

Learning Guide



Greenland

We hope you enjoyed learning all about the landscape and culture of Greenland. Extend your learning with this print-ready Learning Guide!



What's in this Learning Guide?

Get Set to Listen

Answer TRUE or FALSE statements before and after listening to the episode.

Vocabulary

Discussion Questions

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.3-8.1, SL.3-8.3

Writing Prompts

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-8.1, W.3-8.2, W.3-8.3, W.3-8.4, W.3-8.7, W.3-8.8

Community Knowledge Map: Activity

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3-8.2, SL.3-8.4, RI.3-8.1, W.3-8.9; C3 Geography: D2.Geo.2.3-8, D2.His.4.3-8, VA:Cr2.1.3-8; VA:Cr2.3.3-8

Types of Greenland Ice Lab

NGSS: 5-ESS2-1, 5-ESS3-1, MS-ESS2-1, MS-ESS2-2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3-8.3, CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-8.2; C3 Geography.D2.Geo.2.3-8, C3.D2.Geo.5.3-8

Understanding Bias Activity: Indigenous Perspective vs. Stereotype

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3-8.6, RI.3-8.7, RI.3-8.1, C3 History: C3.D2.His.6.3-5, C3.D2.His.6.6-8, C3.D4.1.3-5 / D4.1.6-8

Greenlandic Music Appreciation: Activity

MU:Re7.1.3-8, MU:Re7.2.3-8, MU:Re8.1.3-8, MU:Cn10.1.3-8, MU:Cn11.1.3-8; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3-8.1

Additional Resources & Book List



The Children's Hour
kids public radio

© 2026 The Children's Hour radio show podcast
<https://www.childrenshour.org/greenland/>



Get Set to Listen

1. Before listening!

Read each statement and write TRUE or FALSE based on what you already know.



2. After listening!

Based on what the experts said in the episode, write TRUE or FALSE.



Before Listening	TRUE or FALSE?	After Listening
	1. Greenland is the largest island in the world.	
	2. About 85% of Greenland is covered by ice.	
	3. People can drive on roads between all the towns in Greenland.	
	4. The Inuit people have lived in Greenland for thousands of years.	
	5. People in Greenland can buy and privately own land.	
	6. In northern Greenland, the sun may not rise for a period during winter.	
	7. Greenland's traditional culture is strongly connected to the sea and marine wildlife.	

What did you learn?



Get Set to Listen

Answer key

1. TRUE
2. TRUE
3. FALSE. There are not many roads connecting the towns, so people often travel by airplane or boat.
4. TRUE
5. FALSE. Land is communal, although people can receive permission to build on a piece of land.
6. TRUE
7. TRUE



Vocabulary

Listening for Words

1. Make a four-column chart and label the columns “I don’t know,” “I’ve seen or heard, but don’t know the meaning,” “I think I know the meaning,” and “I know the meaning.”
2. Write the vocabulary word in the column that describes how well you know the meaning of the word.
3. Listen to [the episode](#). Note how the speaker uses the words.

Matching Words with Definitions

1. Print and cut apart the word and definition cards.
2. Spread out the word cards so you can see them all. One by one, attach a definition card to each word card.

Writing with New Words

After working with the words and definitions, write a one-page essay or story that uses at least three of the words.

glacier

A large, slow-moving mass of ice formed from snow.

ice sheet

A huge layer of ice covering a large area of land.



Vocabulary

iceberg

A large piece of ice that calves, or breaks off, from glaciers and falls into the ocean. They are made of compressed snow.

sea ice

Ice made of frozen seawater.

pack ice

A type of sea ice that is clustered together but isn't attached to the shoreline and drifts with winds, currents, and other forces.

drift

To move slowly with the wind or water.



Vocabulary

Indigenous

Describes people who are the original inhabitants of a particular place.

Inuit

Indigenous peoples who live in Arctic regions, including Greenland, Canada, and Alaska.

nomadic

Moving from place to place instead of living permanently in one location.

migration

The movement of people or animals from one place to another.



Vocabulary

communal

Shared by a group of people rather than owned by one person.

autonomy

The ability or right of a place or group to govern itself.

jurisdiction

The official power to make and enforce laws in a particular area.

resources

Useful materials or supplies that come from nature or other sources.



Discussion Questions

1. What does Naja mean when she says, “We’re not the bosses of nature. Nature is our boss”?
2. How is land ownership in Greenland different from land ownership in the United States?
3. Why do you think living in a small community might give children more freedom to explore?
4. How is life in Greenland different from life where you live?
5. Greenland has very long periods of darkness in some northern areas. How do you think that might affect everyday life?
6. What would be the most challenging part of spending a year living in Greenland? What might be the most exciting part?
7. Naja describes spending lots of time outdoors as a child. How does your childhood experience compare?
8. What can we learn about a place by listening to someone who actually lives there instead of relying only on pictures, movies, or news reports?
9. After listening to the episode, how would you describe Greenland to someone who knows very little about it?

Group Discussion Strategies

Think Pair Share:

1. Individually, student writes down their answer to a question.
2. Students pair up and tell each other their answers.
3. Teacher calls for volunteers to share with the whole class their answer (and/or their partner’s answer). Teacher notes key words/phrases on board.

Round Robin:

1. Teacher poses one question (written on top of a large page) to students, who are assembled into small groups of 3 or 4.
2. Students take turns brainstorming the answers. The recorder of the group writes down all answers.
3. The leader reads the group’s ideas to the entire class. Teacher moderates.



Writing Prompts

Narrative Prompts

1. Imagine you are a child living in Greenland. Write a story about one day in your life, including what you see, eat, do, and experience.
2. Imagine you have moved to Greenland. Write about your first winter and how you learn to adapt to the cold, darkness, snow, and ice.
3. Write a story in which you encounter a polar bear, seal, whale, raven, or another animal found in Greenland.

Informational/Expository Prompts

1. Write an informational article explaining Greenland's geography, climate, population, culture, and natural resources.
2. Explain what daily life is like for people living in Greenland. Include information about transportation, housing, food, work, and recreation.
3. Explain how warming temperatures and changing sea ice are affecting Greenland's environment, animals, and traditional ways of life.
4. Write an informational piece about Inuit culture and traditions in Greenland. Explain the importance of hunting, fishing, language, community, and the natural environment.
5. Explain what the four seasons are like in Greenland and how people adapt to the changing weather and amount of daylight.

Opinion/Persuasive Prompts

1. What ideas did you have about Greenland before you listened to Naja talk about her home? Why is it important to learn about Indigenous peoples from Indigenous people themselves?
2. Naja describes spending much of her childhood outdoors. Do you think children should spend more time exploring and playing outside? Give reasons and examples.
3. In Greenland, people cannot privately own land in the same way they can in many places. Do you think communities should share responsibility for land and nature? Explain your opinion.



Community Knowledge Map

Listen

- [Part 3: Being Outdoors Throughout the Year in Greenland \(segment 27:34-31:50\)](#)

Read



Seasons by the Lake: Adventures in Greenland

by Naja Lund Aparico (Greenland Inuk), illustrated by Alex Nees (Choctaw/German)

Greenlandic Inuk author Naja Lund Aparico combines a sweet sibling story with an exploration of the seasons in the Arctic, featuring stunning illustrations and detailed backmatter.

ages 4-8

Draw

A map of your community and identify places that hold knowledge, such as:

- A river, lake, or other water source
- A park or natural area
- A school
- A neighborhood
- A place where people gather
- A place connected to local history or culture
- A place where people fish, farm, or hunt

Write

For each location, write a label with the following information:

- *Who knows this place well?*
- *What might they know that others don't?*
- *How could that knowledge be passed down?*

Reflect

Indigenous knowledge is often deeply connected to specific places, environments, seasons, and generations of experience.

- *How can living in a place for a long time teach people things that aren't found in a textbook?*
- *How do people develop and pass down knowledge about the places where they live?*

Extend

Choose one place on your map and write:

“If this place could tell a story, what would it teach us?”



Types of Greenland Ice Lab

Listen

- [Part 2: The Inuit People and Animals of Greenland \(segment 27:34-31:50\)](#)

The Greenland **Ice Sheet** and **glaciers** are land ice, while **sea ice** forms from seawater. **Icebergs** are pieces of glacier/ice-shelf ice that have broken off and are floating in the ocean. **Pack ice** is drifting sea ice that is not attached to the shoreline.

Greenland Ice Lab: “Where Does the Ice Come From?”

Model and compare five types of ice found in Greenland: **ice sheet**, **glacier**, **iceberg**, **sea ice**, and **pack ice**.

Materials

- Clear tub or large container
- Water (*optionally dyed blue*)
- Large ice block
- Ice cubes made with **salt** water
- Long strip of ice
- Something to break off a piece of ice from the long strip of ice, such as a hammer
- Modeling clay
- Small labels
- Human figurine or paper cutout

Overview

In this lab, you will:

- **Build a model**
 - Use clay to make a landmass representing Greenland.
 - Place a large block of ice on top: Ice Sheet.
 - Place a strip of ice extending toward the water: Glacier.
 - Break off a piece of the glacier and let it float: Iceberg.
 - Put ice made from frozen saltwater into the water to float: Sea Ice.
 - Push several pieces of floating sea ice together: Pack Ice.
- **Reflect**
 - Ice Sheet: Where does it form?
 - Glacier: How does it move?
 - Iceberg: Where did it come from?
 - Sea Ice: Is it made from freshwater or seawater?
 - Pack Ice: How is it different from sea ice?
- **Demonstrate understanding of the two pathways that lead to ice in Greenland:**
 1. Snow → Ice Sheet → Glacier → Iceberg → Ocean
 2. Seawater → Sea Ice → Pack Ice
- **Reflect on the importance of understanding the different types of ice in Greenland.**



Types of Greenland Ice Lab

Part 1: Build Greenland

Materials

- Modeling clay
- Large clear plastic container or dishpan
- Large block of ice
- Small label and permanent marker

Directions

1. Use some of the modeling clay or play dough to make a landmass at one end of the container.
2. Put a large block of ice on top of the landmass. This represents Greenland's Ice Sheet.
3. Label this “**ICESHEET (compacted snow)**”.

Note: Don't worry about making the model to scale—the purpose is to show the relationships.

*An **ice sheet** is an enormous mass of land-based glacial ice. It is made from compressed snow (freshwater). Greenland and Antarctica are the only two ice sheets on Earth today. The Greenland Ice Sheet covers roughly 80% of Greenland and is more than 3 km thick at its thickest point.*





Types of Greenland Ice Lab

Part 2: Make a Glacier

Materials

- Greenland Model from Part 1
- Modeling clay
- Small label and permanent marker
- Long strip of ice

Directions

1. Take some modeling clay and make a valley leading from the large ice block toward the water.
2. Place a long strip of ice along the valley.
3. Label it “**GLACIER (compacted snow)**”.

A **glacier** is a large body of land ice that flows slowly. It is made from compacted snow (freshwater). In Greenland, glaciers can carry ice from the interior ice sheet toward the coast.

The Greenland Ice Sheet flows outward under its own weight, and some of that ice moves through outlet glaciers toward the ocean.

Student movement activity

Place your hands at the top of the model and slowly move them toward the ocean.

Discuss

The ice sheet is moving. Where is the ice going?

Follow the pathway:

Ice Sheet → Glacier → Ocean





Types of Greenland Ice Lab

Part 3: The Iceberg “Calving” Demonstration

Materials

- Something to break off a piece of ice, such as a hammer
- Small label and permanent marker

Directions

1. Break a small piece off the end of your glacier and drop it into the water. This is **calving**. The piece that breaks off is an **iceberg**.
2. Label the piece of broken-off glacier “**ICEBERG (compacted snow)**”.

Discuss

- *Where did the iceberg come from?*
- *Is the iceberg made from frozen ocean water?*

Watch it happen [here!](#)

A Common Misconception

*An iceberg is freshwater ice that originated from glaciers or ice shelves and is now floating in the ocean. It is **not** frozen seawater.*

The “tip of the iceberg” moment

Notice how much of the iceberg is underwater.

Discuss

Why can we see only part of the iceberg?





Types of Greenland Ice Lab

Part 4: Make Sea Ice

Materials

- Ice cubes made from salty water
- Small label and permanent marker

Directions

1. Sprinkle saltwater ice cubes across another area of the water. This represents **sea ice**. Label the loose pieces “**SEA ICE (frozen saltwater)**”.
2. Push several pieces together so they form a drifting cluster. Label that “**PACK ICE (a type of sea ice)**”.

Note the distinction: The saltwater ice cubes represent ice that began as ocean water. On the other hand, the glacier ice began as snow that accumulated on land.

***Sea ice** forms when seawater freezes. **Pack ice** is **sea ice** that is clustered together but isn't attached to the shoreline and drifts with winds, currents, and other forces.*

Discuss

Did this ice come from land?

Notice

- Sea ice = frozen seawater
- Pack ice = drifting sea ice
- Pack ice isn't a completely different kind of ice—it describes how sea ice is arranged and moving.





Types of Greenland Ice Lab

Sea Ice





Types of Greenland Ice Lab

Part 6: Humans and the Ice

Materials

- Human figurine or paper cutout

Directions

Put a small toy person/figure or paper person on the sea ice.

Discuss

Why does it matter to know what kind of ice you're standing on?

- Return to Naja's explanation that sea ice is important to traditional Inuit hunting and travel in [Part 2: The Inuit People and Animals of Greenland \(segment 27:34-31:50\)](#).
- The [National Snow and Ice Data Center](#) also notes that Arctic communities use sea ice for hunting and traveling.

Reflect

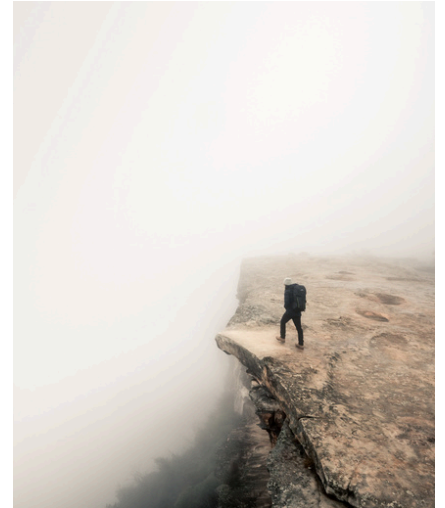
- What information would a hunter need to know about the ice? _____

- Would all ice be equally safe for traveling? Explain why or why not. _____

- How might wind and currents change drifting pack ice? How would this affect hunters or anyone traveling or living on or near the ice pack? _____

- Why would changes in sea ice, such as melting from climate change, affect a community's way of life? _____

- What could someone learn from observing the ice year after year? _____





Types of Greenland Ice Lab

Student Recording Sheet

Some Greenland ice begins as snow on land, while other ice begins as seawater in the ocean. Use this data sheet to record what you learn from your Greenland Ice Model.

Type of Ice	Where does it come from? (Land or Ocean)	Does it move?	How does it get there?
Ice sheet			
Glacier			
Iceberg			
Sea ice			
Pack ice			

Sea ice originates from seawater, whereas glacier ice and ice sheet ice originate from accumulated snow on land. Sea ice typically forms around -1.8°C because of its salinity.



Types of Greenland Ice Lab

Sea ice originates from seawater, whereas glacier ice and ice sheet ice originate from accumulated snow on land.

Write/Draw

Some Greenland ice begins as snow on land, while other ice begins as seawater in the ocean.

Use words and pictures to explain the journey of a snowflake as it becomes an iceberg.

Draw another diagram to contrast how pack ice is formed.

INUKTITUT GLOSSARY OF ICE

Inuit share an intimate relationship with ice. For millennia, they've used it to find food, build homes, and as a mode of travel. While their southern neighbors may only know a handful of ice terms, Arctic Indigenous peoples have created an entire lexicon. Below is a sample representing various dialects of Inuktitut.

AGLU

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A seal breathing hole in the ice, which can also be used for hunting

KANIJJUK

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Salty crystals or "frost flowers" that grow on newly formed ice when the air is cold

PUKTAAQ

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Ice cake, a piece of sea ice that's floating, usually flat and small in size

QISUKTUQ

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Frost smoke or fog rising from open water, when it is very cold

SIKUAQ

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First thin ice indicated by a dark and shiny surface, should be tested with harpoon for stability

SINAAQ

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Ice floe edge, the dynamic ecosystem where the ice ends and open ocean begins

Source: SIKU, the Indigenous Knowledge Social Network, developed to facilitate Indigenous self-determination in research, education, and environmental stewardship. SIKU is a project of the Arctic Eider Society, developed by and for Indigenous communities. (siku.org)
Words by Daniel Hentz | Illustrations by Natalie Renier

Image [source](#)



Understanding Bias

Indigenous Perspective vs. Stereotype

When we learn about a culture or community, the information we receive is shaped by who is telling the story, what they have experienced, and what they choose to include or leave out.

In this activity, we will examine how perspective and bias can influence what we learn about Greenland and its people.

Whose Voice Are We Hearing?

Examine the following three different sources of information about Greenland:

1. Read [“Greenland Brochure”](#)
2. [Wikipedia article on Greenland](#)
3. Listen to native Greenlander Naja Lund Aparico talk about Greenland
 - [Part 1: What’s It Like in Greenland? \(segments 8:21-12:03 + 45:52-51:09\)](#)
 - [Part 2: The Inuit People and Animals of Greenland \(segment 27:34-31:50\)](#)
 - [Part 3: Being Outdoors Throughout the Year in Greenland \(segment 34:18-38:11\)](#)

For each of the sources, determine:

- Who is speaking?
- What do they focus on?
- What do they leave out?
- What assumptions might they have?
- What does the speaker know because of lived experience?
- Which details could only come from someone who has lived there?

Reflect

What changes when we learn about a culture from a person who belongs to that culture?

Connect to Local Indigenous Communities

Research one specific Indigenous nation/community in your area and compare it with Greenlandic Inuit perspectives on one theme:

- | | |
|------------|-----------------------------|
| • Land | • Seasons |
| • Water | • Community |
| • Language | • Traditional knowledge |
| • Food | • Relationship with animals |

Be sure to use sources created by or featuring members of that specific community. This keeps the activity focused on authentic voices rather than stereotypes or generalized “Native American” information.



Understanding Bias

Whose Voice Are We Hearing?

Whose Voice Are We Hearing?

Examine the following three different sources of information about Greenland:

1. Read [“Greenland Brochure”](#)

- Who is the author? _____
- What do they focus on? _____

- What do they leave out? _____

- What assumptions or motivations might they have? _____

- What does the author know because of lived experience? _____

- Which details could only come from someone who has lived there? _____

2. Read [Wikipedia article on Greenland](#)

- Who is the author? _____
- What do they focus on? _____

- What do they leave out? _____

- What assumptions or motivations might they have? _____

- What does the author know because of lived experience? _____

- Which details could only come from someone who has lived there? _____



Understanding Bias

Whose Voice Are We Hearing?

3. Listen to native Greenlander Naja Lund Aparico talk about Greenland

- [Part 1: What's It Like in Greenland? \(segments 8:21-12:03 + 45:52-51:09\)](#)
- [Part 2: The Inuit People and Animals of Greenland \(segment 27:34-31:50\)](#)
- [Part 3: Being Outdoors Throughout the Year in Greenland \(segment 34:18-38:11\)](#)

- Who is the speaker? _____
- What do they focus on? _____

- What do they leave out? _____

- What assumptions or motivations might they have? _____

- What does the speaker know because of lived experience? _____

- Which details could only come from someone who has lived there? _____

Reflect

What changes when we learn about a culture from a person who belongs to that culture?



Greenlandic Music Appreciation Activity

Language and music are important parts of cultural identity. The Children's Hour's Greenland episode features many songs by Greenlandic musicians. Listen and reflect on what you hear.



Listen

[Kalaaliuvunga by Sume](#)



Reflect

How do you think they are making the music? _____

What emotions do you feel as you listen? _____

What do you think the singer is saying? _____

Why do you think the musicians decided to include two very different styles of music in one song? _____



Listen

[Kaakkukkakkit by Hinnarik Kammanilu on the album Kia ilimagaa](#)

Reflect

What emotions do you feel as you listen? _____

What do you think the singer is saying? _____

What effect does the laughing at the end have on the song? _____

Visit [The Children's Hour's Greenland episode page for the complete playlist.](#)



Additional Resources

[Greenland History: From Ancient Migrations to Modern Autonomy](#)

A higher-reading-level article from Secret Atlas.

[Reverse Colonization: How the Inuit Conquered Greenland and Vanquished the Vikings](#)

This article from Washington University explains it for more advanced readers.

[Sea Ice Facts for Kids](#)

An encyclopedia-style article for kids from Kiddle.

[Parts of the Cryosphere](#)

Learn all about the cryosphere, Arctic climate, permafrost, glaciers, ice sheets, ice shelves, sea ice, snow, and more from the National Snow and Ice Data Center.

[Quick Facts about Sea Ice](#)

From the National Snow and Ice Data Center.

[Sea Ice Glossary](#)

Learn all about the different types of ice found in Greenland and the Arctic.

Videos

[Greenland: A Super Quick History](#)

In this 6-minute video, you'll get a very quick overview.

[A Brief History of Greenland \(And Why Trump Wants to Control It\)](#)

In this 22-minute video, historian Matt Lewis breaks down the brief history of Greenland, from its Indigenous Inuit origins and Norse settlements to Danish rule and modern self-governance.

[Moving Habitats: The Arctic and Melting Ice Caps](#)

A 20-minute video that takes young children on a magical adventure to the Arctic to meet the animals that live there and learn about the melting ice caps through interactive dance games and activities. Supporting documents are available in the [Resource Pack](#).

[The Arctic Ocean Explained for Kids](#)

In this fun and educational ocean video, Lilly the Mermaid explores icy waters, meets polar bears, narwhals, and seals, and shares amazing facts about the Arctic Ocean's unique ecosystem.



Book List



Seasons by the Lake: Adventures in Greenland

by Naja Lund Aparico (Greenland Inuk), illustrated by Alex Nees (Choctaw/German)

Greenlandic Inuk author Naja Lund Aparico combines a sweet sibling story with an exploration of the seasons in the Arctic, featuring stunning illustrations and detailed backmatter.

ages 4-8

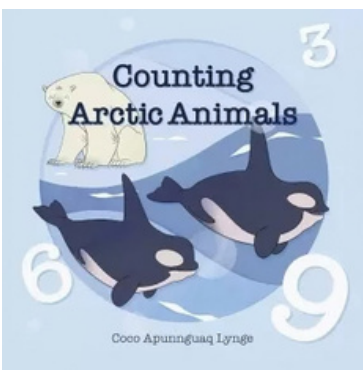


Mythical Monsters of Greenland: A Survival Guide

by Maria Bach Kreutzmann, illustrated by Coco Apunnguaq Lynge

Indigenous European/Greenlandic Inuit author and illustrator detail what you should do if you encounter a Qivittoq, whether you can outrun the fabled Ikusik, and describe what a Tupilak is made of in this picture book.

ages 8-13

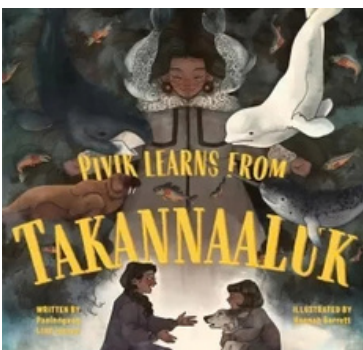


Counting Arctic Animals

by Coco Apunnguaq Lynge

One bowhead whale! Two polar bears! Three orcas! Join Kuluk and Asa as they count all the animals they see! This introduction to counting and to Arctic animals helps young children develop their counting skills through short rhymes. It also introduces interesting collective nouns, like a blessing of narwhals and a bob of seals.

ages 0-5



Pivik Learns from Takannaaluk

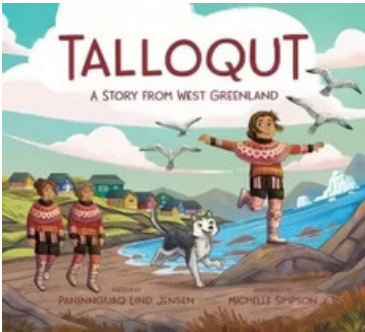
by Paninnguaq Lind Jensen, illustrated by Hannah Barrett

In this story from West Greenland, one young girl tries to teach her mischievous little sister a lesson by telling her the Inuit traditional story of Takannaaluk.

ages 7-9



Book List



Talloqut: A Story from West Greenland

by Paninnguaq Lind Jensen, illustrated by Michelle Simpson

Arnaaleq wants to be just like her anaana, but she has a lot to learn before taking on the traditional responsibilities of a woman. Follow Arnaaleq as she grows up and works hard to master the skills to earn her own talloqut. Learn about West Greenlandic traditions in this story by tattoo artist Paninnguaq Lind Jensen.

This book is part of the Nunavummi Reading Series, a Nunavut-developed series that supports literacy learning while teaching readers about the people, traditions, and environment of the Canadian Arctic.

ages 7-9

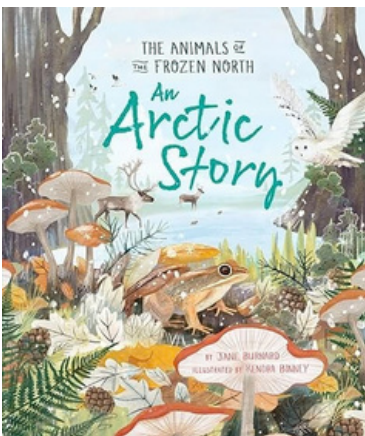


A Journey to the Mother of the Sea

by Mâliâraq Vebæk, illustrated by Aka Høegh

The sea animals have disappeared, and people are starving. An old couple, once great shamans, are asked to journey to the Mother of the Sea to find out what happened to the animals. This is a retelling of a tale that has been told and retold for generations in Greenland.

ages 8-13



An Arctic Story: Animals of the Frozen North

by Jane Burnard, illustrated by Kendra Binney

This beautiful book brings together a spellbinding narrative, breathtaking illustrations, and fascinating facts about one of our planet's most precious environments. On a journey to the North Pole and back, and from fall to spring, you'll meet an extraordinary wood frog, polar bears, an Arctic fox, narwhals, and many other animals.

ages 6-8



The Animals of Greenland

by Angunnguaq Berthelsen

This non-fiction picture book is perfect for introducing young readers to the native creatures of Greenland, like polar bears and puffins, in their natural habitat.

ages 3-6