What is dynamic assessment?

The overall process of student assessment, evaluation and reporting in Nunavut schools is called *Ilitaunnikuliriniq*. It is an approach to assessment that promotes and enhances learning for everyone – students, parents, educators, and communities. Setting learning goals for each student and determining whether they have been met is one of the major responsibilities of every classroom teacher. The *Ilitaunnikuliriniq* approach promotes the combination of a variety of classroom assessment strategies to improve programming and instruction, and identify appropriate placement for students within the learning continuum. It emphasizes that student achievement should be measured:

- over time
- for an intended purpose
- in ways that are fair and appropriate
- in ways that take into account the *Inuit Qauijimajatuqangit* perspectives of the people of Nunavut

Important for Teachers

*It's important that you read and understand this document.*

If you're pressed for time, you'll find that the absolutely essential pages are marked with this icon. You can read these pages first and save the rest for when you have a bit more time.

Make sure you understand...

SECTION	PAGE
Important implications for classroom assessment in Nunavut schools	19 and 27
The fundamental concepts/ beliefs for assessment	22 and 27
The perspective on continuous progress	22
Sivuniksamut Ilinniarniq: learning for the future	22
Assessment as a learning process that has three key purposes	30 and 42
Seven key principles which guide assessment in Nunavut schools	32 and 39

What does dynamic assessment mean to me as a teacher?

It means you won't be assessing with just quizzes and tests. Your toolkit of assessment techniques will have to be expanded to include other strategies: projects, portfolios, rubrics, self-assessment, etc.

Teachers should also take into account the context in which schooling takes place in Nunavut. Ours is a bilingual education system so assessment practices and tools should consider the first and second language context and abilities of students. It is also a system that promotes inclusive schooling as a culturally-appropriate educational philosophy.
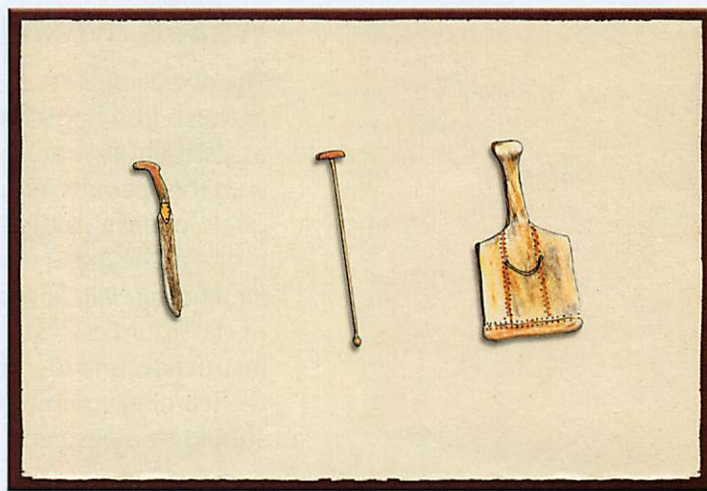
1. Assessment for learning (formative)

Most assessment is formative. Educators assess students continuously: observing; setting goals for learning; asking students to self-assess and peer-assess; listening; keeping anecdotal records; giving assignments; collecting student work in portfolios, journals and learning logs; observing demonstrations of learning; providing descriptive feedback; questioning; and conferencing.

How will it help you as a teacher? You will gain an accurate picture of your students as individuals. This will help you improve your teaching – you'll be able to plan to suit their current knowledge, skills and learning styles.

2. Assessment of learning (summative)

Teachers often do assessment at the end of units or modules or at the end of courses. Summative assessment most often looks like a test, oral reports, a skill demonstration, benchmark test, a cumulative project, or portfolio mark. This kind of assessment of learning is what is usually communicated to other teachers, parents, and stakeholders outside of the school. This assessment is often based on curricular standards and performance benchmarks.

How will it help you as a teacher? There are times when educators choose summative assessment in order to determine how well students have learned content or how close they are to achieving specific learning outcomes.

Illustration by Dan Page

3. Assessment about learning (diagnostic)

Assessment about learning is often referred to as "diagnostic." These assessments are often standardized types of assessment. It is used to determine student strengths and challenges, and attempts to answer the question 'why'. These assessments are often standardized types of assessment. The Department of Education is developing a handbook on inclusive education procedures and tools for the classroom. It includes strategies for teachers to use to start identifying learning challenges of students. Ask your student support teacher for more assistance.

How will it help you as a teacher? Diagnostic assessment is used to determine student strengths and challenges and attempts to answer the question 'why'. It is important that teachers research the purpose and design of all standardized tests. They are not developed for Inuit students and may be culturally and linguistically biased. These tests are often specialized and require training to administer and interpret. Student support staff will sometimes use formal diagnostic assessments with a student who requires an individual education plan.

When designing instruction for English language learners, opportunity to learn should be the guiding principle. It is neither equitable nor ethical to assess students' performance on the basis of knowledge or skills that they have had no opportunity to learn.

Elizabeth Coelho, 2004, p. 260
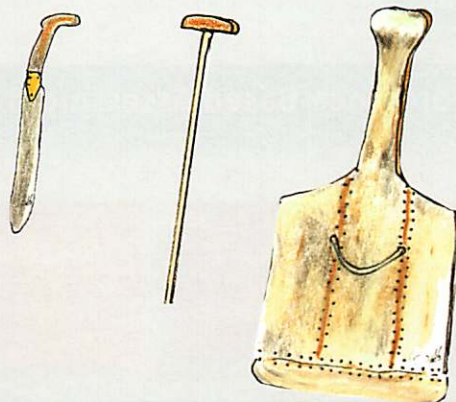
What are the names for these tools in your community?

Reflect

Think about your own experience with assessment. How has your own work been assessed? How have you assessed the work of students?
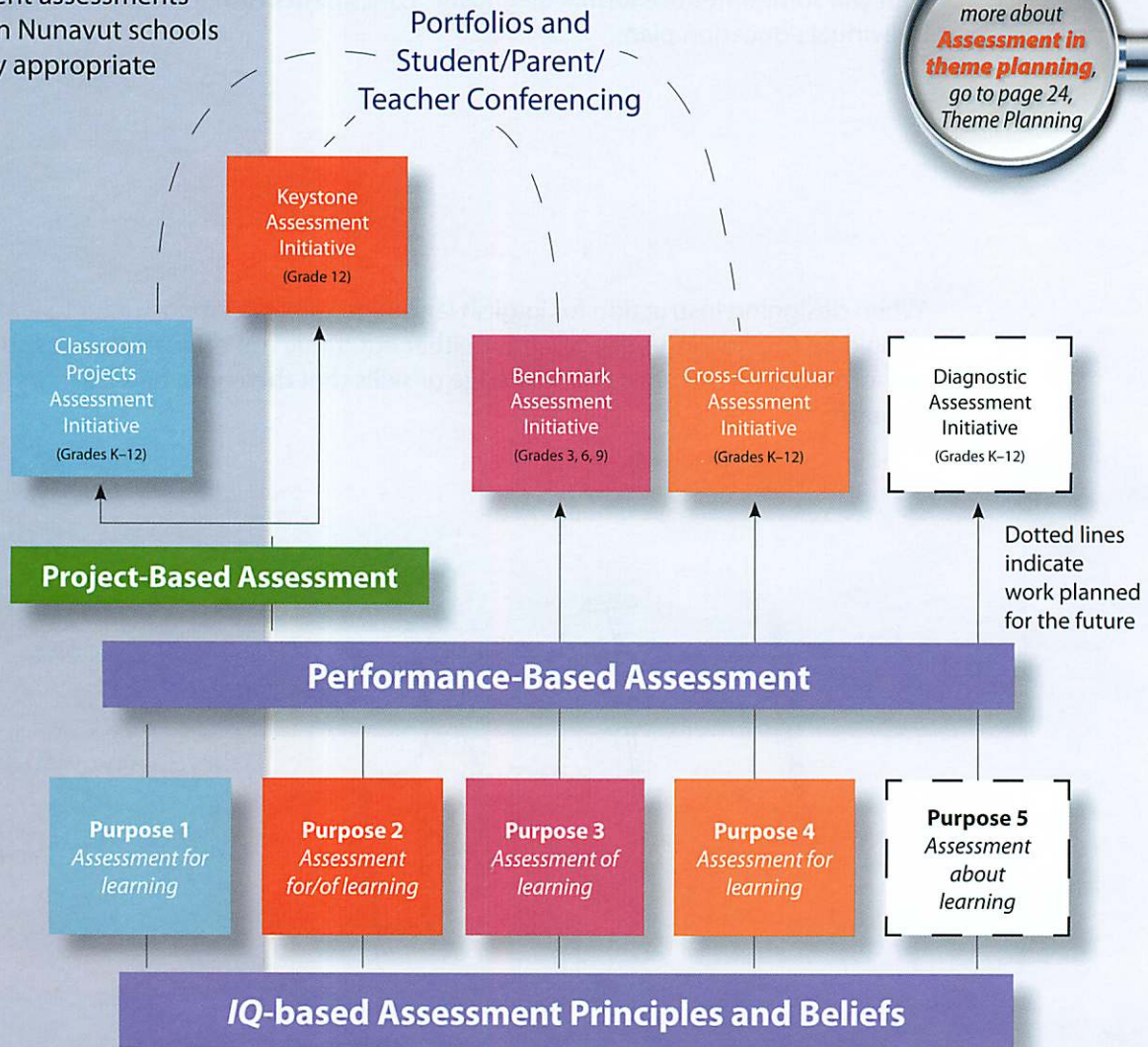
From the *Education Act*

REQUIRED

The Department of Education is required to:

- ensure that Nunavut students are regularly assessed on their achievement of Language Arts speaking and writing curriculum learning competencies
- ensure student assessments carried out in Nunavut schools are culturally appropriate

The Nunavut Comprehensive Assessment System is a territory-wide student assessment program being developed in response to new student assessment-related provisions found in Nunavut's *Education Act* and *Inuit Language Protection Act*. These new provisions require the Department of Education to take a more active role in student assessment, especially in Language Arts (Inuktitut, English, and French) and Mathematics assessment. The diagram below will give you an idea as to what all the pieces will be.

To learn more about **Assessment in theme planning**, go to page 24, Theme Planning

Portfolios and Student/Parent/Teacher Conferencing

Keystone Assessment Initiative (Grade 12)

Classroom Projects Assessment Initiative (Grades K–12)

Benchmark Assessment Initiative (Grades 3, 6, 9)

Cross-Curriculuar Assessment Initiative (Grades K–12)

Diagnostic Assessment Initiative (Grades K–12)

Project-Based Assessment

Dotted lines indicate work planned for the future

Performance-Based Assessment

| Purpose 1 *Assessment for learning* | Purpose 2 *Assessment for/of learning* | Purpose 3 *Assessment of learning* | Purpose 4 *Assessment for learning* | Purpose 5 *Assessment about learning* |

IQ-based Assessment Principles and Beliefs

Conceptual Framework for Nunavut's Comprehensive Student Assessment System

The vision: becoming "able human beings"

The primary aim of Nunavut's Comprehensive Student Assessment System is to support the vision of a Nunavut education system that enables students to become "able human beings" while respecting, protecting, and preserving Inuit societal beliefs, languages, and values (*Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*).

The vision of an "able human being" includes the belief that a person should have the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in whatever path they choose. Today, an "able human being" means one who is proficient in 21st century skills. These skills include: problem solving and effective communication; the ability to work both independently and collaboratively; the ability to be critical, creative and flexible thinkers; and to be technologically literate.

What can you expect?

Over time, the following supports and training will be developed and available for your use:

- ready-made assessment tools such as checklists, numeric rating scales, rubrics
- student exemplars to support the use of the above-mentioned assessment tools *and* help establish consistent, Nunavut-wide performance standards/expectations for all Nunavut students
- teacher "how-to" guides for each of the four assessment initiatives along with accompanying in-service programs
- training on the alignment of assessment to curriculum and instruction (i.e., ensuring that students are assessed on the curriculum taught and the instruction provided)
- the use of assessment of learning/metacognitive learning strategies (e.g., student peer-assessment and student self-assessment)
- the development, interpretation, and use of performance-based assessment tools and strategies to assess higher-order thinking/ 21st century skills
- methods and strategies for the effective communication of performance-based, student achievement information (e.g., student-teacher, student-parent-teacher, and student-peer conferencing; criterion-referenced reporting, portfolios)
- Nunavut-wide student report cards focused on diagnostic and descriptive feedback

Please see the Appendix to learn more about the assessment initiatives to come.

You will be able to use the rich assessment data you collect to inform and improve your professional practice and instruction.

Inuit Language Protection Act

Section 8(2)
"The Government of Nunavut shall, in a manner that is consistent with Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, develop and use measures of assessment, and maintain records concerning individual attainment and education program outcomes…

Reflect

What are your own beliefs about assessment?
How can we promote the development and assessment of 21st century skills?

The Learning Continuum Model

Students will "receive differentiated instruction according to their individual learning strengths, needs and developmental levels… Because the learning continuum model is responsive to, and therefore respectful of, the developmental levels and needs of individual students, it is consistent with *IQ*-based beliefs about student learning, development and progress." (Comprehensive Student Assessment System draft, 2011, p. 12). Nunavut schools use grades to organize students but it is important to keep in mind that students learn at their own pace.

Benchmarks or milestones

Stage 1
Stage 2
Stage 3
Stage 4
Stage 5
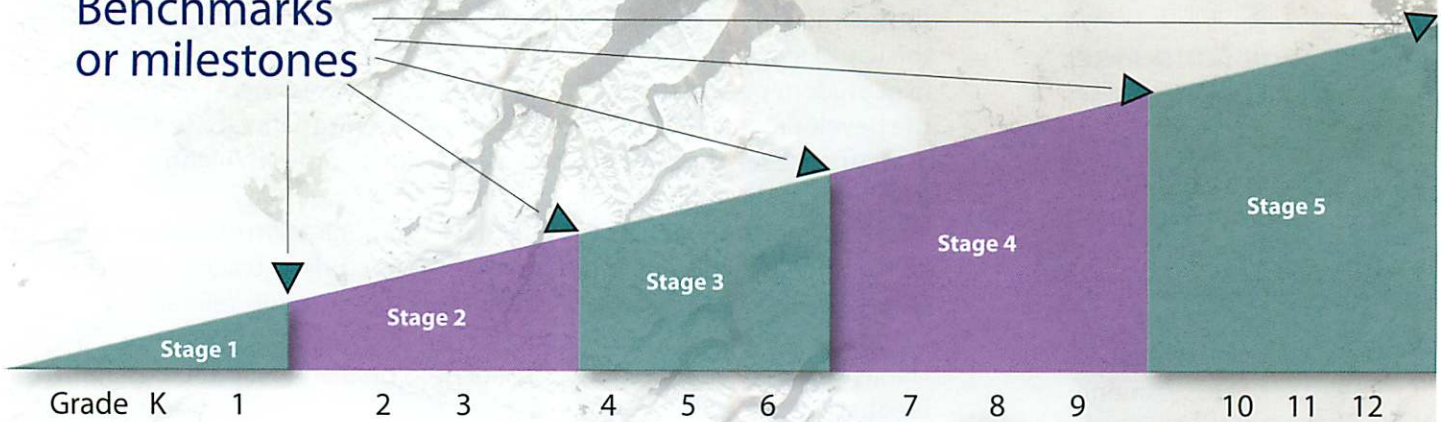
Grade K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Illustration by Dan Page

Stages of learning

In any learning situation, learners will be working at several different stages depending on the topic or project and their personal strengths and interests. However, these five transition points are like snapshots of the profile of the learner's path along the Learning Continuum.

1. **Qaujilisaaqtuq – becoming aware**
   Emergent Learner
   This stage characterizes students entering our school system in the first two years. They listen and observe, trying to make sense of what is going on. They become immersed in a new learning environment, coming to understand their interconnectedness. It is important to build on the fun aspect of learning and respect the learner's efforts and growth, establish strength in classroom relationships, and encourage their critical observation and listening skills.

2. **Tukisiliqtuq – beginning to understand**
   Transitional Learner
   This stage characterizes Nunavut students in lower elementary years. The student commits to the learning process and begins to become more actively engaged. Students begin to use new information and skills. Students may feel a lack of control over the learning situation. It is critical to reinforce and support students in order to increase their commitment to move beyond this stage. The stage is characterized by a great deal of practise and reinforcement. Learners emerge with a sense of empowerment and capacity.

3. **Tukisinaqsiliqtuq – beginning to make sense to others**
   Communicative Learner
   This stage characterizes students in upper elementary grades. Students develop some confidence with learning situations. They feel more confident and risk-taking is a key part of this stage. Students practise, manipulate and develop awareness of connections of their learning and other knowledge. Growing confidence, resourcefulness and reflection create a "can-do" stage of learning.

4. **Pinasugunnaqsijuq – is now able to experiment**
   Confident Learner
   This stage characterizes the late middle and junior secondary years, and is an exciting one for the learner. There is a high level of commitment and active learning. Students develop new coping strategies and make connections between contexts, gaining deeper understandings. They are very actively engaged and highly independent, relying on dialogue and collaborative relationships.

5. **Pijunnaqsijuq – is now capable**
   Proficient Learner
   This is the stage of mastery all Nunavut students should achieve in senior secondary years. Learners interpret information and are very engaged and aware of language diversity and cultural issues. They apply materials, information and skills to improve their environment and relationships. Students at this stage begin to think abstractly and critically.

Foundation for Inclusive Education in Nunavut Schools

SECTION AT A GLANCE

FOUNDATION FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
INUGLUGIJAITTUQ
**IN NUNAVUT SCHOOLS**
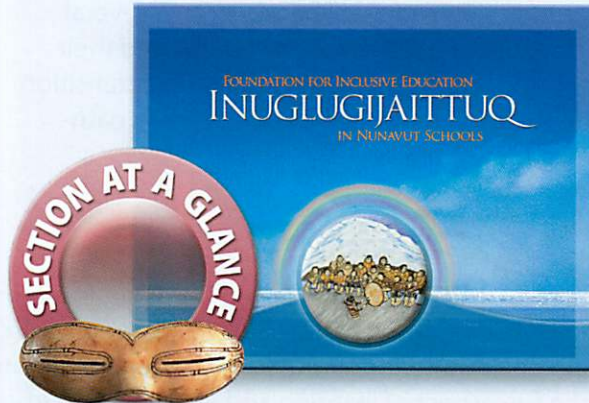
The book contains:

- *Inuglugijaittuq*: Inclusion in Nunavut Schools
- Inclusion and the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* Education Framework for Nunavut Curriculum
- *Ilippallianginnarniq:* Continuing Learning
- *Pivallianginnarniq:* Continuous Progress
- Implications for Nunavut schools
- Purpose of inclusive education
- *Inuglugijaittuq* principles
- The *Tumit* Model of Student Support
- Building the environment for inclusive education

Make sure you understand...

| SECTION	PAGE
Inuglugijaittuq principles	27–34
The *Tumit* Model of Student Support	36–38
The inclusive classroom	22
The inclusive program	23
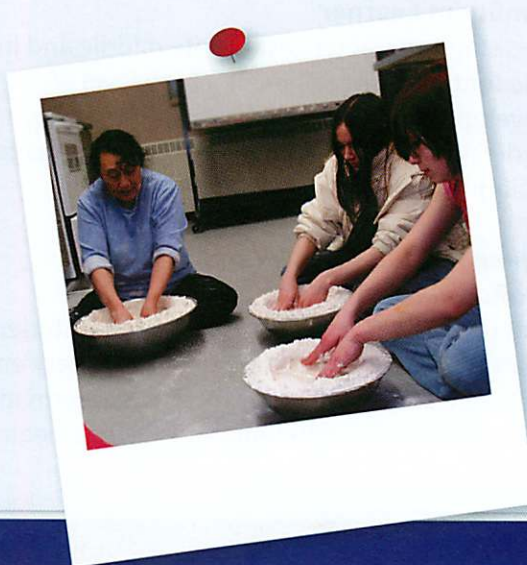
What is inclusive education?

Inclusive education is an educational practice which:

- ensures access for all children to educational programs offered in regular classroom settings with their peers
- builds on students' strengths and responds to students' needs
- promotes and facilitates the involvement of parents in their children's education
- provides appropriate programs and, where necessary, accommodation or behaviour plans or individual education programs and support services so all students, whatever their needs, are enabled to participate

## What does this mean to me as a teacher?

Inclusion builds on the Inuit belief that each individual is valuable and that each individual belongs and contributes to the group. All students at one time or another require support in their schooling.
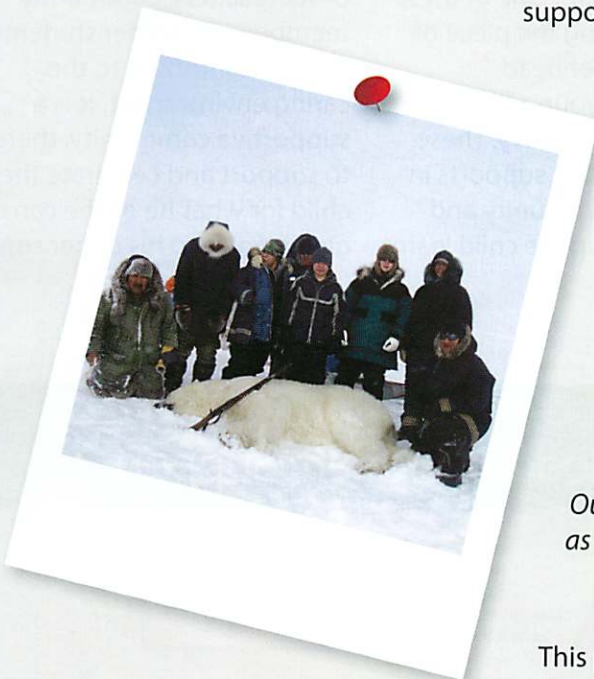
Our children are as different from each other as our fingers

This poster, with a drawing by Rhoda Karetak, was sent to all schools in 2008.

It's important that you read and understand this document. If you're pressed for time, you'll find that the absolutely essential pages are marked with this icon. You can read these pages first and save the rest for when you have a bit more time.
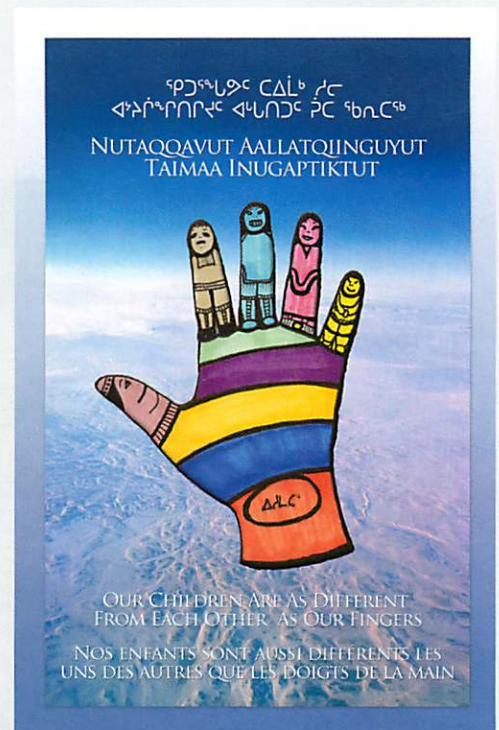
This drawing, by Elder Donald Uluadluak, appears on page 20 of the book and is a metaphor for inclusion in Nunavut schools.
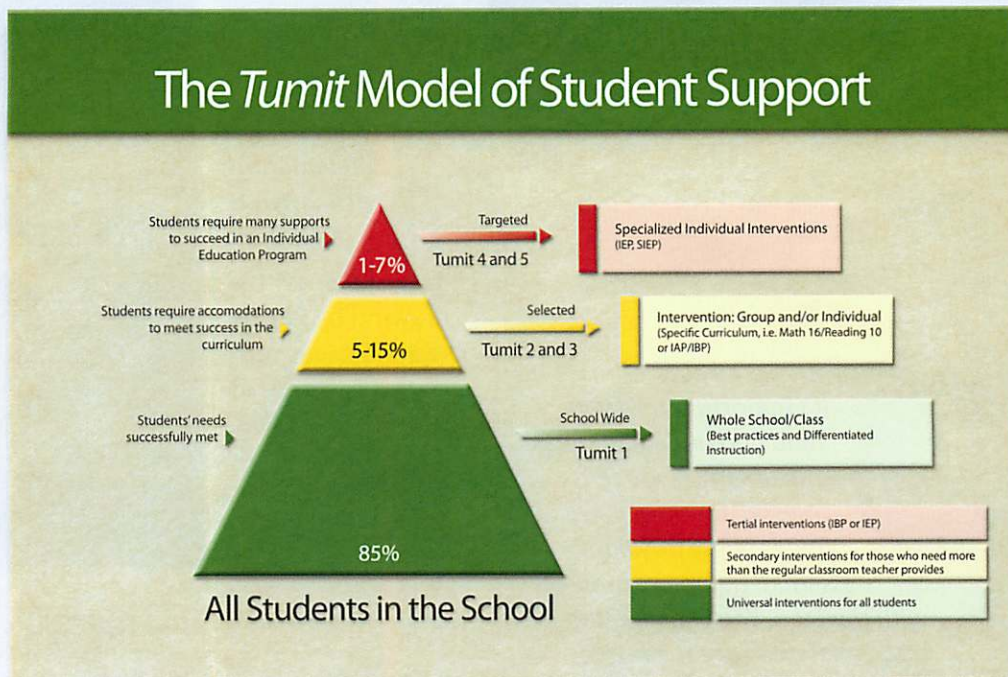
Here is the explanation for the drawing

Elders in Nunavut use the image of a drum dance to portray the young learner and the supports required to learn new skills. In a drum dance (*qaggi*), the dancer (*mumiqtuq*) represents the child requiring support.

The people sitting in the row next to the dancer are the singers (*tusariat*). One of these singers, wearing the piece of fur on his or her head, supports the young dancer if the drum is too heavy. These singers represent supports in the school, community and family that help the child learn.

They also represent people, resources, equipment, and itinerant specialists or Health and Social Services personnel. The supports change, responding to the changing needs of the child. Behind the *tusariat* are the men (*qaggipqajut*) who observe the dancer. They represent other children in the classroom, other teachers, community members, and older students who all contribute to the caring environment. It is a supportive community, there to support and celebrate the child for what he or she can do, giving voice to his or her song.

The *Tumit* model provides support for student learning in Nunavut schools. This model is based on the premise that all students may require some level of support for learning at some time in their educational career. It consists of five levels of support. Learn more about the levels of support in the Positive Classroom Environment section.

The *Tumit* Model of Student Support

Students require many supports to succeed in an Individual Education Program — **1-7%** — Targeted — Tumit 4 and 5 → Specialized Individual Interventions (IEP, SIEP)

Students require accomodations to meet success in the curriculum — **5-15%** — Selected — Tumit 2 and 3 → Intervention: Group and/or Individual (Specific Curriculum, i.e. Math 16/Reading 10 or IAP/IBP)

Students' needs successfully met — **85%** — School Wide — Tumit 1 → Whole School/Class (Best practices and Differentiated Instruction)

All Students in the School

- Tertial interventions (IBP or IEP)
- Secondary interventions for those who need more than the regular classroom teacher provides
- Universal interventions for all students

We believe in continuous progress in Nunavut. Continuous progress recognizes that every person learns at a different rate and every person has a different learning style.

Continuous learning is...	Continuous learning is not...
not based on grade level	grade level or age dependent
a life-long continuum	social promotion or retention
learner-centred	repeating same task
based on intrinsic motivation	pass or fail
based on authentic assessment	based on standardized tests
recognition that all children can learn	thinking the child will never learn
challenging, inclusive and individualized	exclusive – a cookie cutter approach
IQ relevant and culturally based	curriculum-dependent
collaboration with parents, Elders	
supported by professional development	
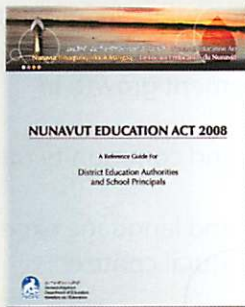
Identification of needs

43. (1) Teachers shall identify those students who are entitled to adjustments or supports under subsection 41(1).

(2) If a teacher is of the opinion that a student is entitled to adjustments or support under subsection 41(1), the teacher shall provide

    (a) the adjustments, unless they are significant; and

    (b) the support, if the teacher can reasonably provide it.

(3) Without restricting the duty of a teacher under subsection (2), a teacher shall request that the school team hold a review under subsection (5) if he or she is of the opinion that a student is entitled under subsection 41(1)

    (a) to adjustments and those adjustments are significant; or

    (b) to support and the support is beyond what the teacher can reasonably provide.

NUNAVUT EDUCATION ACT 2008

A Reference Guide For
District Education Authorities
and School Principals

REQUIRED

Reflect

The student support teacher can support you in the planning and delivery of instruction for students who need accommodation.

Still to come

Other Foundation documents

Atausiunngittumut Uqausirmut: Foundation for Languages of Instruction in Nunavut Schools

This document outlines the philosophy and principles of language instruction that form the foundation for teaching and learning in Nunavut schools, as well as the supports required to ensure Inuit language remains vital in communities, and students graduate bilingually in an Inuit language, and English or French. The Preface states: "Developing and implementing an *IQ* approach to language of instruction means changing the dynamics of teaching and learning in Nunavut schools and the organizational structure of how schooling takes place."

What this means for you as a K–6 teacher is that you will:

- provide rich language and literacy programs at all stages of learning
- teach language across all strands of the curriculum in integrated themes
- regularly assess student language development growth in two languages
- develop strong partnerships with parents and community members as students' first language teachers, and
- offer strong cultural programs with Elders and language experts that promote use of Inuit language in its natural context

Program organization for Nunavut schools

Each of the five Foundation documents describes the philosophy and components of a specific aspect of the framework for schooling in Nunavut based on *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and best practices of western education. This document integrates and summarizes *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* philosophy, principles and information from the other Foundation documents into coherent and clear directions for school and classroom organization. It defines the vision and paints a picture of schooling in Nunavut at different age levels. It outlines how each major partner contributes to achieving those visions. It explains how all of the components of schooling work together to help create the "able human being" who graduates from Nunavut schools with:

- dignity – awareness of own strengths and confidence to use them
- options – strong skills and ideas for how to further develop interests
- direction – understanding of how he/she can use strengths to serve family and community in their lives

Inuit are seeking to reclaim their cultural capital in order to ensure that children in Nunavut can look forward to success in their future. The introduction of an educational system to support success must be representative of the Inuit world view, and requires that educators in the system have an understanding of both that world view and the impact of the Inuit world view on the way Inuit children learn best.

*Inunnguiniq (draft)*

Inunnguiniq: Critical Pedagogy for Nunavut Educators

A combination of current best western knowledge and practice and the *IQ* approach is changing learning and teaching in Nunavut schools. This Foundation document will help you to gain a deep understanding of this change.

Inunnguiniq is the process used by Inuit to socialize, educate and prepare a child for life. Changes implied in this approach strive to make the teaching/learning relationship more like the learning environment children find in their homes and community, and is grounded in the principle that learning is based on the strength and affirmation of relationships.

It is the responsibility of every educator in Nunavut to become familiar with the *Inunnguiniq* critical pedagogy philosophy and to incorporate the purpose and these approaches to critical pedagogy into practice in every classroom and teaching and learning situation in Nunavut schools.

Underlying the *Inunnguiniq* critical pedagogy approach is the understanding that our common goal is to create "an able human being, who can act with wisdom" of every student so that she/he is able to fully contribute to working for the common good.
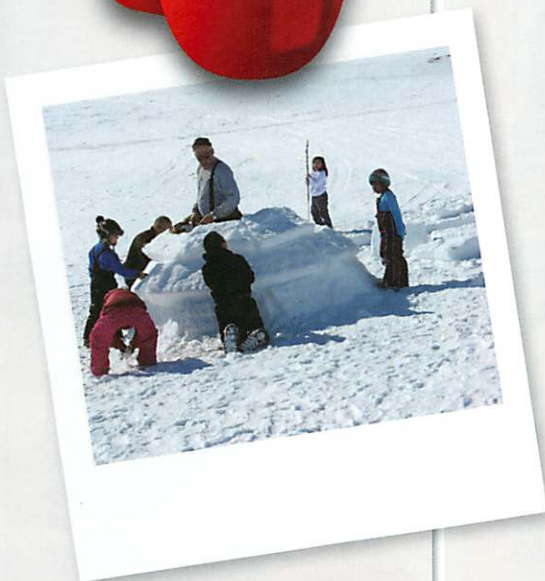
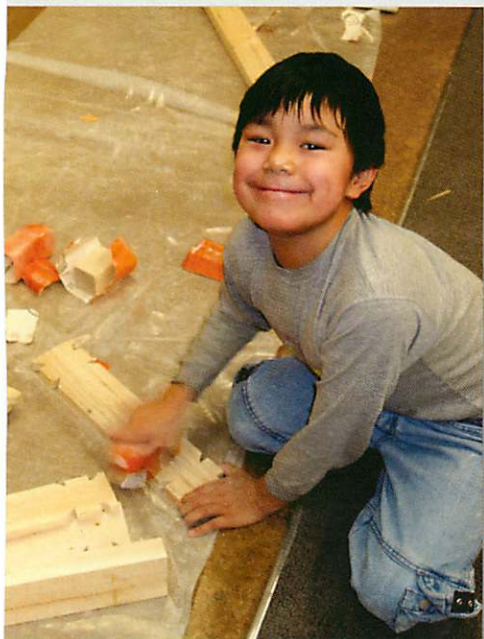This document is in the draft stage at the time of writing of this guide.

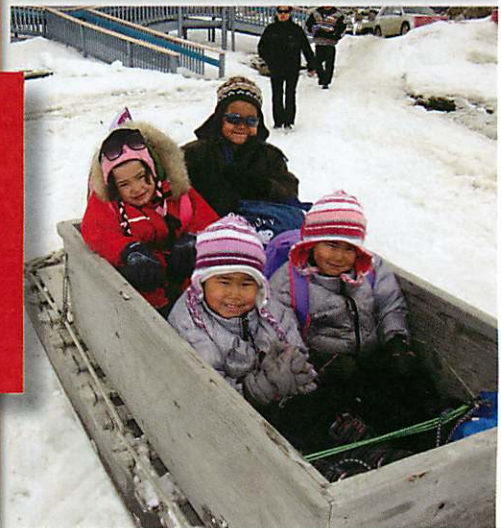Classroom activity centres have many traditional Inuit items.

An *IQ* school:

- has its foundation for all teaching and learning in the Inuit culture, knowledge, history, values, traditions, heritage and language
- sets behavioural expectations and establishes strategies based on Inuit values

Sivuniksamut Ilinniarniq

How the Foundation documents, principles, values, and strands look in the school

Learning in different environments is just as important as the learning that takes place in the classroom. Students will learn on the land and in the community, and also from family members, Elders, and others in the community. There is easy access to traditional tools, shelters and equipment.

Every student has access to an appropriate education program in an inclusive age-appropriate environment.

The school staff reflects the ethnicity of the community.

Resource people from the community, such as hunters or craftsmen, come to the school to share their knowledge and skills.

In an *IQ* school:

- student attendance rates are high
- graduation rates are high
- graduates are well prepared for direct entry into the work force or apprenticeship programs, and post-secondary education paths

Description of an *IQ* school, contributed by Jacqui Bishop and Tracey MacMillan