

Xáat

Salmon

Grade Level K-1



Tlingit Cultural Emphasis

Southeast Alaska has abundant resources. Upon settling in the region the Tlingit people adapted and developed their traditional food gathering around these resources, the primary one being salmon. Five species of salmon are found in Southeast and the Tlingit people caught and preserved – and continue to preserve – each of them for both summer and winter use.

Elder/Culture Bearer

An Elder/Culture Bearer will enrich this unit with his/her knowledge of the connection between salmon and Tlingit people. This would include knowledge about clans who use salmon as their clan crest and the cultural tradition of respecting salmon. In addition he/she can help with Tlingit pronunciation of words and phrases and assist in giving directions for the activities in Tlingit.

Overview

Xáat - salmon - is a vital, traditional source of food for the people of Southeast Alaska. During this unit students learn the Tlingit names of the five species of salmon – **xáat** - found in this region. Students become familiar with the Tlingit ways of showing respect to the salmon as well as traditional ways of catching, preserving and identifying salmon species.

In **Lesson #1**, Salmon Boy - *Aak'wtaatseen* - students hear and learn about the story of the boy who went to live with the salmon people.

In **Lesson #2**, Salmon Habitat, students learn how to identify salmon habitats.

Lesson #3, Salmon Species, students learn about the five species of salmon found in Southeast Alaska.

In **Lesson# 4**, Salmon Life Cycle, the focus is the stages of a salmon's life.

Lesson #5, External Parts of a Salmon. Students learn the Tlingit and English names for the external body parts of a salmon,

Lesson #6, Internal Parts of A Salmon, Students learn to identify the internal parts of a salmon.

A series of elementary level thematic units featuring Tlingit language, culture and history were developed in Juneau, Alaska in 2004-6. The project was funded by two grants from the U.S. Department of Education, awarded to the Sealaska Heritage Institute (Boosting Academic Achievement: Tlingit Language Immersion Program, grant #92-0081844) and the Juneau School District (Building on Excellence, grant #S356AD30001).

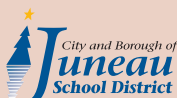
Lessons and units were written by a team of teachers and specialists led by Nancy Douglas, Elementary Cultural Curriculum Coordinator, Juneau School District. The team included Juneau teachers Kitty Eddy, Shgen George, Kathy Nielson, Hans Chester and Rocky Eddy, and SHI language team members Linda Belarde, Yarrow Vaara, David Katzeek, John Marks, Mary Foletti, Rose Natkong and Jessica Chester. Curriculum consultants Julie Folta and Toni Mallott assisted and Annie Calkins edited the lessons and units.

Lessons were field tested in Juneau classrooms in 2005-6.

All units are available online at sealaskaheritage.org.



Sealaska Heritage Institute





In **Lesson #7**, Catching Salmon, students become familiar with several traditional techniques for catching salmon.
Lesson #8, Respect and Cleaning a Salmon. Students learn ways respect is shown to salmon during the cleaning process.

In **Lesson #9**, Smoking Salmon, students learn the process of smoking salmon.

In **Lesson #10**, Making Salmon Spread, students make and enjoy eating salmon spread – a typical Tlingit treat.

Alaska State Standards

English/Language Arts

(B1) Comprehend meaning from oral and visual information by applying variety of reading, listening and viewing strategies

(B3) Relate what student views, reads and hears to practical purposes in own life

Mathematics

(A1) Use counting numbers

Science

(A14) Understand the interdependence of living things and their environments

Cultural Standards

(A3) Acquire and pass on the traditions of their community through oral and written history

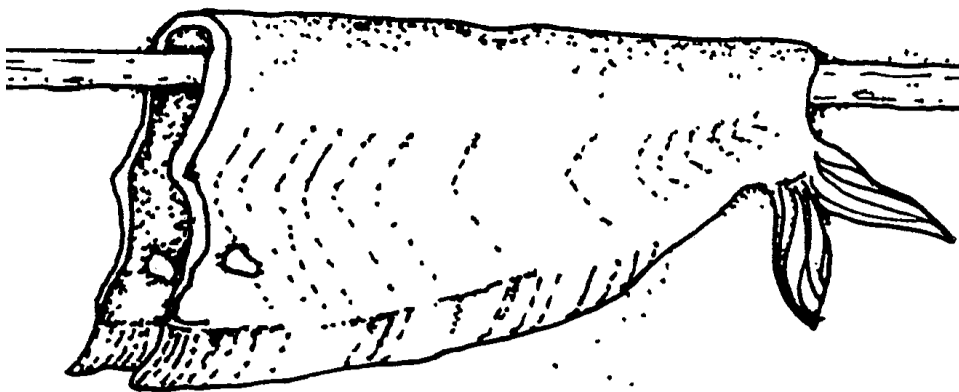
(A4) Practice traditional responsibilities to surrounding environment

(D2) Acquire in-depth cultural knowledge through active participation and meaningful interaction with Elders

(D4) Gather oral and written history information from the local community

Arts

(A1) Participate in music, visual arts





Lesson 1 Salmon Boy - Aak'wtaatseen

Objective

Students:

- Learn the importance of oral history and the values that are passed down through legends such as the legend of the Salmon Boy

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- *Shanyaak'utlaax* Legend
- Construction paper
- Crayons

Vocabulary

Lingít

Aak'wtaatseen

xáat

kéidladi

dáas'aa

xáat kwáani

át yaa awunéi

English

salmon boy

salmon

seagull

snare

salmon people

respect

Activities

Activity #1

Shanyaak'utlaax, Salmon Boy Legend

Teacher Background Information

Aak'wtaatseen "*Shanyaak'utlaax*"

The legend of *Aak'wtaatseen* belongs to the *Kíks.ádi* people of Sitka. It was told by *Deikeenáak'w* in 1904.

Students learn about *Aak'wtaatseen*'s experience living with the *Xáat Kwáani*, the salmon people, and about the importance of respect being shown towards salmon. Students are introduced to the proper protocols shown by Tlingit people toward salmon – what *Aak'wtaatseen* learned from the salmon people.

It is important that we acknowledge and respect the knowledge that is shared in the story and to the clan that owns this legend.

Activity

Explain to the class that *Aak'wtaatseen* was a little boy who went to fish camp with his parents at *Daxéit*. *Daxéit* is in Sitka. Tell them they are going to hear a legend about *Aak'wtaatseen*. He was disrespectful to his mother and the piece of salmon that she gave him to eat. He goes to live with the salmon people and learns many lessons. Invite an Elder to come in to tell Salmon Boy Legend. If an Elder is unavailable read, *Shanyaak'utlaax* legend included with in the Resources.



Activity #2 Class Book

Lead students in a discussion about the main character in the legend, the setting of the legend and the values that were learned – including respect for the salmon.

Distribute large white construction paper to students and have them illustrate their favorite part of the legend. Add text to each illustration as individual students dictate or write what is shown. Collate pages into a classroom book and read it several times throughout this unit. Keep it in the classroom library for future readings.

Assessment

Ask individual students to retell the story of the Salmon Boy. Using a simple checklist or rubric, evaluate whether they retold it in the correct sequence, with proper details.

Lesson 2 Salmon Habitat

Objective

Students:

- Learn the characteristics of a salmon's habitat

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Salmon Habitat Study Prints, pictures
- White drawing paper
- Water colors, crayons
- Paint brushes
- Salmon Book, one per student
- *Salmon Stream*, by Carol Reed-Jones, Dawn Publication, 2001, ISBN 1584690135
- *Salmon Forest*, by David T. Suzuki, Greystone books, 2003, ISBN 1550549375
- *Come Back, Salmon*, by Molly Cone, Sierra Club Books for Children, 2001, ISBN 0871564890

Vocabulary

Lingít

aas

l'éiw

té

nadaayí héen

English

tree

sand, gravel

rock

river



Lingít Phrases

Goox' sáwé *kuna.eich wé xáat?*

Where do salmon live?

Nadaayí héen yikt' *ka eil' tlein ka kuna.eich wé xáat.*

Salmon live in the river and the ocean.

Daa sá a yei yatee wé *xáat neitleex'?*

What is in a salmon's home?

Wéidu áas.

There are trees.

Wéidu l'eiw.

There is sand, gravel.

Wéidu té,

There are rocks.

Wéidu héen.

There is water.

Activities

Activity #1

Salmon habitat

Read the book *Salmon Stream, Come Back, Salmon* or *Salmon Forest*. Reading one or all of these books is a good introduction to teaching children about salmon habitat. After reading lead a group discussion about the story and the habitat that the salmon live in.

Activity #2

Paint a salmon habitat

As a class discuss what might be the elements of a healthy salmon river. A healthy stream has trees, sand, gravel, rocks, and bugs. Record student ideas on a chartpack or board. Share pictures of salmon habitats with students, asking them to notice what they see in various pictures. Pass out paper and watercolor paints to students so they can make watercolor drawings or paintings of a healthy stream for salmon. Demonstrate to the class how to use watercolors effectively to portray a watery environment on paper.

Activity #3

Count salmon in a stream

Copy the book provided in the Resources to make a Salmon Book for each student. Students can color the pictures in this booklet and then complete the book, counting salmon on each page. Students can take the books home to share with their families and practice counting.

Assessment

Check each student's Salmon Book to see if it is complete. Ask individual children to tell about the stream they have painted, to see what environmental elements each has included.



Lesson 3 Salmon Species

Objective

Students:

- Learn the names of the 5 species of Salmon in Lingít and English

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Salmon study prints
- Salmon activity, 1 per student
- Crayons
- Popsicle sticks
- Packing tape

Vocabulary

Lingít

t'á
gaat
l'ook
téel'
cháas'

English

king salmon
sockeye salmon
coho salmon
dog salmon
humpy salmon

Lingít Phrases

Daa sá iyatéen?
(Xáat) xaatéen

t'á
gaat
l'ook
téel'
cháas'

What do you see?
I see a salmon.

king salmon
sockeye salmon
coho salmon
dog salmon
humpy salmon

Activities

Activity #1 Coloring salmon species

Use salmon study prints to have students compare the differences in color a salmon goes through when it leaves the ocean and returns to its spawning grounds. For example, describe the changes a sockeye goes through. They are silver when they are in the ocean and when they enter fresh water to spawn they are green and red in color. See what other color differences students notice when looking at the prints.

Distribute the 5 Salmon Species coloring page (See Resources). Have students color each of the salmon species as if they are in the ocean or fresh water. Then ask them to label the name of each species, in English and/or Lingít.



Activity #2 Around the circle, what do you see? *Daa sá iyatéen?*

Use the salmon study prints to reinforce the Lingít names of the salmon by doing a round robin question/answer game with students. The dialog will go like this:

Teacher: *Daa sá iyatéen?* – What do you see?

(T'á) xaatéen. – I see a king salmon.

Student asks student to the right: *Daa sá iyatéen?*

Student: *T'á xaatéen.*

Continue the pattern until all students have asked and answered the question *Daa sá iyatéen?* Continue the pattern for the next two species of salmon.

Activity #3 Salmon song - *Xáat Daa Sheeyí*

Teach the sentence "*Aadéi yaantoo.át. We are walking along.*" Teach the first stanza to song, using the Lingít CD to sing along with.

Introduce the importance of using motions as you sing songs. Motions help with memory recall and keep students engaged and focused.

Daa sá iyatéen Shí - First stanza:

- *Aadéi yaantoo.át. We are walking along.*
Students walk in place.
- *Daa sá iyatéen?* What do you see? Students place their open hand horizontally across forehead; like they are looking for something.
- *Daa sá iyatéen?* (3x) What do you see?
- *Wé l'ook xaatéen.* I see a coho salmon.
Hold up the picture of the l'ook at this last line.



Activity #4 Making salmon sticks

Students cut out and tape popsicle sticks to the patterns of the five species of salmon. Once each child has completed this job is complete use the completed salmon to sing the salmon species song together.

Assessment

Observe children during the song. Do they sing all the words? Can they follow the movement directions?



Teacher Resources and Websites

- <http://www.adfg.state.ak.us/pubs/notebook/notehome.php>, descriptions of the five species of salmon found in Southeast Alaska.

Optional Extension Activity

- Salmon in a Stream Game

It's an annual occurrence in Southeast Alaska to see salmon returning from the ocean to their spawning streams. The goal of this game is to teach and reinforce the Tlingit names for these returning salmon.

1. Divide children into three salmon groups
2. Give each group a name of a salmon.
 - a. *t'á*
 - b. *gaat*
 - c. *l'ook*
 - d. *téel'*
 - e. *cháas'*
3. Have one member of each group form a line at one end of the playing area by holding hands, while the other partners do the same at the opposite end.
4. Teacher or Elder (to start out - they can be replaced by a student when the students have an understanding of the game) stands in the space between the circles. This person calls the name of the salmon and the person who represent this salmon rushes to their circle to switch places.
5. The person in the space attempts to catch one of the salmon trying to go up stream.
6. When caught this "salmon" calls a different name and their position is taken by the person originally in space

Lesson 4

Salmon Life Cycle

Objective

Students:

- Study the stages of a salmon's life.

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Salmon Study Prints
- Salmon Cycle Activity
- Crayons
- Glue
- *Life Cycle of a Salmon*, by Angela Royston, Heinemann Library, 2001, ISBN 1588103277
- *The Salmon (Life Cycle)*, by Sabrina Crewe, Steck-Vaughn, 1998, ISBN 0817262342
- *Red Tag Come Back*, by Fred B. Phleger, HarperCollins Publishers, 1961, ISBN 006024706



Vocabulary

Lingít

éil' tlein
 nadaayí héen
 xáat kúdi
 xáat kaháagu
 a toonáx yoot uwa.át
 xáat yatx'i

English

ocean
 river
 redd/ salmon nest
 salmon eggs
 hatch
 baby salmon

Lingít Phrases

Xáat aaní áwé éil' tlein.

The ocean is salmon habitat.

Aa háas wudaxeedí yéix' kúx has yada.éich.

Salmon swim back to where they were hatched to lay eggs.

Nadaayí heenyíx' háas du kúdi káa yéis a.éix has du kaháagu.

The salmon lays her eggs in a stream.

Xáat yatx'i éil' tlein kaadéi yóo yaa.héink.

The baby salmon swim back to the ocean.

Activities

Activity #1

Reading about the salmon life cycle

Read one or all of the following books - *Life Cycle of a Salmon*, *The Salmon (Life Cycle)* or *Red Tag Comes Back*. They are a great introduction to teaching students about the life cycle of a salmon. Talk with the children about how a salmon is born, lives and dies. Note some of their comments and observations on a chartpack or board. Ask whether any of them have seen a salmon in any of the stages it goes through, to tell the others about it.

Activity #2

Salmon cycles

Distribute the salmon cycle activity page.(See Resources) Have students, color, cut and glue the salmon in the appropriate places. Children can then take the activity page home to teach their family about the salmon's life cycle.

After they have finished the activity page pass out copies of the salmon life cycle book. Read it aloud to the class, commenting on each page and asking children questions about what they notice. Direct them to color their copy of the book. Encourage students to take their completed books home to also share with their families.

Assessment

Check each child's salmon life cycle book and have an individual conference with each, asking him/her to tell you about the life cycle of a salmon, to evaluate depth and accuracy of knowledge.



Lesson 5

External Parts of a Salmon

Objective

Students:

- Learn the Lingít and English names for the external parts of a salmon

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Salmon study prints
- Salmon Activity Page
- Water colors
- Paint brushes

Vocabulary

Lingít

a sháayi

a wáshi

a waagí

a x'éiyi

a x'éix'ú

a kajeigí

a likat'aawú

a t'aawú

a daas'aagí

a koowú

English

its head

its cheek

its eyes

its mouth

its gills

its scales

its dorsal fin

its pectoral fin

its pelvic fin

its tail

Lingít Phrases

Sh toox tooltoow yaa xáat daa.ádi daat át. Let's learn about the external parts of a salmon.
(A koowú) áyá. This is its (tail).

Activities

Activity #1

Identify the parts of a salmon

Use the study prints, or a real salmon if possible, to help students learn to identify the external parts of a salmon – head, cheek, mouth, gills, scales, fins, tails. Ask an individual student to point to the parts and have the rest of the class name that part. Repeat this action in Lingít after they have correctly named the parts in English.

If an Elder is available to visit, ask him/her to teach the children the Lingít names for the parts of the salmon, and to tell students a personal story about a salmon.



Activity #2 Naming the external parts of a Salmon

Using large pieces of paper, ask students to again use watercolors – this time to paint a salmon. Remind them about using this kind of paint, demonstrating how the amount of water mixed with paint can create different images. When the paintings have dried, use give each child a set of labels to attach to their painting, naming the external parts of the salmon. Circulate among the children, asking individuals if they can say the Lingít word for the parts of the salmon.

Assessment

Check to see that each child has correctly labeled the external parts of a salmon. Try asking the Lingít words for some of the parts

Lesson 6 Internal Parts of A Salmon

Objective

Students:

- Learn the Lingít and English names for the internal parts of a salmon.

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- A Real Salmon in the round
- Salmon Insides activity page
- Salmon Study prints
- Scissors
- Crayons

Vocabulary

Lingít

a téix'i

a tl'óogu

a kaháagu

a tl'éili

a yik téiyi

a keilí

a yoowú

English

its heart

its liver

its eggs

its milt

its gall bladder

its air sac

its stomach

Lingít Phrases

Sh toox tooltoow yaa xáat yik.ádi daat át. Let's learn about the internal parts of a salmon.
(Téix') áyá. This is the (heart).



Activities

Activity #1

Learning the names of the insides of a salmon

Teacher Background Information

Prior to this lesson contact a fisherman or your local hatchery to get a real salmon to dissect. If this is not possible, use the study prints to teach students the internal parts of the salmon and their functions.

- Heart - Pulsates to pump the blood through the fish's body.
- Liver - Red in color. High in vitamin content. Many elders remove and fry the liver and eat them because they are so rich in nutritional value.
- Eggs - Pink or orange in color. There are numerous eggs in two sacs. They will hatch and become baby salmon if they are fertilized by a male salmon's milt.
- Milt – looks like milk. Male salmon have two milt sacs. The milt fertilizes eggs.
- Gall bladder – Green in color. When cleaning a fish this part is cut off and discarded. If the gall bladder is cut the sour green liquid ruins the salmon meat.
- Air sac – Balloon like sac helps a salmon swim upright.
- Stomach – Stomach – A sac-like digestive organ that receives food from the esophagus and opens into the intestine.

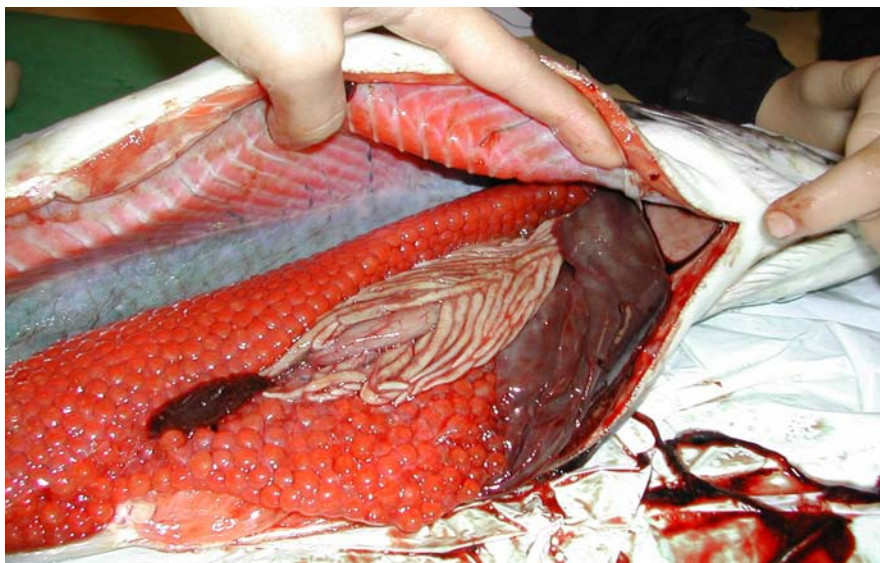
Activity

Use a real salmon or the study print to teach students about the internal parts of a salmon. Tell them what each part is useful for, in keeping a salmon alive.

Activity #2

Coloring the insides of a salmon

After learning the names and functions of salmon "insides", ask students to color the parts of the salmon, using the activity page. (See Resources). Then tell them to fold the page in half, and cut out the salmon shape. Show them how to staple partway around the salmon, to close it. Then direct them to gather scraps of paper from the recycle bin and stuff scraps into the internal parts salmon to give it depth and dimension.





Lesson 7 Catching Salmon

Objective

Students:

- Identify the color changes salmon go through when they are in the river.

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Study Prints of ocean salmon and river salmon
- Salmon Species activity page
- Water colors
- Paint brushes
- Pipe cleaners – 8 per student

Vocabulary

Lingít

áadaa

geiwú

digáa

shaal

óot'

English

fishing spear

seine net

dip net

fish trap

rock fish weir

Lingít Phrases

Asteix naxtookúx.

(Áadaa)teen áwé xáat shaxatléikw.

(Geiwú)teen áwé xáat shaxatléikw.

(Digaa)teen áwé xáat shaxatléikw.

(Shaal)teen áwé xáat shaxatléikw.

(Óot')teen áwé xáat shaxatléikw.

Let's go fishing.

I used a (fishing spear) to catch my fish.

I used a (net) to catch my fish.

I used a (dip net) to catch my fish.

I used a (fish trap) to catch my fish.

I used a (rock fish weir) to catch my fish.

Activities

Activity #1

Teacher Background Information

Tlingit clans historically owned salmon spawning grounds. The location determined the kinds of tools used to catch salmon. They included:

- Aadaa** – Fishing Spears, were used to catch individual salmon. The bone tips are sharp, they are attached to the base of a wooden shaft with spruce line. They woosani is thrust into a salmon the sharpness of the tip and the force from the through penetrate the salmon body
- Shaal** – Fish Traps, made from hemlock staves and held together with spruce root hoops which are lashed together with spruce roots. They have a funnel in one end for fish to enter. The sharp point around the opening and the conical shape prevented the salmon from escaping form the trap. Traps are anchored in the river while the salmon are running up stream. The size of the trap and the salmon run determined the amount of salmon caught.



- **Óot** – Rock Traps, made at the entrance of a salmon spawning river/stream. They were built at low tide. Rocks are piled in a U shape to form a trap to catch salmon when the tide is going out.
- **X'wéil** – Pole traps, made with tree poles that were stuck into the river bottom in a straight line or in a U shape. When the tide is high the salmon swim over the poles but at low tide the salmon get caught up against the poles.

Activity

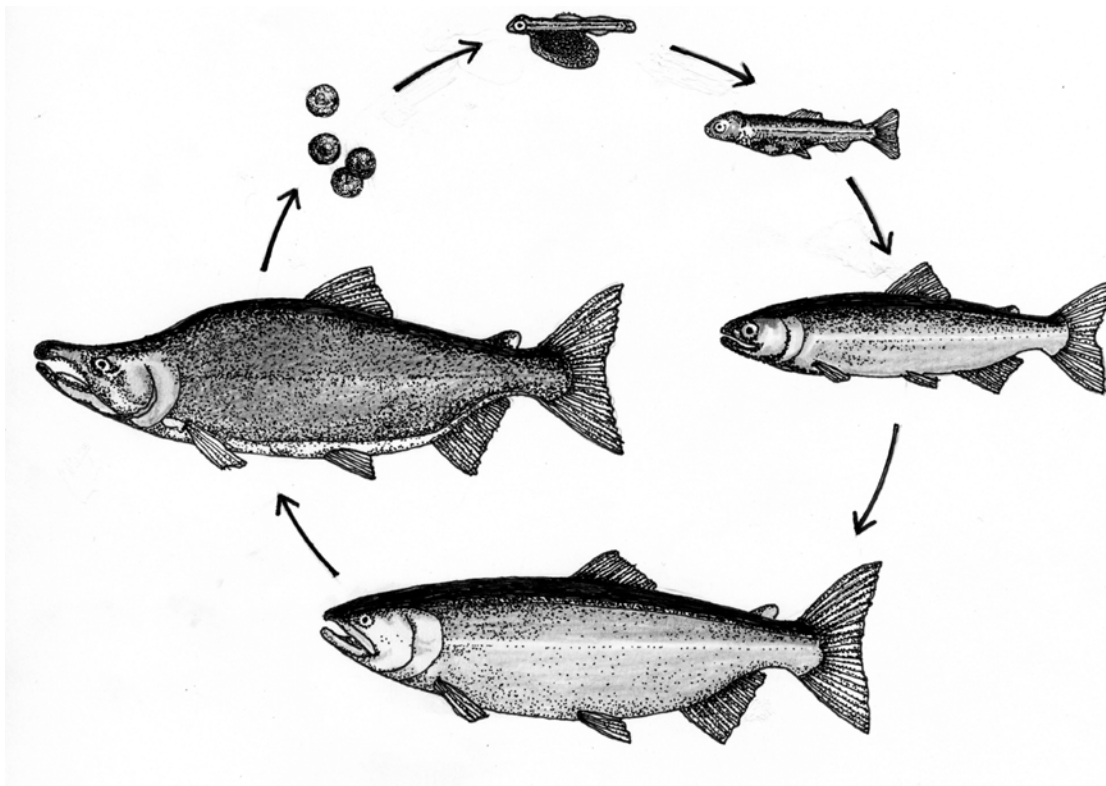
Museum visit

Make arrangements to go to your local museum to look at traditional fishing tools. Invite an Elder/Culture Bearer to accompany the class, to share their knowledge on how traditional tools are made and used. Ask the museum staff to share fish artifacts and tools, explaining and demonstrating to the children how they were used.

Activity #2

Making model fish traps

Once back in the classroom, direct children to make their own models of fish traps, using pipe cleaners. As they follow the directions (See Resources) to make their traps, ask them how they would use the trap to catch salmon, what kind of salmon they would catch, where they would use the trap etc.





Lesson 8 Respecting and Cleaning a Salmon

Objectives

Students:

- Learn proper language and protocols used while cleaning salmon
- Reinforce the names for various parts of the salmon in Lingít and English

Time

45 minutes

Materials

- Tlingit Way to Treat Salmon, by Patricia Partnow, Anchorage School District
- Uncleaned salmon
- Burlap bag or plastic table covering
- Knife
- Plastic bag for trash/for cleaned salmon
- Clorox clean-up wipes or other disinfectant cleaner

Vocabulary

Lingít

át yaa awunéi

xáat yeigi

xáat

a sháayi

a yik.ádi

nandé héen

English

respect

salmon spirit

salmon

its head

its guts/insides

upstream

Lingít Phrases

Goosú wé a sháayi?

Where is its head?

Kei naxákw yáx nandé héen ayinaadei yáx shadustaa. The head goes upstream.

Héen yix' a kúx yei sanéi a yik.ádi. Return the insides to the river.

Activities

Activity #1

Learning the Tlingit way to treat salmon

Read the book *Tlingit Way to Treat Salmon*, as an introduction to the Tlingit way to show respect to salmon. Ask children to repeat what they have heard, writing the proper traditional way to treat salmon on a chartpack or the board. Discuss the proper language used and respect shown in the treatment of salmon. Explain to students that if we were cleaning the fish by the river where it was caught we would point the head upstream. This how we show respect to the salmon and help its spirit continue up stream. Remind students of the salmon boy story and how language is important. Particularly emphasize that “it’s not okay to use words such as yucky, gross” in relation to salmon, as these are disrespectful words.



Activity #2 Cleaning a salmon

Invite an Elder/Culture Bearer in to assist you in cleaning a salmon in front of the class. Ask him/her to share stories about going to fish camp and their experiences in cleaning salmon.

Slowly and carefully clean the salmon. Discuss the external parts and then the internal parts of the salmon as you clean. Ask children to name the parts, in English and Lingít. Use the phrase, *Goosú we (a sháayi)?* – Where is the (head)? to reinforce Lingít names of the external and internal parts of the salmon

Pay particular attention to the following parts:

- Externally - head, eye, mouth, teeth, cheek, scales
- Internally – gills, eggs/milt. heart, liver, stomach

Once it is cleaned, filet the salmon into halves, in order to get it ready for the next lesson, Smoking Salmon. Explain to the children that next the class will smoke a salmon. Cut the filets into 1” wide chunks by the width of the filet. Then cut 1” wide strips that run the length of the fish. Refrigerate (or freeze) the fish until you are ready for smoking.

Lesson 9 Smoking Salmon

Objectives

Students:

- Learn simple steps and procedures for smoking salmon
- Understand the importance of salmon to Native people
- Learn one way to preserve salmon

Time

@ 4 hours

Materials

- Salmon cleaned in Lesson #8
- Salt
- Potatoes
- Marinating bowls/tubs
- Paper towels
- Cookie sheets
- Smoke house/Little Chief Smoker
- Alder wood chips (or others if alder is not available)



Vocabulary

Lingít

héen
éil'
k'únts'
kaast
x'ux' jigwéinaa
at x'aan hídi
gán
kayeixtáagu
s'eik
xáat kaxashtí

English

water
 salt
 potato
 tub
 paper towel
 smokehouse
 firewood
 wood chips
 smoke

Lingít Phrases

Xáat ax' akanaoolas'eik
(Héen) eeteenáx haakw gwatí.
(Éil') eeteenáx haakw gwatí.
(K'únts') eeteenáx haakw gwatí.
(kaast) eeteenáx haakw gwatí.
(X'ux' jigwéinaa) eeteenáx haakw gwatí.

Let's smoke salmon.
 We'll need (water).
 We'll need (salt).
 We'll need (potato).
 We'll need a (tub).
 We'll need (paper towel).

Activities

Activity #1 Making brine

Teacher Background Information

At one time obtaining fish was central to Tlingít people's winter survival. Salmon was the chief part of their diet. Salmon were usually dried, flesh side out, on a framework, out of doors and protected from the elements, or in a special smoke-house. Once dried, the fish were stacked, tied in bundles and often stored in bentwood boxes for later use. When the winter supply was complete, remaining salmon were rendered into oil. Alder was a commonly used material for grease bowls and other food storage containers, since it does not contain the poisonous oils that cedar does.

During the salmon fishing season, limited to the summer months, the clans of the Tlingít people established their camps close to fishing places. Each clan had its river and the head of the clan was the owner of the smokehouse. While the men caught the salmon in the rivers with traps or harpoons, the women prepared the fish for preservation.

There are many ways to prepare salmon (smoking, canning, jarring, drying...). Bring in a local Elder to share how they prepare their salmon. It might be especially helpful to have an Elder come who can talk about the availability of food/resources in summer compared to winter. The ability to preserve/dry food helped make it possible to store food for throughout the year. This would also be a great time to have them help with some salmon smoking/canning. Tlingít people traditionally used alder wood to preserve and flavor their meat, although some prefer the taste of cottonwood smoke.

Putting up salmon can be a tough job. During the peak of a salmon run you might be cleaning and smoking over 100 fish. Prior to the start of a salmon run the smoke house is cleaned and alder and/or cottonwood is gathered.

People use different brines to cure salmon. The following is a basic brine recipe that can be used to smoke a class fish.



Activity

Put approximately a gallon of water in a bucket/bowl/tub. Add enough salt to make a medium size potato float. Stir to dissolve the salt. Add salmon pieces. Let salmon soak in brine for 30 – 45 minutes. Remove it from the brine, rinse it off with fresh water and lay it on cookie sheets lined with paper towels. When the salmon is dry to the touch the pieces are ready to go in the smoker.

Activity #2 Smoking salmon

Many people in your community have smoke houses. Contact community members to arrange an outing to place your salmon in a smoke house or a smoker. (If you are unable to use a traditional style smoker use an electric Lil' Chief smoker). You will be smoking the class salmon for 4 – 8 hours.

If you are using a “Little Chief” type smoker: This recipe is shared by Rocky Eddy (Gastineau Elementary School teacher) who was given it by his older brother who has been smoking/preparing fish for decades.

- Clean and dry the racks from the smoker.
- Spray Pam on each rack before you put the chunks on. The skin will stick to the rack if you don't place the chunks skin down and the strips lay on the meat side on the smoker racks.
- Dry the fish on the racks until a film forms on the meat,
- Put the rack of fish inside the smoker with one pan of chips, The chips should be alder, normally used in Southeast Alaska if possible.
- Smoke for four hours without adding any more chips to the smoker
- Remove rack from smoker.

If you are going to use a full size smokehouse: Here is one recipe to try: To smoke salmon properly takes at least three persons. The smoker I remember was my mother, but equally important was my grandmother who originally taught my mother and hovered for it for many years, to give commentary on mother's technique. You also need a fire tender with a squirt gun, or Windex bottle full of water works best. They will squirt the fire occasionally to keep it from getting too big.

Recipe

- Filet the salmon and cover filets with rock salt for at least three hours until excess water is drawn out the fish.
- Brush salt off of the fish and then rub the fish with garlic butter.
- Collect fresh alder branches one half inch in diameter.
- Strip the leaves and discard.
- Build a smoldering fire of alder in the bottom of the smoke house or cooker.
- Place salmon filets on open racks in cooker.
- Check to see that temperature inside the cooker does not exceed 150 degrees Fahrenheit.
- The object is not to cook the fish but to cure it by virtue of the tannic alder smoke.
- Add green alder to keep the fire smothered, and extinguish open flame with squirt gun.
- Smoking takes 6 to 8 hours depending on the thickness of the filets.

As you can see, this can get rather complicated, so be sure and have some help if you are not completely comfortable with all the steps.



Throughout this activity, use Lingít vocabulary and phrases to enrich this activity.

Activity #3 Sharing our recipe

At the end of the smoking process brainstorm with the class the steps they took to brine and smoke a salmon. Write the steps on the board. Direct children to copy the recipe onto papers to take home to share. As they finish writing they can decorate their “recipe cards” with pictures of salmon.

Assessment

Observe listening skills of students throughout the activity.

Lesson 10 Making Salmon Spread

Objective

Students:

- Learn how to make a popular Tlingít snack
- Share what they have learned about salmon with peers

Time

30 minutes to prepare

20 minutes to share

Materials

- Jarred or canned salmon- 2-3 cans or jars
- Mayonnaise
- Bowl
- Spoon
- Knife
- Pilot Bread

Vocabulary

Lingít

xáat

aḵakawdudlis'eigi xáat.

s'ix'

shál

a káay yukahá

at xá

English

salmon

smoked salmon

bowl

spoon

stir/mix

eat

Lingít Phrases

Xáat.een woosht jikayjél a káay yukahá.

S'ix' kát shakagaḵ yilawoos'.

Shálteen shakagaḵ yilawoos'.

Xáat ka mayonaise shakagaḵ yilawoos'.

At gatuxáa!

Let's mix together salmon spread.

We'll mix it in a bowl.

We'll mix it with a spoon.

We'll mix fish and mayonaise together.

Let's eat!



Activities

Activity #1 Making salmon spread

Invite an Elder to come in to talk about traditional uses of jarred and canned salmon. Organize classroom into workstations to make salmon spread, one very popular snack that is often served at Tlingit parties and celebrations.

- Station 1 – Breaking up salmon
- Station 2 – Adding mayonnaise and mixing
- Station 3 – Spreading on to pilot bread

Divide the class into three groups (name the groups using traditional clan names if you have already introduced clans to the class). Direct each group to “man their station” and do the task set out at the stations. As they prepare their part of the salmon snack sing the salmon song they learned in Lesson #3 and practice Lingít phrases they have learned throughout the unit.

Activity #2 Sharing salmon spread

Invite another class to share the salmon spread. As they are feasting, have individual or groups of children tell guests what they have learned about salmon. Encourage all children to share salmon stories while they are snacking.

Assessment

Observe children at work in groups, and, using a simple rubric outlining group cooperation skills, evaluate their ability to work together and contribute to the group effort.