

*Island of the Blue Dolphins*, Chapter 21  
**The Cormorant Skirt**

**Grade Level**

Upper Elementary: Third Grade through Fifth Grade

**Subject**

Literacy and Language Arts, Social Studies

**Common Core Standards**

4.SL.1, 4.RL.1

**Background Information**

The cormorant skirt plays an important role in Karana's life, especially when she meets Tutok in chapter 21. The goal of this activity is to encourage students to think critically about the use of personal ornamentation in culture and the role it plays in human relationships. It is also designed to help students identify key details and make inferences.

It says, I say, and so: This is a graphic organizer-based strategy designed to help students make inferences, connect the text to their prior knowledge, and identify important textual details.

**Materials**

- Copy of activity sheet for each student (provided)
- Class set of *Island of the Blue Dolphins*

**Procedure**

1. Give each student a copy of the activity sheet.
2. Model the strategy using the example provided.
3. Assign students to work in pairs to complete the activity sheet.
4. Discuss student findings as a class.
5. To shorten this activity: Divide students into groups and assign each group just one question to answer.
6. To lengthen this activity: Have students work alone first. Then, pair them up to share their answers.

**Enrichment Activities**

1. Group brainstorm: What types of ornamentation do you wear? Why do you wear them?
2. Show students images of a cormorant skirt or other article of clothing made of bird feathers.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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<b>Question</b>	<b>It Says</b>	<b>I Say</b>	<b>And So</b>
<i>Read the question carefully.</i>	<i>Find quotes from the text that will help you answer the question. You may paraphrase or use direct quotes. Be sure to include the page number.*</i>	<i>Think about what you already know based your reading and experiences.</i>	<i>Combine the quotes from the text with what you already know to answer the question.</i>
Why did Karana consider leaving her cave when the Aleuts set up camp on the mesa?	The Aleut camp was “less than a half league from my cave” (page number).  Karana was afraid the Aleut girl would find her cave because lots of different types of food grew in the ravine near her cave (page number).	Karana hates and fears the Aleuts because they killed her father and most of her people.  The Aleuts have guns.  A half a league is about 1½ miles.	Karana considers leaving her cave because she is afraid the Aleuts will find her. Their camp is near her cave, and the girl might find her cave when she is looking for food.
Why did Karana choose male cormorant feathers to make her skirt?			



<p>How does Karana feel about the cormorant feather skirt?</p>			
<p>In what way does the cormorant skirt help the Aleut girl and Karana become friends?</p>			

\* No page numbers have been included in the example because pagination varies among editions.