

## WRITTEN SUMMARY

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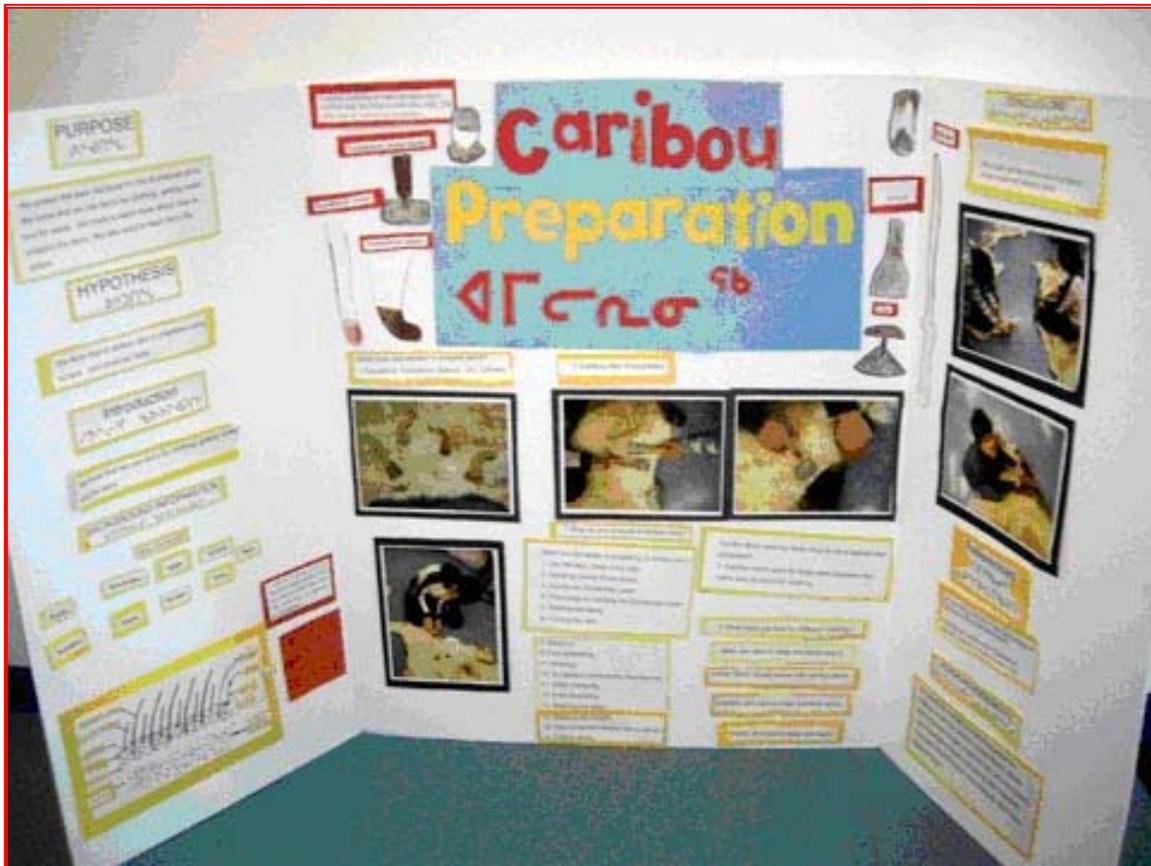
**GRADE:** 7

**SCHOOL:** Jonah Amitnaaq School

**PROJECT NAME:** Caribou Skin Preparation

### **DESCRIBE YOUR PROJECT:**

Our project is all about preparing caribou skins. We learned how to scrape and stretch caribou skins. The prepared skins are useful and very warm. The skins are used for clothing. In the old days, my Granny used prepared skins to make clothes such as mitts, parkas, pants, tents, kamiks and short pants. The skins were also used to make sleeping bags, tents. Different tools are used to scrape and stretch the skins. We worked with Elders and practiced our skills. Then we made a backboard to show what we learned.



### **RESOURCES: HOW DID YOU FIND YOUR INFORMATION?**

We worked with Elders and asked lots of questions. We found some information in books. Our teachers helped us find some information. We looked for some information online and in the library.

### **WHAT DID YOU FIND OUT AS A RESULT OF YOUR RESEARCH?**

Caribou skin preparation is very important for my culture and for Inuit people. Knowing how to do this helped Inuit survive on the land for many years. Caribou skin preparation takes a lot of time and sometimes is hard to do. We found out that the skins are now prepared using scrapers and stretcher tools made of metal and wood. In the old days, the tools were made of bone, stone and sometimes found metal. The Elders still chew the skins to make them soft.

### **DESCRIBE YOUR PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE PROJECT AND WHY YOU CHOSE IT.**

We chose this project because we thought it was important to learn about skin preparation. Inuit needed to know how to prepare skins to survive. It is important to learn about our culture and history. Inuit still prepare caribou skins today. Our Elders have important knowledge and it was fun to learn from them.

#### Caribou Skin Preparation Purpose

We picked this topic because it's fun to prepare skins. We know that we use skins for clothing, getting water, and for sleds. We hope to learn more about how to prepare the skins. We also want to learn from the Elders. We think that a caribou skin is prepared using scraper and stretcher tools.

#### Introduction

We know that we use skins for clothing, getting water and for sleds. Skins were used to make tents and sleeping bags. Skins were used to cover the runners on sleds to make them go faster. Caribou clothing is warm because each caribou hair has honeycomb-like cells. The cells trap air and act as insulation. There are different parts to the caribou skin and each part has a name.

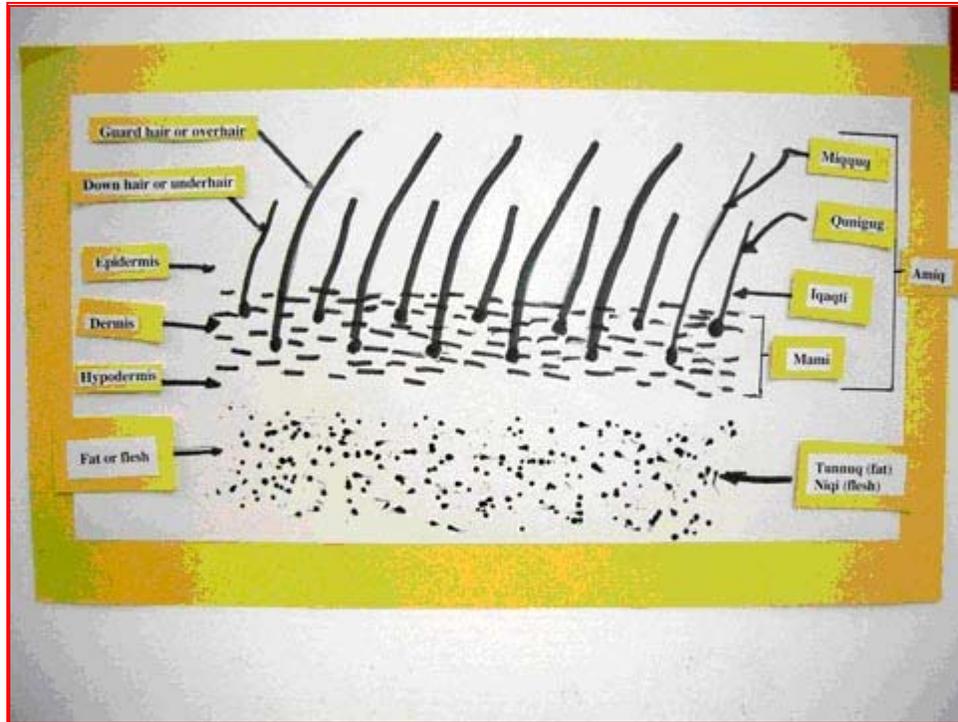


### Key Vocabulary

Parka, Kamiks, Membrane, Pants, Mitts, Scrape, Stretch, Soles, Skin

Caribou Skin – Names of parts:

Guard Hair or overhair, down hair or underhair, Epidermis, dermis, hyperdermis, fat or flesh, Miqquq, Qunigug, Amiq, Iqaqti, Mami, Tunnuq (fat), Niqi (flesh).



### Tools Used For Caribou Skin Preparation

#### Scrapers:

- Hakuut



#### Stretchers:

- Tasiukirut can be made out of bone, stone or metal.
- A hakuut is a stretching tool too.



- An ulu is used to cut patterns, skin, meat, sinew or thread.



- An Ipiksaut is a tool used as a sharpener for other tools.
- They were made of stone in the old days.
- Iktuksit is a name for scraper.



Scrapers and Stretchers

### How Do You Prepare a Caribou Skin?

1. Dry the skin. It takes a full day at least.
2. Working the overly dried areas by wetting and stretching them.
3. Curing the epidermal layer (scraping)





4. Fracturing or cracking the epidermal layer (scraping)



5. Wetting the Mami.
6. Folding the skin (so it won't dry out)
7. Seeping (putting weight on it or tying it)

8. First stretching.

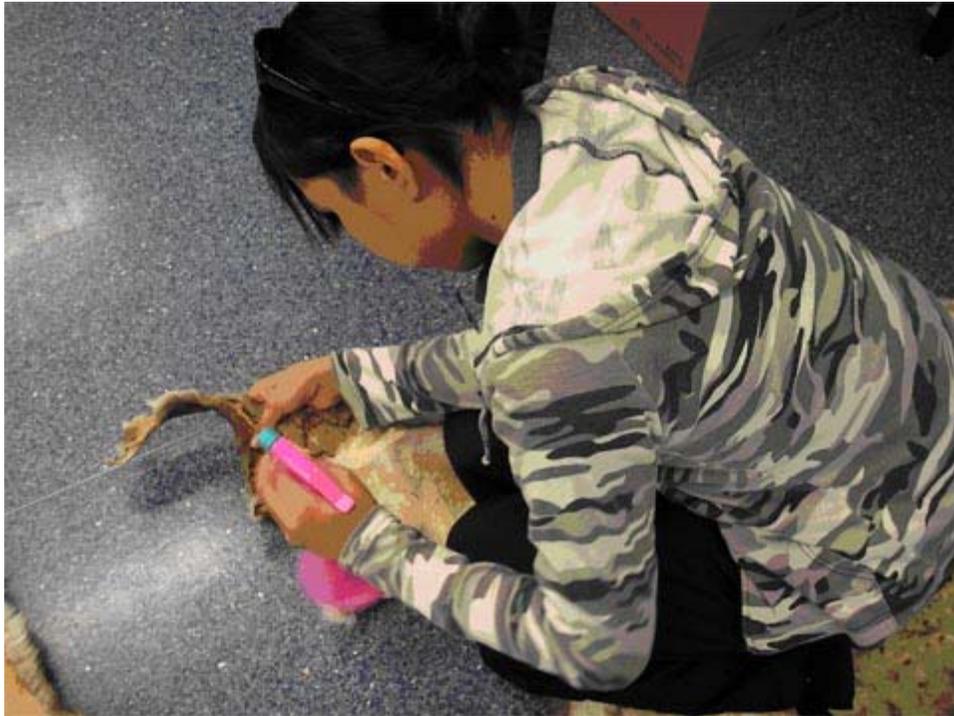


9. Chewing.

10. Scraping to remove the hypodermis.



11. Slight dampening (we used a spray bottle)



12. Final stretching.



- 13. Aligning the sides.
- 14. Marking the middle.
- 15. The completed middle line or crime.
- 16. Folded skins.

## Other Questions We Had About Skin Preparation

Did the skins used for tents have to be prepared and stretched?

Yes, Caribou skins used for tents were prepared the same way as skins for clothing.

What skins are best for different clothing?

Caribou skins are warm and are used for making mitts, parkas, kamiks and pants. Softer skins are used for children's clothing. Thicker skins are used to make warm outdoor clothing. Thinner skins are good for making vests.

## Conclusion

We found out that caribou skin is prepared using scraper and stretcher tools. And skins are also chewed to make them softer.

## References and Acknowledgements

Two of our book references were:

"Preparing Caribou Skins" from *The Heritage of the Inuit of the Lower Kazan River*. Iniqsimajuq: Caribou-skin Preparation in Igloolik, Nunavut by Lea Aksaajuq Otaq.

We would also like to thank the following people for helping us with our project: Lindsay Baker, Sheila Mariq, Denise Cooper and Craig Vincent. We would especially like to thank the Elders who showed us how to prepare skins. They were Simona Scottie, Elizabeth Paungrat, Elizabeth Alooq, Irene Kaluraq, May Haqpi and also Dwayne Haqpi.