



Food as Culture

Lesson Plan 1: Fishing

Hands-On Materials

- *The People of Cascadia* by Heidi Bohan
- Replicas of artifacts
- List of topics for 3rd grade student projects

Guiding Question:

What natural resources were used by Native Americans 200 years ago, and what natural resources are used by Native Americans today?

Online Resources:

- [Lummi section of American Indian Responses to Environmental Challenges](http://www.nmai.si.edu/environment), National Museum of the American Indian Online at <http://www.nmai.si.edu/environment>
- [Scedadx \(Salmon\) video](http://salmondefense.org/projects/educate/bfj-salmon-video/) <http://salmondefense.org/projects/educate/bfj-salmon-video/>

Objectives:

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of natural resources used by Native Americans locally in Whatcom County.
- Students will understand how Coast Salish peoples have depended on fish as a food staple for thousands of years.

Classroom Based Assessments (CBA's)

Humans and the Environment
(GLE's) 3.1.1, 3.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.3.1

Activities

1. Show students list of traditional foods included in this lesson plan: *Traditional Foods: FISH AND REPTILES*.
2. Observe replicas of fishing tools. Discuss what they are made from and how the shape of the tools works for fishing.
3. Show videos about Lummi and salmon culture on the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian's website for educators. Watch videos from the Lummi Nation section.
4. Watch Scedadx (Salmon) video <http://salmondefense.org/projects/educate/bfj-salmon-video/>
5. Have each student pick a topic and make an oral presentation about one aspect of the connections between Coast Salish Peoples and salmon, today or in the past. Explain how the environment influences the development of the Lummi or Nooksack cultures' lifestyle, traditions and beliefs, with three or more examples related to the topic of fishing or salmon.

Assessment: Humans and the Environment CBA

Geography- GLE 3.1.1-- Understands and applies how maps and globes are used to display the regions of North America in the past and present.

Geography- -GLE 3.2.1 --Understands how the environment affects cultural groups and how cultural groups affect the environment.

Social Studies Skills- -GLE 5.2.2 -- Uses a graphic organizer to organize main ideas and supporting details from visuals and literary, narrative, informational, and expository texts.

Social Studies Skills - -GLE 5.3.1 -- Engages in discussions that attempt to answer questions about cultural similarities and differences.

In a paper or presentation, you will:

1. Use the map of the Salish Sea to explain the interaction between indigenous peoples and their environment.
2. Explains how the environment influenced the development of a native culture's lifestyle, traditions, and beliefs.
3. Explains ways that Lummi and Nooksack peoples affect their environment as they met their needs.
4. Uses a graphic organizer to organize main ideas and supporting details from sources on the cultural contributions of Coast Salish tribes regarding salmon recovery.
5. Draws a conclusion using at least two clear, specific, and accurate examples in a presentation about how the Lummi or Nooksack Tribes meet their needs.
6. Prepares a list of resources, including the title and author for each source.

What is this?



How does it work?

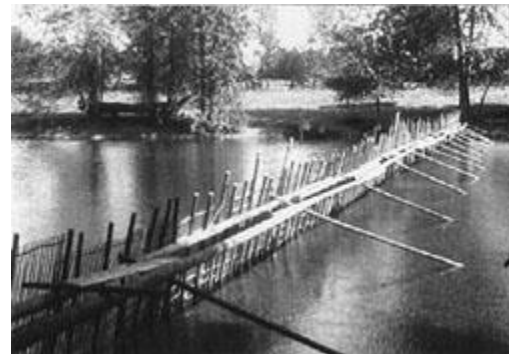
Photo courtesy of the Whatcom Museum

Fishing Weirs

Weirs are fence-like structures made of a row of wooden stakes that have latticework woven in-between them. They were constructed in estuaries, streams, and shallow rivers. Water was able to flow through these fences, but the salmon that were trying to swim upstream to spawn could not pass through them. As the salmon milled about trying to find a way around the fence, they were easily speared, netted, or guided into nearby traps.

On large streams, building a weir required the cooperation of an entire village. The salmon caught in these large weirs were owned and shared by everyone in the village. The weir fishing sites were owned and reused, rather than the actual weir itself. Some weir fishing sites, often across small streams, might be owned by only one person or by a family of high rank.

The stake frame of the weir was left up all year long; the latticework sections were removed until the next fishing season so that they would not be damaged before they were used again. Some latticework sections were also removed during the fishing season to allow some salmon to continue upstream to spawn. These sections were also removed to allow upstream First Nations groups access to the salmon as well.



Cowichan River fishing weir, 1930.
© RBCM pn1748

There was a delicate balance of resource sharing among the various First Nations peoples. Often, if a salmon run was poor one year and a group did not get enough fish for the winter, another group that was lucky enough to get their supply of fish would share and trade with the first group so that they could make it through the winter.

from: <http://bcheritage.ca/pacificfisheries/techno/weir.html>

You can find a good diagram of how a fishing weir works on p. 51,
The People of Cascadia by Heidi Bohan, **included in this kit.**

Teacher Background Information: Fishing

The freshwater streams and estuaries flowing into the Salish Sea provide a rich environment, home to more than 200 species of fish, more than 200 kinds of sea birds, and about 26 species of marine mammals. The **Lummi Nation** and **Nooksack Indian Tribe** have depended on this bountiful ecosystem for thousands of years.

The traditional means of subsistence for the Lummi and Nooksack people were fishing for salmon and other kinds of fish, gathering shellfish and plants, and hunting waterfowl and mammals. **Salmon**, however, were their most important food source. Because salmon migration is cyclic, native peoples' lives revolved around the fish. Their movements coincided with the arrival of the salmon, and their fishing success depended on the size of the annual salmon runs. Thousands of years of close observation and experience in their environment allowed the native people to develop sophisticated and ingenious ways to create everything they needed—from clothing and shelter to tools—and to invent unique methods of catching salmon. Knowing that fish on spawning runs would rise toward the surface as they neared underwater reefs, Lummi fishermen developed a reef-netting technique that took advantage of this behavior. The Nooksacks also harvested their abundant resources effectively, fishing from shovel-nosed canoes and with nets on the Nooksack River. They also observed an important cultural ethic of respect and preservation, which remains an essential element of their traditional culture.

Salmon is part of their identity and their culture, and they see the survival of this fish as integral to the health of their culture, their economy, and the lands on which they have thrived for millennia. Overfishing and especially the destruction of habitat have contributed to the decline of the salmon. Much of the salmon habitat has been lost because of population growth, degraded watersheds after generations of farming, and logging that left rivers without shade and choked with pollutants and silt.

For more than the last 20 years, these communities have been involved in numerous programs to preserve and enhance the severely threatened salmon populations that migrate along the watersheds of their “usual and accustomed lands”—lands addressed in treaties between the Lummi and the United States.

With strong cultural, economic, and political ties to salmon, the Lummi and Nooksack people reach far beyond the reservation borders to mitigate the environmental challenges to this important resource. They operate two hatcheries and have conducted numerous efforts to repair and protect the salmon ecosystem. These projects include building logjams to ease problems caused by severely eroded lands, particularly in key salmon spawning areas; encouraging reduction in the use of upstream agricultural fertilizers; replanting deforested areas; and preserving old-growth forests. Both the **Lummi Nation** and **Nooksack Indian Tribes** works in partnership with numerous intertribal, government, academic, nonprofit organizations, and scientific groups to secure a sustainable future for the salmon and their people.

Burke Museum at the University of Washington, *Salish Bounty Exhibit*
Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian

Traditional Foods: FISH AND REPTILES

Northern Anchovy • Candlefish • Codfish • Pacific Cod • Spiny Dogfish •
Wolf Eel • Flatfish • Left-Eye Flounder • Right-Eye Flounder • Starry
Flounder • Greenling • Pacific Hake • Pacific Halibut • Pacific Herring •
Alaska Jing • Lingcod • Red Irish Lord • Plain Fin Midshipman • Northern
Pike Minnow • Peamouth • Pile Perch • Shiner Perch • Poacher • Walleye
Pollock • Spotted Ratfish • Ray • Rockfish • Sablefish • Chinook Salmon •
Chum Salmon • Pink Salmon • Coho Salmon • Sockeye Salmon • Pacific
Sanddab • Scorpion Fish • Great Sculpin • Pacific Sculpin • Staghorn Sculpin
• Roughback Sculpin • Blue Seaperch • Striped Seaperch • Shark, Skate • C-
O Sole • Curlfin Sole • Dover Sole • English Sole • Rock Sole • Sturgeon •
Large-Scale Sucker • Pacific Tomcod • Trout • Mountain Whitefish •
Western Pond Turtle

This list was compiled by the Burke Museum.



Food as Culture

Lesson Plan 2: **First Salmon Ceremony**

Hands-On Materials

- Information sheet: *First Salmon Ceremony*
- Story Sheet: *The Legend of the Salmon Woman*
- *Photo of Salmon Woman story pole*

Online Resources:

- Video: *Lummi First Salmon Ceremony*, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
<http://bit.ly/2oz4dOi>

Guiding Question:

How do Coast Salish stories, legends, and the arts serve as expressions of cultural traditions?

Objectives:

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of natural resources used by Native Americans locally in Whatcom County.
- Students will know that in various local environments, fishing and salmon are central to the culture.
- Students will understand Coast Salish traditions of honoring the gifts of natural resources provided by the earth.
- Students will know that the First Salmon Ceremony is an annual part of Coast Salish culture, integrating song, dance and stories.

Activities

1. Watch video of [Lummi First Salmon Ceremony](#), Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
2. Discuss with students how and why it is important for cultures have ways to show respect for the environment.
3. Teacher reads story of *The Legend of the Salmon Woman*. A totem pole that tells this story is in Bellingham's Maritime Heritage Park.

Assessment: Cultural Contributions CBA

History-GLE 4.2.2 Understands how contributions made by various cultural groups have shaped the history of the community and world.

Social Studies Skills--GLE 5.1.2 Evaluates whether information is clear, specific, and detailed.

Social Studies Skills—GLE 5.4.2 Prepares a list of resources, including the title and author for each source.

Knowing about traditions and stories from the Lummi Nation and Nooksack Indian Tribes, students can make connections with our community, our environment and our world. Students will explain how Lummi people have contributed to society by integrating salmon ceremonies and stories into their cultural and education programs.

In a paper or presentation, you will:

1. Explain two or more examples of contributions made by the Lummi and Nooksack and other Coast Salish tribes through their cultural traditions relation to salmon.
 2. Compare the contributions through art of the Lummi and Nooksack and other Coast Salish tribes with one similarity or difference.
 3. Prepare a list of resources, including the title and author for each source.
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Lummi Nation First Salmon Ceremony

Salmon is as important to the Lummi people as the air we breathe: it sustains our schelangeng (way of life). Since time immemorial, our people honored the salmon each year by holding a salmon ceremony to respect the gift that the Salmon Woman provides to us, the sacrifice of her salmon children and to pass down the tradition of respect taught to us by our elders.

Over recent decades, however, many of our traditional ways had been lost or supplanted by new ideas and attitudes. The bounty of Salmon Woman's gift was taken for granted. And as our stories have warned, the salmon declined.

From: SALMON WOMAN AND HER CHILDREN by Jewell Praying Wolf James

They say that Salmon Woman was hurt by the treatment she and her children were receiving. Some say that Raven was gone when she decided to take her children and leave. She stood by the water's edge and sang a new song. She sang this song and as she did, all the Salmon Children came back to life. The dried, the smoked, the boiled, all of it came back and rolled to the water. As each neared the water, they turned back into whole salmon and leaped into the water, swimming toward the bay, and waiting for their mother-Salmon Woman.

When she finished her song, and all the children had transformed, then she walked into the water and trans-formed back into a salmon, just like her children. She swam away, singing a song, while all her children followed her. They went in the direction that they originally came with Raven. Soon they were out of sight, gone forever. She vowed to never bring her children to a place that they are not wanted or appreciated. She would not tolerate the disrespect of herself or her children's great sacrifice.

In the 1980's, salmon runs that the Lummi people have always depended on began to fail. Around this time, Doralee Solomon-Sanchez & Gordon Wilson undertook a journey to Lake Stuart, the source of the Fraser Sockeye. They were reminded of the story of Salmon Woman. They remembered that traditionally the people held ceremonies to honor the return of the first salmon children each year, and to show their gratitude.

From BEAR AND THE STEELHEAD by Jewell Praying Wolf James

This was the time that the people began to hold the "First Salmon Ceremony." They knew that Salmon Woman would continue to send her children, year after year. But, to remember the sacrifice and the need to not repeat past mistakes, the people began to hold annual ceremonies to remind the elderly and teach the young children to never forget. Through the use of a traditional, annual, ceremony each generation would be taught. All of the people would participate-the elderly, the young, and the leadership. Now, each year, with the arrival of the First Salmon Children, the people remember that the death of the Salmon Children is a spiritual matter, and if we want them to come back every year then we have to be respectful... they are, after all, spiritual sacrifices for the benefit of the human children.

When they returned to Lummi, Gordon Wilson, Randy Kinley, and the Lummi Fisheries and Natural Resources Commission decided to revive the traditional celebration of the First Salmon to honor the gift of Salmon Woman

The First Salmon is brought in, songs are sung, and prayers are made, thanking the salmon for its sacrifice, and thanking Salmon Woman for her gift. Through this, elders are reminded of the story of Salmon Woman, and young people are taught the stories of their ancestors.

The First Salmon is then divided up and shared with all those attending, in keeping with the Lummi tradition of sharing the First Salmon caught with others.

Once the First Salmon has been eaten, all of the bones and uneaten parts are gathered up. Then the First Salmon is returned to the sea to nourish the waters and allow its spirit to return to Salmon Woman and tell her its story and how the Lummi people have remembered to be grateful for her gift.

Excerpted from Lummi Nation Website, Lummi Natural Resources Page, Lummi Natural Resources Commission
<http://lnnr.lummi-nsn.gov/LummiWebsite/Website.php?PageID=190>



Salmon Woman Story Pole

Maritime Heritage Park, Bellingham

Lummi Nation First Salmon Ceremony



The Legend of the Salmon Woman and Her Children

A Northwest Native American legend as told by Marguerite Which-Ta-lum.



Salmon Woman Story Pole,
Maritime Heritage Park, Bellingham
WA

Once a long time ago, when the world was still young, the Xwlemi People all lived in a village at the mouth of the River. They followed Raven, who was a good leader, for he held the interests of his people above his own. It was soon after the Big Flood and the animals had not multiplied, so the people ate only fish. Some of the people began to complain, “Fish, fish, fish, we are sick of fish!” Salmon Woman heard them complain, and she was angry. She gathered up her children and took them back to the ocean, leaving the people with nothing but roots to eat.

Soon the people were starving. They pleaded with Raven to go find food. Raven stocked his canoe with food and water and went out into the unknown ocean . . . out past the islands now known as the San Juans. Raven became lost in the fog, ran out of food and water and began to starve. Finally, he went to the bow of his canoe, raised his arms and began to sing his death song.

Salmon Woman heard Raven’s Death Song and was moved that he was willing to give his life for his people. She transformed into a woman and called for help. Raven rescued her from the water but told her they would both perish, for he was out of food. To show her gratitude, Salmon Woman told him to dip his hat into the water. He did as she said and caught some of her children in the hat. She made a fire from the seats, cooked some of her children, and fed Raven. He regained his strength but told her he was still lost. So she told him to pour out the remaining children; they would show him the way back to the river. They began swimming and jumping ahead of the canoe all the way back to the mouth of the river, for they were happy to return to the river.

The people were happy to see the salmon return and held large feasts to honor Salmon Woman. She became Raven’s wife and told the people that her children were her gift to them. They could have as many as they wanted, as long as they fished from the river. But they were never to get them from the spawning beds. The people were happy. Each year Salmon Woman’s

children came to the village, and the people had plenty to eat before the fish went upstream to the spawning beds. Each year the salmon returned to their mother’s house under the oceans.

Raven was a good leader, and his people prospered. As time went by, the animals had multiplied, and the people were able to hunt again. Raven and the men of the village prepared for a big hunt. But Raven's brother, Bear, was not allowed on the hunt because his wife was expecting a child. In keeping with the beliefs of the people, while Bear's wife was pregnant, Bear could not hunt or fish or touch any hunting or fishing gear. If any of the power of creation was on Bear, it might affect anything that Bear touched. That was the rule, Raven said that he would hunt and fish for Bear's family until the baby was born. The men left to hunt. Bear stayed behind.

But two days into the hunt, Bear's children were crying for food. Bear had not salmon to feed his children. He decided he would ignore the rule. He would fish with his hands away from the village where no one would see him. Bear went upstream to the spawning beds far away from the village. When he got there he could see all the Salmon Children – Chinook, Coho, Sockeye, Pink, Chum and Steelhead. Bear got down on all fours and crawled out into the river. He reached out and grabbed the Salmon Child named Chinook. When he touched the Chinook, all of its kind rolled over and died. Bear was so pleased at how easy it was to catch the fish he did not notice all the dead fish floating downstream. As he reached out and grabbed each species of salmon, all of its kind would roll over, die, and drift downstream.

The people of the village were frightened as they saw all the dead salmon children floating by in the river. When the men returned from the hunt, they heard the people crying and wailing. Raven's wife was very angry. She said, "You must punish whoever has done this or I will take my children out to the Big Water and never come back." Raven could not find his brother, Bear, and realized he must be in the river touching all the fish.

Raven led the people up the river to the sleeping place of the salmon. As they approached, he saw his brother Bear reaching for the Steelhead. He told him to stop, that all the fish were dying. Bear said the salmon were easy to catch while they slept. But Raven stopped him before he touched the Steelhead. To this day the Steelhead doesn't die when he spawns – he is the only salmon who can return to the ocean. Raven then reached in his medicine bag, took his black paint powder, and threw it on his Brother Bear, turning him into the black bear. "Because you have done this, from this day forward you will walk on all fours. You will fish only here in the spawning beds. If you come into the village again, you will be hunted for food."

This appeased Salmon Woman. But from that day forward, to protect her children, she allowed only one species of her children to be in the river at one time. To honor Salmon Woman and to make sure that everyone would always remember to respect her children, Raven ordered that there be a big ceremony, to be repeated every year, to remind the elders and teach the young about the generous gifts of Salmon Woman and her children.

** The legend of Salmon Woman is told on the story pole: raven on top; salmon woman in the center and bear on the bottom, holding a fish. This story pole carving can be viewed at Bellingham's Maritime Heritage Park.*



Food as Culture

Lesson Plan 3: Shellfish

Hands-On Materials

- Collection of local shells
- Small Poster: *Traditional Foods --*

Guiding Question:

- What natural resources were used by Native Americans 200 years ago and what natural resources are used by Native Americans in contemporary times?
- What environmental challenges are facing Lummi and other Coast Salish people?

Online Resources

- PowerPoint: *Food as Culture: Shellfish*
<http://bit.ly/2FhggAG>
- PowerPoint: *Garden of the Salish Sea*
<http://bit.ly/2oBD4dt>

Objectives:

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of natural resources used by Native Americans locally in Whatcom County.
- Students know that for thousands of years along the coastline along the Salish Sea, shellfish have been and continue to be an important source of food for Coast Salish people.

Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs)

Meeting Needs and Wants
(GLE's) 2.2.1, 5.4.1

Activities

1. Review the names of the types of shellfish harvested by Coast Salish people on the Shellfish poster.
2. Pass out various shells to students, and have them compare and contrast shells and try to match the names with the shells and the pictures.
3. Show [Garden of the Salish Sea](#) PowerPoint presentation.
4. Students choose topic related to shellfish in Whatcom County.
5. Make a poster or do a presentation about one.

Assessment: Meeting Needs and Wants CBA

Economics--GLE 2.2.1 Understands how the economic systems of groups are influenced by laws, values, and customs.

Social Studies--GLE 5.4.1 Draws conclusions using at least two clear, specific, and accurate examples in a paper or presentation.

In a paper or presentation, you will:

7. Explain how laws, values, and customs affected the ways in which Lummi and Nooksack tribes gathered shellfish in past time; and/or
8. Explain how current environmental and social issues affect the ways in which Lummi and Nooksack tribes gather shellfish today.
9. Draw a conclusion using at least two clear, specific, and accurate examples in a presentation about how different tribes meet their food needs.
10. Prepare a list of resources, including the title and author for each source.

Teacher Background Information: Shellfish

Shellfish have been a mainstay of western Washington Indian tribes for thousands of years. Clams, crab, oysters, shrimp, and many other species are readily available for harvest year-round. The decline of many western Washington salmon stocks, due in large part to habitat loss from the region's burgeoning human population, has made shellfish more important than ever to the Coast Salish People.

The right to harvest shellfish lies in a series of treaties signed with representatives of the federal government in the 1850's, confirmed in federal court in 1994, and worked out in an agreement between Puget Sound commercial shellfish growers and seventeen treaty Indian tribes in 2007.

Clams, geoducks, mussels, and oysters are currently commercially grown at the Lummi Shellfish Hatchery. The Lummi hatchery, which was built in 1971 and remodeled in 1995, also produces millions of juveniles and seeds from clams, oysters and mussels to sell to tribes and other growers.

Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission web page, *About Us/Shellfish and Commercial Shellfish Growers Settlement*

Why do tribal members get to come onto private property and harvest shellfish?

Washington State is one of the few states in the nation where tidelands are privately owned. Most states have kept tidelands in public hands so everyone can enjoy them. The state sold off the tidelands several decades after the treaties were signed in the 1850s that promised the tribes half of the shellfish. Court cases have established that the treaty right to harvest shellfish was never extinguished; the sale of tidelands did not change the tribes' treaty right.

In what kind of harvesting do the tribes participate?

The tribes conduct commercial, ceremonial and subsistence harvest for shellfish and finfish. Commercial harvests allow tribal members the opportunity to sell the shellfish products they harvest. Ceremonial harvests are intended for use in weddings, funerals and other traditional gatherings, while subsistence harvests are intended to provide tribal members with food.

Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission web page, *Treaty Rights FAQ*

Traditional Foods: SHELLFISH and Other Marine Life

Acorn Barnacle • Gooseneck Barnacle • Thatcher Barnacle • Gumboot Chiton •
Bent-Nose Clam • Butter Clam • Gaper Clam • Macoma Clam • Littleneck Clam •
Pacific Coast Clam • Venus Clam • Basket Cockle • Puget Sound King Crab •
Dungeness Crab • Dog Whelk • Dogwinkles • Oyster Drill • Geoduck • Limpet •
Blue Mussel • California Mussel • Olympia Oyster • Pacific Octopus • Periwinkles •
Sand Dollar • Giant Pacific Octopus • Scallops • Moon Snail • Rock Snail • Sea
Snails • Serpulia Worm • Pink Shrimp • Sidestripe Shrimp • Spot Shrimp • Hooked
Slipper Shell • Wrinkled Slipper Shell • Sea Urchin • Vitrinella • Whelks

From a list of nearly 300 food sources compiled by the Burke Museum.



Food as Culture

Lesson Plan 4: Plants

Hands-On Materials

Detailed List on next page

- Native Plant cards
- Information sheet of traditional plant names, *Traditional Foods: Plants*
- Information sheet of *Stinging Nettle* as food

Guiding Question:

- What native plants were used by Native Americans 200 years ago and what native plants are used by Native Americans in contemporary times?
- What environmental challenges are facing Lummi and other Coast Salish people

Objectives:

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of natural resources used for food by Native Americans locally in Whatcom County.
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of how local tribes use native plant to meet their needs.

Online Resources

- PowerPoint: *Native Plants*
<http://bit.ly/2CSLy4q>

Classroom Based Assessments (CBA)

Meeting Needs and Wants

GLE's 2.2.1, 5.4.1

Activities

1. Present [PowerPoint](#) slides, showing pictures of native plants and/or collect specimens of native plants
2. Oral Tradition: *Story of a Native Plant*
3. From a basket, have each child randomly pick a native plant card.
4. Every student conducts research on a local native plant
5. Every student produces a native plant poster, sign or brochure, with a drawing and/or photograph, with information, including: English name, Lummi and/or Nooksack, and/or Latin name of plant, description, how plant is used for eating, how to find and prepare for eating.

Assessment:

Meeting Needs and Wants CBA

Economics--GLE 2.2.1-- *Understands how the economic systems of groups are influenced by laws, values, and customs.*

Social Studies-GLE 5.4.1-- *Draws conclusions using at least two clear, specific, and accurate examples in a paper or presentation.*

In a paper or presentation, you will:

Explain how laws, values, and customs affected the ways in which Lummi and Nooksack tribes gathered plants in past time; and/or

Explain how current environmental and social issues affect the ways in which Lummi and Nooksack tribes gather plants today.

Draw a conclusion using at least two clear, specific, and accurate examples in a presentation about how different tribes meet their food needs.

Prepare a list of resources, including the title and author for each source.

STINGING NETTLE

Other names: tsł'ts'tcal - Lummi

tsitsxa'ltc - Samish

su'tsx – Swinomish “it'll sting you”

Most hikers and wood-walkers have met the tingling sting of the nettle, so it may surprise you to learn that it has many varied traditional uses in Coast Salish families. Nettle is one of the most nutritious and useful Northwest plants. Throughout the ages, nettles have been revered as food, fiber (thread) and medicine. The spring shoots are eaten like spinach, the leaves are dried and made into a mineral-rich tea and autumn stems are stripped and made into rope.

What it looks like: Nettle is a native herb with deep green leaves that have serrated edges (zig-zag, like the blade of a bread knife). Nettle grows three to nine feet tall in streambeds and areas with rich wet soil from the coast into the mountain. The stalk and undersides of the leaves are covered with stinging hairs that contain formic acid – the substance that stings us.

Harvesting: As you can imagine, nettle must be harvested carefully - gloves or scissors are usually used. However, the elders say that if you approach this plant with attentiveness, patience and respect, it will not sting you. Historically nettles were harvested with bare hands!

Uses:

- **Food:** Harvested in spring, nettles can be boiled, steamed or sautéed like spinach. They are high in minerals, vitamins, chlorophyll and amino acids. Leaves can be dried and used for a mineral-rich tea that is high in iron and other nutrients.
- **Fiber:** Nettle fiber is renowned for its strength and durability and has been used for making fishnets, ropes, clothing, etc. German soldiers in WWII wore uniforms woven from nettle fibers. Nettle has been used as a dye with shades ranging from yellow to deep green.
- **Medicine:** Nettle tea can be helpful in relieving allergies and hay fever and has traditionally been used for colds, arthritis, headaches, and as an aid in childbirth. Nettles help to detoxify the liver, blood and kidneys – meaning that they help to filter waste from the body. Some Northwest Coastal Indians sting themselves to cure arthritic joints with great success. Warriors and hunters once stung themselves to remain awake and alert through the night. It turns out that the sting is not just irritating – it can lead to better circulation, less inflammation and quicker healing.

Teacher Background Information: Plants

Studies show that returning to a more traditional diet can help Native Americans improve health and reduce problems such as diabetes. People from throughout Indian Country have put those findings to work and are contributing to the revitalization of Native food traditions. Northwest Indian College (NWIC) in Bellingham is leading the educational effort through its *Institute of Indigenous Foods & Traditions*

NWIC has recently produced two informative books on traditional Coast Salish food: *Wild Rose and Western Red Cedar* and *Feeding the People, Feeding the Spirit: Revitalizing Northwest Coastal Indian Food Culture*, both available in this kit

Some traditional foods are so important to health that they are considered medicine. For example, huckleberries are a powerful antioxidant and can lower blood sugar. Nettles cleanse the liver and support detoxification. Recent studies have shown that fish oil, with its high Omega-3 content, helps infant brain development, lowers inflammation and helps prevent diabetes. These are just a few of the many examples of traditional foods that help our bodies to function optimally. Many of the foods eaten today lack the nutrients and medicinal qualities that traditional foods contain. That is why eating traditional foods on a regular basis can make a big difference in your health.

Because secondary compounds in some traditional foods and medicines actually have the ability to change our genes, it may be said that we have evolved with the food our ancestors ate. We have heard elders affirm this belief by saying that Indian people's bodies and spirits respond to native foods with profound recognition and knowing. So today, when chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease and cancer are rampant in tribal communities, it is more important than ever to eat traditional foods. We believe that traditional foods can help heal people on many levels. They provide nutrients and medicinal properties that are needed for good health. They are also woven into Northwest Coastal Indian culture and as many elders have told us, the culture is the medicine.

Wild Rose and Western Red Cedar: The Gifts of the Northwest Plants by Elise Krohn

Feeding the People, Feeding the Spirit by Krohn & Segrest

Traditional Foods: PLANTS

Acorns • Mountain Ash • Bearberry • Bedstraw • Biscuit Root • Wild Blackberry • Bladderwrack • Blueberry • Bulrush • Camas • Can Flower • Wild Carrot • Cattail • Bitter Cherry • Chokecherry • Wild Cherry • Chickweed • Clover • Pacific Crabapple • Cranberry • Currants • Golden Currants • Dandelion • Dogwood • Elderberry • Bracken Fern • Lady Fern • Licorice Fern • Ostrich Fern • Springwood Fern • Gooseberry • Goose Foot • Oregon Grape • Hazelnut • Western Hemlock • Horsetail • Huckleberry • Bullwhip Kelp • Kinnikinnick • Knotweed • Lambsquarters • Legume • Miner's Lettuce • Lily Root • Mustard • Nettle • Nightshade • Hooker's Onion • Nodding Onion • Wild Onion • Nori • Nutmeat • Indian Plum • Purslane • Blackcap Raspberry • Wild Rose • Salal • Salmonberry • Seablite • Seaweed • Serviceberry • Soapberry • Spruce • Coastal Strawberry • Wild Strawberry • Woodland Strawberry • Thimbleberry • Vetch • Violets • Wapato • Watercress

From a list of nearly 300 food sources compiled by the Burke Museum.



Food as Culture

Lesson Plan 5: Hunting

Materials Needed

- Animal fur samples
- Information sheet: Food types -- Hunting

Guiding Question:

What natural resources were used by Native Americans 200 years ago and what natural resources are used by Native Americans in contemporary times?

Online Resources

- George Swanaset Sr. interview on hunting <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-s1gSc61IU>
- *Teachings from the First Peoples: Stories from Puget Salish Tribes*
<http://bit.ly/2Flwedy>

Objectives:

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of natural resources used by Native Americans locally in Whatcom County.
- Students know that in various local environments, some kinds of animals were hunted and are still hunted by Nooksack and Lummi people.

Classroom Based Assessments (CBA)

Meeting Needs and Wants
GLE's 2.2.1, 5.4.1

Activities

1. Ask: What natural resources were used by Native Americans 200 years ago?
2. What natural resources are used by Native Americans in contemporary times?
3. Pass out samples of wildlife animal fur. Observe.
4. Watch George Swanaset interview.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-s1gSc61IU>
5. Listen to animal stories from [*Teachings from the First Peoples: Stories from Puget Salish Tribes*](#).
6. Discuss one of the animal stories.
7. Have students make a poster about an animal from one of the stories, including its habitat, and connections with the animal and the food cultures of tribal people.

Assessment: Meeting Needs and Wants CBA

Economics--GLE 2.2.1-- *Understands how the economic systems of groups are influenced by laws, values, and customs.*

Social Studies-GLE 5.4.1-- *Draws conclusions using at least two clear, specific, and accurate examples in a paper or presentation.*

In a paper or presentation, you will:

11. Compare how laws, values, and customs affected the ways in which Lummi and Nooksack tribes hunted food;
12. Draw a conclusion using at least two clear, specific, and accurate examples in a presentation about how different tribes met their needs.
13. Prepare a list of resources, including the title and author for each source.

Facts for Kids:

Meet the Lummi People: A Living Culture

What do the Lummi called themselves?

Lhaq'temish, (LOCK-tuh-mish) which means People of the Sea.

What was the traditional territory of the Lummi Nation?

Before the arrival of Europeans, the Lummi lived in a large area that included the San Juan Islands and Salish Sea area in Washington State and British Columbia, Canada.

What were traditional Lummi villages? They established villages near the sea and in the forests, and moved according to the seasons. They lived in multi-family cedar-plank longhouses.

Where is the Lummi Reservation today?

Today, the Lummi reservation comprises about 20,000 acres on the north side of Bellingham Bay in western Whatcom County, in Washington State. The Lummi Nation manages nearly 13.00 acres of tidelands on the Lummi Reservation

How big is the Lummi tribe?

Over 5000 members. The Lummi is the third largest tribe in Washington State.

What type of government does the Lummi Nation have?

The Lummi Nation is currently a Self-Governing Nation within the United States. Their elected government, the Lummi Indian Business Council, is made up of 11 members.

What were traditional foods for Lummi people?

The traditional means of subsistence for the Lummi were fishing for salmon and other kinds of fish, gathering shellfish and plants, and hunting waterfowl and mammals. The freshwater streams and estuaries of Lummi territory are home to crabs, shrimp, shellfish, marine fish, salmon, and birds. Salmon, however, were their most important food source.

What is the word in Lummi language that means "Lummi way of life?"

Schelangen (shuh-LANG-un)

Traditional Foods

HUNTING

Mammals

Black Bear • American Beaver • Bobcat • Townsend's Chipmunk • Cougar • Coyote • Deer • Pocket Gopher • Snowshoe Hare • Elk • Canada Lynx • Mink • Coast Mole • Moose • Deermouse • Mountain Beaver • Muskrat • North American River Otter • Dall's Porpoise • Raccoon Eared Seal • Hair Seal • Harbor Seal • Striped Skunk • Squirrel • Meadow Vole • Stellar's Sea Lion • Southern Red-Backed Vole • Wapiti • Weasel • Whale • Grey Wolf

Birds

Albatross • Alcid • Bufflehead • Canvasback • American Coot • Cormorant • American Crow • Dove • Ruddy Duck • Bald Eagle • Barrow's Goldeneye • Common Goldeneye • Canada Goose • Eared Grebe • Horned Grebe • Pie-Billed Grebe • Western Grebe • Blue Grouse • Ruffed Grouse • Gull • Harrier • Hawk • Great Blue Heron • Belted Kingfisher • Common Loon • Pacific Loon • Red-Throated Loon • Yellow-Billed Loon • Mallard • Common Merganser • Red-Breasted Merganser • Common Murre • Marbled Murrelet • Owls • Pelican • Pigeon • Northern Pintail • Tufted Puffin • California Quail • Rail • Sandpiper • Lesser Scaup • Black Scoter • Surf Scoter • White-Winged Scoter • Shearwater • Trumpeter Swan • Tundra Swan • Wild Turkey • Turkey Vulture • American Widgeon • Pileated Woodpecker

This list was compiled by the Burke Museum.