

Hydro-Québec presents

GREAT N RTH

Teacher's Guide



GREAT NORTH



Preface

Watching the giant-screen film *Great North* is an adventure all on its own. The film plunges you into a magnificent environment, sparsely populated by little-understood aboriginal peoples — the Inuit of northern Canada and the Saami of Scandinavia. It's guaranteed culture shock for anyone living below the Arctic Circle!

In order to help you get the most out of the film, we've created this Teacher's Guide. Aimed primarily at 11-to-16-year-olds, the guide is also appropriate for both younger and older students — either in or out of a school setting.

The guide is a perfect complement to the *Great North* experience. You can use it to prepare for a screening of the film, or to gain a deeper understanding of the North afterwards. The content of each chapter is based on elements in the film, and is meant to provide a more in-depth understanding and place *Great North* in a larger context. While it draws on the film, the guide is a stand-alone document that can be used to explore northern themes. You should find it useful even if you are unable to attend a screening of *Great North*. It is our hope that, by making this guide widely available, people throughout the world can gain a greater understanding of the North.

Although you can use the guide without having seen the film, we strongly encourage you to watch *Great North* if you have the opportunity. That way you will appreciate the magnificence of this unique environment at the top of the world — a magnificence we can only begin to capture in words.

Dress warmly, and *bon voyage!*

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Chapter 1: The Far North and its Environment

Chapter 2: Northern Flora and Fauna

Chapter 3: Caribou and Reindeer

Chapter 4: The Inuit

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Chapter 6: The Making of *Great North*



Using this guide

Each chapter in this guide follows the same structure. Information is presented in a question-and-answer format, with sidebars offering interesting facts and statistics. A glossary defines the more unfamiliar words in each chapter (these words are marked with a number in the text).

The final section of each chapter is divided into three parts: the first is an activity reviewing the chapter's content; the second is an invitation to further exploration; and the third provides questions linking issues in the film to personal experience.

Each chapter can be used on its own. There is no need to go through them in sequence; use them in whatever order is most convenient.

In most cases, the text is addressed to the teacher or group leader, but some sections (including diagrams and instructions for activities) that can be copied and used as handouts for students or group participants are marked with this symbol:



We have tried to keep the materials needed for the activities to a minimum. We have also tried to make each chapter as comprehensive as possible — but of course, you can always go farther! There are lots of additional resources out there that you can take advantage of, such as Web sites, atlases and other reference books. You will find a suggested list of resources at the end of each chapter.

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GREAT NORTH



SYNOPSIS by David Homel

If you think that life in the *Great North* is a daily, harsh struggle for survival, well, think again! Of course, it does take special gifts to live and prosper in the world's most inhospitable zone, but the North is also a place of poetry and magic, music and myth-making. People have been living in the far North for millennia, and they have developed fascinating and unique ways of thriving in their environment.

Their greatest ally? The caribou, in Canada, and its close cousin in Sweden, the reindeer. With an Inuit guide, Great North follows the herds of caribou through the Canadian North as they make their annual trek of more than 7 000 kilometres, which gives them the title of greatest migrating land mammal on Earth. The white deserts of the winter, the brief and colourful summer buzzing with flies – the herds face all these conditions and more, as their migration opens a window on the Northern landscape for us.

In the Arctic reaches of Sweden, the Saami people learned to tame the reindeer even before other cultures elsewhere on our planet learned to domesticate the horse. The Saami are the cowboys of the North, and we're invited to the autumn round-up to join them as they care for their herds of reindeer.

Great North shows us unique ways of living that are perfectly adapted to extreme environments. Patience, a respect for nature's lessons and the bonds of community are what's needed. Inside their snow houses and tents, we watch the Inuit and Saami passing on what they know to their children, making sure that their way of life will remain eternal.

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