# Introduction to the Iditarod Sled Dog Race

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**Discipline / Subject:** Geography/Social Studies/Science

**Topic:** Iditarod Sled Dog Race

**Grade Level:** 2nd – 8th

**Resources / References / Materials Teacher Needs:**
- Movie – *Nanook of the North*
- Movie – *Alone in the Wilderness*
- Book – *Enchantment of America: Alaska*
- Book – *Balto* by Natalie Standiford
- Globe
- Flashlight
- Internet site with animation of earth’s orbit: [http://www.uwsp.edu/geo/faculty/ritter/geog101/textbook/energy/earth_sun_relation_s_seasons.html](http://www.uwsp.edu/geo/faculty/ritter/geog101/textbook/energy/earth_sun_relation_s_seasons.html)

**Lesson Summary:** This lesson introduces Alaska and the Iditarod to the students. It is also a lesson on why we experience the change in seasons.

**Standard’s Addressed: (Local, State, or National)**
1. NSES 6.4 Earth and Space Science
2. PA S&T 3.4D Explain and illustrate the cause of seasonal change.
3. USNGS 6 How Culture and Experience Influence People’s Perceptions of Places and Regions
4. NCSS 3 People Places and Environments

## Learning Objectives:
1. Students will describe the movement of the earth in relationship to the sun.
2. Students will explain how the tilt of the earth relates to the change in seasons.
3. Students will identify differences between our culture and that of people from the artic regions.

## Method of assessment for learning
1. Students will draw the tilt of the earth and its relationship to the sun in each of the 4 seasons.
2. Students will demonstrate the movement and tilt of the earth in relationship to the sun.
3. Students will list differences between their culture and Nanook’s culture.
## Procedural Activities

1. Using the globe and solar system model, describe the orbit of the earth around the sun.
2. Use the flashlight and globe to show how the tilt of the earth causes parts of the earth to receive less sunlight certain times of the year.
3. Show students the Internet site with the animation of earth’s orbit.
4. Since we receive heat and light energy from the sun, parts of the earth get less heat and light during some months and are therefore colder.
5. Relate lifestyle and culture to climate.
6. Show students the movie *Nanook of the North*.
7. Have students list differences and similarities in culture they observed.

## Materials Students Need:
Worksheet page with picture of the sun and earth’s orbit.

## Technology Utilized to Enhance Learning:
Computer with internet access to show animation of earth’s orbit.

## Other Information:
Preview *Nanook* before showing it to your class. Some material may not be suitable for children.

## Modifications for Special Learners/ Enrichment Opportunities:

This is a great hands-on lesson for learning the orbit and tilt of the earth.

Students who understand the concept of earth’s tilt may describe in their journals the affect there would be on the seasons if earth had no tilt.