

# Elders Speak About the Aurora

### **Overview:**

Students invite Native Elders to their classroom to share legends, personal experiences, artwork, dance, poems and/or music related to the aurora.

### **Objectives:**

The student will:

- identify Elders within the community and establish a rapport with them;
- invite an Elder to participate in a classroom lesson or other community event;
- listen patiently and respectfully to community Elders, value what they have to say/share and acknowledge this information as an important part of their learning about this topic;
- recognize and respect alternative explanations for the aurora spoken by members of the community; and
- apply knowledge from Elders to written descriptions of aurora legends.

### **Materials:**

- Writing paper and writing tools (markers, crayons, colored pencils, etc.)
- List of Elders in the community matched with student names
- STUDENT WORKSHEET: “Elders Speak About the Aurora”

### **Activity Procedure:**

1. Compile or obtain a list of Elders in the community (see school secretary or contact the local Native Corporation office), and match the Elders’ names with the names of the students. Make copies of the list to give the students. (If you live in a non-native community with no Elders, find long-standing community members to speak with students.)
2. Help students create invitations and hand deliver or mail them to Elders in the community.
3. On the day of the event, introduce Elders, guide discussion and ask students to complete the essay question on the STUDENT WORKSHEET: “Elders Speak About the Aurora.”
4. Help students create and mail thank you notes to Elders.



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### *Answers to Student Question:*

#### *Acceptable answers:*

*Stories about the northern lights passed on by ancestors, or an idea that cannot be tested by experiments performed under controlled conditions.*

### ***Tips for Inviting Elders into the Classroom:***

- Know your Elders needs; arrange rides to and from school for them and prepare comfortable seats in the classroom.
- Ask your students to practice inviting an Elder, then have them deliver invitations in person.
- Learn and use the local Native language word for aurora.
- Prepare snacks or a meal to share with Elders during their visit.
- Piggyback your Elder visit with other times Elders are being invited to school.
- Ask students to thank Elders by preparing hand-made notes and/or gifts, or by doing community service activities for the Elders (i.e. chopping wood, doing yard work)

# Elders Speak About the Aurora

**Student Instructions:**

1. Invite Elders into the classroom to share stories, personal experiences, artwork, dance, poems and/or music related to the aurora by creating an invitation, which includes the community Elder’s name, date, time, place, and the reason for the event.
2. Hand deliver or mail the invitation to the Elder.
3. On the day of the event, watch and listen as Elders share stories about the aurora.
4. After the event, write and illustrate a thank you note to the Elder.



**Student Essay Question:**

After the Elder has shared his/her information, think about what was said and apply it to answer the following question:

What are aurora legends?

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