

MUSH ON!

Monthly Newsletter of the Iditarod Education Department

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And the Winner Is . . .

By Linda Fenton

As teachers using Iditarod in the classroom, we are all fully aware that Jessie Holmes won the 2025 Iditarod Sled Dog Race with 10 dogs in harness. This year's race, being the second longest in Iditarod history (in 1989 it was 1,168 miles) included many lead changes. At any given time, Paige Drobny, Matt Hall, or any other team could have taken the lead. 3 women and 91 dogs finished in the top 10. Congratulations Jessie and all the mushers who participated in the 2025 race!





April Teaching Ideas

by Heidi Sloan

Social Studies

In social studies, my students are currently learning about the finding of gold causing a rush of people moving, trying to capitalize on economic opportunity. This lesson by Teacher on the Trail, Juli Westrieck, includes a book suggestion and videos on this interesting topic. The gold rush era ties beautifully into our theme for the Iditarod EDU this year: the dog teams that often carried mail and supplies to the miners rose to the emergency in getting the serum to Nome in 1925.

[Gold Rush Lesson](#)

Character Education

Since Iditarod 2025 recently ended with Ebbe Pedersen winning the Red Lantern Award, this is a strong lesson to work through with students, developing perseverance to finish out the school year strong! It provides great ideas to incorporate the Red Lantern Award into your class discussions and can incorporate data analysis and graphing for math.

[Red Lantern Award](#)

STEM

This lesson in STEM by Teacher on the Trail, Kate Newmyer, trying to create insulation to keep water from freezing on the Iditarod Trail, is sure to add excitement as well as scientific method review for your students.

[Build The Best Insulated Water Bottle](#)

Let's Compare

The top picture is the original Burled Arch, then comes the Burled Arch introduced in 1999. Finally our new Burled Arch. Read more about the history of this famous finish line here:

[Burled Arch](#)



If you were not able to attend our Winter Conference in Anchorage this year, do not worry!

The Iditarod education department is teaming up with the Idaho Sled Dog Challenge to bring you another conference option this summer. The ISDC race is a qualifying race for Iditarod, and a great place to further your own education about dog mushing. Come see their headquarters, and visit a checkpoint on our field trip day. Hear from past Iditarod Teachers on the Trail, race veterinarians, mushers, and many others. Bring back new and innovative lesson ideas to share with your colleagues and students.

Where: McCall, Idaho

When: June 24-26th

Cost: \$100

There is a block of rooms reserved for the nights of the 23rd, 24th and 25th at local hotels as well. Contact Jim Deprez (email below) for more information.

MORE INFORMATION and registration link COMING SOON!!!

We are proud to be partnering with the ISDC for this upcoming conference, and look forward to seeing many of you there! If you have any questions, please contact Jim Deprez, Co-Director of the Iditarod Education Department, at jim.deprez@iditarod.com



Paws and Get Ready!

Check out some of the exciting plans for the month of April from Maggie Hamilton, 2025 Teacher on the Trail™.

[Paws and Get Ready!](#)



A Classroom Without Walls: In the lesson this month, students will use finish times from this year's race to practice conversions, ordering, and comparisons. This math lesson is great review for the end of the school year!

More to Discover: Find out more about some of the unique checkpoints along the 2025 Fairbanks route, volunteering as a cook at one of the hubs along the trail, and how mushers are recovering from the race this month. Plus you can learn more about how I am using the race in my school and classroom!



It is impossible to believe that another year has rolled around, and the 2025 Iditarod Sled Dog Race is now completed. What a race it was, and congratulations to all who entered and volunteered to help make it a success!

As I watched the Red Lantern winner cross the finish line, I wondered just how many mushers have been involved with the Iditarod Sled Dog Race from its first race in 1973 through the current year. Many times as educators, we focus on mathematical concepts related to such things as the length of the race, time it takes to run the race, number of dogs, number of booties and various costs. However, what about the number of mushers who have actually started the race each year?

This could be an exciting adventure for your students to research, collect the data and conduct various mathematical functions using that data. Those of you who teach middle school, high school, or even the advanced technological students, you might consider having students use a spreadsheet to log information and calculate various mathematical concepts. Students can work individually, in small groups, or as a whole class with more direction from the teacher, especially for younger grades.

Students will need the following data for each year from 1973-2025: Number of total mushers starting the race (including finishers and scratches/withdrawals), the number that actually finished the race and the number that scratched/withdrew once the race had started. The source of your data can be found at [Iditarod Race Archives](#).

Suggested Mathematical Functions to Use with the Data

Collecting and Investigating Data

- *What is the total number of mushers from 1973-2025 who were in the race, including any who scratched or withdrew once the race started?
- *How many of those mushers actually finished the race per year?
- *How many of those mushers scratched or withdrew after starting the race per year?
- *What year had the highest number of total mushers? Highest number of finishers? Highest number of scratches/withdrawals?
- *What year had the lowest number of total mushers? Lowest number of finishers? Lowest number of scratches/withdrawals?

Comparing the Decades

- *Which decade had the most number of total mushers? Most number of finishers? Most number of scratches/withdrawals?
- *Which decade had the least number of total mushers? Least number of finishers? Least number of scratches/withdrawals?

Mean, Median, Mode

- *What was the mean (average number), median (middle value) and mode (number occurring most often) for the total number of mushers from 1973-2025?
- *What was the mean (average number), median (middle value) and mode (number occurring most often) for the number of finishers from 1973-2025?
- *What was the mean (average number), median (middle value) and mode (number occurring most often) for the number of scratches/withdrawals from 1973-2025?

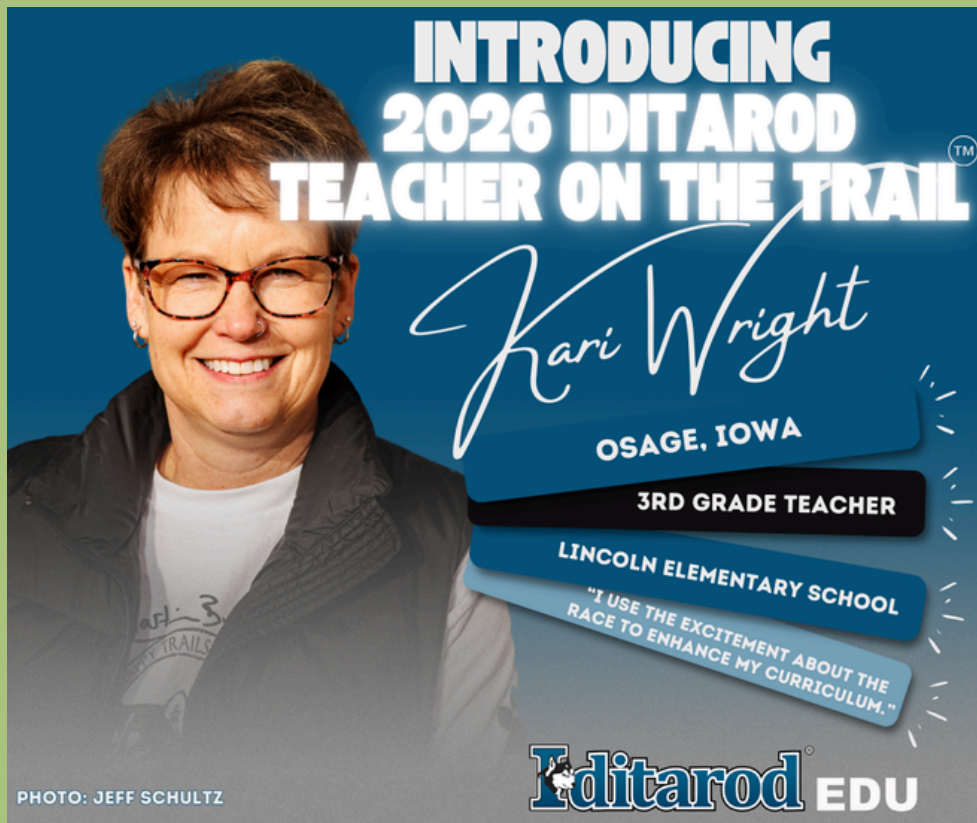
Have fun exploring the data along with your students! I was surprised to find that the total number of mushers that have started the race from 1973-2025 is well over 3,200. That is a lot of dedicated mushers!!!!!!

~Sled Dog Ed

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- June 24-26, 2025: Iditarod™ EDU Summer Conference in McCall, ID

**Welcome to the Iditarod EDU Team
Kari Wright!**



Iditarod EDU

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