

ALASKA
NATIVE
HERITAGE
CENTER

Cultural and Educational Services

ANHC School Programs

**Extending Your ANHC School Visit
Program 2: Native Games and Yo-yos
(K-12)**

Eskimo Stick Pull UKMIRTAQ



This is a game of strength, the kind needed to pull a seal through a hole in the ice on Norton Sound, pull a beluga whale onto a North Slope shore, or deal with the carcass of a heavy animal - a moose or a bear - in Alaska's vast interior.

The Eskimo Stick Pull can be a lengthy competition, so teachers need to be prepared for sore and/or blistered hands and fingers. To out-pull your opponent in the Eskimo Stick Pull, contestants must develop strong upper body and core muscles, as well as endurance. Respect for your opponent and teamwork are paramount. Athletes often

embrace after competition. And during the competition, spotters assist the contestants. This contest was one of the original games in the World Eskimo Indian Olympics and has remained one of the more popular contests. Teachers and students can watch exactly how this game is played on the accompanying Games of the North DVD.

World Records

RECORD HOLDER	HOME TOWN	GOLD MEDAL(S)	WINNING YEAR(S)	VENUE
Robert "Big Bob" Aiken, Jr.	Barrow, Alaska, USA	6	1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987	World Eskimo-Indian Olympics
Chugie Keller	Nome, Alaska, USA	4	1982, 1983, 1984, 1985	World Eskimo-Indian Olympics

INSTRUCTIONS



Equipment Needed

A stick or dowel, approximately an inch and a quarter in diameter and eighteen inches long. A small area of the floor. A mat for the contestants to sit on is optional.

How To Play

- Two athletes sit facing each other on the floor with the soles of their feet touching.
- Knees are bent about 45 degrees.
- The stick is placed slightly above their toes and grasped by the athletes, with palms facing down.
- One person's hands are on the inside and the other's hands are on the outside. All hands must be touching.
- Once the pulling begins, athletes may not change their grip, nor may they jerk the stick.

- Contestants use the strength of their legs, arms, and backs to attempt to either pull the stick out of their opponent's grip or raise their opponent off the ground and pull him over.

- Spotters may be used during the competition. Spotters sit on the floor at right angles to the contestants and place their feet against the upper thighs of the athletes' sitting bodies and against the sides of their feet to keep the contestants from falling over sideways.
- The winner of the competition is successful in two out of three rounds. The winner of a round is given the same hand position for the next round.



Kneel Jump PEEDLETATAQ

This is a game of agility and explosive strength. Hunters need lightning quick reflexes to survive in the event of an ice break-up. The leg strength needed to do well in the Kneel Jump is also required to lift heavy game—seal, whale, walrus or moose—and carry it back home.

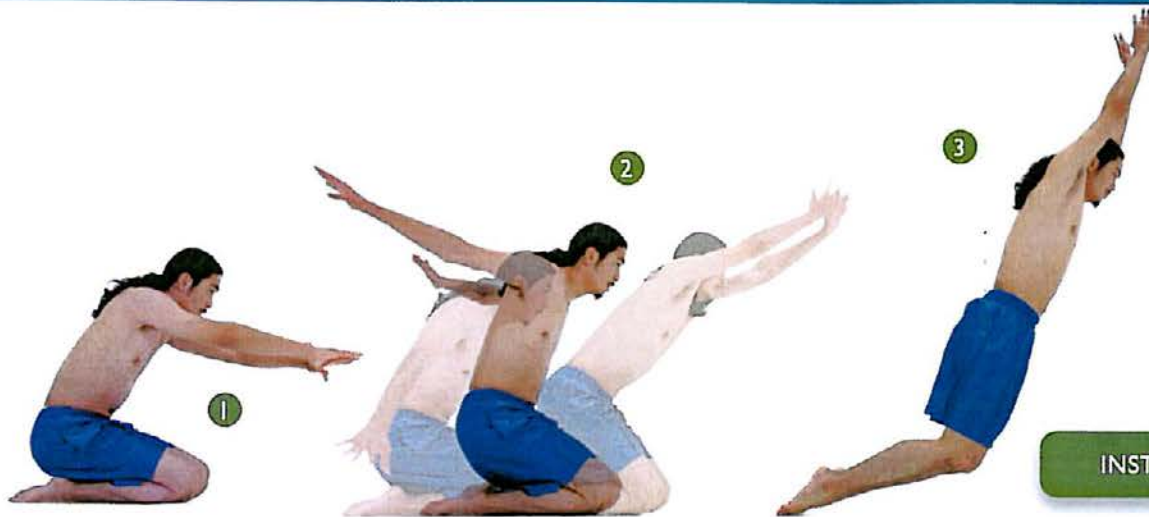


Like the hunter on the ice during break-up, athletes require strong leg and core muscles to play Kneel Jump. The game also demands balance, composure, and focus. Teachers should insure that all participants are warmed up properly and that the physical demands of the sport are well understood. This is a game for both boys and girls and can be played virtually anywhere, anytime, and need not be restricted to physical

education classes. But because this is a game of great agility, strength, balance, and coordination, teachers should assess the developmental abilities of the students before introducing the game. Teachers and students can watch exactly how this game is played on the accompanying Games of the North DVD.

World Records

RECORD HOLDER	HOME TOWN	DISTANCE	WINNING YEAR	VENUE
Jesse Frankson	Point Hope	5' 4 3/8"	2004	World Eskimo-Indian Olympics
Eleanor Matthias	n/a	4' 5"	1993	Native Youth Olympics



INSTRUCTIONS

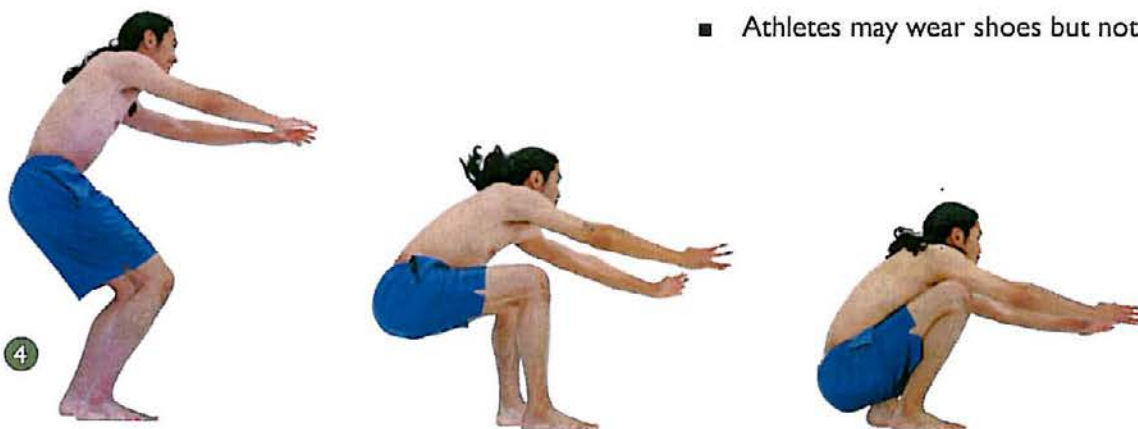
Equipment Needed

A tape measure. Open floor space with a starting stripe.

How To Play

- The athlete kneels down on both knees and sits on his/her heels.
- The top of the feet must be flat on the floor. The feet cannot be crossed over each other, and the athlete cannot be up on his/her toes before the jump.

- The contestant is allowed to swing his/her arms back and forth and to move his/her body up and down in order to gain momentum for the leap forward.
- The athlete's hands cannot touch the floor.
- The athlete jumps out as far as possible, and must land on both feet without falling or without any other part of the body touching the floor.
- The athlete will scratch if he/she falls back or if one of the landing feet slides.
- Measurement is taken from the start line to the rear heel.
- Contestants are given three jumps.
- The winner is the athlete who jumps the farthest from the starting line.
- Athletes may wear shoes but not knee pads.



Laughing Game IGLAGUNERK

Laughing Game

Despite living for thousands of years under harsh conditions, Alaska Natives have always set aside time for having fun!

The Games of the North, spring whaling festivals, community potlatches, and dance competitions all emphasize the fact that Alaska Natives know how to enjoy themselves.

One of the more remarkable examples of this is the development in many Arctic Native groups of Laughing Games.

Here are three such games. They are easy to play, require virtually no equipment, and are the perfect way to emphasize positive aspects of indigenous Arctic Native life.

Eskimo Laughing Game

Note: although the term “Eskimo” is considered pejorative in Canada, this is not the case in Alaska, since there are a number of different “Eskimo” languages rather than one single common tongue.

- Divide students into two groups, with a line marked on the floor between them.
- One side does anything within reason to make the other side laugh. The other side, of course, must resist laughing or even smiling.
- This game may not have winners and losers but students will have fun playing it.

Inuit Laughing Game

Each player faces a partner, generally holding the other's hands. At an agreed-upon signal, the players begin to laugh. The one who laughs the hardest and longest is declared the winner.

Laughing Game #3

- You'll need a silk scarf, feather, or something that when dropped will slowly fall to the ground.
- This game can be played in pairs or in large groups.
- Players face each other while the referee throws the object into the air.
- As soon as the referee releases it, students laugh while maintaining eye contact.
- When the object reaches the floor, all must stop laughing immediately.
- Whoever laughs after the object has struck the ground is eliminated.
- The winner is the last person remaining.



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Yo-yo's

The origin of the yo-yo used today in the Yup'ik and Inupiaq Alaskan Native cultures harkens back to the bola weapon. Hunters used the bola to entwine small animals and birds for food. The bola was made of several braided strands of sinew tied together at one end and ivory or stone weights attached to the open ends. A twirling and throwing motion could catch the smaller wild game. Today the yo-yo has only two strands and is used as a very popular toy for both adults and children.

For yo-yo tricks, read [Original 100 Alaska Eskimo Yo-Yo Stratagems](#) by Chris Kiana, Sr.