

How **BIG** Is It?

- Objective: The students will research certain aspects of both Minnesota and Alaska and compare and contrast their findings.
- Materials: 3 strings, pieces of yarn or rope of the following lengths (different colors would be visually helpful):
Small Option: 32 feet (Alaska), 9 feet (Minnesota) and 5 feet (Iditarod)
Big Option: 63 feet (Alaska), 17 feet (Minnesota) and 10 feet (Iditarod)
- Time: 15 Minutes
- MN Standard: **Mathematics**—*Spatial Sense, Geometry and Measurement: Measurement*
Measure and calculate length and area using appropriate tools and units to solve real-world and mathematical problems.
- Set Up: Have the students stand and make a large circle with the center open for the activity.
- Process: Ask the students to define the term *BIG*? Have them list things that they think are *BIG*. Using a map, atlas or globe look at both Alaska and Minnesota and decide which one is bigger. Ask the students the questions “How Much Bigger?” Using the *Alaska (63 ft or 32ft)* string, make an outline of the state of Alaska (it does not need to be perfect, just a rough outline will do). Next, using the *Minnesota (17ft or 8ft)* string make an outline of the state of Minnesota. Place this outline within the outline of Alaska. This should give a good representation of just how **BIG** Alaska really is. Finally using the *Iditarod (10ft or 5ft)* string representing the length of the Iditarod, place this string in the through the outline of Minnesota to get an understanding of how long of a race this actually is.
- Extension: Have the students form a 1,131 mile race route through Minnesota. Using a Minnesota map, have the students draw a meandering route through the state to cover this distance. Or have them use the Iditarod string and snake it through the outline of Minnesota, compare this route to an actual map, and discuss where this race would take a musher through Minnesota.