

# Something Fishy

## *Lesson Plan*

Educator Hannah Morales

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### **Rationale:**

This cross-curricular lesson can be done during a unit on ocean life, names of local plants and animals, or ocean literacy. Students will gain insight to the anatomy of fish and First Peoples' knowledge and relationship with fish. Students will examine scientific drawings and First Nations artwork of fish and explore how they reflect different interpretations and perspectives of nature.

**First Peoples Principles of Learning:** Learning supports well-being of the community/the land; learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focus on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place); learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.

### Curriculum Connections:

#### **Grade 1–2 Science**

*Big Ideas:* Living things have features and behaviours that help them survive in their environment

*Curricular Competencies:* Recognize First Peoples stories (including oral and written narratives), songs, and art, as ways to share knowledge

*Content:* Names of local plants and animals; local First People's knowledge of water

#### **Grade 1–5 Arts Education**

*Big Ideas:* People connect to others and share ideas through the arts; the arts connect our experiences to the experiences of others

*Curricular Competencies:* Describe and respond to works of art; experience, document and share creative works in a variety of ways

*Content:* Traditional and contemporary Aboriginal arts and art-making processes

*Estimated time required: 45 minutes*

## Lesson Activities

1. Print off images of fish illustrations from the *look* section of the *Something Fishy* pathway from the Royal BC Museum's Learning Portal. Place the images around the classroom. As students enter the classroom instruct them to pick an image that interests them and stand beside it. The students should then be formed into groups around the images.
  - a. Tell students to discuss in their groups why they chose their image and what they think it is an image of. Have one student from each group share points from their discussion with the class.
2. Have students return to their desks. Ask them if they can guess what today's lesson is on. Fish!
3. Ask students to brainstorm the responsibilities and jobs that a scientist does. Tell them that there is one task some scientist do that they might not know of, drawing.
4. Read the description of drawing fish written by Dr. Gavin Hanke *Drawing Fish: The Scientific Art of Fish Illustration* Let the students know that the drawings and images they picked at the beginning of class are drawings all done by scientists; some were by Dr. Gavin Hanke.
  - a. You may also wish to show your students the video under the *watch* section of the *Something Fishy* pathway which is a recording of a Google Hangout for World's Oceans Day with Dr. Gavin Hanke (30 mins). Dr. Gavin Hanke, Curator of Vertebrate Zoology, discusses deep sea exploration and the myriad of new fishes, including the Bony-eared Assfish (*Acanthonus armatus*) which is a new species to British Columbia.
5. Show students images of First Nations ocean related artwork found within the [playlist](#).
  - a. How are the drawings done by scientists different than the First Peoples? How are they similar?
  - b. What do you think these objects and images were used for or represent?
  - c. What do these objects and images tell us about the First Peoples relationship to the water and the creatures who live in it? What do they tell us about their relationship with nature? You may wish to read the descriptions of each object to the class to give them further information.
6. Show the class the video of the Haida legend, [Salmon Boy](#) .
  - a. Why is respecting nature and wildlife important to First Nation's people?
  - b. What other information does this tell us about First People's relationship with fish, particularly salmon?

## Extension

1. Have students pick a fish or sea creature they may not know much about or have a strong interest in. They may want to choose one from the drawings they looked at earlier or one that they know some information on already.
  - a. Students will draw their fish as a scientific artist and as an indigenous artist would. Students could additionally label parts of their scientific drawing, write a brief description of their fish, or find an indigenous story that is related.

Fully immerse yourself in the Royal BC Museum's Learning Portal by making a [playlist](#)!