

Title: <p style="text-align: center;">There's More Than One Way to Skin a Cat</p>	
Developed by: Jane Blaile 2008 Wells Fargo Teacher on the Trail	
Discipline/Subject: critical thinking	
Topic: musher gear	
Grade Level: 4-8	
Resources/References/materials Teacher Needs: gear list and pictures of or actual pieces of gear	
Lesson Summary: The students will become familiar with required and optional Iditarod sled and musher gear. Then, given one specific item, they will explain alternative/resourceful uses for each piece.	
Standards Addressed: national standard: NL-ENG.K-12.5 Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes. Alaska state standard: W2.1.1 [5] The student writes about a topic by writing more than one paragraph stating and maintaining a focused idea and including details that support the main idea of each paragraph. Arizona state standard: W05S3C1-01 write a narrative based on imagined or real events	
Learning Objectives: The students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ assess the usefulness of a piece of gear (evaluation) ○ propose at least 10 alternative uses for the piece of gear (synthesis) ○ defend the alternative use ideas (evaluation) ○ write a narrative based on an imaginary situation (application) 	Method of Assessment for Learning: judgment of the logic behind the suggested use, the creativity of the idea, and the defense of the alternative as students discuss their lists
Procedural Activities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Handout a gear list, pictures of gear, or actual gear items to students. 2. Search for gear list items on the Internet and show them on an interactive white board. Make sure the students know what each piece is and does. 3. Have students work in small cooperative groups to brainstorm a list of alternative uses for a randomly assigned piece of gear in a given amount of time. 4. Have each group share their ideas. Let other students challenge their suggestions and let the presenting group defend or demonstrate their meaning. Class may vote on acceptability of the idea or the teacher may be the sole judge. 5. A possible writing connection: have each student do an expressive paragraph or essay telling about a musher in a hard situation using his/her gear resourcefully for example, putting used booties on his/her fingers to help prevent frostbite. 	
Materials Students Need: List of, pictures of or examples of Iditarod sled gear	
Technology Used to Enhance Learning: Internet sites	
Other Information: This is a gifted education strategy designed to challenge students to analyze and evaluate as well as think differently about common objects. Any student can be successful with just one suggestion.	

Modifications for Special Learners/Enrichment Opportunities:

For reinforcement, show as many actual pieces of gear as possible and let students handle them. An extension would be to have students do a survey of Iditarod mushers about which piece of gear they think is most important.