

NEWS BREAK

Article: **Navy apologizes for 1882 obliteration of Tlingit village in Alaska**

Section: **MAIN, A5**

Sunday's News Break selects an article from **Sunday, October 27, 2024** of The Seattle Times print replica for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions.

You are encouraged to modify this lesson to fit the needs of your students. For example, some teachers might use this as a take-home assignment and others might read and answer the questions in a small group or larger, class discussion.

****Please be sure to preview all NIE content before using it in your classroom to ensure it is appropriate for your students.***

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2

- Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Objectives:

Students will learn about the atrocities that occurred due to the U.S. Navy upon the Indigenous peoples of the Tlingit village of Angoon 1882 and how the U.S. government recently apologized, 142 years later. They will discuss generational trauma and how that has impacted Native people that have been mistreated in the past. Students will talk about colonialism and its impact on Indigenous people and how that links to the modern-day in terms of environmental justice, sovereignty, self-determination, education and reconciliation.

Pre-Reading Discussion:



- What do you think the article will be about, using this picture?
- Are there any clues? What can you infer?

Vocabulary Building:

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted words mean using *context clues*? A **context clue** is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the identities and meanings of unknown words.

Now, 142 years later, the **perpetrator** of the bombardment — the U.S. Navy — has apologized.

Perpetrator Guess:

Perpetrator Definition:

Comprehension Questions:

1. Shells fell on the Alaska Native village as winter approached, and then sailors landed and burned what was left of homes, food caches and canoes. Conditions grew so dire in subsequent months that elders sacrificed their own lives to spare food for surviving children. It was Oct. 26, 1882, in Angoon, a _____ village of about 420 people in the southeastern Alaska panhandle.
2. Now, 142 years later, the perpetrator of the bombardment — the U.S. Navy — has _____.
3. While the rebuilt Angoon received \$90,000 in a settlement with the Department of the Interior in _____, village leaders have for decades sought an apology as well.

4. The attack was one of a series of conflicts between the American military and Alaska Natives in the years after the U.S. bought the territory from Russia in _____.
5. The U.S. Navy issued an apology last month for destroying the nearby village of Kake in _____, and the Army has indicated that it plans to apologize for shelling Wrangell, also in southeast Alaska, that year, though no date has been set.
6. Today, Angoon remains a village of about 420 people, with colorful old homes and totem poles clustered on the west side of Admiralty Island, accessible by ferry or float plane, in the _____, the nation's largest.
7. The residents are vastly outnumbered by brown bears, and the village in recent years has striven to foster its _____. Bald eagles and humpback whales abound.

Class Discussion Questions:

- What surprised (or stood out to) you in the article?
- At first, I thought _____, but now I think _____?
- What things did you already know from prior experience?
- Have you learned about the injustices of Indigenous peoples in school? Why or why not?

“The Navy recognizes the pain and suffering inflicted upon the Tlingit people, and we acknowledge these wrongful actions resulted in the loss of life, the loss of resources, the loss of culture, and created and inflicted intergenerational trauma on these clans,” he said during the ceremony, which was livestreamed from Angoon. “The Navy takes the significance of this action very, very seriously and knows an apology is long overdue.”

- What is your opinion about this apology? Is it enough? What other reparations could be given? What was taken from the Indigenous Tlingit people? Why?

Diving Deeper into the Topic: Journaling, Essay Prompts, Small Group or Larger Class Discussion Questions:

Historical Context and Impact:

1. Historical Significance: Why do you think it took over 140 years for the U.S. Navy to formally apologize? What does this delay suggest about historical injustices and the treatment of Indigenous peoples?
2. Intergenerational Trauma: How might the actions of the U.S. Navy in 1882 have impacted the Tlingit people for generations? What are some of the ways that trauma can be passed down through families?

3. Cultural Loss: The attack on Angoon resulted in the loss of lives, resources, and cultural heritage. How can we measure the impact of such losses on a community? What steps can be taken to preserve and revitalize Indigenous cultures?
4. Government Accountability: What role does government accountability play in addressing historical injustices? How can governments work to repair the harm caused by past actions?

Moral and Ethical Considerations:

1. Justice and Reconciliation: What does it mean to seek justice for historical wrongs? How can apologies and reparations contribute to the process of reconciliation?
2. Indigenous Rights: What are the rights of Indigenous peoples? How have these rights been violated historically, and what steps are being taken to protect them today?
3. Colonialism and Imperialism: How did the U.S. government's policies of colonialism and imperialism impact Indigenous communities in Alaska? What are the long-term consequences of these policies?
4. Empathy and Understanding: How can we develop empathy and understanding for the experiences of others, especially those who have been marginalized or oppressed?

Modern Implications:

1. Environmental Justice: The Tlingit people have a deep connection to the land and sea. How does the destruction of their village relate to contemporary issues of environmental justice and climate change?
2. Sovereignty and Self-Determination: What does it mean for Indigenous communities to have sovereignty and self-determination? How can non-Indigenous people support these rights?
3. Education and Reconciliation: How can education play a role in promoting understanding and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples? What kind of historical education is needed to address past injustices and build a more equitable future?

News Break is posted to the Web on Tuesday. Please share this NIE News Break program with other teachers. To sign-up for the print replica for your class, please [register online](#) or call 206/652-6290 or toll-free 1-888/775-2655.
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