

LESSON PLAN - Importance of Saving Salmon From Extinction

EALRS: (Science 1) The student understands and uses scientific concepts and principles.

GRADE LEVEL: Secondary (Examining Primary Educational Curriculum)

BASIC CONCEPTS: Acknowledging the significance of a healthy salmon environment, and the connection to our own survival.

ORGANIZING GENERALIZATION: Salmon are and have always been the center of life for native peoples in Washington State. There is a constantly increasing interest in connecting with and learning about both contemporary and traditional tribal concepts about natural resources and the environment within which we all live. We must encourage our students that in this time of environmental crisis, there is hope for a positive future if we all work together to help make it happen.

CULTURE AREA: Washington State

TIME PERIOD: Pre-contact to present day

BACKGROUND: The five species of Pacific salmon(chinook, coho, pink, dog and sockeye) miraculously return to the same streams where they first spawned, if not yearly then within its own cyclical spawning stage. Their return not only nourished humans, but also the bears, birds, and meager local soils. The first fish caught was celebrated with a great ceremony of welcome and thanks. So significant was salmon to Native peoples that during the signing of treaties in the 1850's, the right to continue taking them in their "usual and accustomed" places was written in. However, for over a hundred years American settlements and construction have destroyed or polluted salmon habitats, not only killing these fish but extinguishing whole runs. The connection to the salmon and native peoples identity is evident from the "epics" told from the native viewpoint. Examining them is key to understanding this relationship. We must also look at the common bonds that we all share with the salmon: the watersheds. To appreciate and care for them as our shared home, to educate all students in the state as to their significance, is crucial to understanding and cooperation. The Salmon Homecoming Education Program is one of the most comprehensive environmental education programs in the state today. Integrating their materials, videos, hands-on activities and games with the knowledge and wisdom of tribal stories is a step toward building a foundation of acceptance and understanding.

OBJECTIVES:

Knowledge

Students will: (Science .1.) use properties to identify, describe, and categorize substances, materials, and objects and use characteristics to categorize living things.

Skills

Students will: read essay, view video, review primary curriculum, and participate in games and hands-on activities.

Values

Students will: (Life Science- basis of biological diversity) categorize plants and animals into groups according to how they accomplish life processes and by similarities and differences in external and internal structure, and classify organisms into distinct groups according to structural, cellular, biochemical, and genetic characteristics.

ACTIVITIES: Students will read *Salmon, the Lifegiving Gift* by Jay Miller, view the video *Through Salmon Eyes*, and review the primary science curriculum *One With the Watershed*. After considering the statistics of *How Much Time Do We Have?*, ask students their opinion of the significance of the materials reviewed. What worked for you? What did you understand and what do you still need to know about the significance of salmon to all our lives? What suggestions would you (students) have to improve this primary curriculum?

EXTENSIONS: By having students in secondary grades participate in primary education, they not only learn by teaching, but develop a greater understanding of the materials. Students could visit primary grades and assist in facilitating the games and activities of the curriculum materials and report back to the class with their experiences. Reviewing articles available from other sources; newspapers, magazines, library, and Internet would allow an in-depth understanding of the multiple viewpoints concerning this topic.

EVALUATION: By removing the sense of hopelessness in the face of environmental crisis gives students the concept that there is something they can actually do to build a positive future for salmon and people. Suggestions for improving this curriculum would be welcomed by their designers, most especially after application of their lessons and materials.

MATERIALS/ RESOURCES: *Salmon, the Lifegiving Gift* by Jay Miller -available through website - <http://content.lib.washington.edu>
Science curriculum for primary grades - *One with the Watershed* and video, *Through Salmon Eyes* - available through Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission website- www.nwifc.wa.gov
WSRI- Wild Stock Restoration Initiative - statistics on Chinook salmon extinction (included and available from NWIFC)