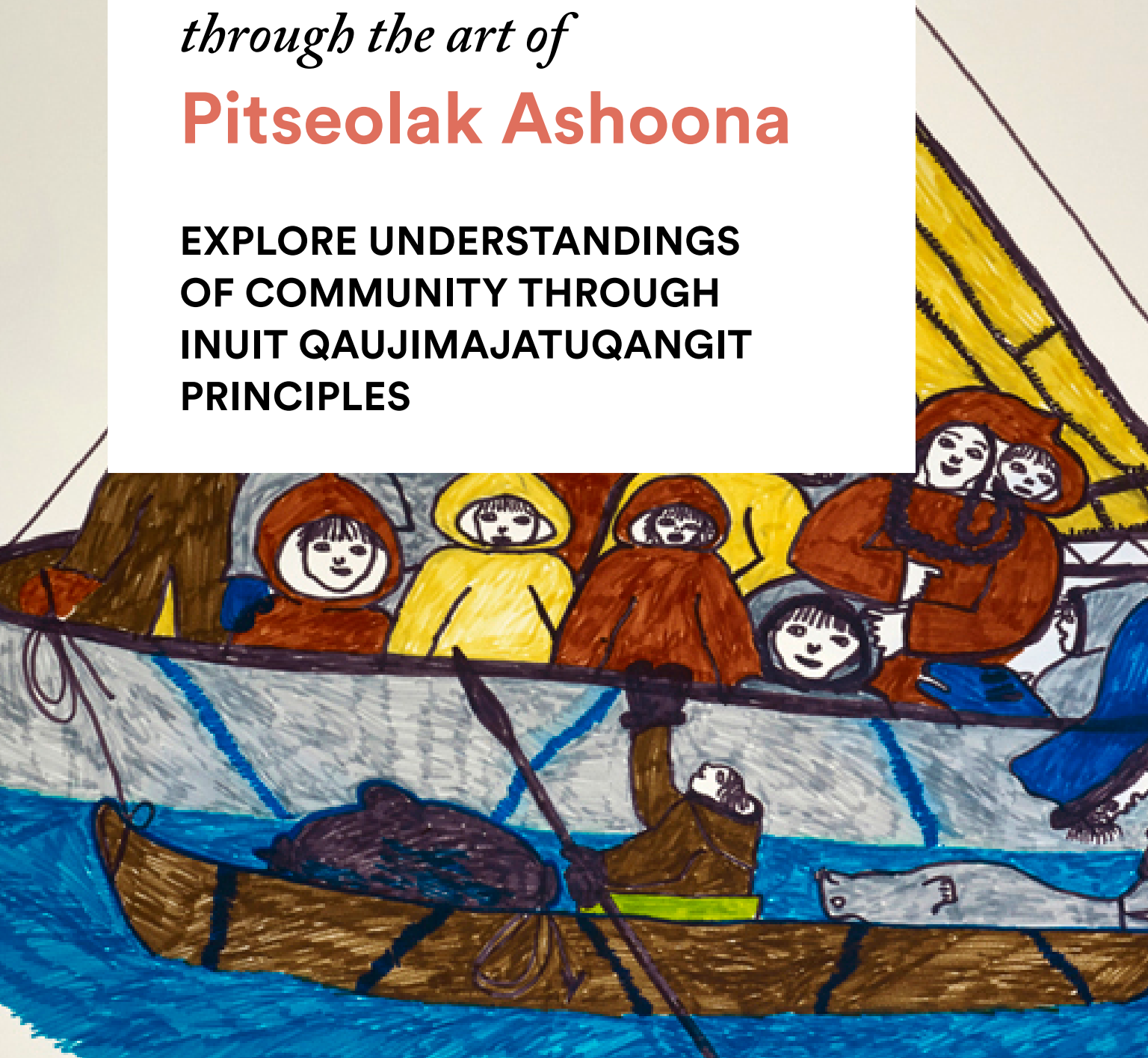




INDEPENDENT STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITY  
FOR GRADES 9–12

# Community & Land Stewardship *through the art of* Pitseolak Ashoona

EXPLORE UNDERSTANDINGS  
OF COMMUNITY THROUGH  
INUIT QAUJIMAJATUQANGIT  
PRINCIPLES



## TEACHER INTRODUCTION

Using Pitseolak Ashoona's art as a starting point, this independent activity will examine the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles. Through this activity, students will learn about and respect the cultural specificity of Inuit approaches to knowledge building and acquisition, skills, relationships, policies, and beliefs. This activity has been written to complement the Art Canada Institute online art book *Pitseolak Ashoona: Life & Work* by Christine Lalonde and adapted from the Teacher Resource Guide titled "Learn about Community & Land Stewardship through the art of Pitseolak Ashoona." For additional learning materials, please see the Art Canada Institute [collection of Teacher Resource Guides](#).

In this activity, students will analyze a variety of images by Pitseolak Ashoona to learn more about the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles, or "what Inuit have always known to be true." Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is a set of traditional beliefs, laws, and values that articulate important aspects of Inuit worldviews, and it is a focus for governance and life in Nunavut.

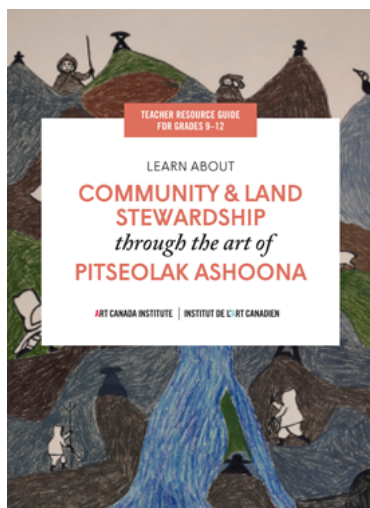
Please note it is suggested that you use the [Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit handout](#) to support your students. The information on this handout can be shared through a synchronous class, through an asynchronous video posted to your digital space, or as an additional handout that can be posted by the teacher to a digital classroom space to support students.

Within this activity, your students will have the opportunity to engage in critical discussion. Several platforms, such as Jamboard, Parlay, and Flipgrid, may be used to help foster rich dialogue between students throughout this activity.

Students may also be given the opportunity to share their work with their peers at the end of the Learn at Home plan. Applications for creating a video message include iMovie and QuickTime. Applications for creating a communal gallery space include CoSpaces Edu, Google Classroom, and/or Seesaw.

### Curriculum Connections

- Grades 9–12 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies



DOWNLOAD

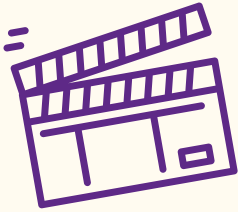
ADAPTED FROM

### Community & Land Stewardship through the art of Pitseolak Ashoona

Grades 9 to 12

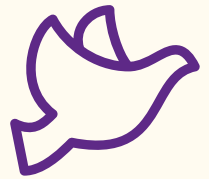
THEMES

- Community awareness
- Connections between land and community
- Intercultural dialogue and understanding
- Inuit principles of knowledge



When Pitseolak became a famous artist, the National Film Board of Canada made a film about her life.

**BEST KNOWN FOR:**  
Prints and drawings  
celebrating Inuit life and  
community.



Pitseolak created thousands of drawings of birds. Her name is the Inuit word for sea pigeon.

### GET TO KNOW THE ARTIST



**“ Does it take much planning to draw? Ahalona! It takes much thinking... ”**



For many years, Pitseolak drew every day, often working at home with coloured pencils and felt-tip pens.

# PITSEOLAK ASHOONA

Pitseolak regularly sewed clothing for her family.



**BORN:** Springtime, sometime between 1904 and 1908

**DIED:** May 28, 1983

**PLACE OF BIRTH:** : Tujakjuak (Nottingham Island)

**PLACE OF DEATH:** Kinngait, Nunavut



## INDEPENDENT STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITY

# EXPLORE UNDERSTANDINGS OF COMMUNITY THROUGH INUIT QAUJIMAJATUQANGIT PRINCIPLES

Pitseolak Ashoona (c.1904–1983) was a trailblazing figure in the world of modern Inuit art. She is part of the groundbreaking first generation of Inuit artists to produce drawings and prints through the establishment of the West Baffin Eskimo Co-op in Kinngait (Cape Dorset) in the 1950s. Her understanding of art as a form of personal expression and communication has resonated with artists for generations. Pitseolak Ashoona's art includes over eight thousand original drawings and requires viewers to consider the artist's experience and worldview, including the themes of community and respect for the land.

This activity will introduce you to Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, or “what Inuit have always known to be true.” Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is a set of traditional beliefs, laws, principles, and values that articulate important aspects of Inuit worldviews, and it is a focus for governance and life in Nunavut. Community, collective identity, and the laws of relationships are central to this system of beliefs and can be understood through Pitseolak Ashoona's vibrant images of life in the North, where community and collective identity are central.

You will be introduced to this cultural knowledge and encouraged to make personal connections. You will be asked to consider your own community and collective identities, and you will be encouraged to share this knowledge with your peers through a collaborative discussion.

### Materials Needed

- Computer, iPad, etc.
- Paper
- Pencils, markers or pencil crayons



Pitseolak Ashoona in Cape Dorset, 1968.  
Photograph by Norman Hallendy.

### Learning Goals

1. I am learning about Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles in relationship to the theme of community and collective identity.
2. I can understand multiple definitions of and perspectives on the theme of community.
3. I can describe my role in and relationship to my local community/communities.
4. I can describe how my community shapes and informs my identity.
5. I can show empathy, care, and understanding when researching the experiences of people from history.
6. I am respectful and use appropriate language in my responses on the discussion board.

### Success Criteria

1. My written work shows clear evidence of research and understanding of the specific time period and place.
2. My written work shows understanding of the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit.
3. My written work is thoughtful, clear, and edited.
4. I am respectful and use appropriate language in my responses on the discussion board.

## LEARNING PLAN

### Step 1: 5 min

Watch the Art Canada Institute learning video on Pitseolak Ashoona. <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/531349864>

Think about what you found interesting about the artist Pitseolak Ashoona. Post your thoughts on the collaborative discussion board or share directly with your teacher using the preferred method of communication. Treat this space as you would a class discussion. Write clearly, structuring your thoughts carefully and paying attention to proper writing conventions.

### Step 2: 15 min

Answer the following questions.

- What is a community?
- What community / communities do you belong to?
- Who are the members of your community?
- What roles and responsibilities do people have in your community / communities?
- What are your roles and responsibilities to others in your community / communities?
- What values and beliefs guide your community / communities?
- How does / do your community / communities influence who you are and how you see yourself?



Pitseolak Ashoona, *Untitled (Birds Flying Overhead)*, c.1966–67, coloured felt-tip pen on paper, 65.6 x 50.5 cm. Collection of the West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative Ltd., on loan to the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario.

Post your answers on the collaborative discussion board or share directly with your teacher using the preferred method of communication. Your teacher may choose to hold a discussion to discuss these questions.

### Step 3: 10 min

The Inuit Qaujimagajatuqangit is a set of traditional beliefs, laws, principles, and values that articulate important aspects of Inuit worldviews, and it is a focus for governance and life in Nunavut. Please review the handout and any additional information posted by your teacher.

Reflect on what communal laws or principles you have in common with your community.

### Step 4: 20 min

Read “Inuit Qaujimagajatuqangit” in the [Significance & Critical Issues](#) chapter of *Pitseolak Ashoona: Life & Work* and answer the following questions.

- How does what you have learned about Inuit Qaujimagajatuqangit change your perception of Inuit?
- How does what you have learned change how you see yourself and your role(s) in your community?
- What similarities and differences do you see when you consider the Inuit concept of community and your own community? For example, what concepts or phrases are similar in your home or in your community?
- What questions do you have?

Post your answers on the collaborative discussion board or share directly with your teacher using the preferred method of communication.



### Step 5: 10 min

Look at *Eskimos on a Sealskin Boat*, c.1966–72, (below) and answer the following questions.

- How is community shown in this artwork?
- What makes you say that?

Post your answers on the collaborative discussion board or share directly with your teacher using the preferred method of communication. Your teacher may choose to hold a discussion to discuss these questions.

### Step 6: 10 min

Look at the drawing *Summer Camp Scene*, c.1966–76 (below). Using your new knowledge of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, think about the following questions:

- How is community shown in this artwork?
- What makes you say that?

### Step 7: 10 min

Take time to explore the collaborative discussion board. Review at least two written posts and provide your peers with two stars (something they have captured well) and a wish (something you wish you had seen in their work) as feedback.



Pitseolak Ashoona, drawing for print *Eskimos on Sealskin Boat*, c.1966–72, coloured felt-tip pen on paper, 66.4 x 51.4 cm, Collection of the West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative Ltd., on loan to the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario.



Pitseolak Ashoona, drawing for print *Summer Camp Scene*, c.1966–76, wax crayon and coloured felt-tip pen on paper, 45.7 x 61.2 cm, Collection of the West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative Ltd., on loan to the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario.