

Literacy This Week



**Yukon Literacy
Coalition**

We are a society of people dedicated to improving the quality of life of all Yukoners. We do this by building the foundational skills required for lifelong learning; acknowledging that we are all adapting to an everchanging world.

Zana Ka Nanááje

Every March, Kluane First Nation (KFN) hosts a culture camp for the youth of KFN and students at Kluane Lake School (KLS). Zana Ka Nanááje, also known as Muskrat Camp, is included as a part of the school curriculum. Students spend a week on the land roughly 100km north of Destruction Bay, they learn traditional culture from community members, teachers, elders, and the land itself. Camp activities include setting the trapline on Pickhandle Lakes, daily trips to check the traps, and traditional teachings like plant medicine knowledge and language. Community and group-based activities such as hand games, and programming from partner groups like the Yukon Literacy Coalition are also included.

In the 2023 camp, the land dictated the schedule, and everyone adjusted their plans to accommodate the weather. Temperatures dipped as low as -36 one morning, and the snow was so deep that the Pickhandle Lakes were flooded with "overflow". Because of the flooding, it wasn't possible to set the trapline, the trappers shifted gears and focused on snaring. Everyone piled onto snowmobiles, headed into the bush to find signs of rabbit and hare tracks, and set snares on their trails. By the end, the kids harvested a snowshoe hare and a few squirrels, and the trapping team harvested a wolverine!

Despite the cold and the mountains of snow, most camp activities took place outside, either out in the open or in wall tents heated by a wood stove. The kids made ice lanterns and no-sew neck warmers, and concocted "fluffy butter slime". KLS staff led everyone through a language scavenger hunt, and the whole camp competed in a fire-making, tea-boiling, and bannock frying competition. Inside the lodge, KFN spent 3 days at camp teaching people to sew traditional hide mitts with sinew. It was a busy week full of community, friendship, learning, and laughter.

Yukon Literacy Coalition

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