

**Minnesota Storytime
Reading Guide**

Title: *The Raven's Gift: A True Story from Greenland*

Author/Illustrator: Kelly Dupre

**Publisher and
Copyright Date:** Houghton Mifflin, 2001

**Connection to
Minnesota:** Minnesota author/illustrator

Summary: This is the true story of a Minnesota man who traveled with a friend by kayak and dogsled along the coast of Greenland. The trip was long and difficult, and they grew tired, homesick, and afraid the trip had been a mistake. But an encounter with a raven gave them the strength and spirit to complete their fifteen month journey. The book was written and illustrated by the wife of one of the travelers.

Suggested ages: 7-10, all ages

Tips for Reading:

- Before reading the story, read aloud the introduction (the page beginning with "My name is Lonnie Dupre...") to emphasize that this is a true story.
- During the first reading, stick to the story. Follow up in another reading with the captions and boxes on many pages that add information.
- Practice reading the words in the Inuit language. Pronunciation guides are given.
- Locate Greenland on a map or globe to show listeners.

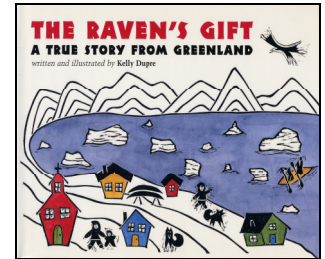
Questions before reading:

- What's the longest trip you've ever taken? Describe where you went and how you got there.
- Have you ever tried to do something so difficult it seemed you wouldn't be able to do it?
- Have you ever received a gift that you weren't expecting?

To Introduce this story say: This is a true story about two friends who took a long trip in the far north of Greenland and the surprising help they received along the way.

Questions After Reading:

- Why do you think Lonnie and John wanted to go on such a long and difficult trip?
- Did you ever think they might not make it?
- What did the raven do to help them?
- What made the raven's actions so unusual?
- Do you think you could have made that trip with Lonnie and John? Why or why not?
- What's the hardest trip (hike, bike, swim, etc.) you've ever taken?



RELATED ACTIVITIES

- Art:**
- The artwork in the book is linoleum block print. Using stamps or shapes cut from sponges, create pictures in this style. Fine-point black marker adds a great detail when used to outline shapes and figures. Watercolor paint in bright colors will make the pictures more like the ones in the book.
- Culture:**
- On a map or globe, trace Lonnie and John's journey from Minnesota to Greenland and around the coast of Greenland, as described in the book.
 - Visit the library, or search the internet, to learn more about the Inuit people.
- Language:**
- Review the book to find words that are unfamiliar, such as names of animals (narwhal), Inuit words (tulugaq), and villages (Kullorsuaq). Practice pronouncing these unfamiliar words and learn more about them.
- Math:**
- Make a timeline showing the planning and traveling of this long journey. What clues does the author give us about how long it took?
- Science:**
- List all the animals depicted in the book, and chart characteristics that help them survive in the harsh, cold climate.
- Writing:**
- Write two lists about Lonnie and John's trip – the first about all the reasons they should have made the trip, and the second about why they shouldn't have gone on such a trip.
- Other:**
- Read aloud the "The Raven" by Edgar Allen Poe and discuss the poem.
- Suggestions for English Language Learners:**
- Compare animals in the cold north with animals in other climates.
 - Have pictures or other books with seasons for students from places with different climate conditions.
- Related Books:**
- ***Arctic Lights, Arctic Nights*** by Debbie S. Miller, illustrated by Jon Van Zyle (Walker, 2003)
 - ***Whale Snow*** by Debby Dahl Edwardson, illustrated by Annie Patterson (Charlesbridge, 2003)
 - ***Arctic Alphabet: Exploring the North from A to Z*** written and illustrated with photographs by Wayne Lynch (Firefly, 1999)
 - ***Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Pacific Northwest*** by Gerald McDermott (Harcourt, 1993)

