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QAPIRANGAJUQ: INUIT KNOWLEDGE AND CLIMATE CHANGE



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QAPIRANGAJUQ: INUIT KNOWLEDGE AND CLIMATE

Directed by Zacharias Kunuk

Canada | 2009 | 60 min

TEACHER'S GUIDE

This guide has been designed to help teachers and students enrich their experience of documentary film by providing support in the form of questions and activities. There are a range of questions that will help teachers frame discussions with their classes, activities for before, during and after viewing the film, and some web links that provide starting points for further research or discussion. In separate packages, there will also be support materials available with information regarding general viewing and teaching principles for documentary film and the fundamental aspects of making documentary films.

The Film

Qapirangajuq: Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change is the world's first Inuktitut-language film on the topic of climate change. The film is an intimate portrait of Inuit life told in the voices of Inuit elders and hunters, who detail the social and ecological effects of global warming in the Arctic. Using stunning visual shots on the land, *Qapirangajuq* documents Inuit knowledge that has been ignored by southern scientists. That includes evidence that seal behaviour and fur thickness is changing, polar bear and raven populations are increasing, warmer winds are changing snow, overland navigation weather prediction difficult are more difficult, the sea is warmer, ice floes are thinner and ice is breaking up much earlier. *Qapirangajuq* had its world premiere at the 2010 imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival in Toronto. The premiere screening was simultaneously streamed online, watched by more than 1,500 viewers around the world.

The Filmmakers

Nunavut-based director Zacharias Kunuk, an Inuk, is the acclaimed director of *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner*, the groundbreaking 2001 film based on an Inuit oral story. Born near Igloolik, Nunavut, Kunuk was named an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2005. Environmental scientist and filmmaker Dr. Ian Mauro is a geography professor at Mount Allison University in New Brunswick. Mauro uses filmmaking techniques to publish scientific research; *Qapirangajuq* was part of his post-doctoral research at the University of Victoria.

Educational package written and compiled by Suzanne Methot suzanne.methot@tdsb.on.ca



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VIEWING THE FILM WITH STUDENTS

There are important themes in this film that have broad implications for students and their futures.

Take time to activate your students' background understanding of these themes before viewing.

This will help them as they come to their own understanding and develop their critical abilities.

The following three subsections, on this page, are intended to provide you with a range of pre-viewing, viewing and post-viewing activities. They are followed by a set of questions based upon the film's larger thematic domains, some follow-up questions and quotations, sample curricular outcomes, and a page of web links for further investigation.

Pre-Viewing Activities

Have students watch the short YouTube video "What is Climate Change?" (www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmRyJaBPvDO&feature=related). Ask students to work in small groups to create a mind map that organizes the main ideas in the video.

Have students examine the DVD case carefully. Have a large-group discussion or ask them to write down their thoughts on the following:

- Who is the target audience for this media text? How can you tell?
- How does this media text use visual imagery on the DVD cover to appeal to its target audience?
- How does this media text appeal to you?
- What are the themes of this film? How can you tell?

Print several of the quotations from the Extension Activities section of the guide on individual sheets of paper. Have students work in small groups or in pairs to discuss the ideas in the quotations. Then ask them to share their conclusions with the large group. As they discuss the quotations, ask students to think about the following:

- What is the main conflict in this film? How do you know this?
- From whose perspective is this story told? How do you know this?
- What values are being promoted? How do you know this?
- Whose point of view do the values represent? Are your values represented? Why or why not?

Have a large group discussion about one of the quotations from the Extension Activities section of this guide. Ask students to structure their questions and responses around the themes of identity, relationships, sovereignty and challenges.

Viewing Activities

Have students take notes on the connections they see between the issues in this film and ones found in the The Big Questions/Ideas/Themes section of this guide.

Have students describe what they see in the film. Ask them to withhold judgment and observe carefully. They can write notes or give an oral description.

Ask students to create a mind map as they watch the film. The mind map should contain the following key words: conflicts, techniques, purpose and perspective. To get students started, use the following prompts:

- What are the main conflicts we encounter in this film? Were the conflicts resolved at the end of the film? Why or why not?
- How was the film made? What conventions or production techniques are used? How do these techniques attract the viewer?
- Who produced this media text, and for what purpose? Who profits if the message is accepted? Who may be disadvantaged?
- How would this story be different if told from the perspective of another character in the film?

Have students jot down three questions for discussion that the film raises in their minds.

Post-Viewing Activities

A fast-paced television commercial or music video may contain more than 40 shots in 30 seconds. Some people think the slower editing of other programming such as documentary film makes the pace too slow or dull. Have students discuss the effect of speed in commercials and music videos on our perception of other programming and on our lives in general.

Have a large-group discussion guided by student questions written during the last Viewing Activity.

Write "Inuit Qaujimagatunqangit (IQ)" on a flip chart or board (pronounced kao-yee-muh-yah-tut-khang-geet). Explain that IQ is a concept in the Inuit culture that means "doing things the Inuit way." It means knowledge of the environment, including snow, ice and weather; being in harmony with people, land, living things and the Inuit worldview; and having the life skills, alertness and ability to train others to lead a strong, healthy life. According to director Zacharias Kunuk, the principle of IQ underlies the Inuit way of life, including filmmaking. It is the wisdom passed on from generation to generation, gained from the experience and values of Inuit society. Have students write about or make an oral presentation on the ways in which Kunuk's film honours and/or illustrates the concept of IQ. How are the filmmaker's techniques in keeping with IQ? How does Kunuk's film train others to lead a "strong, healthy life"?

Have students create a T-chart with the main title "Observations and Evidence of Climate Change." Their column headings will be "Traditional Knowledge" and "Western Scientific Knowledge." Provide students with the Key Findings sheets from the "Impacts of a Warming Arctic"

report, available on the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment website (www.acia.uaf.edu/pages/overview.html). Ask students to summarize the ACIA information and place it in the appropriate column. Then, using information from the film, have them match each Western scientific idea with a piece of Inuit knowledge to fill in the "Traditional Knowledge" column.

After they have completed their T-chart, have students write about or present their thoughts on the following questions: How does Western scientific knowledge validate or confirm Inuit traditional knowledge? What similarities are there between the two? What differences?

Have students build a conceptual map showing the web of ideas, topics and associated sub-topics in the film. Using the conceptual map as a guide, ask students to create questions they think will represent the important issues. Then, using the questions and the conceptual map, ask students to make interconnections among elements of the film. This should take the form of an argument, including a thesis statement and evidence from the text. Have students make a final judgment about the text based on the argument they created above. Students will learn that their evaluations and feelings are informed by description, analysis and interpretation.

Finally, ask students to reflect on the processes of description, interpretation and evaluation they completed during the Pre-Viewing, Viewing and Post-Viewing activities. Did these steps help inform their ideas? Ask students to write a personal reflection to summarize what they have learned.

THE BIG QUESTIONS/IDEAS/THEMES

Multiple Perspectives

What is the subject of this film? Can you determine the filmmakers' perspective on this subject? What evidence can you find in the film to support your view?

How does this film help you analyze and interpret points of view about issues that concern people?

Does the filmmakers' perspective foster respect for diversity and an inclusive society? If so, how?

Identity

Whose story is told in this documentary? Whose story is not told? How does this story, and the way it is told, help you understand your own community/life?

How do the people in this film identify with their community? What are the common bonds among the people in this film? What challenges do they face in expressing their identity?

What film techniques do the filmmakers use to convey the identity of the people in this film?

Citizenship

What insights does this documentary offer about the ideals of good citizenship in the community depicted in this film?

How does the film deal with issues of freedom, equality, human dignity, and individual and collective rights and responsibilities?

Change and Continuity

How does this film help you understand a community's values and its attitudes towards an issue at a particular time?

What changes do the people in the film experience? What causes those changes? What are the consequences of those changes for the people in the documentary?

Culture and Community

Which aspects of a people's culture does this film focus on? Why do you think the filmmakers focused on those aspects?

How do the images, themes and message of this film help you understand the filmmakers' attitude towards the subject? What do you think might have been the intended audience's attitude towards the documentary subject?

Individuals, Societies and Economic Decisions

What economic systems are at work in this film? What are some of the causes and effects of the economic decisions made by the people in the film's community?

Does money play a part in the decisions being made in the film and what does it tell you about their local culture?

Power and Governance

What system of government control do we see in this documentary? How is power distributed within this society? What are the implications of that distribution on issues affecting the people's well-being and freedom?

Global Connections

What global issues are addressed in this film? What is the filmmakers' point of view on the opportunities and challenges of those issues?

Adapted from NFB Documentary Lens: <http://www.nfb.ca>

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Have students write letters to director Zacharias Kunuk and/or producer Ian Mauro. Is the film an effective tool? How would students produce the text differently? Does the film work as a scientific report, as is intended by Dr. Mauro?

Have students conduct independent research on climate change (books, Internet, the Kunuk film). Have them gather information on the solutions they think are most worth pursuing. Provide them with the following questions to guide their work:

- Will there be one successful action to stop climate change, or will we need to undertake multiple actions?
- Should we focus on adapting to the effects we already see and know we will experience in the future?
- Will the solution be political, scientific or both?
- Can scientists and government policy work together to address this issue? Are there examples of this occurring in the past?
- Will the best actions or solutions be found at the global, regional or local levels?
- What role do students and youth play in finding a solution?

Ask students to gather in small groups to participate in a debate about their solutions. Their solutions must be supported by evidence from their research. Solutions and evidence should be scrutinized by the group based on scientific and political merit. When everyone has presented their solutions and evidence, have each group decide which solutions are the best. Then have each group present their solutions to the large group. The large group will then vote on the top two solutions. If time allows, students may then summarize their solutions in a letter they send to government.

Have students write a letter to the elders who appear in the film. How does the knowledge these elders share help students understand the world differently?

Additional Questions for Pre-Viewing or Post-Viewing Activities

How might the effects of climate change affect Inuit concepts of identity?

How does this film document the relationship Inuit people have maintained with the land? How does climate change affect the Inuit relationship with the land? With the government of Canada? With citizens around the globe?

How does the film show the challenges Inuit people face in reclaiming, reasserting and further developing their

relationship with the land and their identity as a people?

How might the concept of Inuit sovereignty—the right to govern oneself—be a solution for climate change? What connections are there between government policy and climate change?

Quotations From the Film to Explore

"First thing in the morning, I was told to go out in order to welcome the environment and all the animals that I was going to hunt in my lifetime.... That was the law."

How would this action allow a person to develop a relationship with the land and the animals on the land?

"Our parents and grandparents taught us how to live, survive on the land, and be a good person. These were told to us."

How has colonization and Western education changed Inuit family life? How has the change in family structure affected Inuit identity and values?

"Hunters had this awareness of the environment within them." What is the difference between knowing things and having knowledge "within" you?

"Inuit culture is oral and we keep knowledge in our minds. Even without text, our culture is full of wisdom."

Is written text more accurate than oral stories/knowledge? Isn't an oral story a form of text?

"This is dangerous to people worldwide. Not only the Arctic but everywhere. However, it's most noticeable in our homeland."

If the effects of climate change were more noticeable in the south, would climate change be more of an issue? How does climate change show connections between all living things on the earth?

"Scientists talk about climate change with studies on pollution and toxins, whereas Inuit discuss the effects as they occur within our lives."

How does this statement reflect the difference between Western science (examining the parts and proceeding to the whole) and Inuit traditional knowledge (a holistic understanding of concepts with people as part of the web)? How might seeing humanity as part of an interconnected web of living things lead to a feeling of personal responsibility for issues such as climate change?

"Multi-year ice is not just ordinary ice.... They behave like living beings."

How might an Inuit hunter see an iceberg as "alive"? Why would this be necessary for survival?

"Scientists say with great authority, 'Polar bears are in decline and will go extinct.' When I am out hunting, I never see these scientists. Not even one!"

What does this say about the difference between Western science and traditional Inuit knowledge?

"I've lived here all my life and have also watched the sun. Where it rises has not changed much, but the sunset has shifted way over. Perhaps the earth has tilted on its axis."

Although Western science accepts that a polar wander of 30 degrees has occurred over the past 200 million years, and that the Earth's magnetic field has reversed its orientation tens of thousands of times since the planet's formation, scientists say that the Inuit are wrong and that the Earth's axis has not shifted. How might Western science work more effectively with Inuit hunters to understand what is happening today?

"If we do not have our environment, we cannot survive."

What connections are there between the land and Inuit identity? When cultural identity changes, does this mean a people ceases to survive?

"Scientists don't realize the knowledge of our hunters. Hunter knowledge is rich in information and must be included. Southerners often have a narrow perspective, based only on studies. This has to change."

How might Inuit knowledge be turned into "studies"? How might turning Inuit knowledge into "studies" benefit both Western science and Inuit life?

"They make regulations and apply them to us without our consultation."

How do the actions of government illustrate a paternalistic attitude toward the Inuit? Has the creation of the new territory of Nunavut changed this attitude or the effects of this attitude?

"Since we cannot stop it, we have to adapt."

What does this statement show about the strength of the Inuit as people? As a culture?

POST-VIEWING ACTIVITY: CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS EFFECT ON LIVING THINGS

Name: _____ Date: _____ Mark: ____ /40 (See rubric)

Climate change is causing or is expected to cause changes in plants, animal and human life worldwide, including a decrease in animal habitat; changes to forests; loss of biodiversity; changes to human economies dependent upon marine life and forests; socioeconomic changes to Aboriginal peoples living on the land due to changes in animal migration; changes in river flows and soils; infrastructure damage to buildings in northern communities due to melting of permafrost; and shifts in ecosystems.

You will research the ecosystem of the Arctic. Your research needs to include organisms in each category of producers, herbivores, carnivores, omnivores and decomposers. You may use books, the Internet and the film *Qapirangajuq: Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change*. After you complete your research, you will create a web of the Arctic ecosystem, showing interrelationships between organisms and their environment. Your web should include physical factors such as the sun, the Earth's atmosphere, water, soil and nutrients. It should also include connections to the Inuit knowledge described in the film.

After you develop your web, you will:

- Develop hypotheses that explain how climate change might affect the ecosystem of the Arctic
- Decide on your strongest hypothesis
- Based on your hypothesis, write a statement that describes how climate change might affect one of the plants or animals in the Arctic ecosystem
- Prepare a description of the ecosystem as it is today, using the web as your illustration
- Prepare a description of what you think the ecosystem might look like in 2100 if climate change continues to occur, using a new web for illustration
- Present your webs and your descriptions to the large group

You may use ideas from the Pre-Viewing, Viewing or Post-Viewing activities, information from the film, the questions from The Big Questions/Ideas/Themes section and the rubric categories to help guide your project.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS EFFECT ON LIVING THINGS RUBRIC

Name: _____ Group: _____

Categories	Level 1 (50-59%)	Level 2 (60-69%)	Level 3 (70-79%)	Level 4 (80-100%)
Knowledge and Understanding	5.0 5.2 5.4 5.6 5.8	6.0 6.2 6.4 6.6 6.8	7.0 7.2 7.4 7.6 7.8	8.0 8.2 8.5 9.0 10
Understands the concept of an ecosystem	Demonstrates limited knowledge of the concept of an ecosystem	Demonstrates some knowledge of the concept of an ecosystem	Demonstrates considerable knowledge of the concept of an ecosystem	Demonstrates thorough knowledge of the concept of an ecosystem
Explains the effects that climate change will have on ecosystems	Explains the effects that climate change will have on ecosystems with a limited degree of understanding	Explains the effects that climate change will have on ecosystems with some degree of understanding	Explains the effects that climate change will have on ecosystems with some degree of understanding	Explains the effects that climate change will have on ecosystems with a thorough degree of understanding
Thinking and Inquiry	5.0 5.2 5.4 5.6 5.8	6.0 6.2 6.4 6.6 6.8	7.0 7.2 7.4 7.6 7.8	8.0 8.2 8.5 9.0 10
Uses critical and creative thinking skills to analyze and interpret information, formulate hypotheses and form conclusions	Applies few of the skills involved in an inquiry process	Applies some of the skills involved in an inquiry process	Applies most of the skills involved in an inquiry process	Applies all or almost all of the skills involved in an inquiry process
Communication	5.0 5.2 5.4 5.6 5.8	6.0 6.2 6.4 6.6 6.8	7.0 7.2 7.4 7.6 7.8	8.0 8.2 8.5 9.0 10
Communicates information and ideas through the use of language, symbols, and visual images	Communicates information and ideas with limited clarity	Communicates information and ideas with some clarity	Communicates information and ideas with clarity	Communicates information and ideas with clarity and insight

EXAMPLES OF CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

COURSE	OVERALL EXPECTATIONS
Grade 7 Science and Technology: Understanding Life Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • design and construct a model ecosystem. • use scientific inquiry/research skills to investigate occurrences. • use appropriate science and technology vocabulary. • use a variety of forms to communicate with different audiences and for a variety of purposes. • demonstrate an understanding of an ecosystem as a system of interactions between living organisms and their environment. • describe the roles and interactions of producers, consumers and decomposers within an ecosystem. • describe ways in which human activities alter balances and interactions in the environment. • describe Aboriginal perspectives on sustainability.
Grade 7 Science and Technology: Understanding Matter and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explain how heat is transmitted through radiation and describe the effects of radiation from the sun on different kinds of surfaces. • describe the role of radiation in heating and cooling the Earth, and explain how greenhouse gases affect the transmission of radiated heat through the atmosphere. • identify common sources of greenhouse gases.
Grade 11 Native Studies: Contemporary Aboriginal Voices, University Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyze themes related to sovereignty, as portrayed in media works by Aboriginal creators. • identify and assess solutions to challenges suggested in media works by Aboriginal creators. • use a variety of electronic primary and secondary sources to gather and assess information and develop ideas for writing.
Grade 11 Native Studies: Current Aboriginal Issues in Canada, University/ College Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate an understanding of how Aboriginal identity is linked to the physical environment. • demonstrate an understanding of the influences on Aboriginal societies that have an impact on their sense of identity. • describe Aboriginal perspectives related to issues of identity and sovereignty. • demonstrate an understanding of Aboriginal peoples' strong relationship to the land. • demonstrate an understanding of the interrelationships that characterize an Aboriginal world view. • describe how Aboriginal peoples adapt to external forces. • identify social, political and economic issues currently being addressed by Aboriginal individuals and communities in Canada.
Grade 11 Native Studies: Aboriginal Beliefs, Values and Aspirations in Contemporary Society, College Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe traditional and contemporary beliefs and values of Aboriginal cultures that influence present-day activities and behaviours. • identify aspects of cultural identity related to specific Aboriginal peoples. • explain how Aboriginal peoples' links to the land and to a sustainable environment are part of their cultural identity. • demonstrate an understanding of differences in the challenges faced by various Aboriginal peoples.
Grade 11 Native Studies: Contemporary Aboriginal Voices, College Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analyze images in media works related to Aboriginal identity. • identify and assess solutions to challenges suggested in media works by Aboriginal creators. • use a variety of electronic primary and secondary sources to gather and assess information and develop ideas for writing.

COURSE	OVERALL EXPECTATIONS
Grade 11 Native Studies: Aboriginal Beliefs, Values and Aspirations in Contemporary Society, Workplace Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe how traditional and contemporary beliefs and values of Aboriginal cultures influence present-day activities and behaviours. • identify aspects of cultural identity related to specific Aboriginal peoples. • describe competing values between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal societies on issues of ecological sustainability.
Grade 11 Native Studies: Contemporary Aboriginal Voices, Workplace Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe images in media works related to Aboriginal identity. • demonstrate an understanding of relationships presented in media works by Aboriginal creators. • Use a variety of print and electronic resources to gather information and develop ideas for personal, school, and workplace-related writing.
Grade 11 Native Studies: Issues of Indigenous Peoples in a Global Context, University/College Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe emerging global economic and environmental practices and their impact on indigenous cultural identity.
Grade 11/12 English, University Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate an understanding of a variety of media texts. • identify some media forms and explain how the conventions and techniques associated with them are used to create meaning.
Grade 11/12 English, College Prep/ Workplace Prep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate an understanding of a variety of media texts. • identify some media forms and explain how the conventions and techniques associated with them are used to create meaning. • reflect on and identify their strengths as media interpreters and creators, areas for improvement and the strategies they found most helpful in understanding media texts.

WEBSITES AND ONLINE RESOURCES

About the Film

The website for director Zacharias Kunuk's production company, Isuma TV, contains information about the film.

<http://www.isuma.tv/hi/en/inuit-knowledge-and-climate-change/movie>

CBC Television's The National broadcast a segment on *Qapirangajuq: Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change* during the world climate talks in Copenhagen in 2010. In it, the filmmakers talk about why they decided not to fly to Copenhagen and how they used digital technology to take part instead.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LCWK74ulb68>

About the Filmmakers

The website for Zacharias Kunuk's production company, Isuma TV, contains Kunuk's full bio.

<http://www.isuma.tv/hi/en/zacharias-kunuk-for-president/biography>

The Canadian Film Encyclopedia contains a long entry on Zacharias Kunuk, including all his film credits.

<http://tiff.net/CANADIANFILMENCYCLOPEDIA/content/bios/zacharias-kunuk>

Isuma TV's website includes a bio page for Dr. Ian Mauro, co-director of *Qapirangajuq: Inuit Knowledge and Climate Change*.

<http://www.isuma.tv/hi/en/members/ian-mauro>

NGOs/Organizations

The website of the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the national Inuit organization in Canada.

<http://www.itk.ca>

The homepage for Greenpeace Canada's climate change campaign.

<http://www.greenpeace.org/canada/en/campaigns/climate-and-energy>

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change website contains information on the impacts of climate change on populations around the world.

<http://www.ipcc.ch>

Free downloads of the report "Impacts of a Warming Arctic" are available on the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment website.

<http://www.acia.uaf.edu/pages/overview.html>

The World Wildlife Federation's Climate Witness initiative contains fact sheets, maps and video testimony from people around the world whose lives have been affected by climate change.

http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/aboutcc/problems/people_at_risk/personal_stories

Various Links for Lesson Plan Ideas, Media Awareness, Critical Literacy and Documentary Films

Using Documentaries in the Classroom: This teacher librarian's personal website contains excellent resources for teaching with documentary films.

http://www.frankwbaker.com/using_docs_in_the_classroom.htm

Media Awareness: A Canadian non-profit media education and Internet-literacy resource library.

<http://www.media-awareness.ca>

Center for Media Literacy: A U.S. website which provides several resources for making, understanding and criticizing media.

<http://www.medialit.org>

The National Film Board of Canada website: On this site is an area with teaching resources and short documentary films that can be used as teaching aides.

<http://www.nfb.ca>

The Association for Media Literacy: This Canadian website examines how media impacts and influences culture.

<http://www.aml.ca/home>

Hot Docs Looking at Documentaries: A teaching guide that sets out questions designed to help teacher include the study of documentary film in their curriculum.

http://www.hotdocs.ca/youth/docs_for_schools/