

## MEETING ON THE ICE – in Gjoa Haven 1903

A very special meeting happened on the ice in Gjoa Haven in the fall of 1903. Nattilik Inuit Taraajuk met with Roald Amundsen and his crew. They went on to visit with each other, trade with each other, and help each other. Amundsen learned lots from his Inuit friends about how to manage travel and climate in the North.

Imagine you are one of the people on the ice that day. What do you think it would have been like? What would you do, and say?

**Grades:** High school (can be adapted to elementary grades)

**Relevant subject areas:** Social Studies, Inuktitut, English, art

**Resources:**

Amundsen's story of meeting

Gjoa Haven Elders story of meeting

**Activities:**

**1. Introduce**

Talk in class about

- The time: 1903
- Taraajuk and the other Nattilik Inuit, what they were doing
- The Norwegian expedition and Amundsen, what they were doing
- The North West passage

**2. Explore**

Read or listen to the two stories about the meeting.

Visit the Nattilik Heritage Centre to see photos from Amundsen's stay, the model of the ship Gjøa, and some of the objects Amundsen traded with the Inuit for.

**3. Choose**

Choose roles in class. Who are going to be Taraajuk and his friends, who are going to be Amundsen and his men? Plan how you are going to act during the meeting.

- Would you have been happy? Scared? Why?
- Would you be friendly? Would you want to talk to them?
- How would you try talk to them?
- If you wanted to give them a gift, what would be good?
- What questions would you want to ask them?

**4. Play!**

Go out on the ice and re-enact the meeting!

**5. Reflect and discuss in class**

Reflect on your experience. What would have been the challenges to understanding each other back then? What would the Norwegians have learned from their friends in Gjoa Haven? What would the Inuit have thought of their guests?

How do you think this meeting could have been different from meetings between Inuit and kablunaq today? How could it have been similar?

**Objectives:**

- Learn about the history of the place Gjoa Haven
- Learn about the history of Inuit in Kitikmeot region
- Learn about the history of North West Passage exploration
- Imagine different perspectives, practice taking someone else's point of view
- Discuss how today is different from 1903 – and how it is similar
- Reflect on the similarities and differences in Inuit/ kablunaq relations in Gjoa Haven over time