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# Introduction

## Module 1 - Akshayuk Pass Expedition

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Akshayuk Pass – looking north from Pangnirtung Fjord



Welcome to the i2P Akshayuk Pass Expedition!

The Akshayuk Pass is a dramatic mountain pass of soaring vistas and sheer cliffs that serves as an outlet for glaciers that spill into it from the mountain valleys above. Over a ten-day period in early September 2009, a team of i2P adventurers will be following the Akshayuk Pass across Baffin Island's Cumberland Peninsula. The expedition will start in the remote Inuit community of Qikiqtarjuaq and finish in Pangnirtung on the southern coast of the Cumberland Peninsula.

The purpose of this introduction is to outline how the Akshayuk Pass Expedition education resource functions. The resource is a web-based program that links the day-to-day activities of the expedition to a set education program. The education resource is not meant to reflect a particular curriculum, but is a broad based discourse that uses the fabric of the expedition as the platform to explore fascinating worlds of history, science and

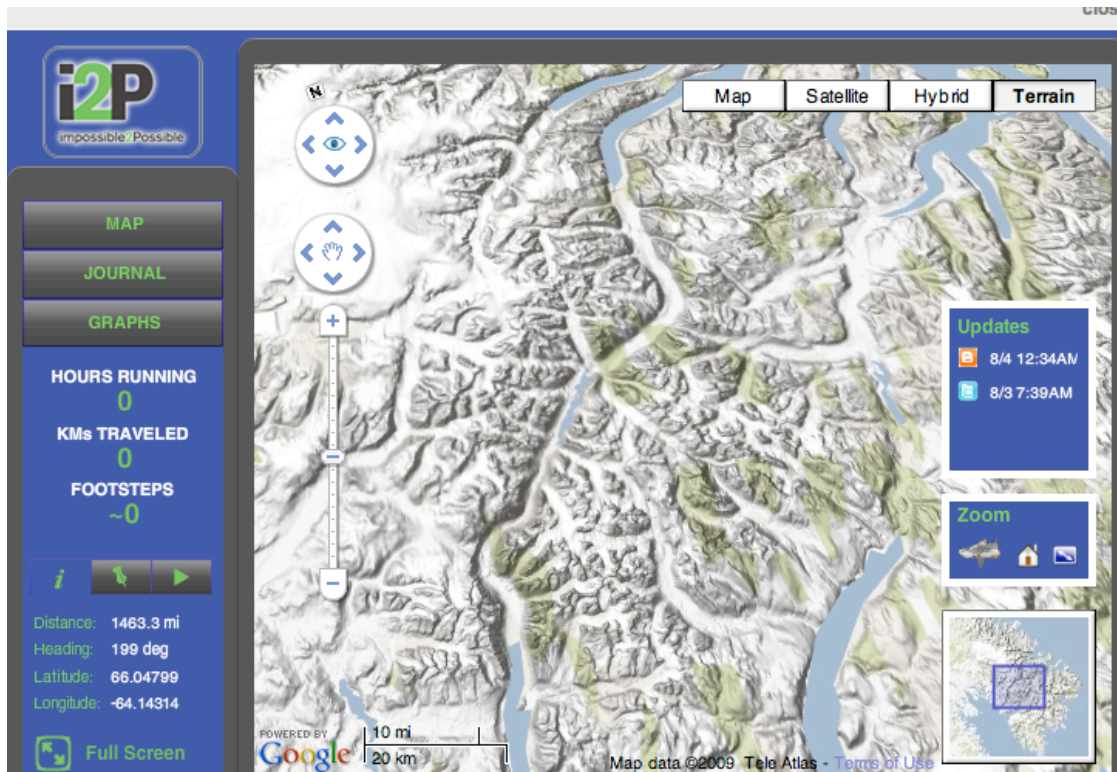


Figure 1: The interactive map that will be used to track the i2P Akshayuk Pass Expedition. The Pass is seen in the center of the map, a curved pass running north /south. A satellite system will instantly track the course of the expedition on this map and register a variety of statistics (image courtesy of Google Earth).

culture. Teachers can employ the resource as an adjunct to their set curriculum or to engage their students by highlighting specific issues currently affecting the Arctic. The education resource has the following elements:

#### VIRTUAL TOUR OF THE AKSHAYUK PASS

There is a virtual three-dimensional tour of the Akshayuk Pass on the expedition website. This is a stunning introduction to the expedition route, well worth the ride.

#### DAILY EDUCATION MODULES

Every day of the Expedition an education module will be posted on the i2P website. There are eleven modules (excluding the introduction) that set out to address the following questions:


1. How does exercise make you smarter?
2. How was the Akshayuk Pass formed?
3. Where did the Inuit people come from?
4. How did the Inuit find enough to eat in the harsh environment of the Arctic?
5. Was hunger as common a problem in the Arctic, as it is today in a world short of food?
6. Why did European explorers first travel to the Arctic, and how did their arrival affect the Inuit people?
7. How is global warming affecting the polar bear?
8. Why do birds, butterflies and bats have much better senses of direction than human beings?
9. How has the cold war and modern politics affected the Inuit people of the Arctic?
10. What is the life cycle of the Arctic Char, and how important is the sustainability of fish stocks to the people of the Arctic?
11. How is climate change affecting the north and how can we all take action to mitigate climate change?

Education modules can be read during the course of the expedition, used as an adjunct to set class curriculum, or serve as a stimulus for future class discussions.


#### INTERACTIVE QUESTION AND ANSWER PROGRAM

During the Expedition students and teachers can send in written questions to the expedition team. These questions will be answered and posted as audio responses on the website. Schools must be registered for the expedition in order to send in questions, and will be provided the link for the web based question generator. There is a limit to the number of questions that the team can answer each day, but they will do their best to answer as many as they can.


#### VIDEO LINKS EMBEDDED IN THE MODULES

There are video and photo links embedded in the modules. These links appear in orange boxes. 


#### PROFILES OF PEOPLE OF INTEREST

Certain modules highlight persons of interest pertinent to the module topic. These features appear in the green boxes. 

#### SCHOOL EXERCISES

There are education exercises posted in modules related to the topic, aimed at stimulating further thought on the topic at hand. These appear in the red boxes 

#### FACTS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Every module has features of special interest related to the topic at hand. These are found in the blue 'Did You Know' boxes. 

#### SATELLITE TRACKING OF YOUTH EXPEDITION MEMBERS

The progress of the youth expedition members will be followed on-line by unique satellite trackers. Clicking on their tracking icon will allow opening of their daily blog.

#### TEACHERS & STUDENTS INTERACTIVE FORUM

On the i2P facebook page (which is linked to the website education page) there is an interactive teachers and students forum. Just follow the link on the Expedition page. This will permit an exchange of ideas and observations on the part of those following the expedition.

#### THE TEAM

The Akshayuk Pass Expedition Team, led by i2P founder Ray Zahab, will include five youth selected from across North America who will be provided an opportunity to experience first-hand world-class exploration. The five youth team members are:

- Kathleen Merritt of Rankin Inlet, Nunavut
- Amanda Cobbs-Russell of Murietta California
- Tamara Banks of Lombardy, Ontario
- Thomsen D'Hont of Yellowknife, NWT
- Sandi Nypaver of Parma Heights Ohio

The remaining team members are Marshall Ulrich, Kevin Lin, Jen Segger, Kevin Vallely, Nansen Weber, Kathy Adams, Bob Cox and Ewan Affleck.

So please join us for this remarkable expedition through the Akshayuk Pass, and learn about the remarkable history of the land, the people and animals that inhabit it, and the modern issues that are impacting the fragile Arctic.

Please see a beautiful photo montage of the Akshayuk Pass that follows the same route as the i2P expedition:

<http://www.lewyckyj.com/Nestor%20Rostyslaw%20Lewyckyj/Baffin%20Island%202007.htm>



Figure 2: Mount Thor overlooking the Akshayuk Pass (photo: Nestor Lewyckyj).