

Uswitusqaq's Dream
A Review by Chris Provost

'Dream' and 'adventure,' words that stand out on the cover of *Uswitusqaq's Dream: An Alaskan Tale of Adventure* by Pattie Leighton. This coming of age book tests the courage of our young protagonists throughout their journey as they seek out the *arhnat* - sea otters.

Tanqiq, the eldest brother never doubts the journey he is being sent on by Uswitusqaq, the elder of his village. However, Kuuku, the youngest, has little faith in Uswitusqaq's dream. Kuuku and Tanqiq, through their actions and thoughts, accurately describe the family pecking order found in Alutiiq culture. The role of Elders, and their importance to the survival of a culture, is a common theme eloquently woven throughout our youth's adventure. Though an imaginary tale, the geography, plants and animals described in this story are accurate. Be prepared to go on a historical roller-coaster ride.

Furthermore, the final two chapters vividly portray the transformation of these two brothers, and their relationship to each other. The challenges encountered by Tanqiq and Kuuku allow the development of useful skills, though at times they are put into a position of harm. They "arise" to the occasion through a position of inner strength. Intermediate students will find their own sense of adventure through the eyes of our young storytellers. Be prepared, be surprised, be mesmerized.

The author, a former primary teacher, finds a practical and useful way to expose the reader to another culture's language. Ms. Leighton introduces Alutiiq vocabulary words at the beginning of each chapter. Each Alutiiq word is carefully written with context clues. This method enables our young reader to progress fluently through the text. Assistance with the Alutiiq language came from April Laktonen Councillor, Ph.D. and Elders from the Alutiiq Museum Language Club. The Alutiiq language, a difficult language to speak, is slowly being resurrected by the efforts of the Alutiiq Museum staff located in Kodiak, Alaska.