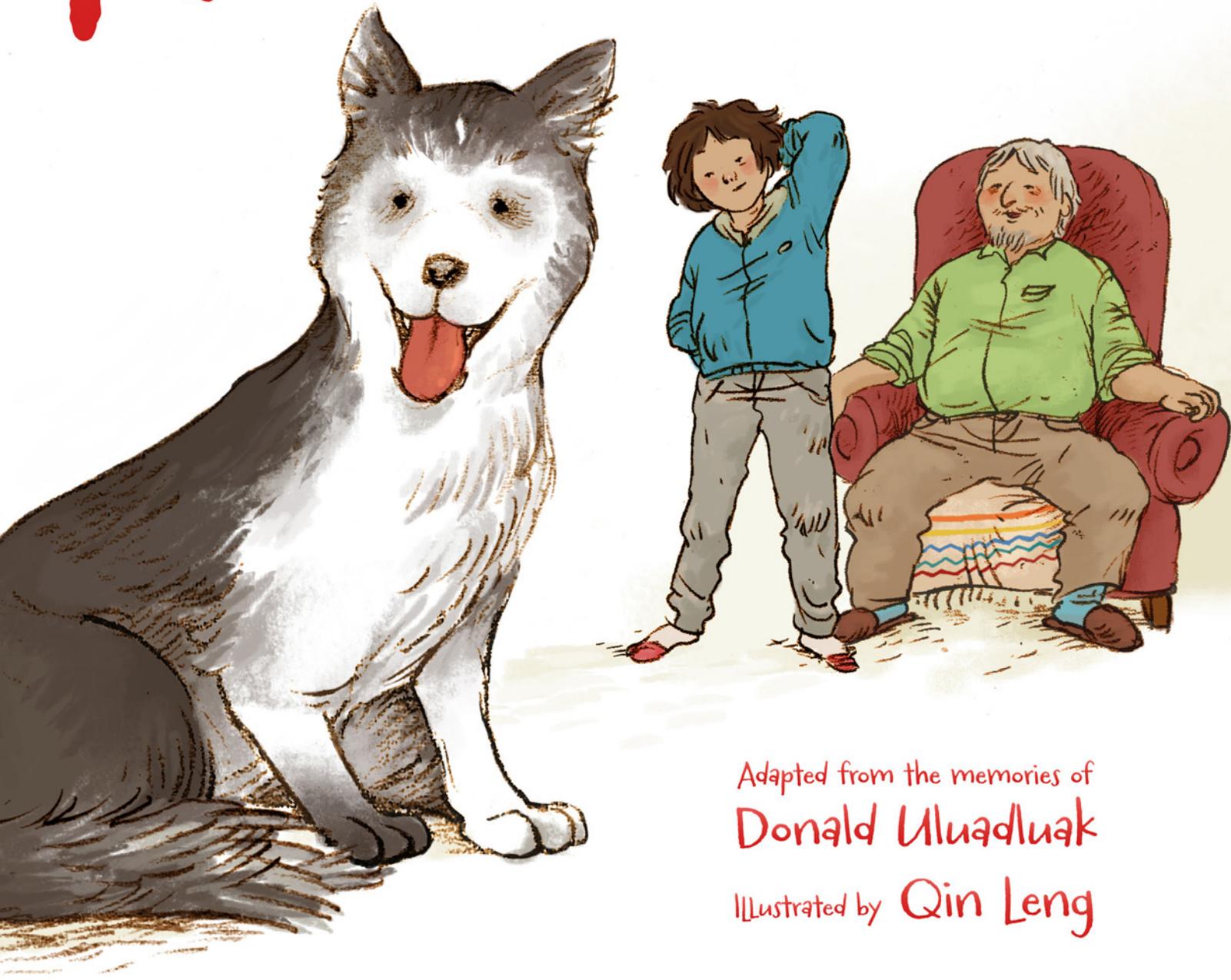


Kammik an Inuit Puppy Story



Adapted from the memories of
Donald Uluadluak

Illustrated by Qin Leng

EDUCATOR'S
RESOURCE



Kamik: An Inuit Puppy Story

About the Book

Kamik: An Inuit Puppy Story is the first in a series of books about Jake and his sled dog-to-be Kamik.

When Jake finally gets a puppy to call his own, all he can think about is the fast, strong sled dog that his puppy will become. But Kamik is far from an obedient sled dog. He won't listen, he tracks mud all over the house, and he's a lot more work than Jake ever thought a puppy could be! But after a visit with his grandfather, who raised many puppies of his own while living out on the land, Jake learns that Inuit have been raising puppies just like Kamik to be obedient, resourceful, helpful sled dogs for generations.

This educator's resource has been written for Grade 1–3 classrooms. The discussion questions and activities can be adapted depending on the background knowledge and experiences of students.

Teachers can use this book in the classroom in a number of ways, including:

- To teach about Inuit sled dogs
- To explore the idea of learning through storytelling with students
- To have discussions about concepts and themes such as responsibility, respect, and trust

Pre-Reading Discussion Questions and Activities

Show students the cover of *Kamik: An Inuit Puppy Story* and ask students to make predictions about the book. Consider using the following prompts:

- Who do you think is in the story?
- Where do you think the story takes place?
- What do you think the story will be about?



You may wish to record student responses on the board or chart paper and revisit the predictions after reading. Alternatively, you may wish to write the questions on the board or chart paper and have students record their own responses to the prompts.

Tell students that you are going to read a story about a boy named Jake who has a puppy named Kamik, and that Jake has big plans for his puppy. Ask students:

- Why do you think Jake has named the puppy Kamik?
- What plans do you think Jake has for Kamik?

Note to Educators

Some students may be unfamiliar with the word *kamik*. If so, explain that a kamik is a soft boot that traditionally is made of animal skin and is worn by Inuit on snow and ice. You may wish to show a picture of a pair of kamiik. You may also wish to pre-teach the word *qamutiik* for those students unfamiliar with the word. A qamutiik is an Inuit sled designed to run on snow and ice.

Ask students, “What do you know about Inuit sled dogs?” Record student answers on the board or chart paper and revisit after reading the story. If students do not have a lot of background knowledge about sled dogs, tell them that they will learn about Inuit sled dogs in the story!

Post-Reading Discussion Questions

- How does Jake feel about Kamik at the beginning of the story?
- Why did Jake give his puppy the name Kamik?
- Who did Jake’s grandfather name his sled dogs after? Why?
- Think about how Jake spoke to Kamik at the beginning of the story. How did Jake’s grandmother speak to her sled dogs? What lesson does Jake learn about how to speak to and treat sled dogs?
- What did Jake’s grandfather use his dog team for?
- What are two examples of dangerous situations in which Jake’s grandfather’s sled team saved his life?
- Why does Jake change Kamik’s name at the end of the story?
- How do Jake’s feelings about Kamik and his hopes for Kamik’s future change over the course of the book?
- Of everything that Jake’s grandfather taught Jake about sled dogs through his stories, what do you think is the most important? Explain your thinking.

Activities

About the Author

Read the author biography at the back of the book to the students. Explain that the story is based on Donald Uluadluak's memories of growing up on the land with his grandparents.

Ask students, "All the lessons Jake learns from his grandfather in the story are based on stories his grandfather told. What is the value of learning about something new by hearing about somebody else's experiences?"

Have students retell one of Jake's grandfather's stories in their own words. Prompt students to explain what Jake can learn about sled dogs when retelling the story.

Have students think about something that they could teach somebody else to do because they have experience doing it—for example, riding a bike or baking cookies. Then have students write a story about a time they were doing the activity and how they learned something from that experience. For example, if telling a story about riding a bike, maybe they fell off their bike and bumped their head, and learned that you always need to wear a bike helmet.

Inuit Naming Tradition

Traditionally, Inuit children are named after a respected ancestor. In the story, Jake's grandfather explains that he used to name his dogs after previous strong sled dogs that he or his grandfather had run. Ask students, "Do you think the act of naming a sled dog or a child is important? Why or why not?"



Ask students, “What would you name a sled dog? Why?”

Have students explore how and why they received their names and write a short report about what they learned.

Inuit Sled Dogs

After reading the story, review the list of information the students brainstormed about sled dogs before reading the story. Have students add any information they learned about sled dogs from the story that is not already on the list. This may include:

- You need to build trust with a sled dog by spending time with it and taking good care of it.
- Sled dogs deserve respect.
- Sled dogs can be reliable helpers.
- Once a sled dog takes a trail, they will never get lost.
- Sled dogs can sense danger.
- Sled dogs can hear and smell better than humans.

Based on their previous background knowledge and what was included in the story, have students write a short “how-to” manual that explains some of the basics of how to take care of a sled dog.

Have students research the equipment used to raise and run sled dogs in the North—for example, snow goggles, qamutiit, dog harnesses, etc.

If your class is located in the North or where dogsled teams are used, invite a guest speaker into the class to talk about their experiences caring for sled dogs.

Note to Educators

Inuit sled dogs have played an important role in Inuit history in the North. You may wish to have students further research the role of *qimmiit* (sled dogs) in Inuit society.

Pages 10–14 of the *Qikiqtani Truth Commission: Thematic Reports and Special Studies, 1950–1975* includes information about the origin of Inuit sled dogs and the important role they played in the traditional Inuit economy. The report can be found here: https://www.qtcommission.ca/sites/default/files/public/thematic_reports/thematic_reports_english_qimmiliriniq.pdf.