

Alaska Native Heritage Center
8800 Heritage Center Drive
Anchorage, AK 99504
(907) 330.8000 or (800) 315.6608

Dear Teacher:

We are delighted that you will be visiting the Alaska Native Heritage Center and look forward to your visit! This packet of information will prepare you and your students for your visit to the Center.

Mission

The mission of the Alaska Native Heritage Center is: *Sharing, perpetuating, and preserving the unique Alaska Native cultures, languages, traditions, and values through celebration and education.*

Your Visit

For every ten students, there must be one adult chaperone. Please indicate your total:

of students: _____

of chaperones: _____

Date of school visit requested: _____

The **Standard School Visit** lasts two hours and includes an introduction to Alaska Native cultures, a film, an Art Project, a Village Site Tour (*please dress for the weather outside*), and **one** of the programs listed below, plus your choice of one film:

- Native Dance and Drumming
- Native Stories and String Stories

- Native Games
- Collections

Please select **one** of the following films:

- Alaska's Three Bears
- Raven Tales *How the Raven Stole the Sun*
- Raven Tales *Raven and the First People*
- Raven Tales *The Sea Wolf*
- Raven Tales *Gone Fishing*
- Stories Given, Stories Shared
- Games of the North
- Asveq, the Walrus Hunt

Age group

- Pre – 3
- Pre – 4
- Pre – 4
- Pre – 4
- Pre – 4
- 3 – 12
- 3 – 12
- 4 – 12

For a customized school visit, please contact Elizabeth Walls at 330-8067 or Steven Alvarez at 330-8091 for more information.

A **Customized School Visit** lasts two and one-half hours (*Please add 30 minutes, if you choose to have lunch at the Center*) and has multiple options. For instance, you can:

1. Choose 2 programs, a film, and a tour of the village sites or exhibits.
2. Request a specialized tour that fits the current interests of your class, such as architecture, environment or traditions.

Alaska Native Heritage Center School Visit Information

Arrival

In order to ensure that you receive the full benefit of your visit, please arrive at the Center promptly at the designated time. When your group arrives, a staff member will give you a brief introduction. If your class is late, your school visit will be shortened accordingly. We cannot run over the allotted time for your school visit because of other events scheduled.

The Role of Chaperones

Your class needs to be accompanied by at least one chaperone (admitted free) for every ten students. Please give each chaperone a copy of the enclosed "Letter to Chaperones". This details the important role everyone plays in making your visit worthwhile and fun.

Preschool Children: Preschool children visits must be arranged at least 30 days prior to coming to the Center in order for staff members to prepare. The village site tour is not offered to preschool children due to safety concerns.

Admission and Payment

The Center can accommodate up to 60 students at a time. Admission is \$6 per student when part of a school group, year-round. This fee applies to all students. For every 10 students (winter) or 5 students (summer), there must be one adult chaperone or teacher who attends free of charge. Additional chaperones may attend by paying the student rate of \$6. Full payment in cash, credit card, or single check for the entire group should be made at the ticket window on the day of the visit.

Food

No food or beverages are available for purchase at the Center. However, we allow students to bring and eat sack lunches at the Center immediately following their school visit in the uncarpeted areas (the Crossroads or the foyer). Please be sure students clean up thoroughly when finished.

Preparing Your Class for the Visit

Before coming to the Center, you need to divide your class into groups of no more than 20. Remind the students that they will need to dress warmly for the outside Village Sites Tour.

Map of Alaska and Descriptions of Alaska Native Cultures

Two maps depicting Alaska Native territories are included in the enclosed booklet *Cultural Descriptions of Alaska's Native People*. The first map shows traditional territories occupied by speakers of 20 different languages. The second depicts cultural areas rather than languages and correlates to the divisions reflected at the Alaska Native Heritage Center.

Make copies of one or both maps and distribute them to students. Using maps, locate Anchorage and its indigenous culture. Learn the names of the other Alaskan cultures. If students are unfamiliar with the geography of Alaska, refer to the text and teacher's guide to *Alaska in Motion* or *Alaska: A Thematic Atlas*, available in your school library and local bookstores.

To make your visit more meaningful to your students, please review information on the Alaska Native cultures including the *Cultural Descriptions of Alaska's Native People*.

Visit the Website

Students can visit the Alaska Native Heritage Center website at www.alaskanative.net.

Alaska Native Heritage Center School Visit Information

As You Leave

All teachers will be given an *Evaluation Form* to complete so we know how we are doing and how we can improve in the future.

After Your Visit

When you return to school, you can follow up on the visit. Refer to the packet of ideas we have given you. For instance, you could:

- Give students a chance to complete art projects, if they were not able to do so at the Center.
- Have students write or talk about the experience. How does it relate to other topics you have covered in class? How did students feel about it? Which part of the experience did they enjoy the most?
- Write thank you letters to the tradition bearers and send them in care of the Alaska Native Heritage Center.
- Check out books from your school library on the cultures of the tradition bearers who worked with your students; read them aloud in class.
- Refer to library books for additional art activities relating to Alaska Native cultures.
- Perform a dance or story the students learned at the Center for another class in your school.

Afterthoughts

If you should have further questions or would like more information on what you experience at the Heritage Center, please contact the Center at 330.8091 or 800.315.6608.

Your school district Indian Education Program may have resources about Alaska Natives and Native Americans. Contact the Indian Education Department or the Bilingual/Multicultural staff at your school or school district to access this information.

Please let us know how we are doing

- The Alaska Native Heritage Center appreciates feedback about the programs we offer.
- The highest compliment you, your class, and the school can pay us is to visit us again.
- If you enjoyed your visit to the Heritage Center, please let others know.
- Please consider becoming a member of the Center by contacting 330-8000 so you and your family can enjoy our many programs year-round.

Thank you very much for your interest in the Alaska Native Heritage Center! We look forward to your visit.

Respectfully,
Steven Alvarez
Director of Cultural Education, Arts & Media
Alaska Native Heritage Center

**Alaska Native Heritage Center
School Visit Information**

Additional background information can be found at the following websites:

www.ankn.uaf.edu

www.alaskool.org

www.newtradewinds.org

www.echospace.org

www.alaskaice.org

Attachments

Letter to Chaperones

Cultural Descriptions of Alaska's Native People

Teacher Checklist