

*Iluvaktuq* is a traditional Yup'ik story, told by Annie Blue and Mary E. Bavilla. It accompanies the curriculum module *Patterns and Parkas: Investigating Geometric Principles, Shapes, Patterns, and Measurement*, which is part of the series *Math in a Cultural Context: Lessons Learned from Yup'ik Eskimo Elders*.

This story is about a famous historical Yup'ik warrior who lived during the Great War, during the Russian occupation of Alaska. The story tells about the importance of family lineage to Yup'ik people and the history behind the design of the parkas that his descendants still wear today. Stories are an important part of the *Math in a Cultural Context* series, as a way for students to relate to Alaska and some of its unique characteristics. This story helps connect to the math of the module through parka pattern designs.

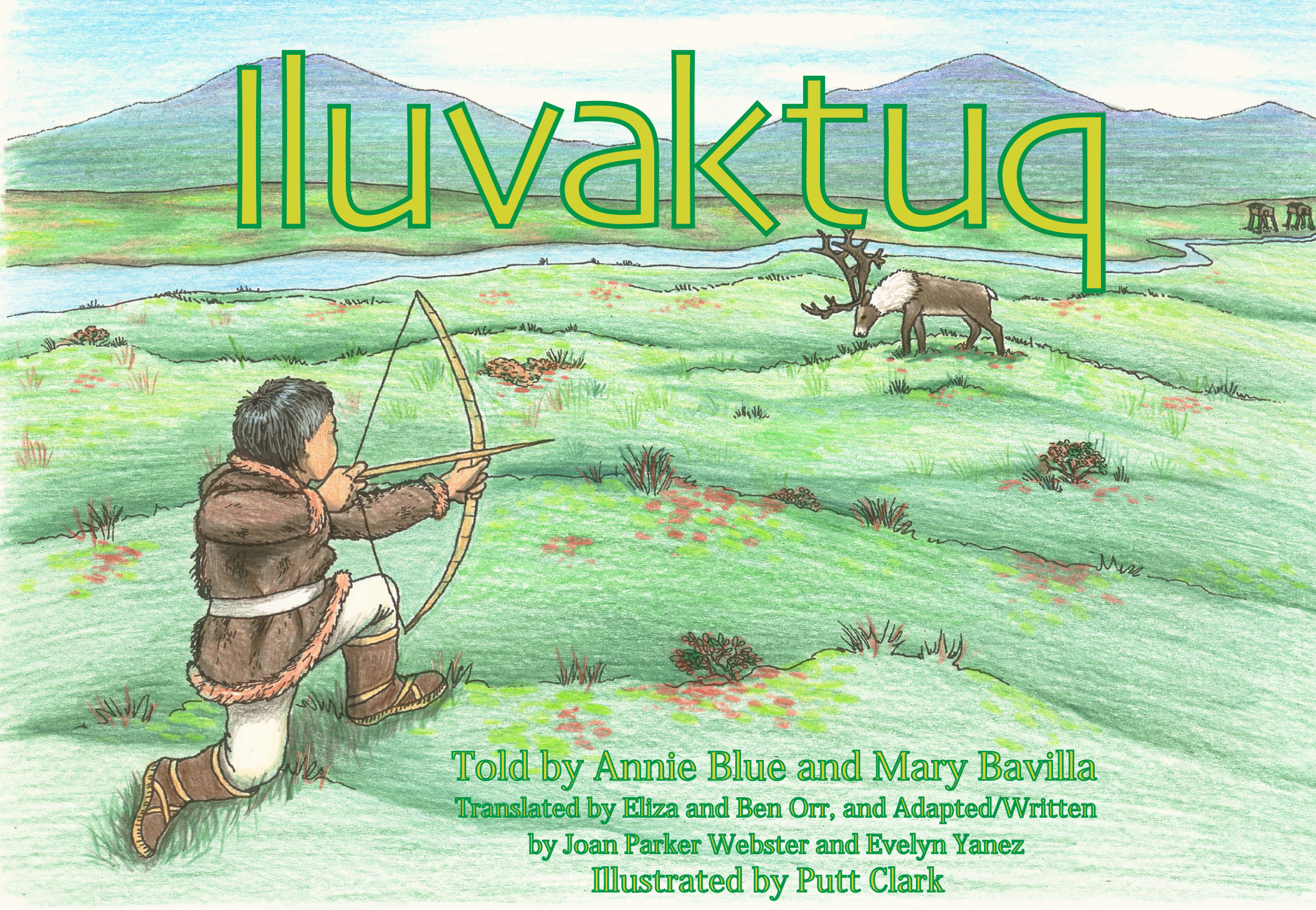


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Part of the series:  
*Math in a Cultural Context: Lessons Learned from Yup'ik Eskimo Elders*  
Jerry Lipka, Principal Investigator



Part of the series: *Math in a Cultural Context: Lessons Learned from Yup'ik Eskimo Elders*





# Iluvaktuq

as told to  
Evelyn Yanez  
by  
Annie Blue and Mary E. Bavilla

Illustrated by Putt Clark

Children's English version adapted by Evelyn Yanez and Joan Parker Webster and translated into Yup'ik by Evelyn Yanez

Part of the *Patterns and Parkas: Investigating Geometric Principles, Shapes, Patterns, and Measurement* second-grade curriculum module, which is part of the series *Math in a Cultural Context: Lessons Learned from Yup'ik Eskimo Elders*, Jerry Lipka, Principal Investigator and Series Editor.

*Iluvaktuq*, told by Annie Blue and Mary E. Bavilla, is part of *Patterns and Parkas: Investigating Geometric Principles, Shapes, Patterns, and Measurement*, © 2006 University of Alaska Fairbanks, which is part of the series *Math in a Cultural Context: Lessons Learned from Yup'ik Eskimo Elders*, Principal Investigator and Series Editor Jerry Lipka.

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## About the Storytellers

### Cungaulyar, Annie Blue

Annie Blue was born on February 21, 1916, in a place called Qissayaaq on the Togiak River in Alaska. Her mother, Aninautaaq, and father, Quriciq Yugg'aq, had nine children. Annie Blue moved to Togiak around 1945, where she still lives. She married Cingarkaaq and had seven children; four survived birth. One is still living today. When asked how she became a storyteller, Annie Blue said that she remembers listening to Saveskar, the storyteller in her village, as she told stories. Annie remembers that while Saveskar was telling her stories, others who were also listening with her would start to leave as time went by. Pretty soon, Annie found herself the only one left listening to Saveskar's stories. It was important to Annie to stay and listen to the stories because she respected Saveskar and was afraid to offend her by leaving while she was telling stories. Today, Annie Blue is a respected storyteller, carrying on the oral tradition of Yup'ik storytelling. When asked what her favorite stories were, she said Iluvaktuq and Kukugyarpak.

### Ernerculria, Mary E. Bavilla

Mary E. Bavilla was born on May 1, 1927, in Goodnews Bay, Alaska. She moved to Togiak in 1946 after her oldest son (one of fourteen children, eleven of whom are still living) was born. When asked how she became a storyteller, Mary said that her parents told her stories as a young girl. Her father, Angulluaq, was a storyteller, and he would tell stories every night. Today Mary is a respected storyteller, following in the tradition of her father. Her favorite story is *Tulukaruk*.





## About the Contributors

**Putt Clark**, illustrator, was born in Petersburg, Alaska, in 1967, later moving with her family to Fairbanks, where she grew up. She attended the University of Alaska Fairbanks, later transferring and graduating from World College West in Petaluma, CA, with a BA in arts and society.

**Joan Parker Webster** is an associate professor in the School of Education at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. She develops the literacy component and conducts qualitative research and analysis for Math in a Cultural Context.

**Evelyn Yanez**, a former Yup'ik teacher and state-recognized bilingual educator, has been involved in education for the past thirty years. She has extensive experience working with Yup'ik elders and collecting, recording, transcribing, and translating traditional Yup'ik stories.





## **Acknowledgements**

Thank you to all the elders who have told stories to us so that the next generation may learn them and that the stories may live on.

We would like to thank all the behind-the-scenes people who have contributed their talents to the production of this book. Thank you to Dora Andrew-Ihrke for reviewing and editing the children's version of Iluvaktuq. A special thanks to Flor Banks for her persistent attention to detail, to Carrie Aldridge for her editing, and to Sue Mitchell for the layout and editing.







# Iluvaktuq

*Qanemcitqataramken ak'a imumi anguyagpallratni Kusquqviim nuniini. Tamatum nalliini anguyagetangqellruuq nukalpiamek at' legmek Iluvaktumek.*

*Iluvaktuq tauna amllerqunek ciulistekluku curugaqluteng anguyameggnun. Arenqialan-llu tuknian yuut anguyagcuutmeggnek piaqluku.*

*Piculuni tuaten tauna Iluvaktuq. Pissuryarraarluni yuilqumun tekitaqluni piliqluni tuntunek iqallugpignek-llu.*



I am going to tell you a story that happened a long time ago when a great war took place in the Kuskokwim River area. During this time, there lived a great warrior and hunter named Iluvaktuq.

Iluvaktuq led many attacks against the enemy. He was such a mighty warrior that his people called him their lethal weapon.

Iluvaktuq was also a skillful hunter. When he went out into the wilderness to hunt, he came back with many caribou and arctic char.







*Iluvaktuq-gguq yugpaulruuq anrulvauluni-llu. Taumek nuliani aiparkaanek ayagyuanranek nuliangellrulria. Malrugnek nuliangami pistekagminek Iluvaktuq nutaan amllerneq tuntunek iqallugpigneq-llu pitaqluni imirlukek puyurcivini qulvarvini-llu.*

*Caqerluni erenret iliitni Iluvaktuq utrutliniuq angutvagmek. Unuurcan Iluvaktum pitani enem egkuanun ellia. Angutviim-llu angem ugaani egkuq tamalkuan imirluku.*



They say that Iluvaktuq was a very big man with a very big appetite.

So, Iluvaktuq decided to take a second, younger wife.\* With two wives to prepare the caribou and arctic char for the winter, Iluvaktuq doubled the amount of food in his smokehouse and fish cache.

One day, Iluvaktuq came home with one gigantic bull caribou. It was late, so Iluvaktuq stashed it in the back of the house. The caribou was so big it filled the entire back corner.

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\* Iluvaktuq had two wives because there was so much food to prepare and store for winter that one wife could not manage all of the work. Iluvaktuq felt sorry for the older wife, because she worked so hard to prepare the food for winter storage. That is why he took another younger wife so she could be a helper to the older wife with the food preparation and other chores.

Historically, in a subsistence society, such as the one in which Iluvaktuq lived, it was important to prepare enough food for the family to survive the winter. According to the story, Iluvaktuq was not only a mighty hunter who brought home many caribou and fish, he also had a large appetite. With two wives to prepare the food, there would be enough to last throughout the winter.







*Unuaquan makcami kinguqlian nulirran egkuq tangrraa imaunani. Tua-i-llu aptaa ciuqliq nuliaq, “Naugga tuntum kemga egkumi uitalleq?” Ciuqliim nuliam kiugaa, “Uiimegnuk nerelqaa nangluku. Nakiqatarqami tuntuuq tamalkuan nerlaraa.”*

*“Alingnaqvaa,” piuq ayagyuanra nuliaq. Umyuarniurluni Iluvaktum nerngaku tuntuuq nangluku. “Uksurpak-mi camek ner’aqniarceta?”*

*“Umyuarniurpegnak,” piuq ciuqliq nuliaq. “Waten pilartuuq nakiqatarqami.” Pillinia cimingeciqluku Iluvaktumun angutvak nerellra. “Amllerneq tuntunek piciiquq,” ciuqliq nuliaq piuq, “taumek neqkangqerciqukut uksurpak.”*



Early the next morning, the second wife woke up and saw that the corner of the house was empty. She asked the first wife, “Where is the caribou meat that was in the corner?”

The first wife replied, “Our husband ate it all. He always eats a whole caribou in one sitting before he goes on a successful hunt.”

“*Alingnaqvaa*, oh my goodness,” said the younger wife. She was concerned because Iluvaktuuq ate the whole caribou. “Now what are we going to eat all winter?”

“Don’t worry,” said the first wife. “This is what he always does before a successful hunt.” She assured the younger wife that Iluvaktuuq would replace the big bull caribou that he had eaten. “He will kill many more caribou,” said the first wife, “so we will have enough food to last all winter.”







*Tua-i-llu Iluvaktuq utruquragluni tuntunek. Qulvarviat-llu neqnek imangluni.*

*Tamatum nalliini arnat kenillerkun kenilallruut kanaggun enem natran qukaakun. Kenilleq cali kumartaqan enem ilua kiiriaqluni. Ataucimek egalengqerrluni pikaggun enem kangrakun. Puyuuq tuaggun egalerkun mayurluni an'aqluni. Enem-llu kangrakun uqrutarluni. Uqrutam taum puyuuq utertevkayuunaku enem iluanun.*

*Iluvaktum nulirra keniraqluni iqallugpignek kenillerkun malrugnek egacirluni. Keniraqluni egatem aipaa imirluku keggatnek, aipaa-llu papsalqunek.*



And so it was that Iluvaktuq began to bring home one caribou after another. The cache began to fill up with food.

In those days, the women cooked food on a fire that was built on the dirt floor of the house. This fire was also a source of heat. There was one window in the ceiling of the house. The smoke from the fire would rise and go out of the house through the window. There were also windbreaks on the roof of the house. These windbreaks blocked the wind so the smoke would not be blown back down into the house and make it smoky inside.

Iluvaktuq's first wife cooked arctic char by boiling it over the fire in two cooking pots. She used one pot to cook the upper part of the fish and the other pot to cook the tail end part.



*Tamatum nalliini arnat neqkiulallruut muraganek qantanek, aluuyaneq, aturluteng. Akutaqluteng-llu tamakutgun qantatgun. Iluvaktum nulirran atsat passilluki tunumek avuluku, passicissuutii-wa asverem tuluaneq piliaq. Ayuqenrilngurnek akutaqluni muriit qantani aturluki.*

*Iluvaktum nulirran cali muriit qantani aturaqluki kenirani nengllaciraqamiki. Kenirraarluni malrugnek egacirluni ipugaqluki keggatet ataucimun qantamun aipaanun-llu papsalqut ipugluki. Iqallugpiit-llu nengllakaki, Iluvaktum nulirran enrirturluki. Nutaan-llu taquskuni patuqerluki.*



In those days, the women had oval wooden bowls used to prepare food to eat. *Akutaq* was one kind of food prepared in these bowls. Iluvaktuq's first wife crushed the berries and the big game fat for the *akutaq* with a berry masher made from a walrus tusk. She made many different kinds of *akutaq* in her wooden bowls.

Iluvaktuq's first wife also used her wooden bowls to cool what she had cooked. After cooking the arctic char that she had boiled in the two pots, she would carefully place the upper part of the fish in one wooden bowl, and she used another bowl for the lower tail end part. After the arctic char cooled off, Iluvaktuq's first wife covered the bowls.







*Iluvaktuq-llu tekiskuni pissurraarluni, nerluki iqallugpiit nuliame kenirai. Ciumek qantaq papsalqunek imalek nerluku, melukaqluki mecarrluni neryugturluni. Nangkata-llu yuurqaarat merluku. Kinguakun-llu nutaan iqallugpiit keggatait nerluki. Nutaan nerluki cukaunani yugtun. Nerluni elliqaqluki enrit qantam mengliinun. Ak' anivkenani malruk qantak imalek nerlukek nanglukek.*

*Caqerluteng inglui anguyagtet niitelliniut nukalpiamek ilurpalegmek, tuqutnaluku-llu piluteng. Tua-i-llu maligtelliniat Iluvaktuq tuntussullrani.*



When Iluvaktuq came home from hunting, he ate from both of the bowls. First he ate from the bowl with the tail parts of the fish, slurping very noisily. Then he drank the fish broth. Next he ate from the bowl with the upper part of the fish. He ate this part very slowly, like a genuine human being. As he ate, he carefully placed the bones on one side of the bowl. Before long, Iluvaktuq had eaten everything that was in both of the wooden bowls.

Soon the enemy warriors heard about the great hunter with the very big appetite, and they wanted to get rid of him. So they began to follow Iluvaktuq when he went caribou hunting.







*Erenret iliitni ingluin Iluvaktuq tangvalliniat nalluakun, tangvainanratni-llu angutvaggluni. Iluvaktum ciemek tunuak augaraak elliqerlukek-llu yaatminun yurcirlukek. Tua-i-llu kemga itumlluku. Iluvaktuq taqucan anguyain avatailliniat caviirluku.*

*“Tuquteqatararput-qa waniwa?” iliit anguyain aptuq.*

*“Aling, niitellruunga una ilurpauniluku,” alla iliit qanertuq. “Kitak ciemek nerevkarraaqerlaput qessangraan. Nerevkarraarluku ayagcetniaput. Qimagciigaciiquq aqsiigni imangqerrlukek tunurugarmek. Tuquarcunaqciquq.”*



One day, while the enemy warriors were secretly watching Iluvaktuq, they saw him kill a big bull caribou. Iluvaktuq first cut up the fat part of the caribou and set it aside to gel. Then he cut up the meat. When he was finished, the warriors surrounded Iluvaktuq.

“Are we going to kill him now?” one of the enemy warriors asked.

“Well, I heard that this one has a big stomach,” said another. “So, let’s force him to eat first. After he eats we will let him go. He won’t be able to run away because his stomach will be so full of caribou fat. Then it will be easy for us to kill him.”







*Taukut anguyagtet iliit asqilinrituq Iluvaktuq tuaten pinaluku pillratni. “Yuut ilait maani cakneq usvituut,” qanertuq. “Wangni una usvitunqurrauguq! Camek unangengaitukut wangkutni usvitunrukan.”*  
*Taugaam ilai anguyiit picirkiurateng assikaat. Tua-i-llu Iluvaktuq nerevkaraat. Nerngami nernguq. Neresciigalian-llu ingluin qessangraan qanra tunumek keviraat, cali kiiki nerevkarluku.*



Now one of the enemy warriors had doubts about the plan to kill Iluvaktuq. “There are some very clever people living around here,” he said, “and I think this man is the most clever of all! We will all end up with nothing if he outsmarts us.”

But the other enemy warriors were sure the plan would work. So, they made Iluvaktuq eat. He ate and ate. When he couldn’t eat any more, the enemy warriors began to stuff Iluvaktuq’s mouth with caribou fat.







*Ak' anivkenani Iluvaktum tangellra cakneq aqsinguq. Inglui anguyiit qanertut, "Kitak nutaan ayagcetnauput." Tua-i-llu yaaqliqu' urluteng nangertut itukurluteng, yaatmun ak' akik tayima. Iquatni-llu tamakut itukuralriit yuut ingrirtarluni quletmun. Inglui iquanun tekiskan, ingrimun tekiskan, tuqutarkauluku Iluvaktuq.*

*Iluvaktuq tamaaggun itukelriit qukaatgun ayagtuq ingrim tungiinun. Ayainanermini Iluvaktum ayaruni tegumiaqenqegcaraa katagyuumiilamiu. Kingyaqa' aqluki tamakut yugugaat akiqliqelriit ayagtuq. Kingyaqa' erqami miryaq' eraqluni atkumi qanganaat tusgagnun.*



Before long, Iluvatuq looked very, very full. The enemy warriors said, “Now we can let him go.” Then they formed two lines that stretched far into the distance. At the end of the two lines, there was a mountain with a steep slope. The enemy warriors planned to kill Iluvatuq when he reached the end of the two lines of men that stretched to the foot of the mountain.

Iluvaktuq began walking between the two lines of warriors that stretched toward the mountain. As he walked, Iluvaktuq carefully held on to his walking stick, because he did not want to lose it. All the while, he kept looking back at the two lines of men who were following him. And as he looked back, he vomited a little on each of the shoulders of his short squirrel skin parka.







*Tekiqurainaraak iugmeInguuk ingluugni anguyagtek. Ayakararkaukuni tuani ayakaryugngaluni.  
Alqunaq piqerluni Iluvaktuq ayakartuq. Ingrim qacarnerakun aqvaqurluni may'ugertuq. Ingluin  
malirqeryaaqaat taugaam angusciigataat. Ingluin pitgaquyaaqaat taugaam urluvrem agtunrita. Iluvaktuq  
cukassiiyaagtuq.*



Finally, Iluvaktuq reached the last two men at the end of the two lines of enemy warriors. Now was his chance to outsmart the enemy.

All of a sudden, Iluvaktuq started running. He ran up the mountain. The warriors ran after him, but they could not catch him. The warriors shot arrows at him, but the arrows could not hit him. Iluvaktuq was too fast for them.







*Iluvaktuq qasqiarcami ingrim kangranun nangertuq. Kanavet tangvagluki qayagpagtuq, “Aa-rra-rraa, Ak’a pikna naqii-ii! Ayarurturluku! Ayarurturluku!”*

*Tua-i-llu ayakarluni. Ayakallermini tuar’ aqsiik imailnguuk. Ayakallermini tuar’ tuntuyagaq.*

*“Qanrucaaqellrukemci waten piciqniluku,” anguyiit iliit qanrucestellrat Iluvaktumek piuq, “taugaam niicugniksaitarpecia. Tangerrluku, usvituami Iluvaktuq anagivkartuq.”*



As soon as Iluvaktuq reached the top of the mountain, he stood up very tall. Looking down on the men below, he said, “Aa-rra-rraa, Ak’a pikna naqii-ii. Ayarurturluku. Ayarurturluku” (a chant signifying his triumphant escape from his enemies).

Then, he quickly ran away. He ran as if his stomach was not full. He ran as a young caribou.

I told you that this would happen,” said the enemy warrior that had warned the others about Iluvaktuq, “but you would not listen. See, Iluvaktuq has outsmarted us after all.”





*Ernerpak atkugtangqertuq qaralilegnek miryaruaneq. Miryaruak kuluvauguk qaterlutek mingqumalutek atkuum tusgagnun. Taukuk-gguq tua-i miryaqaquurallrak tusminun Iluvaktum qimallerminiki anguyani. Man' a-llu tekilluku kia irniani aciqsaitaa Iluvaktumek. Cayunaitellruami maa-i atruyuunani Iluvaktuq. Qutegtenrilamta aciucuunaku. Wani qanemcika iquklituq.*



Today we have a trim on our parkas called *miryaruak*. *Miryaruak* are white fur trim sewn onto the shoulders of the parka. This represents what Iluvaktuq vomited on his shoulders while he was running away from the enemy warriors.

And to this day, there are no children named Iluvaktuq. He was too great a warrior and no one can live up to his name. It would be boasting.

This ends my story.



# Glossary

***akutaq***—a food that contains animal tallow or fat; salmonberries, cloudberry, or blueberry; and sugar. This light and fluffy mixture is sometimes called “Eskimo ice cream.”

***alingnaqvaa***—Yup'ik for an expression of concern, like “Oh my goodness”

**arctic char**—a type of fish found in lakes in Alaska. They can weigh between two and ten pounds, depending on the lake in which the fish live. Some scientists say that the Dolly Varden trout is a closely related cousin to the Arctic char.

**cache**—an elevated storehouse where food items were kept. The cache was usually a rectangular wooden structure built on top of four log posts.

**caribou**—animals that live in large herds in the arctic, tundra and northern forest regions of North America, Russia, and Scandinavia. Caribou eat vegetation such as tree leaves and small sedges as well as lichens, moss, and berry shrubs.

***miryaruak***—white fur sewn onto the shoulder area of parkas from the Togiak region. In Iluvaktuq's time the fur was either white dog fur or caribou. Today white calfskin is used. It also symbolizes the vomit caused by Iluvaktuq's running when he escaped from his enemies.

***naunrat***—salmonberries or cloudberry

***paluqtak***—beaver pelt

**smokehouse**—a small structure, built from logs or wooden planks in which a fire is built to slowly smoke meat and fish for the winter

***tan'gerpiit***—crowberry

**walking sticks**—walking sticks were important tools for survival when people traveled out into the wilderness. Walking sticks could be used:

- If a person fell through thin ice into the water, he could place the walking stick horizontally across the hole and pull himself up and out of the water.
- It could be used to check for quicksand while walking on the tundra or by a river or pond.
- It could be used to check for soft mud while walking on the beach when the tide is out.
- It could be used to check water depth.
- It could help one walking on glare ice.
- It could help in walking faster and walking uphill through rocky areas

**windbreaks**—pieces of wood that were placed in the window or smoke hole on top of the domed roof of subterranean houses. These windbreaks would block the wind so that the smoke from the fire in the house below would not be blown back down through the window or smoke hole. It was important to change the placement of the windbreaks, when the wind shifted direction, to keep the house from getting smoky.



## About the Stories

When Evelyn Yanez was a young girl, during a time before there was electricity in her village, Annie Blue would come to her house and tell stories in Yup'ik. Remembering these times, Evelyn says, "I was never bored when I was listening to stories." Even when she and her family went to pick berries or fish at Togiak Lake, Evelyn remembers they would stop along the way and stories would be told.

When Evelyn became a teacher, she asked Annie Blue to come to her classroom to tell stories. When Evelyn became the bilingual coordinator, she began to tape the stories, so they would be saved as oral histories. Annie Blue wanted to start sharing her stories in the classroom because she knew if the children did not have the opportunity to hear them, they would be lost to future generations. This children's book represents another way of sharing these stories so they will not be lost—so they will remain with us forever as they are passed down to future generations.

The children's book you are reading is the result of a careful process that occurred in several phases. The first phase of the children's storybook project involved collecting traditional Yup'ik stories told in Yup'ik by elder storytellers. While many stories were previously recorded, translated, and compiled into an unpublished archival collection, one of the project goals was to collect additional tellings of the stories that were already in the archived collection as well as stories that may have not been included. Also, these stories are part of a larger project titled Math in a Cultural Context: Lessons Learned from Yup'ik Eskimo Elders (MCC). Of particular interest was the collection of stories that would directly relate to the cultural theme and math content of the developing math modules. While we already had a transcribed Yup'ik version of many of these stories in the archived collection, we collected additional tellings of them, because every oral performance of a given story differs somewhat from other performances of the same story, and we wanted to capture the various nuances of detail that might occur.

The members of the literacy team (Evelyn Yanez and Joan Parker Webster, assisted by Dora Andrew-Ihrke) then began to compare the transcriptions and the two new

English translations of the Togiak story performances with previously transcribed and translated versions of Iluvaktuq. The "constant" elements formed the framework for the composite story and details were added from the various performances. This involved a recursive comparative process that moved back and forth between Yup'ik transcriptions (performed by Evelyn Yanez and Dora Andrew-Ihrke in consultation with the elder storytellers) and English translations.

The next phase of the process involved working with the English composite versions to produce a children's text that contained language and vocabulary appropriate to a range of reading levels that were compatible with the target reading audience (grades 2–3). After this children's English text was constructed, the literacy team first reviewed it for content accuracy and faithfulness to the oral storytelling style. The team then reviewed it for its comprehensibility and accessibility to younger readers. After these readings, the text was read (translated into Yup'ik) to Annie Blue and Mary E. Bavilla for approval. In this phase, we also checked the preliminary sketches of the story illustrations for accuracy and compatibility with text of the preliminary sketches for the story's illustrations by consulting with the elders. This debriefing and revision stage also involved the formatting of the text such that page breaks and illustrations would occur in a narrative flow and would coincide with the story's natural narrative pacing and action segments. Thus, throughout the process, there were member checks and revisions contributed by the literacy team members and the storytellers, Annie Blue and Mary E. Bavilla.

We hope you will enjoy the story in its written form. The collaborators on this project believe the use of traditional Yup'ik stories, such as Iluvaktuq, can provide a way to bridge the culture of the community with the culture of school. We also believe the historically untapped wisdom and knowledge embedded in these traditional stories can open new pathways to greater levels of engagement with the activities in the MCC curriculum. We believe that these stories can contribute to students' meaning-making abilities through a direct experience with a literary genre that has historically rested outside of the Western literary tradition taught in school.

