



The Shadows that Rush Past

Teacher Study Guide

The Shadows that Rush Past

By Rachel A. Qitsualik

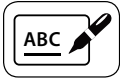
Teacher Study Guide

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Icon Descriptions



READING Students will read assigned passages using a variety of reading strategies.



VOCABULARY Through organized activities, students will review vocabulary from the assigned passages. They will learn definitions of these words and practice integrating them into written and oral communication.



ORAL COMMUNICATION Students will discuss the readings and express what they have learned through oral language in open class discussions, small group work, and presentations.



LANGUAGE SKILLS Students will read assigned passages using a variety of reading strategies.



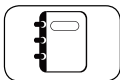
LISTENING Students will be asked to demonstrate effective listening strategies as they attend to verbal instructions, discussions, and presentations.



WRITING Students will read assigned passages using a variety of reading strategies.



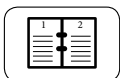
COMPREHENSION ACTIVITIES Students will demonstrate their understanding of the assigned readings, themes, and topics through various discussion activities, group tasks, assignments, and presentations.



REFLECTION Students will reflect on the information learned throughout the lesson. In their reflections they will form connections from the readings to the self, the community, and the world.



VISUAL DEPICTIONS Students will express themselves visually by creating pictures, diagrams, and graphic organizers, demonstrating an understanding of text content and features.



HANDOUT Handouts accompany many activities throughout the guide. These handouts are to be photocopied and handed out to the students, allowing them to practice and expand on the information they are learning.



COMMUNITY INCLUSION Students will extend the walls of the classroom, incorporating community perspectives and examples from their neighbourhood into the lesson. This will broaden their understanding and help them apply their learning to everyday experiences.



FIELD STUDY Students will venture into the community to research and gain hands-on experience.



RESEARCH SKILLS Students will perform a variety of research tasks developed in a sequential progression, encouraging them to build on and improve their research skills.



TECHNOLOGY Students will use different forms of technology to broaden their learning, create assigned work, and demonstrate their understanding of the material at hand.



GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES Students will look outside of their classroom and community to explore other cultures and beliefs and important issues affecting the global community.



EVALUATION At the conclusion of each unit, evaluation techniques are suggested to allow instructors to informally assess students' understanding and abilities.



VIEWING Students will examine and interpret a variety of forms of work (e.g., films, art, work created by peers, etc.) and respond to these elements in writing, oral presentations, and group discussions.

Pre-Reading Discussion and Activities

This section includes pre-reading activities, which will provide the students with background knowledge of Inuit culture and traditional Inuit folktales.



Activity 1

Inuit



- Put the term Inuit on the board and ask the students to discuss what it means. Help the students identify the term as applying to people indigenous to the far north.
- Ask the class what provinces and territories are found in northern Canada.
- Explain that Inuit have lived in Nunavut and other parts of the Arctic for thousands of years.
- Ask the class to brainstorm a list of everything they know about Inuit and record their answers on the board.



Inuit Land



- With the class, locate Inuit lands on a world map. Inuit lands include the northeastern tip of Siberia, the islands of the Bering Sea, the coastal regions of mainland Alaska, the north coast and islands of the Canadian Arctic, and most of the west coast and part of the east coast of Greenland.
- In a brainstorming session, have students describe these northern areas by recognizing the physical characteristics (landforms, water bodies, climate, animal life) and human characteristics (inhabitants, languages, religion, livelihoods).
- If possible, provide students with books and images about the Canadian Arctic so they can visualize the physical landscape and what life is like in these regions. You can expand on this activity by having the students perform a research activity on the Arctic and Inuit.
- If you have access to the Internet, you can go to <http://www.isuma.tv/lo/en/exploring-inuit-culture-online>. This site provides excellent educational videos and lesson plans for students in grades 4 to 6 to learn about Inuit and culture.

PRE-READING DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES



Activity 2 **Introduction to Folktales**



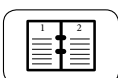
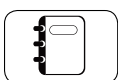
- Invite the class to discuss what they know about folktales. Some guiding questions include: What are folktales? Where do they come from? How are they passed down from one generation to the next? Why do we have folktales? What is their purpose? Were you told any folktales as a kid?
- Explain to the class that folktales are stories that were traditionally handed down orally by storytellers in various cultures. They are usually about ordinary characters in their ordinary lives and tell about something extraordinary that happens to them.
- Ask the class to brainstorm any famous or well-known folktales, listing the titles on the board or chart paper (“The Three Little Pigs,” “Goldilocks and the Three Bears,” etc).
- Explain to the class that folktales are a way to learn about the history of different people and places throughout the world. As previously discussed, *The Shadows that Rush Past* is a collection of four folktales from Nunavut.
- Ask the class to think about what they have learned about the Arctic and Inuit, and to predict what characters might appear in Inuit folktales and what the setting might look like. Record their answers on the board or chart paper.



Activity 3 **Introduction to *The Shadows that Rush Past* by Rachel A. Qitsualik**



- Tell the students they will be reading *The Shadows that Rush Past* by Canadian Inuit author, Rachel A. Qitsualik. With the class, use the provided handout to read and discuss Rachel’s biography.
- Explain to the students that because Inuit have traditionally relied on the environment for survival, it is often a source of fear in Inuit folktales. Ask the students to brainstorm a list of ways in which Inuit have relied on the environment and predict what their biggest fears might have been.
- Explain to the class that many Inuit folktales involve human relationships with animals, mighty beings and supernatural creatures.
- Tell the class that in *The Shadows that Rush Past* they will be reading about four of these supernatural creatures.



COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS



Post-Reading Comprehension Questions



The Shadows that Rush Past by Rachel A. Qitsualik is a book consisting of four traditional Inuit folktales. After each reading, use the following suggested comprehension questions to assess students' understanding of the ideas and concepts presented in each story.



Introduction

1. What form of imaginative expression is most treasured by the Inuit?
2. What is the Inuktitut word for an Inuit ancestor?
3. Why were traditional Inuit folktales heavily criticized?
4. How old are some of these stories?
5. How did these stories survive for thousands of years without being written down?
6. What do these stories teach us about Inuit ancestors? Encourage the class to think about the Arctic climate and the relationship of Inuit to the land.
7. Why are these stories described as songs of immortality?

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Amautalik

1. Who are the main characters in this folktale?
2. Describe the amautalik. What did she look like?
3. What is a shaman?
4. What makes a shaman different from other human beings?
5. What did the shaman (grandmother) do when her grandson was stolen?
6. What role do animals play in this folktale?
7. What did the amautalik do with the boy?
8. What was under the amautalik's parka?
9. Where did the amautalik live?
10. What was the boy's job when he arrived at the amautalik's house?
11. What was the shaman's little helper?
12. What did the little helper tell the little boy?
13. How did the boy escape?
15. What lesson do you think the storyteller is trying to teach?

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Akhla

1. How old is this story?
2. Who are the characters in this story?
3. What does the word akhla mean?
4. Describe the akhla. What did it look like?
5. What did the akhla eat?
6. Who decides to stop the akhla?
7. Why is this person called the man?
8. How did the man plan to stop the akhla?
9. Where did the akhla live? Describe its home.
10. How did the man escape from the akhla's home?
11. How did the man escape from the akhla's wife?
12. What similarities can you see between humans and the akhla family?
14. What happened to the she-akhla when she was drinking the river?
15. How is she remembered?
17. What lessons do you think the storytellers are trying to teach?

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Nanurluk

1. Who are the main characters in this story?
2. Why was Nakasungnak so difficult to talk to?
3. Was he surprised when he saw the bear for the first time? Why?
4. What names did Inuit have for this kind of monstrous bear?
5. Where did the story take place? Describe the setting.
6. How did the bear react to being hit with harpoons?
7. What caused Nakasungnak's crazy anger?
8. Why was Nakasungnak embarrassed after he defeated the nanurluk?
9. It is said that Nakasungnak enjoyed his status as a hero a bit too much. What events lead to his demise?
10. What does the word "ego" mean?
11. What role does ego play in this story?
12. Why do you think the Inuit would tell the story of a giant bear?
14. What lessons do you think the storytellers are trying to teach?

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Mahaha

1. Who are the main characters in the folktale?
2. What were the roles of Inuit men and women in traditional Inuit culture?
3. Describe the mahaha. What did he look like? What did he sound like? What did they say his tickling was like being raked with?
4. How did the woman eventually die?
5. Why was the creature called the mahaha?
6. Describe the setting. What does the setting tell us about traditional Inuit life?
7. How did the husband plan to catch the mahaha?
8. Did it work? Describe what happened when the man entered the iglu.
9. How did the husband outsmart the mahaha?
11. What lessons do you think the storyteller is trying to teach?

POST-READING ACTIVITIES

Post-Reading Activities

Listed are a number of activities that can be used to explore Inuit culture and the themes presented in *The Shadows that Rush Past*. Please feel free to alter them to meet the specific needs of your classroom. You may choose to read the book as a class or have the students read the four folktales in guided reading groups. Remember that the stories are graphic so you will need to be there to discuss and provide feedback about the context of the material.

If you are interested in teaching your class more about Nunavut and Inuit culture, the following link provides excellent educational resources and lesson plans.
<http://www.isuma.tv/lo/en/exploring-inuit-culture-online>.



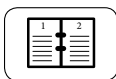
Activity 1 **Elements of a Folktale**



- Invite the students to discuss what they have learned about folktales so far (i.e., where they come from, how they are passed down orally through the generations, etc).



- Explain to the class that all folktales from around the world present a similar set of elements. These include Supernatural Beings, Problems, Solutions, Cultural Elements, and Lessons.



- Distribute **Handout: Elements of a Folktale**.
- Once the class has read the first story, “Amautalik,” fill in the first page of the handout as a class. Allow the students to fill it in as you go and ask any necessary questions.
- After each of the remaining stories, ask the class to work in partners to fill in the corresponding chart.
- When the class has completed all four charts, ask the students if they noticed any similarities between the stories. As a class, discuss why these similarities are important and discuss the important themes, including survival, persistence, intelligence, spirituality, and courage, and what they tell us about traditional Inuit communities and culture.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES



Activity 2 **Monster Illustrations**



- After each folktale, read through the corresponding monster description with the class.



- Ask the students to create a visual depiction—either a drawing, painting, or 3D mask of the monster.
- Display drawings and masks in the classroom.



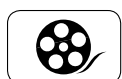
Activity 3 **Language – Inuktitut**



- In *The Shadows that Rush Past*, Rachel uses words from the Inuit language of Inuktitut. Throughout the readings, create a list of Inuktitut words and what they mean. While reading, create a master list on the board or chart paper, and with the class practice the pronunciation of each word.



- The following is a link to an excellent lesson plan that teaches students about the Inuktitut language. The lesson teaches students the history of the language and provides them with activities that teach them the pronunciation guidelines and Inuktitut syllabics.
<http://www.isuma.tv/sites/default/files/attachments/Inuktitut.pdf>



Activity 4 **Shamanism**

Teacher Note: This topic can sometimes be problematic. Shamanism is a traditional Inuit belief system. Please use discretion when teaching this lesson, as the subject matter may be sensitive to some families.



- After reading “Amautalik” and/or “Akhla,” divide the class into small groups and ask students to brainstorm various religions practiced throughout the world today. List them on the board.



- Explain that today approximately 80% of Inuit living in Nunavut are Christian. Tell the class that prior to the early 1900s, Inuit had never been exposed to Christianity. They lived a life centred around the earth, the animals, and the spirits of their ancestors. Shamanism is an element of traditional Inuit spirituality. These spiritual leaders helped Inuit communities understand the spiritual world and protected them from danger.

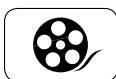


POST-READING ACTIVITIES

- Explain to the class that shamans were not priests. They were more like tradesmen who specialized in the unseen powers of the world. “The task of the shamans is to be able to make journeys through these boundaries, journeying back and forth between the human and the supernatural, bringing special knowledge, and using it for better or for ill.” (Hugh Brody, Film Review of *Atanarjuat: The Fast Runner*, Isuma Inuit Studies Reader, p.12).
- Watch the movie *Shaman Stories*:
<http://www.isuma.tv/lo/en/isuma-productions/angakkuiit-shaman-stories>.
- Discuss the movie with the class and how the shaman is presented in the stories of “Amautalik” and “Akhla.”



Activity 5 **My First Polar Bear**



- After reading the story about the Nanurluk, go to the following link <http://www.isuma.tv/lo/en/exploring-inuit-culture-online> and download the PDF of the lesson, titled “My First Polar Bear.” This is an excellent lesson that teaches students about the significance of the polar bear and of hunting in Inuit culture.



Activity 6 **Survival**



- Tell the class that each of the four stories in *The Shadows that Rush Past* is a story of survival.



- Explain to the class that survival has been a topic of many stories throughout the history of literature. From a hero surviving an evil villain, a victim surviving an airplane crash, a cancer patient beating the odds, or a homeless child overcoming adversity, stories of survival can uplift the spirit and inspire others.



- Explain to the students that for all humans, survival is big part of our everyday lives. Ask the class to take out their journals. Explain that they will have five minutes to answer the question, “What does the word survival mean to you?”
- In pairs, have the students share and discuss their responses. When the pairs are done, open the discussion up to the whole class, while recording students’ answers on the board or chart paper.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES

- Explain to the students that people all over the world require food and shelter to survive. Ask the class to think about what they have learned about traditional Inuit communities and brainstorm a list of what members of these communities used for shelter and how they acquired food.
- Is it the same in modern society? In partners, ask students to use the Internet to research what Inuit communities in Nunavut are like today. In their journals, ask them to answer the following questions. Where do the people live—small towns or spread out across the vast landscape? What do the houses look like? Where do they get their food?
- Discuss results with the class and ask the students whether they believe surviving in the Arctic has become easier or more difficult. Why?



Activity 7

Puzzle Tale: Putting the Pieces Together

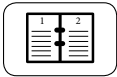


- Explain to the class that because folktales were traditionally passed down orally over thousands of years, there are often many versions and interpretations of the same story.
- Divide the class into four groups and assign one story from *The Shadows that Rush Past* to each group. In their groups, students are going to prepare to retell the folktale in their own words.
- Tell each group to break their story up into sections. Each student will be responsible for retelling one section of the story.
- Assemble the story by having each student retell his or her part of the plot's sequence. Give the groups plenty of time to practice. When the groups are ready, ask each group to perform their story for the class. Have students keep the flow going as the story is told so that the performance moves along as though one person were telling it.
- Alternatively, have the class perform one story together and divide the story into much smaller sections. If you do it this way, you can do a second round by giving students different sections to retell. Notice how differently students retell the same sections.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES



Activity 8 **Folktale Writing**



- Ask the students to work in partners and print off one folktale from the Internet. The folktale can originate from anywhere in the world. Tell the class that they will be participating in a classroom storytelling session. Ask for volunteers to share their folktales. Note: The teacher may want to begin the activity to encourage class members to participate.
- Tell the class that they are going to write a folktale of their own. Explain to the class that there are a lot of important ideas that go into creating a good folktale. Ask students to draw inspiration from something that has happened to them in the past or to someone they know. Ask them to think about a time they were scared, or a time they had to be brave or courageous.
- Allow the class to brainstorm a list of possible folktale ideas and record them on the board.
- Distribute **Handout: Story Map**.
- Give students time to plan out their folktale on the story map and share their ideas with a partner. Ask the students to use their story map handouts to complete the rough draft in their journals.
- When students are finished, ask them to peer edit each other's work with a partner. Give the students time to discuss their work with their partners and make the necessary corrections.
- Explain to the class that they will be writing a good copy of their folktale on the computer.



Extension Activity **Story Illustration**



- Explain to students that they will be creating a visual depiction of their written folktale.
- Students will have the choice to choose from a picture book, a computer graphic illustration, a collage, etc. Completed projects can be shared, displayed, and/or scanned into an electronic journal.

POST-READING ACTIVITIES



Activity 9 **Story Cover**

- Distribute blank paper and drawing utensils.
- Ask students to imagine that their folktale is going to be made into a book and sold in a bookstore. Ask them to brainstorm what images and text would be on the cover of these books.
- Tell students to create the front cover for their book and combine their book cover and folktale stories to complete the folktale writing activity.



Extension Activity **Storytelling Session**



- Invite an audience into the classroom for a storytelling session and have the students share their personal folktales with the other class.



CULMINATING ACTIVITY



Board Game



In Rachel's biography she explains the importance of games in Inuit culture. Using the following link, <http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/technical-reading-writing-using-123.html?tab=4#tabs>, complete this activity.



It provides an excellent board game lesson that will give students the chance to use everything they have learned throughout the book study in a creative way. Below is an overview of the activity.



Students work in small groups to create a game based on stories they have read. Each game must be directly related to the story(s), contain at least 25 questions, and be neatly created and contained within a folder. Each game must also include a brochure with student-written directions for how to play the game. Once the game is complete, students play it to test their instructions. Students then rotate through the room, playing all the games and leaving constructive comments at each station. After discussing the results, each group has a chance to revise their game and/or instructions.

Thank you for reading *The Shadows that Rush Past*. We hope you and your class enjoyed the stories and are inspired to learn more about traditional Inuit culture and communities.

BIOGRAPHY: RACHEL A. QITSUALIK

Rachel is an Inuk. That's a way of saying "one of the Inuit" (since Inuit don't use *s* on the end of words to mean "a bunch"). Inuk is a funny word, because it doesn't just mean "Person." It means "One Who Inhabits." That means Inuit not only see themselves as being people, but as being somewhere. And where would that be? Well, the Arctic. The Arctic is what makes Inuit what they are, since it's such a strange and beautiful place. To be honest, Inuit might make you think of hobbits. You know, from J.R.R. Tolkien's books? Just like hobbits, Inuit love to eat. They always find reasons to celebrate things. For Inuit, there's nothing more enjoyable than hanging out in the Arctic (which they call "the Land"), with their rather large families. Whenever Inuit have a choice, they're gentle—but they fiercely defend what they love.

One of the things Inuit defend is words. Oh, not that they talk a lot. It's simply that their language is kind of sacred to them. They even squabble about how to pronounce words right, or how to spell them in English. But it's all meant well. You see, when Inuit speak, they're representing their ancestors. They know that they have nothing without the people who came before them. A part of every ancestor still lives, even if that person died a thousand years ago. When you remember that your great, great, great grandparents are watching you, you want to impress them.

So, what does this have to do with Rachel? Well, she's an Inuk, right? If you want to know anything about her (anything important, anyway), you have to know where she comes from. In the Arctic, saying where you came from doesn't mean too much. Would it mean anything to you to hear that she was born at Aulitsivik wilderness camp, Northern Baffin Island, in the early 1950s? Probably not. But if you know what kind of tradition she comes from, you get a more colourful picture.

Even Rachel's name is not Rachel. That's a Hebrew name. It means "Female Sheep." She got it because, around the time she was born, there was no religion in much of the Arctic. There was spirituality. You know, the belief that there's more—maybe even better—stuff beyond what we see in the world? Inuit were very spiritual. But they still liked religion. It seemed like a neater way to do what they were already doing. Rachel got her name because her parents thought names from the Bible were cool. They pronounced Rachel in a funny way, though, saying "Raigili." Inuit had no family names in those days. That upset missionaries a bit, so they declared that the name of Rachel's dad would be her family name. He was Qitsualik, which means "One Who Scratches."

BIOGRAPHY: RACHEL A. QITSUALIK

Want to know a secret, though?

Rachel really has no name! See the A in Rachel A. Qitsualik? That stands for Atittuq. Atittuq is her actual name, and it means “One Who Has No Name.” You see, around the time Inuit were trying out religion, they still had a lot of traditions about names. Names are powerful things, you know—and Inuit aren’t the only folks who believe that. The Land is powerful, too. Some of its power is good. Some is bad. Inuit were worried: What if the bad things find out who my kid is, and come after him or her? So, to confuse evil, Inuit came up with the idea of protective names. There are lots of these, and Atittuq is one of them. If something bad floats Rachel’s way, it can’t find a true name—because she’s called No Name. Cool, eh?

See how words are important to Inuit? These days, Rachel even combines her name with that of her husband. He’s a big Scottish-Mohawk cross, so the name comes out Qitsualik-Tinsley. It’s long, but she adores him. They always write together, because they know Inuit stuff is cool, and they like to chatter about it. They usually write stuff with Inhabit Media, because Inhabit thinks it’s cool, too.

Other than that, Rachel’s adult life has been pretty dull. Let’s see: She’s been a translation specialist for about 40 years (yawn). She was a magazine editor. She worked for some governments, writing up papers that were important, but boring (life is like that, sometimes). She’s been a college teacher. She gave some good advice to the RCMP. She wrote a few hundred newspaper articles. Oh—and she got a Diamond Jubilee medal.

If you could only have been there for her childhood, though! She had a pet snowy owl, just like Harry Potter (it ate lemmings). Her favourite dog, Kusik, was part wolf (Kusik ate lemmings, too). She dogsledded all over the Arctic with her family. She nearly drowned by falling into a crack in the ice. Her best friend was a scary shaman. Her worst enemy was another scary shaman. In winter, she saw icebergs as big as mountains. In summer, she saw flowers for as far as the eye could see. Her father saved her, once, by knocking her out of a polar bear’s way. Maybe that’s why she writes about the Arctic so much: because she misses it. Sometimes, it seems like it’s the only thing that was ever real.

Rachel A. Qitsualik, 2012

The Power of Storytelling

Rachel A. Qitsualik

Did you know stories are games?

Yep. They are. And if there's anything Inuit love to do, it's play. If you ever visit the Arctic, you'll find them playing pretty much all the time (at least, if they're healthy). But the Inuit of today don't play half as much as their ancestors did. You might even say that there are four "quarters" to the Inuit life of not-so-long-ago:

- Hunting
- Eating
- Sleeping
- Playing

So, why all the play? Well, someone is going to tell you this, if they haven't already, but play is important. Every time you play one weensy bit of a game, your brain goes *BAM* along with it. Inuit wanted brains pretty badly (not in a zombie—mm-mm-yum—way). A good brain meant a good life. The Arctic is a fabulous place to grow up in, a treasure chest of adventure and beauty; but it makes you pay with hard-earned survival. Survival demands brains.

Inuit not only survived in the Arctic, they did pretty well for thousands of years! This was because they figured out the A-B-C's to a good brain:

- A learner needs a teacher's help.
- A teacher needs a learner's help.
- Play is where the two best meet.

That's why stories are a game. Have you ever noticed that Inuit stories go on and on about dreadful things? While Inuit are a giving people, their stories tell about greed. While Inuit are a kind people, their stories tell about meanness. While Inuit are a forgiving people, their stories tell about vengeance. While Inuit are a social people, their stories tell about conflict. While Inuit are a zen people, their stories tell about crazy stuff. While Inuit are a beautiful people, their stories tell about monsters.

THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

Inuit always knew that the greatest power you can give someone is a story. Whenever you hear a story, it becomes you. It allows you to learn without coming to harm. It tells you what to watch for. Think about that: Without risking a thing in this wide, dangerous world, you can spot what's best in human nature. You can also spot what's worst, and know what to do before it bites you.

That's why Inuit still fight to keep their stories from becoming forgotten. Every tale is a bit like astronaut food: a lot packed into a little format. At any age, you can go over an Inuit story time again—there will always be stuff you missed.

What gave someone power a thousand years ago can do the same today.

Pijariiqpunga ["All I have to say"].

MONSTER DESCRIPTIONS

AMAUTALIK

The Child-Snatching Ogress

The Arctic can be a dangerous place. The relentless winds, the frigid temperatures, and the rough terrain can make living in the North difficult. However, there are other dangers that are well known to the people who have made the Arctic their home.

Inuit have numerous tales of strange beings who prey on children and lone travellers. In many Arctic regions, especially inland, elders have shared stories about a particularly dangerous race of ogress that moves quickly over the tundra, abducting children to be used as playthings or as food. Amautalik (a-mow-ta-lick) is the name given to this type of ogress.

An amautalik is usually described as a huge ugly woman who carries a large basket on her back. This basket is fashioned from foul-smelling driftwood and stuffed with rotting seaweed. Sometimes, instead of carrying a basket, this ogress wears a huge amauti (woman's jacket with a pouch to carry children) made of walrus hide and lined with rancid seaweed.

Amautaliit (plural of amautalik) are primarily child-snatchers, but if they are hungry enough they have been known to subdue adults and carry them off as well. Often their victims do not realize they are being hunted until it is too late. This is probably because of the creature's ability to move silently over the rocky tundra. Despite the amautaliit's great size, strength, and stealth, many of the stories about them suggest that they are not very intelligent and can be tricked or frightened away.

It is also said that amautaliit usually live underground and that once they have captured someone, they carry their captive back to an underground lair. Amautaliit usually have soil and plants matted in their hair and clothing, due to their subterranean life.

Written by Neil Christopher, reprinted from *Arctic Giants*, 2011.



MONSTER DESCRIPTIONS

AKLA

The Grave-Robbing Ogre

In olden times, when magic was still a powerful force in the world, many animals had the power of speech and the ability to shape-shift. It is during that time that a family of barren ground grizzly bears took to living in human form. These hulking beings were feared, as they possessed the bulk and strength of their true form, the grizzly bear. And, true to their nature, they often lived as scavengers, wandering the tundra looking for easy meals. Many groups of Caribou Inuit relay stories of these terrorizing beings and their habit of digging up the fresh graves of Inuit in their quest for food.

Written by Neil Christopher, reprinted from *Arctic Giants*, 2011.



MONSTER DESCRIPTIONS

NANURLUK

The Giant Bear

Inuit ancestors lived in a very different world. When we listen to the stories that have been passed from generation to generation, we catch glimpses of this ancient time. We are told that when the world was much younger many strange beings populated the circumpolar regions of the world. Great giants moved across the Arctic landscape; malevolent ogresses hunted the small and the weak; shy marine races hid below the protective sea ice waiting for an opportunity to steal children; and countless other preternatural things crawled, swam, flew, and lived in this ancient place. We are told that some live here still.

One of these powerful creatures is mentioned in the traditional stories of many of the Arctic regions—the giant polar bear. Some storytellers refer to these giant marine beasts as the ice-covered bears, on account of their heavily iced fur. In other regions, however, these giant marine animals are known as the nanurluit (or nanurluk singular).

So massive were these animals that they are often compared to the huge icebergs that populate the Arctic waters. These colossal bears were powerful swimmers and could also move quickly over land. The nanurluit were the only prey that offered the great Arctic giants any sport. You see, the great giants could walk across rivers and kick over mountains. Regular polar bears seemed like helpless lemmings, and whales were as fragile as sculpin in their hands. The giants craved the excitement that came from hunting creatures as powerful as themselves.



MONSTER DESCRIPTIONS

For a while this legendary world was held in balance—giant bears with equally powerful giants to hunt them, keeping their numbers in check. But eventually the world changed. The great giants began to disappear. There were few of these mighty hunters left to hunt the nanurluit. And for a short time, these ursine behemoths had no predators and were able to hunt in Arctic seas and coastal areas without challenge.

The nanurluit had huge appetites to go with their massive bodies. They hunted whales, seals, walrus, and everything else they could get into their mouths, including Inuit. On account of the nanurluit's size, these bears were almost invulnerable to the attacks of Inuit. Some stories even tell us that their fur was so heavily covered by ice that even arrows and harpoons could not penetrate it. This icy armor, coupled with the bear's size, strength, and speed, made the nanurluit greatly feared.

As feared and invulnerable as these giant bears may have been, they could be killed. Several stories tell how Inuit outsmarted this colossal foe, as you will see in the following story shared by well-known storyteller Rachel A. Qitsualik.

Written by Neil Christopher, reprinted from *The Giant Bear*, 2012.

MONSTER DESCRIPTIONS

MAHAHA

The Tickler

Mahaha is a maniacal demon that is said to have terrorized parts of the Arctic long ago. This creature is a thin, sinewy being, ice blue in colour and cold to the touch. Mahaha's eyes are white and piercing, and they peer through the long, stringy hair that hangs over its face. This demon is extremely strong and is always seen barefooted and almost naked.

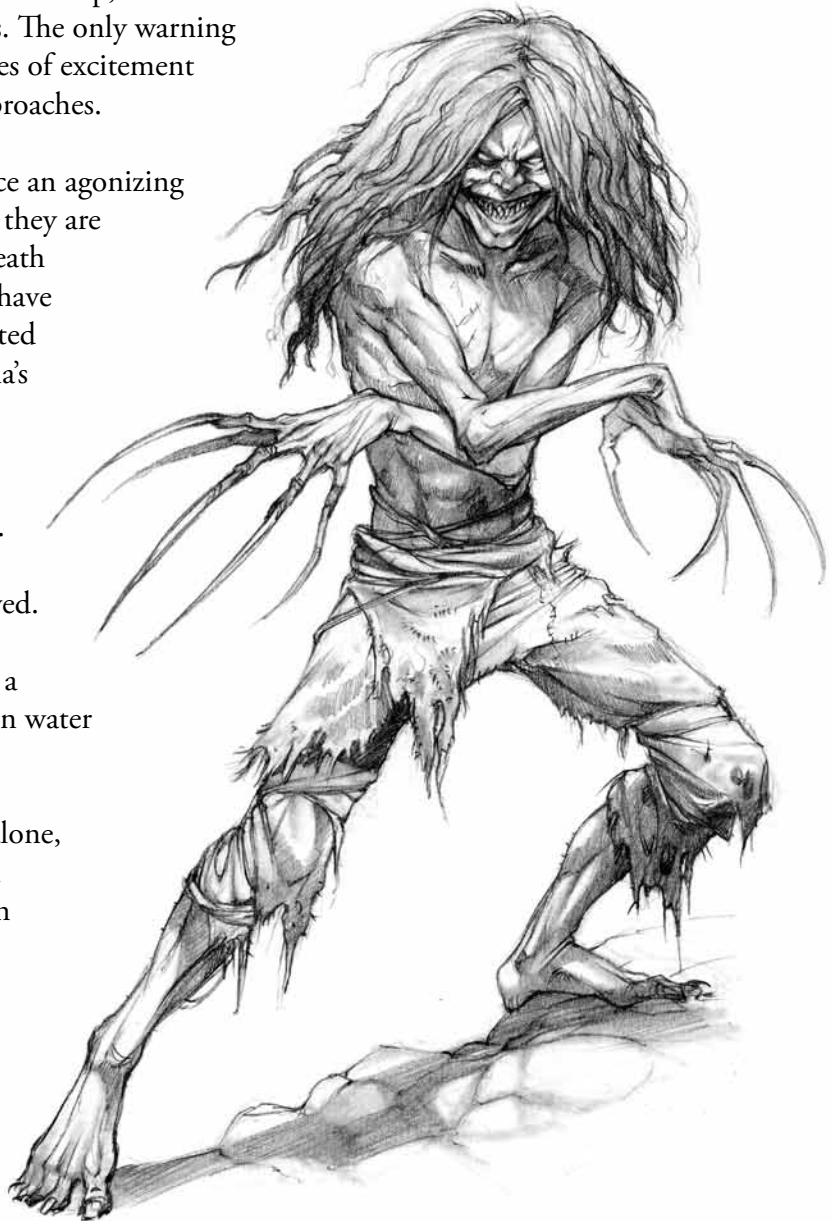
Mahaha is a stealthy creature that creeps up on unsuspecting Inuit. When it gets close enough, Mahaha delights in tickling its victims to death with its sharp, vicious nails attached to its long, bony fingers. The only warning a victim ever receives is the giggles of excitement Mahaha cannot contain as it approaches.

Mahaha's unfortunate victims face an agonizing death of screams and laughter as they are tickled and tickled until their breath leaves their bodies. Many elders have commented on the horribly twisted smiles left on the faces of Mahaha's victims.

Although this demon is vicious and evil, Mahaha is easily fooled. Most of the stories told about Mahaha end with it being deceived. Usually, Mahaha is tricked into leaning over a water hole to take a drink and is pushed into the open water and swept away by the currents.

So, if Mahaha ever corners you alone, ask it to have one last drink with you by the water hole, so you can push it in.

Written by Neil Christopher,
reprinted from *Inuit
Mythological Characters and
Elemental Beings*.



HANDOUT 1

Elements of a Folktale

Part I: Fill in the following chart as a class.

AMAUTALIK

Supernatural Being	
Problem	
Solution	
Cultural Element	
Lesson	

HANDOUT 1

Part II: With a partner, complete the following chart for each of the three other stories in *The Shadows that Rush Past*. Be prepared to discuss your handout with the class.

AKHLA

Supernatural Being	
Problem	
Solution	
Cultural Element	
Lesson	

HANDOUT 1

NANURLUK

Supernatural Being	
Problem	
Solution	
Cultural Element	
Lesson	

HANDOUT 1

MAHAHA

Supernatural Being	
Problem	
Solution	
Cultural Element	
Lesson	

Folktale Story Map

Elements	Name of folktale
Main character(s), with short description	
Secondary characters, with short description	
Setting	
Problem/solutions	
Conclusion/outcome	
Moral, lesson, or value	

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

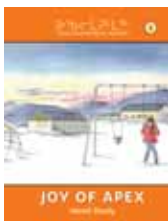
If you would like more information about our other educational resources, please contact us at info@inhabitmedia.com.



Unikkaaqtuat: Exploring Inuit Folktales, Legends, and Myths



Walk on the Tundra



The Joy of Apex



Ava and the Little Folk