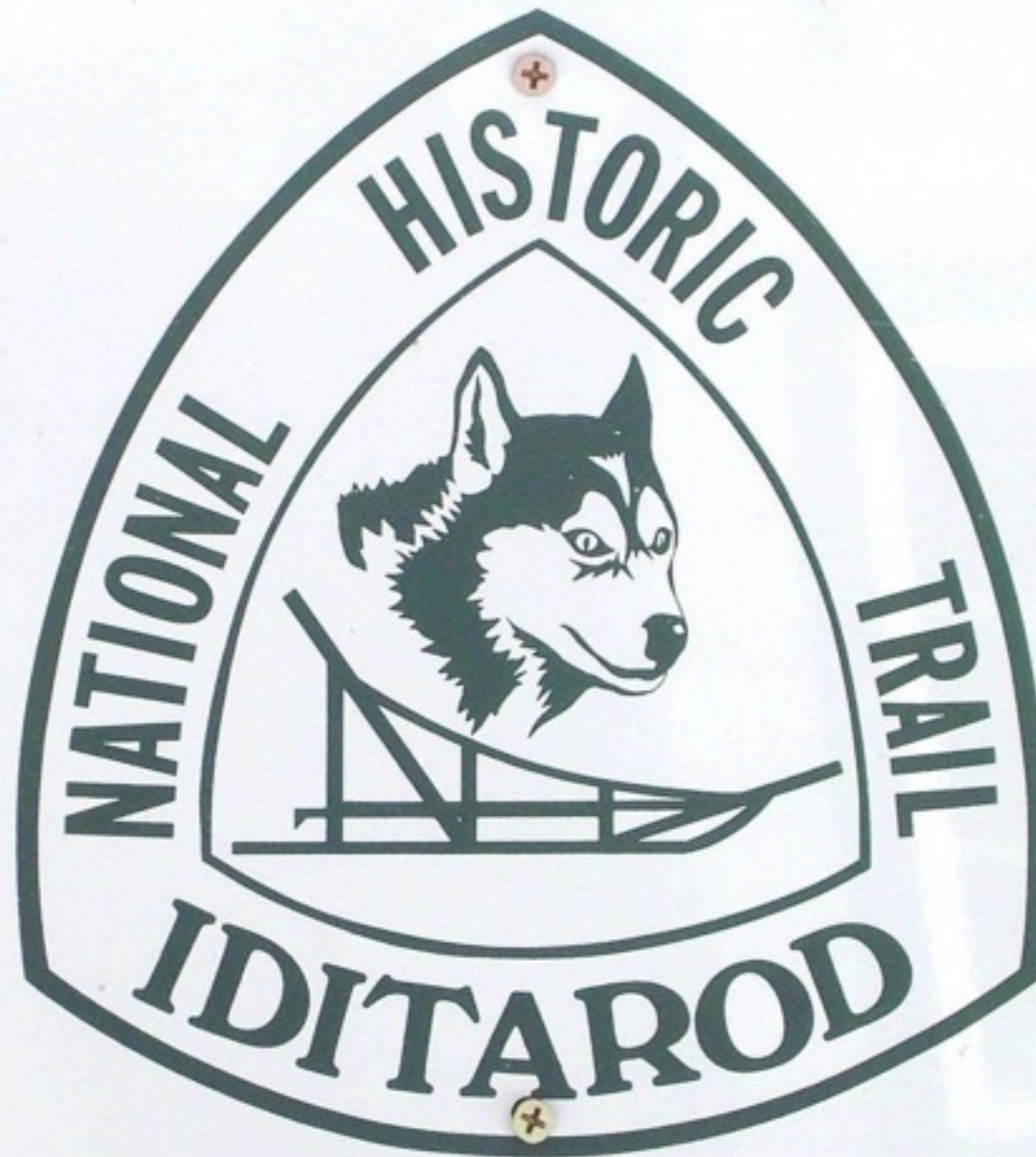


DEEDEE JONROWE LEADING
THE PACK IN ELIM, 1998.

MY ADOPTED
DOG TEAM



LESSON PLAN #2: IDITAROD TRAIL HISTORY





LESSON SUMMARY:

Subject: Language Arts/Social Studies/Science

Grade Level: 4-12

Students will learn about the history of the National Historic Iditarod Trail. Then, they will learn about the diphtheria epidemic in Nome and the decision to use sled dogs teams to get the serum. Finally, the history of the modern sled dog race will be taught. This lesson should take place over a couple regular class periods.



First dogteam Nome to Seward
S. Sexton



PROCEDURAL ACTIVITIES

The teacher will ask students to write a quick paragraph detailing what they know of the Iditarod Trail and its history.

The teacher, using the Bureau of Land Management's website, will share the unique history of the Iditarod trail. Worksheet attached.

The teacher will tell about the symptoms, spread of, and history of diphtheria. Worksheet attached.

The teacher teaches how the serum cured the disease.



PROCEDURAL ACTIVITIES, CONTINUED

Students will see how the dog teams and mushers relayed the serum successfully to Nome.

***They can use the LitSite website to see maps, learn about the villages, and problem-solve their way down the trail to Nome.

Students can play the serum run game online at: [http://
www.alaskakids.org/layouts/alaskakids/games/alaska/index.htm](http://www.alaskakids.org/layouts/alaskakids/games/alaska/index.htm)

Students, using the www.iditarod.com website, will explore the history of the sled dog race.



PROCEDURAL ACTIVITIES, CONTINUED

Learn about the debate to use dog teams vs. airplanes for the serum. Students who want an extra challenge can conduct a mock debate telling about the pros and cons of each style. (Assignment attached.)

Students will research to see where the closest National Historic Trails exist near their school.

Students may chose to develop a service learning plan to take stewardship of the trail. (Activity sheet attached.)



STEVE MELCHOR DOG TEAM — SEWARD ALASKA

ALASKA SHOP



RESOURCES/REFERENCES/ MATERIALS:

**<http://www.chugachchildrensforest.org/programs/education/itrec>
(itrec program that educates about the original Iditarod trail.
Includes curriculum and ideas for service learning)

**<http://www.blm.gov/ak/st/en/prog/nlcs/iditarod.html> (Bureau of
Land Management's website with educational links)

*The Cruellest Miles by Gay Salisbury, the first chapters

**<http://iditarod.com/about/history/> (summary the origins of the
race, focus on the Redingtons and Dorothy Page)

**<http://www.arlis.org/resources/special-collections/inhc-collection/>



RESOURCES/REFERENCES/ MATERIALS:

****<http://www.litsite.org/index.cfm?section=Digital-Archives&page=Land-Sea-Air&cat=Dog-Mushing&viewpost=2&ContentId=2559>** (Alaska website, including an interactive, problem-solving game about the Serum Run)

***<http://www.cdc.gov/features/Diphtheria/index.html>** (Center for Disease Control info on the original serum run and diphtheria)

***<http://www.alaskaweb.org/disease/1925serumrun.htm>** (history of the original serum run)

****<http://www.nps.gov/nts/>** (National Historic Trails information)



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Students can also study the role of the famous lead dogs, like Balto, who helped guide the mushers safely through raging storms and -50 weather to reach Nome. Controversy existed because musher Leonard Seppala felt like his lead dog, Togo, was not honored as much as famous Balto. Interested teachers may want to have students research both dogs and their miraculous runs, as well as why Balto became a household name while Togo did not. The teacher could modify the debate lesson plan to make it a debate on whether Togo or Balto deserves the fame and glory, or if it should have been given to both dogs. Here is a link to prior Teacher on the Trail™ Jen Reiter's lesson plan about Togo: <http://iditarod.com/teacher/giving-a-hero-his-due/>





Iditarod Trail History: The Original Serum Run

Your name _____

Date _____ **Period** _____ **Due date** _____

Use the following resources to help get you started learning about the background of the Serum Run.

The Cruellest Miles, by Gay Salisbury

<http://www.litsite.org/index.cfm?section=Digital-Archives&page=Land-Sea-Air&cat=Dog-Mushing&viewpost=2&ContentId=2559>

Answer the following questions with detail in complete sentences on a separate sheet of paper.

1. What is diphtheria?
2. What are the symptoms of the disease?
3. What happens to the victims of the disease?
4. In 1925, what was the cure for diphtheria?
5. How did Doctor Curtis Welch find out about the spread of the disease? Who were the first victims?



Iditarod Trail History: The Original Serum Run

6. What did Dr. Welch do to try to stop the spread of the disease?
7. Why was it so difficult to get the serum to Nome?
8. How was the serum delivered to Nome?
9. Name at least three of the original dog mushers on the Serum Run.
10. Name at least two of the important lead dogs.
11. What extreme difficulties did the original serum run mushers encounter?
12. Was the serum run successful in stopping the diphtheria?
13. Listen to or read an original newspaper report about the Serum Run. Write down the source information. Summarize the article.



Iditarod Trail History: How and Why the Trail and Race Started The National Historic Iditarod Trail

Debate Extension Activity

Your name _____

Date _____ Period _____ Due date _____

Divide your class into two teams. Have one group research why dog mushing was considered a better option than using airplanes for the serum run. Have the other group research why airplanes were also considered a viable option. Both groups should pick 3 to 5 main reasons and be ready to back them up with research and data. Students can use this sheet to prepare, but should have their research on a separate paper.

Reason 1:

Data backing this up:

Source where you found the data:

Reason 2:

Data backing this up:

Source where you found the data:

Reason 3:

Data backing this up:

Source where you found the data:



Reason 4:

Data backing this up:

Source where you found the data:

Reason 5:

Data backing this up.

Source where you found the data:

Concession/Counterargument

Tell one or two positive arguments for your opposing teams. This makes helps your argument sound more mature and balanced.

Reason 1:

Data backing this up:

Source where you found the data:

Reason 2:

Data backing this up:

Source where you found the data:



Debate!

Your name _____

Date _____ **Period** _____ **Due date** _____

You should have enough material to debate when this worksheet is done. The teacher should have the students stand and deliver their main points. There should be time for cross examination, then each team should wrap up their main points and urge the class to vote for them.

Debate Ballot

Who won?

Why?



Iditarod Trail History: Option 2: Service Learning

Your name _____

Date _____ **Period** _____ **Due date** _____

Have your students identify national historic trails in your area. If there are none, students can identify trails of local importance. If there are several trails, students can research the trails in small groups and deliver a pitch to the class about why the class should choose that trail as a group.

1. Write down the trail's name.
2. Write down why it's an important trail to your community.
3. Find out who helps maintain the trail. Write down the organization and the main person in charge below.
4. Contact the person in charge, and ask how your class can help. Write down how below.
5. Adopt the trail as a class! Maintain and care for the trail by helping in any way possible. Write a proposal to the class or school, pitching your project and why it is important.



Naughty puppy!



BIKE TOURING FROM ANCHORAGE TO HAINES





ARCTIC CARIBOU INN

at Prudhoe Bay

WELCOME TO PRUDHOE BAY



ANOTHER DAY OF HAULING MY GEAR
TOWARDS THE BROOKS RANGE. MY
VERSION OF MUSHING.



WINTER AVALANCHE STUDIES



Thompson
Pass
drop

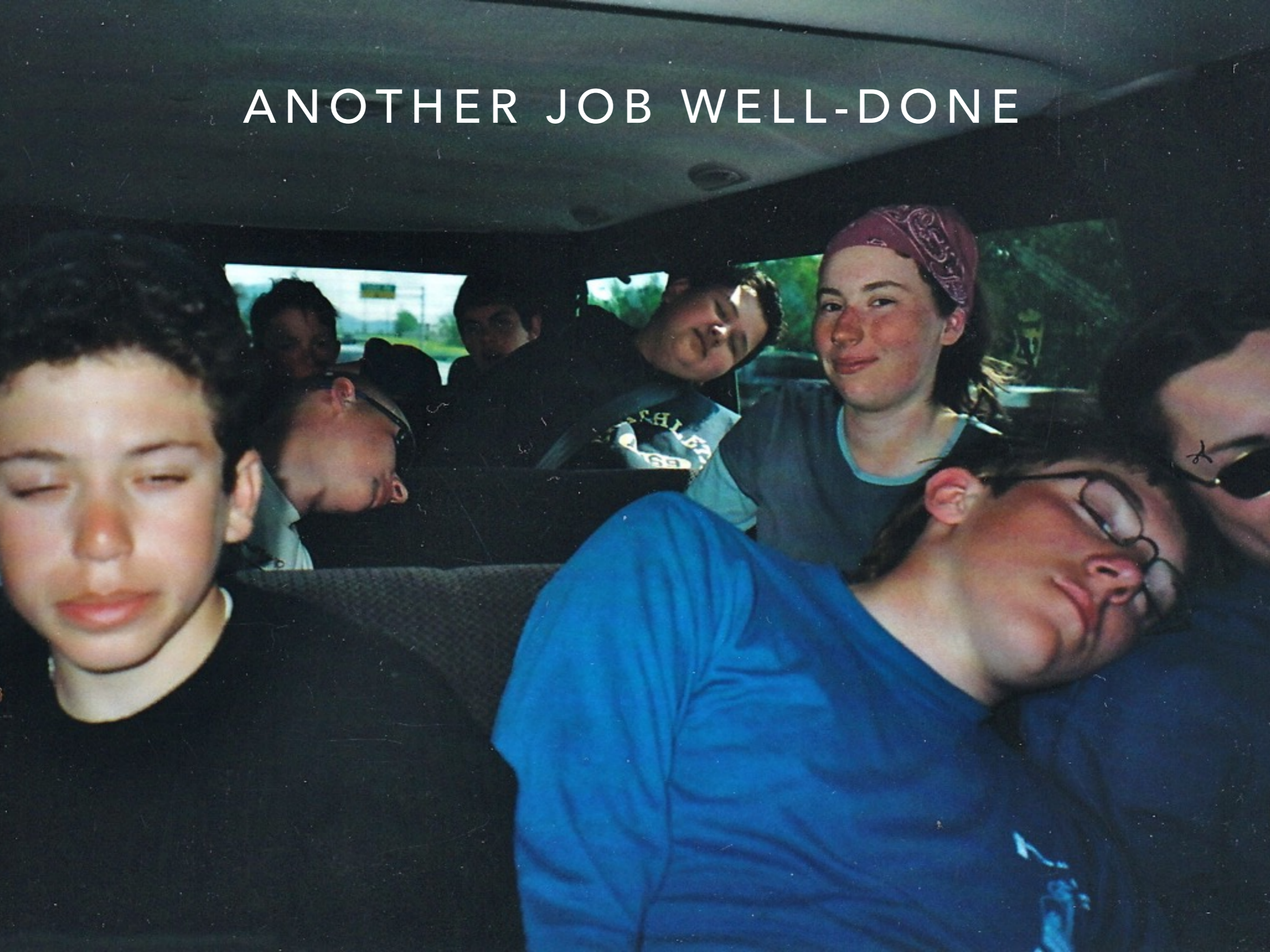
ELEV. 2678'





SIGN OF A JOB WELL-DONE

ANOTHER JOB WELL-DONE



LESSON PLAN #3: STORYTELLING AND THE IDITAROD







LESSON SUMMARY:

Subject: Language Arts/Social Studies/Science

Grade Level: 4-12

Students will listen to accounts from primary and secondary sources, watch video clips, and read stories from the Iditarod. Then, they will either rewrite a historical tale from the trail with a fresh and unique perspective, or they will write their own original fictional account from the trail based on a historic event.



PROCEDURAL ACTIVITIES

First, teachers will share real stories from the trail.

I've included a URL of footage of Jeff King mushing down the Alaska Range with virtually snowless conditions in 2014. Teachers can show this video as a resource.

Teachers should share 3 to 4 stories or videos so that students get a feel for the atmosphere, mood, and tone of the Iditarod. A chapter or two from Winterdance by Gary Poulsen would be an excellent resource.



PROCEDURAL ACTIVITIES

Teachers can share slide shows from famous mushers like Joe Redington, Sr. at the jukebox website above from UAF. Arctic Entries also has videos of live storytelling events from Alaska.

If possible, the teacher should invite a local musher, veterinarian, dog handler, or dog team into the classroom for story telling.

Students may then choose to do some further research on their own.



PROCEDURAL ACTIVITIES

Finally, students should write their own original story, modeling from a real historic event from the Iditarod.

Have a map of the Iditarod trail available in the room so that students can pick a geographic focus for their story and include relevant geographic details.

Time to publish! Students can share their stories with a partner, small group, or class. A display of the stories can be made.

Students can illustrate the scene or use photography or drawing.



RESOURCES/REFERENCES/ MATERIALS:

Classroom visitors/presenters, like mushers, vets, handlers, and dogs, should be invited if possible to bring the stories alive.

* <http://wiki.bssd.org/index.php/Storytelling> (storytelling unit from the Bering Strait School District)

**<http://jukebox.uaf.edu/site7/akmushing> (Incredible resource including slide shows of many historic mushers with audio recordings)

**<http://tinyurl.com/lunbax7> (the amazing video of Jeff King)



RESOURCES/REFERENCES/ MATERIALS:

*Winterdance by Gary Paulsen (non-fiction account by a rookie musher and accomplished nature writer)

*www.arcticentries.com (Anchorage based storytelling organization and event)

*map of the Iditarod trail (see iditarod.com or Alaska Dispatch

http://www.newsminer.com/opinion/editorials/quest-victory-all-about-attitude-sass-gets-first-win-by/article_19195ce4-b7c6-11e4-aaf9-1b1f08c17681.html (article from Brent Sass, recent Yukon Quest winner, about overcoming obstacles.



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& ASSOCIATES

2017

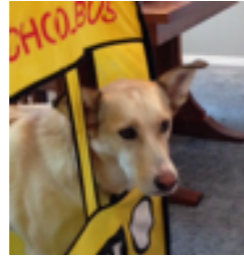
SCOTT JANSSEN: VISITING MUSHER



HIGH SCHOOL
KIDS LOVED OUR
CANINE GUESTS!







Tales from the Trail: Storytelling and the Iditarod

Your name _____

Date _____ **Period** _____ **Due date** _____

Directions: During this unit, you will hear several different stories about the Iditarod. During the stories, take notes below to practice listening for key details.

Story #1

The storyteller's name:

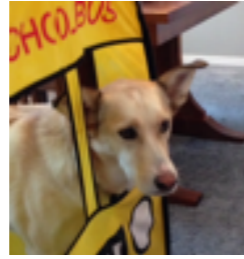
Tell the storyteller's job or relation to the Iditarod:

What type of format the story came in:

Write two or three complete sentences summarizing the story told. Include interesting details about Alaska, the musher/team, and nature.

What obstacles did the team encounter?

How did the team overcome the obstacles?



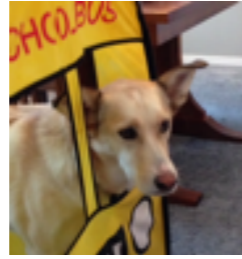
Tales from the Trail Storytelling and the Iditarod

Adversities and Obstacles Storytelling Planning Worksheet

Your name _____ Date _____ Period _____

Please answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper.

1. In the stories you heard about the Iditarod, what are some difficulties and obstacles the characters had to go through?
2. How did the characters cope with the problem?
3. What do you think the hardest part of doing the Iditarod would be? Why?
4. What's a tough obstacle you've had to overcome?
5. How did you do it?
6. What's the most inspirational story you know of someone overcoming obstacles? Explain it.



Iditarod Storytelling Time to Write!

Your name _____

Date _____ **Period** _____ **Due date** _____

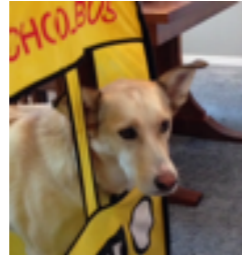
To get into the mindset of a musher, and to practice creative writing, you will choose to either:

A: rewrite a story we heard from a different perspective. Write from the perspective of another dog musher, a dog, a vet, a person who lives in a checkpoint, a spectator, or an impartial observer.

B. write your own creative story about the Iditarod.

Stories need to include creative details, an obstacle that is overcome, and real historic or geographic details. Answers should be written on a separate piece of paper.

1. Who is/are the main character(s) in your story?
2. How did you chose this character?
3. Will you have a limited or omniscient narrator? Why did you choose this style of narration?
4. What obstacle(s) will your character encounter? How will the character deal with the problem?
5. What type of describing details do you want to include?
6. Where on the trail do you want to the story to occur, and what real geographic details will you include?
7. How will the story end?



Tales from the Trail Storytelling and the Iditarod/ Assessment

Your name _____

Date _____ Period _____ Due date _____

Score yourself using the following rubric. Then, your teacher will also score you after reading your story. Give yourself a score from 1 to 10, 10 being the highest score. Circle the score that matches best. Then, write a comment saying why. If you give yourself a 1-5, that means it was missing or underdeveloped. 7 means you had the basics. 8 would mean you did well. 9 or 10 means you mined a gold nugget! You did your best possible.

1. Style of narration: Did you pick a consistent narration style? Did it work well for your story?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments:

2. Details: Did you include good details that helped the reader to visualize your story?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments:

3. Obstacles: Did include a clear obstacle that your team overcame?

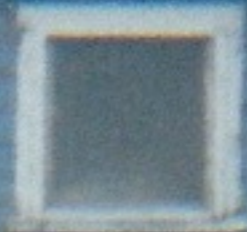
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments:

4. Directions: Did you follow your teacher's directions on page limit, formatting, and publishing?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Comments:



FUCK YOU



SKIJORING

I fell in love with sled dogs while living in Nome, AK. I grew up in suburban Chicagoland and had never seen anything like the sled dog lots in Nome. There were probably about 30 dog teams living in Nome while I was there.

Many of the teams were staked out on the outskirts of town, with small wooden dog houses for the dogs to take shelter in from the howling winds of the Bering Sea and Seward Peninsula. Nome is the real windy city, sorry Chicago! You're a second close.

We purchased our remote funky off-the-grid house from a dog musher. We inherited from him a pretty secure puppy lot for our own eventual huskies. I wanted to learn how to mush, but definitely was very intimidated by the whole thing, from riding the sled itself at up to 15 mph, to the process of hitching eight to sixteen dogs together in an organized fashion and convincing them to run in the direction you want! This takes a lot of work, and Gary Paulsen wrote a great book about it, WINTERDANCE.

I didn't want the level of commitment and work this lifestyle demanded, but I loved huskies. And I wanted to use their love of running and exploring to help me explore the vast Alaskan wilderness as well.

One afternoon, I decided to go to a fellow teacher colleague's dog lot after work to try to skijor. This is a sport that wasn't popular at all in Nome at the time, but I had seen it once or twice. Basically, you attach yourself to a dog, strap on some skis, and the dog pulls you while skiing. It looked like a lot of fun, plus I was also falling in love with skiing at the time. Double bonuses abounded, so I had to teach myself how to do this.

Diana hadn't done it, but she had a dog that she thought would be good to try it with. This dog was a leader, which skijorers need, otherwise, the dog runs next to you, or behind you, or all over the tundra willy nilly, dragging you along. The dog was middle aged, not too hyper, and supposedly listened to







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**HUMAN POWERED
ULTRA-MARATHON**

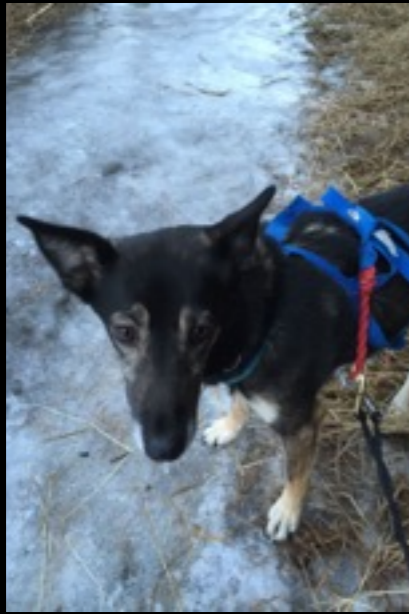
IN ALASKAN WINTER EVENT

An aerial photograph of a dense forest with thin, vertical trees. A line of sled dogs and mushers is visible, moving through the forest. The text "LESSON #4: THE IDITAROD RACE AND CLIMATE CHANGE" is overlaid in white on the top half of the image.

LESSON #4:
THE IDITAROD RACE AND CLIMATE CHANGE



When I moved to Alaska in 1993,
the glacier was ~80 feet thick
where I am standing in 2015.



LESSON SUMMARY:

Subject: Language Arts/Social Studies/Science

Grade Level: 4-12

Teachers will share pictures of Alaska that show examples of climate change. If time, show the documentary *Chasing Ice*. Then, ask the students to consider the implications of global warming for the Iditarod race. Finally, teach about the impacts of global warming to the villages along the coast. Have students come up with a plan to lessen their carbon footprint.

PROCEDURAL ACTIVITIES



Teachers will collect and share images that clearly demonstrate climate change impact in Alaska.

If time, show the documentary Chasing Ice (available on Netflix).

Discuss how climate change impacted the race route for 2015.

Finally, teach how climate change is impacting coastal Alaska, especially Shishmaref and Unalakleet).

Have students come up with a plan to lesson their carbon footprint.

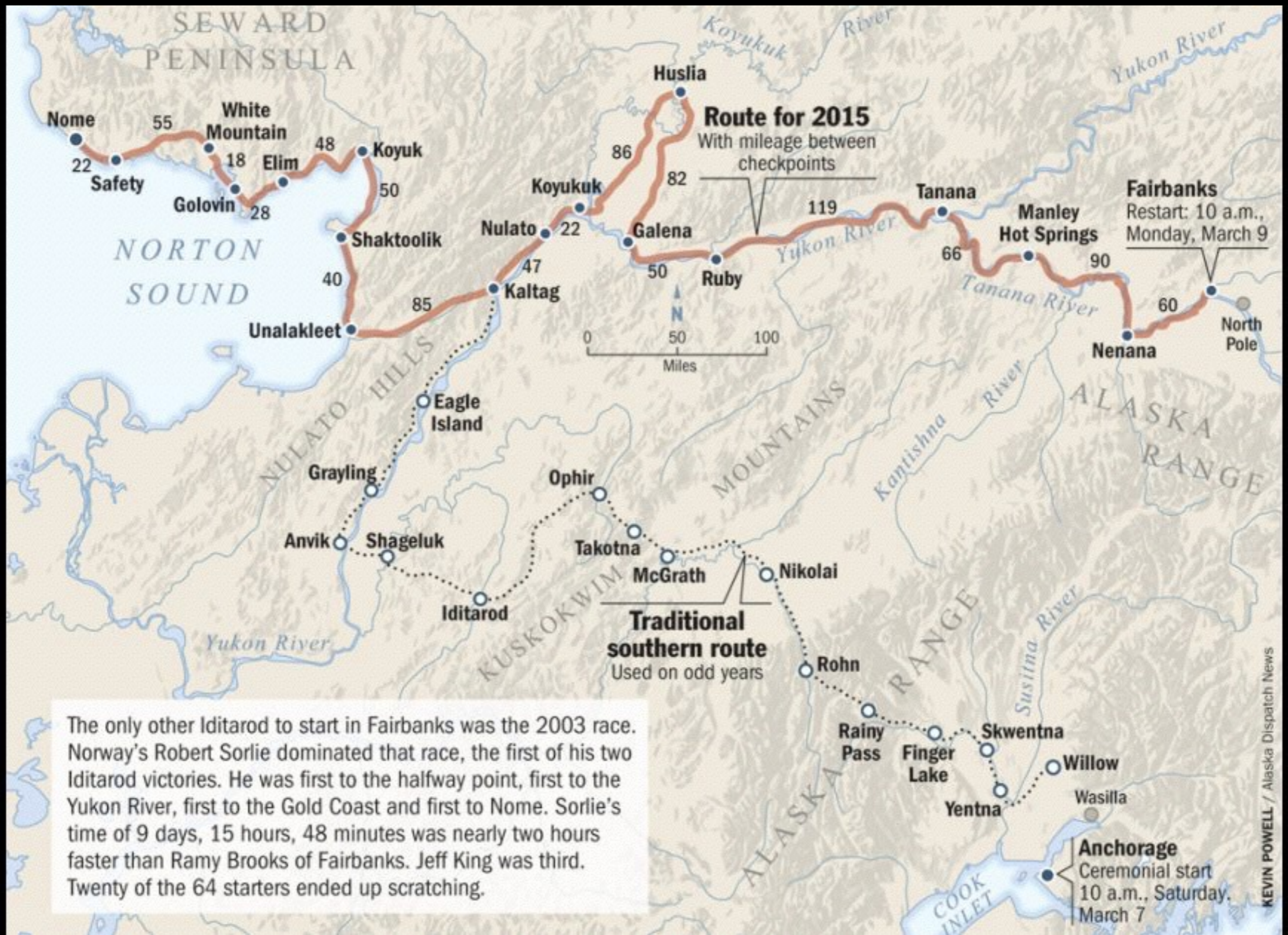
Iditarod Trail and Climate Change

Your name _____

Date _____ **Period** _____ **Due date** _____

After reading the articles your teacher provided and watching the videos, answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper with complete sentences.

1. What image did you find most shocking and why?
2. What are the specific problems faces Alaskan villages because of climate change?
3. What are the names of the two villages you studied?
4. How are the villages working to fight climate change? Tell about at least 4 changes.
5. How is the Iditarod sled dog race impacted by climate change?
6. What innovations are mushers trying because of climate change?
7. What are some changes you could make to lessen the impacts of climate change?



The only other Iditarod to start in Fairbanks was the 2003 race. Norway's Robert Sorlie dominated that race, the first of his two Iditarod victories. He was first to the halfway point, first to the Yukon River, first to the Gold Coast and first to Nome. Sorlie's time of 9 days, 15 hours, 48 minutes was nearly two hours faster than Ramy Brooks of Fairbanks. Jeff King was third. Twenty of the 64 starters ended up scratching.



RESOURCES/REFERENCES/ MATERIALS:

*<http://www.adn.com/article/20150216/interior-secretary-vows-work-solutions-climate-threatened-village> (current article about government policy and climate change)

*<http://www.adn.com/article/20141116/facing-climate-change-unalakeet-will-endure> (great feature about Unalakeet's adaptations)

*<http://www.climatechange.alaska.gov/> (general information)

*<http://akclimate.org/ClimTrends/Change/TempChange.html>
(general information)



RESOURCES/REFERENCES/ MATERIALS:

*<http://arctis-carts.blogspot.com/2011/05/arctis-carts-dryland-mushing-rig.html> (musher's climate innovation)

*<http://www.chasingice.com/> (amazing documentary about climate change)

*<http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/ean08.sci.ess.watcyc.shishmaref/global-warming-threatens-shishmaref/> (short film about climate change in Shishmaref)

MY SLED DOG,
JONES,
BEWILDERED BY
THE LACK OF
SNOW.

Writing prompt:

Write about climate
change from the
perspective of a
sled dog.







FIRST AND ONLY POWDER RIDE OF THE SEASON



Lesson Plan Calendar

Month	Lesson Theme or Topic
July	Geography of Alaska, The Checkpoints and Route of the Race
August	Subsistence Living in Alaska Villages
September	History of the Race, the Original Serum Run
October	Storytelling--Tales from the Trail
November	Mechanics of the Dog Team
December	Winter Life on the Dog Lot, Routines, Rhythms, Training, and Qualifying Races
January	The Amazing Physiology of the Sled Dog
February	Iditasport--Racing the Trail on Bicycle and Foot
March	The Race is On!
April	The Golden Harness Award--A Look at Famous Leaders as well as Retired and Dropped Dogs--Sled Dog Life for Dogs who Don't Finish
May	Summer on the Dog Lot--Summer Training and Projects for Musers

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Thanks to all the generous resources borrowed from.

Alaska Bureau of Land Management
Alaska Dispatch/Anchorage Daily News
Alaska Government
Alaska Center for Climate Change
Alaska Climate Research Center
Alaska Resources Library and Information Services
Alaska web.org
Arctic Entries
Arctic Carts
Bering Strait School District
Born to Run, Albert Lewis
Center for Disease Control
Chasing Ice
Cruelest Miles, Gay Salisbury
Happy Trails Kennel and Martin Buser
iditarod.com
Iditarod Outsider
iTrec
Fairbanks News Miner
Jeff King
Jen Reiter
LitSite Alaska
Martha Dobson
National Geographic
National Park Services
Oustide Online
PBS
Scholastic
Scott Jansen
Scientific American
Students of Ms. Wiley
Susan Harrington
University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Jukebox Project
Winterdance, by Gary Paulsen

Thanks to Dell for the technology support. Thanks to Exxon-Mobile for supporting this conference and paying for substitute/conference fees.

Go to akwiley.weebly.com for all resources
and lesson plans.

