



# ORANGE SHIRT DAY AND BEYOND

2023- 24 SUPPORTS FOR SCHOOLS AND EDUCATORS

This lesson plan supports Education for Reconciliation through inclusion of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit ways of knowing, historical perspectives, traditional games, dance, and song. The rich and vibrant cultures of Indigenous people across Alberta and Canada are embraced. The lesson activates a learning and thoughtful reflection about Canada's relationship with Indigenous Peoples.

## Inuit Drum Dancing and Throat Singing

### Introduction

Inuit are Indigenous Peoples living in the Arctic regions of Canada, Greenland, Alaska, and Russia. Many Inuit traditions and customs have developed over thousands of years and include extensive oral history and storytelling traditions. From early times, songs and dancing were used to recount legends, stories, and traditions.

### Drum Dancing and Singing

Drum dancing and singing are forms of artistic expression and music in Greenland. Drum dancing is performed to the rhythmic beating of caribou skin drums.

For Greenlandic Inuit, drum dancing and singing embodies a shared identity and a sense of community as well as a means of creating continuity between the past and present.

### Throat Singing

Among the Inuit, it's known as *katajjaq*, a traditional musical performance typically by two women. Inuit women used throat singing to entertain one another while the men were away on long hunting trips. It was a game that took concentration and skill (and a straight face!). It is still practiced in many Inuit communities, particularly in Greenland and the Canadian Arctic.





## Essential Questions

Who are the Inuit People?

Culture, traditions, language, and specifically storytelling, are important aspects of the Inuit. Why is storytelling so important to the Inuit?

What were some of the historical purposes of drum dancing and singing?

Why do you think throat singing was banned in the past?

How is throat singing viewed today?

How is it practised today?

## Activity

**Sharing-Talking Circle:** When considering life in the Arctic, reflect on the influence of environment on culture. Share these reflections in a circle format. Share responses to Essential Questions.

**Reconciliation Connection:** Learning the history of arts and culture preserve and promote traditional Inuit ways of life.

**Key Words:** traditions, storytelling, oral history, *katajjaq*, throat singing, Inuit, history, *qilaat* (drum)

**Themes:** life in the Arctic, intergenerational teachings, culture

**Extensions:** Watch the video *Inuit Throat Singing Introduction – Inuit Cultural Online Resource*. Have students practice the different words/sounds; eventually, have students pair up and try the throat singing game. How did it make them feel? What was the biggest challenge?

## Resources

Inuit Drum Dancing and Singing

<https://youtu.be/xLvWXG7GwGs>

<https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/inuit-drum-dancing-and-singing-01696>

Inuit Vocal Games

<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/inuit-vocal-games-emc>

Inuit Throat Singing – A Mesmerizing Experience

<https://www.quarkexpeditions.com/blog/inuit-throat-singing-a-mesmerizing-experience>

Inuit Throat Singing Introduction – Inuit Cultural Online Resource

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbG6BlCr-g>