

Trail Tails

What to look forward to Along the Iditarod Trail!

News 'Before' the Trail

February 2007

Weather Watch

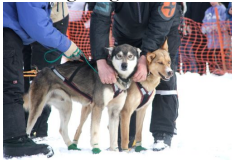
Temperature reports from NOAA. (Highs/lows)

Anchorage 10°/8°
 Nome 0°/-11°
 Vero Beach 80°/72°

See <http://weather.noaa.gov/index.html>

Iditarod Image

Image from last year - Sunday, March 5th. Iditarod 2006 Restart - Two lead dogs get a final equipment check waiting to go.



Alaskan Passport

Dog mushing became the official state sport in 1973, shortly after the Iditarod Trail sled dog race began!

Mental Math

The Northern Route is approximately 1,112 miles and the Southern Route is approximately 1,131 miles. What is the difference between the two routes?

Iditarod Fact



There are 2,200 miles of winter trails associated with the National Historic Iditarod Trail which begins in Seward.

Quote of the Day

"I do not know the word 'quit.' Either I never did, or I have abolished it."
 Susan Butcher



My Iditarod Journey

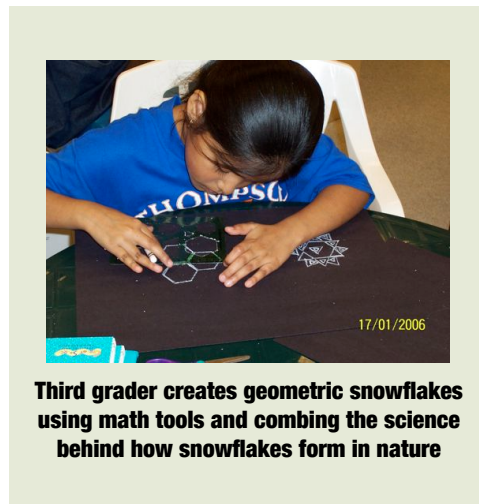
As I prepare for my trip to Alaska, I reflect back to where my journey began.

Teaching About Our Environment

In order to understand where/how we fit into our world, comes only as we compare and contrast our surroundings to other environments making connections. An environment goes beyond our ecosystem and encompasses the culture, the history, the animals & fauna, and the geography of an area. When learning about our community or state, it is important to give another perspective. When studying the subtropical physical environment of Florida and human interactions of that area, it is best practice to compare and contrast another environment. The arctic provides a good contrast, and surprisingly a great way to compare these two diversely unique areas of our world.

Teaching Using the Iditarod

I used the Iditarod as a hook to teach about climatic



Third grader creates geometric snowflakes using math tools and combing the science behind how snowflakes form in nature

regions. We followed the race and paid extra attention to the weather. Students investigated snow crystals and created geometric snowflakes. They used beanie babies to compare and contrast animals of Alaska and Florida. We read about the native culture and the history of each state, then were able to evaluate the relationship of each.

Of course there were the dogs of the Iditarod. Students studied the Alaskan husky, created rice puppies, and took care of their new additions by keep-

ing the pups by their side for two weeks. They gained an understanding what mushers must do in living with their dogs - understanding the personalities and various characteristics of their dogs.

Where I Am Today

After being named the 2007 Wells Fargo Teacher on the Trail, I have made many school visits teaching students about the Iditarod - the history, the geography, the dogs. I have learned a lot from my travels to Alaska and from continuing to read about the race. I have spoken to many mushers, dog handlers, and veterinarians, but I know that my journey along the trail will be the ultimate learning experience.

My goal is to share what I see along the trail helping children and teachers make connections. I plan to report stories that develop out on the trail, point out interesting academic topics that I come across, and to provide trail & Alaskan facts.

Happy Trail Tails!

