



Activity and Teacher's Guide:

The Hungry Giant of the Tundra

Retold by Teri Sloat, Illustrated by Robert and Teri Sloat

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The Hungry Giant of the Tundra introduces children ages 4 and up to the beautifully unique Yup'ik tundra where danger also looms in the form of a huge hungry giant! Students will learn the importance of obeying their elders and thinking quick on their feet for they just may end up as supper! Happy reading!

Reading/Writing/Language Arts

1. Read *The Hungry Giant of the Tundra* and answer the following questions:

- What is the hungry giant's name?
- Why are the children afraid of him?
- What happened when the children pretended not to hear their parents calling them home?
- What did the hungry giant have planned for them?
- What did he forget to bring? How did he keep them together when he left?
- Who saved the children from the tree?
- How did the children trick the giant?
- Who helped them next? How?
- What happened to the giant after he found out the children went missing?
- Why did the giant end up at the bottom of the sea?



2. What does **moral of the story** mean? Does *The Hungry Giant of the Tundra* have a moral? Explain.

3. Write a story or draw a picture about a time you disobeyed your parents or a person of authority. What did you do? What was the outcome? If you had the chance to do it all over again, would you have disobeyed? Explain.

4. What are some other giant stories that you know? Are all of the giants evil or are there some that are misunderstood? Which do you think the hungry giant of the tundra is?

Science

1. The two creatures that saved the children from the hungry giant were the chick-a-dee and the crane.



- a. Where do these birds live?
- b. What do they eat?
- c. What do they look like?
- d. Do males and females look the same?

Different?

- e. What are their scientific names?
2. The children knew the giant was after them before they actually saw him not only because of his smell but also his shadow.
 - a. What is a shadow?
 - b. How is it created?
 - c. Does the length of your shadow ever change? Why?
 3. The hungry giant met his demise by falling in the river and being swept off to sea.
 - a. What is a river current?
 - b. Can it be dangerous?
 - c. Does the speed of the current ever change? How? When?
 - d. What are some safety precautions to take when dealing with a river?



Geography

1. Define **tundra**? What features are unique to the tundra? Where in the world do you find the tundra?
2. This story is from Olinka Michael, a master storyteller, and written by her daughter Lillian. They are from the village of Kwethluk, Alaska. Can you find the village on a map?
3. What do you think a giant lives in? What is it made of? What do the children in the tundra live in? What are they made of? How does this compare to what you live in?

Math



1. If there are 8 children and they each weigh 50 pounds, how much weight is the chick-a-dee carrying in his beak if they are all in a pair of pants that weighs 5 pounds.
2. If the crane's legs are 120 feet long and the giant reached half way before falling into the river, how far in feet did the giant reach on the crane's legs?
3. How is liquid measured? Which holds a greater amount of water: 2 quarts, 1 liter, 4 cups, or 3 teaspoons? Order them from smallest to greatest in their capacity to hold water.

Art

1. Make your own origami crane! Go to www.operationmigration.org/Origami.pdf As a class, hang all of the cranes above your desks.
2. For a display, borrow an adult's pair of pants or trousers and stuff them with crumpled paper, grass, sticks, etc. and hang them outside the classroom like the children did to fool the giant.

3. Draw a picture and make up a story in which the chick-a-dee uses his strong beak to do another good deed, or the crane stretches her long legs to help someone else.

Other Activities

1. Olinka Michael originally told the story to her daughter Lillian. Look up Olinka Michael on the Internet, and you will see that she is a very special person with many accomplishments.
2. Throughout the day, check to see how your shadow changes. As a class, go outside on a sunny day and look at your own shadow at 4 different times (9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., and 3:00 p.m.). Choose partners and have that student measure the length of your shadow and you do the same for them. What observations do you see? What do these observations tell you about the shape of the earth in relation to the sun?

Did you know . . . ?

- Olinka Michael was ordained a saint in the Russian Orthodox Church.
- Olinka was the babysitter for Barbara Winslow, who wrote *Dance on a Sealskin*. She is the grandmother who taught Barbara how to dance.
- Teri Sloat and her husband, Robert, illustrated *The Hungry Giant of the Tundra* together. Look at the giant's hands and you will see a giant version of Robert's hands.
- The arctic tundra is at the top of the world—around the North Pole.
- The tundra soil is often frozen. Permafrost, or permanent ice, usually exists within a meter of the surface.
- Water is unavailable during most of the year. Less than 10 inches accumulate a year (the same amount a desert receives!)
- The average annual air temperature is only 10 to 20 degrees Fahrenheit in the tundra.
- In the summer months, the sun shines all the time in the tundra, even at midnight.
- The only tree that grows in the tundra is the dwarf willow tree. It grows to a maximum of four inches tall.
- The hungry giant's name is A-KA-GUA-GAN-KAK. It literally translates into *squish, squish, squish . . .* it is the sound of his big feet going through the boggy tundra.

(Source: mbgnet.mobot.org)

About the author and illustrators

Author/illustrator **Teri Sloat** has published numerous award-winning books including *The Hungry Giant of the Tundra* (*San Francisco Chronicle* Holiday Choice), *Dance on a Sealskin* (Parent Council Choice/Bulletin for the Center of Children's Books Choice), and her latest children's book, *Berry Magic*. She travels the United States presenting at schools and libraries, and is often a featured speaker at conferences for organizations such as the International Reading Association and the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. Teri and her husband, **Robert Sloat**, live in Sebastopol, California.



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