



Saint Mary's City School District

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Relevant Instruction (RI) @ Saint Mary's

Relevant Instruction

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[2016 Fall Feed Video – Kindergarten and 2nd Grade](#)

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[2016 Fall Feed Video – Whitefish, Moose, and Coast Trips](#)



What are relevant instruction trips?



Relevant instruction trips are educational outings taken by Saint Mary's School District students every year which combine the Yup'ik subsistence life style and the Alaska State Academic Standards into relevant instructional trips which are relevant or have true meaning for our unique student population. On these trips, students hunt, fish, and gather berries while learning Yup'ik traditions from the boat captains and chaperones that have grown up in Saint Mary's, Alaska. The Students then utilize the data collected on the trip to create projects which combine reading, writing, math, science, social studies, and Yup'ik.

Why do we take them?

In addition to learning more about the Yup'ik way of life, the relevant instruction trips allow us to harvest food for the winter. Some of the food we harvest is served to the community at the annual Fall Feed, an event where the students share what they have harvested and what they have learned on the relevant instruction trips. During the fall feed, student projects and presentations are shared with parents, guardians, and the entire community. In doing so the community becomes more involved in the school programs and has a more complete understanding



of what the relevant instruction trips are all about. Any food harvested but not needed for the Fall Feed is given to families in town that need it.

When are the trips and how long do the trips last?



Most of the trips take place in September and October. The Elementary students are the first to go up the Andreafski North Fork for a day of blueberry and blackberry picking before returning home. Older students go on longer trips. The sixth graders, for example, go up the Andreafski South Fork to the weir for an overnight camping, berry picking, tundra tea picking, and fishing trip. The junior high students (7th-8th grade) set nets at Qissunaq for white fish, go clamming, and camp overnight. The high school students take the longest trips. This year our high school students went to Paimiut on a five-day relevant instruction

moose hunt and camping trip.

What are some of the things we do for each subject on the trip?

During the relevant instruction trips, each teacher assigns different activities for students to complete based on the Alaska Academic State Standards. For English class we kept daily journals and answered specific writing prompts. For social studies we use GPS coordinates to plot the location of important sites like camp, where nets are set, and successful harvests areas. For science and math we measure and count everything we catch or harvest in order to create graphs and calculate population characteristics. The data from these different learning activities are then brought back into the classroom and we discuss them, manipulate them, and turn the data into projects aligned with the State of Alaska Standards.



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