

# Akilak's Adventure

by Deborah Kigjugalik Webster  
illustrated by Charlene Chua

EDUCATOR'S  
RESOURCE



# Akilak's Adventure

## About the Book

When Akilak must travel a great distance to another camp to gather food, she thinks she will never be able to make it. With a little help from her grandmother's spirit, and her own imagination to keep her entertained, Akilak manages to turn a long journey into an adventure. Even though she at first feels that she will never be able to reach her destination, she keeps her grandmother's assurance that her "destination is not running away; it will be reached eventually" in mind and ends up enjoying the journey that at first seemed so daunting.

## About the Author

Deborah Kigjugalik Webster grew up in Baker Lake, Nunavut, where she loved to learn about her Inuit culture and heritage. She has a degree in anthropology from Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, and works as an Inuit heritage researcher and author. The lack of published children's literature featuring Inuit content compelled Deborah to write *Akilak's Adventure* for her daughters, Sonja Akilak and Nicole Amaruq. Reading and making up stories with her daughters when they were young was a magical time in Deborah's life, and she took inspiration from their vivid imaginations and sense of wonderment and excitement.

## About the Illustrator

Charlene Chua worked as a web designer, senior graphic designer, web producer, and interactive project manager before she decided to pursue illustration as a career. Her work has appeared in *American Illustration*, *Spectrum*, and SILA's *Illustration West*, as well as several art books. She illustrated the children's picture books *Julie Black Belt: The Kung Fu Chronicles* and *Julie Black Belt: The Belt of Fire*. She lives in Hamilton, Ontario, with her husband and two cats.

## Note to Educators

This educator's resource is written for Kindergarten to Grade 3 classrooms. The suggested discussion questions and activities can be adapted for each class according to the experiences of students.

Teachers can use this book to teach about topics such as:

- Confidence and bravery
- Cultural traditions
- Arctic animals
- Traditional Inuit lifestyle
- Positive mindset

## Pre-Reading Discussion Questions

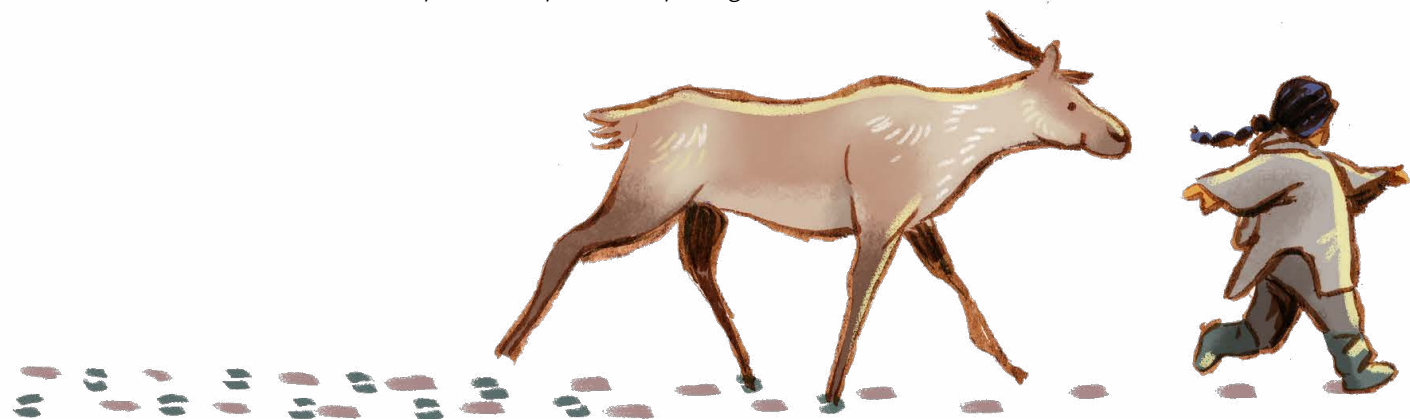
- What animals do you see in the cover illustration?
- Where do you think Akilak's adventure will take her?

- What kind of adventure would you like to go on?
- Can you point to the title of the book? Can you point to the illustration? Can you point to the author's name? What does an author do? Can you point to the illustrator's name? What does an illustrator do?

## During and Post-Reading Discussion Questions

The following questions and discussion points can be used during and after reading *Akilak's Adventure*. Provide students with the chance to voice their own opinions, share their experiences, ask questions, or point out anything else they may notice about the book.

- Page 2: Families are all different. It doesn't matter who you live with, who's in your family, how big or small it is, or how often you see each other! That's what makes your family special. It is unique. Who is in your family?
- Page 6: How would you feel if you had to take this journey by yourself?
- Page 6: What do you think Grandmother means when she says, "Your destination is not running away"?
- Page 9: Let's estimate how many steps it might take to walk for a full day. How many steps does it take you to walk across this room?
- Page 9: Akilak has such a positive attitude about her trip! Why do you think she is so happy?
- Page 13: Time often passes quickly when you have a friend to talk to. Who would you want to come with you on a long journey such as this?
- Page 14: What other animals do you know that migrate?
- Page 17: Where else did we hear of someone raising their eyebrows in agreement in this story?
- Page 18: If you could turn into an animal for a day, what animal would you like to be? Why?
- Page 25: What do you like about being a human? What are some things you can do that animals can't do?
- Page 29: How do you think Caribou knew the exact words that Grandmother had said to Akilak before she left?
- What was the connection between Akilak's grandmother and the caribou she met on her journey? Give specific examples from the text.
- What was your favourite part of this story?
- Did this story remind you of anything?





## Extension Activities

The following activities could be used to help strengthen students' understanding of the story. Adapt these suggestions to the ability level of your students as necessary.

### Writing Prompt

Akilak changes her wording from “journey” to “adventure,” making it sound much more appealing and exciting! Write about an adventure you would like to take. Where would you go? Who would you go with? What would you do there? Add as many small details as you can to make your story exciting. Share your story with your peers.

### Social Studies: Mapping

Create a map of where the story takes place. Go through the story to find words and details that give hints about where things are. Picture these places (e.g., Akilak and Grandmother's house, the river, the tundra, her uncle's camp) in your head.

### Writing/Acting: What Happened Next?

Create a sequel to this story. What happens next? What adventure does Akilak have on her way home?

- Write your ideas for the plot in point form.
- Act out the scene.



## Interview a Character

Choose any one of the characters in the story. Come up with a list of questions that you would ask them if you could interview them. What would you want to know?

(For example, maybe you want to learn more about Akilak's grandmother's traditional lifestyle, or ask Caribou about what it is like to be a caribou.) Trade questions with a classmate. Have them answer as if they are the character!

## Art: Favourite Part

Draw or paint your favourite part of the story. Talk about what part you chose and what you drew to represent that part of the story.

