

# Local Histories: How Did Your Village Become a Village?

By Assiingaaq Janet Johnson

Subject: Local Histories

Audience: Yup'ik Teachers in LYSD (I See, We Do, You Do Model)

Grade Level: High School

## Standards:

- Alaska Cultural Standards for Students
  - A. Culturally knowledgeable students are well grounded in the cultural heritage and traditions of their community.
    - 3) acquire and pass on the traditions of their community through oral and written history;
  - D. Culturally Knowledgeable students are able to engage effectively in learning activities that are based on traditional ways of knowing and learning.
    - 4) gather oral and written history information from the local community and provide an appropriate interpretation of its cultural meaning and Significance;
  - E. Culturally Knowledgeable students demonstrate an awareness and Appreciation of the relationships and processes of interaction of all elements in the world around them.
    - 8) identify and appreciate who they are and their place in the world.
- Alaska Content Standard: History
  - C. A student should develop the skills and processes of historical inquiry.
    - A student who meets the content standard should:
      - 1) use appropriate technology to access, retrieve, organize, and present historical information

## Learning Objectives:

**Historical Understanding:** Students will be able to identify and document key events in the history of their village by engaging with elders' stories and creating a timeline, demonstrating an understanding of the village's cultural and historical development.

**Creative Communication:** Students will create a multimedia project (e.g., video, PowerPoint, or flyer) that synthesizes the elders' stories and their own reflections, effectively communicating the historical significance and cultural identity of their village.

**Materials:**

Paper, pens, recorder, comfortable chair, water, post-its (2" x 2"), thank you cards, snacks, coffee, tea, plates, comfortable chairs. Optional: [See Stories' digital storytelling curriculum](#) provides instruction for filming elders.

**Lesson Opener:**

**Historical Timeline Walk:** Prepare a large timeline on the classroom wall with key events in the history of the village. As students enter, give them sticky notes and ask them to write down one significant event or fact they know about the village's history. They can then place their notes on the timeline. This visual representation will serve as a great conversation starter when the elders come in, and it helps students identify gaps in their knowledge that the elders can fill.

**Lesson Activities:**

- Identify 3 to 5 local elders and an interpreter if possible.
- Invite them to class to share stories about the history of the village. Provide coffee, tea, dried fish, crackers, etc. Set the room in a circle.
- Document their stories.
  - Students can film the elders as they share their stories or take notes on notebook paper or on additional sticky notes.
- Create a video, a powerpoint presentation, and/or a flyer that tells the story of how the village came to be.

**Primary Sources:** Local Elders

**Essential Questions:** How did our village come to be? How did it begin? Why is it important to know this? How can this help us move forward?

**Closing Discussion:**

- What did you learn from the stories? How does it change the way you look and feel about the village? What can you and/or your class do for the health and wellbeing of the village moving forward?
- Create a Powerpoint Presentation on a timeline of who the local village came to be.
- Write thank you cards for elders who participated in the interviews.

**Assessment:**

Oral History Project: Documenting our Community's Story Rubric (below)

## Oral History Project: Documenting Our Community's Story

Criteria	4 - Exemplary	3 - Proficient	2 - Developing	1 - Beginning
<b>Documentation Accuracy</b>	Precisely and carefully documents entire interview with detailed notes, audio/video recording, and comprehensive context	Accurately records most key points of the interview with clear documentation	Captures some important information with partial documentation	Minimal or inaccurate documentation of elder's stories
<b>Cultural Interpretation</b>	Provides profound, nuanced interpretation of stories, connecting deeply to community heritage and significance	Offers clear interpretation of stories with good cultural context	Provides basic interpretation with limited cultural understanding	Minimal or superficial interpretation of cultural meaning
<b>Presentation Quality</b>	Creates an exceptional, professionally designed multimedia presentation that powerfully communicates community history	Develops a clear and engaging presentation with good visual elements	Creates a basic presentation with some informative elements	Incomplete or poorly constructed presentation
<b>Reflection and Impact</b>	Demonstrates deep, thoughtful reflection on how the stories connect to personal and community identity	Provides meaningful reflection showing understanding of community significance	Offers limited reflection with minimal personal connection	Minimal or no reflection on the historical significance

<b>Technological Skills</b>	Expertly uses multiple technologies to organize, present, and preserve historical information	Effectively uses appropriate technology to present and document information	Uses basic technology with some challenges	Minimal technological skills demonstrated
-----------------------------	---	---	--	---

**Scoring Guide:**

- **16-24 points:** Exemplary Understanding of Community History
- **12-15 points:** Proficient Community Historical Exploration
- **8-11 points:** Developing Historical Awareness
- **4-7 points:** Beginning Historical Engagement

**Alignment with Cultural Standards:**

- Supports Standard 3: Passing on community traditions
- Supports Standard 4: Gathering and interpreting local history
- Supports Standard 8: Understanding personal and community identity

**Reflection Prompt:** How do the stories of our elders help us understand our community's journey and our place within it?

*(Rubric Generated by Magic School AI)*

**Context & Resources:**

There may be sharing of traumatic events. Teachers will need to know when and how to provide support for students should the events trigger any emotions that may cause stress and/or tears.

One example activity is from the Yuuyaraq Personal Life Skills Curriculum by [Calista Education Inc](#), Chapter 1: Creating a Support Group activity for students.

Another resource: [PULASARAQ: Reinforcing Strong Yup'ik Minds](#), AASB, 2024

**Rationale:**

Generational trauma still exists today and has been passed down. To break the cycle, students need to understand their histories. Every student is different with their exposure to historical trauma. The rubric will allow for assessing learning stages that meet the students where they are at. The activities are open ended allowing for creativity.