

A Way with Numbers

Introducing students to native populations using numbers.

Duration: 45 minutes – 1 hour

Grade: 6th – 8th

Goal: Students will learn about the various populations of Natives in Alaska. By utilizing a table they will be able to answer questions that are related to Alaska Natives and their use of marine resources.

Objective: Students will be able to...

- Identify the major Alaska Native groups.
- Locate where these Native groups are found on a map.
- Utilize a table and map to answer questions and identify what types of natural resources each group might use.
- Graph information presented in a table.

Standards:

Mathematics: A-3, A-4, B-6, B-7, B-8, E-2, E-3

Geography: A-1, A-2, A-3, A-5, D-3, F-6

Materials:

- Large map of Alaska which depicts traditional language territories. These maps can be purchased through:
Alaska Native Language Center
Box 757680
Fairbanks, AK 99775
907-474-7874 (phone)
907-474-6586 (fax)
fyanlp@uaf.edu
- Individual maps of Alaska for students to use
- Colored pencils
- Graph paper

Activities:

Students should research background information on the following native groups:

Aleut, Inupiaq, Tsimshian, Tlingit, Athabaskan, Alutiiq, Yup'ik, Haida, Eyak.

Go over the different regions in which these Native peoples live. Which are found in coastal regions? Which live in the interior? Once you have identified this, have students color their maps to indicate where the various native groups are found.

1. Identify villages or geographical areas where the Alaska SeaLife Center has retrieved marine mammals for rehabilitation. Mark these areas on your maps.
2. Which groups would you expect to have a cultural tradition of hunting marine mammals like walrus, seals, and sea lions for food and fur?

The table below shows the various populations of natives that live in Alaska. Study the table and use it to help you complete the questions below.

Numbers for this table are based on 1990 US census results and University of Alaska Fairbanks Language Lab. They include only those people still living in traditional territories of the language speaking area.

Alaskan Native Group	Estimated Population
Aleut	2,000
Inupiaq	13,500
Eyak	50
Athabascans	6,385
Alutiiq	3,000
Yup'ik	22,100
Haida	600
Tsimshian	10,000

Questions:

1. Add up all of the populations in the table. What is the total estimated native population in Alaska? _____
2. How many Alaskan native groups have populations of at least 10,000 people? _____. Name those groups: _____.
3. What is the fifth largest native population in Alaska? _____
4. The population difference between Inupiaqs and Athabascans is _____.
5. The population difference between _____ and _____ is about 8,600.
6. Based on the numbers provided in the table and your map, approximately how many people in Alaska may have a cultural tradition of hunting marine mammals?

Use graph paper to create a graph of the information. What type of graph would be most appropriate?