The Inuit: Economy and Government

Nunavut
The Inuit are indigenous people who have learned to survive in the tundra of northern Canada and other Arctic regions. About half of Canada’s Inuit people live in Nunavut, a territory that includes most of Canada’s Arctic islands. Most of Nunavut’s people live in small coastal towns that are far apart from each other. Nunavut’s people elect an assembly of 19 people who choose a government leader and ministers.

Life on the Tundra Long Ago
For more than 4,000 years, the Inuit have relied on the Arctic’s resources to live. They made tents or built igloos, depending on the season. The Inuit hunted animals such as caribou and sea mammals for food. They used animal bones to make harpoons and fishhooks.

Inuit Society
The Inuit lived in extended families, with each member contributing to the work. Hunting, cooking, and making warm, waterproof clothing were important jobs. Children learned survival skills and about the past from elders.

A New Economy
In the past, the Inuit did not use money. They hunted, gathered, or made everything they used. Today, many Inuit have jobs to earn money to pay for goods and services such as electricity and Internet access. Many still live in remote areas but use modern technologies such as electric heaters and snowmobiles.