

Species at Risk

Lesson Plan

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Rationale:

In this lesson, students become the detectives and advocates for our vulnerable species at risk. Students will investigate Indigenous knowledge of their species, why it is at risk, and how we can help them. Students will then step into the role of news anchors and present their findings to the class.

First Peoples Principles of Learning: Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits and the ancestors; learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships and a sense of place); learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions; learning recognizes the role of Indigenous knowledge

Traditional Ecological Knowledge: Local knowledge; necessary for survival; sustainability

Curriculum Connections:

Grade 11–12 Environmental Science

Curricular Competencies: Apply First Peoples' perspectives and knowledge, other ways of knowing and local knowledge as sources of information; analyze cause-and-effect relationships; co-operatively design projects with local and/or global connections and applications; contribute to finding solutions to problems at a local and/or global level through inquiry

Grade 11 Environmental Science

Big Ideas: Human practices affect the sustainability of ecosystems; humans can play a role in stewardship and restoration of ecosystems

Content: Sustainability in local ecosystems; unsustainable and sustainable; species at risk, extinctions, invasive species

Grade 12 Environmental Science

Big Ideas: Living sustainably supports the well-being of self, community, and earth

Content: Global water systems: conservation; protecting species at risk

Grade 11-12 English Language Arts

Estimated time required: One to two class periods

Lesson Activities:

Students will work individually or in pairs to use their inquiry skills to design news segments on a species at risk, thinking locally and/or globally, and suggest ways to help their endangered species.

1. Play the “Monarch Butterflies” and/or “Northern Abalone” videos found on the [watch](#) section of the Species at Risk pathway.
 - a. Tell students that they will be doing a mini inquiry project on a species at risk of their choice and creating a quick news segment similar to the *This Week in History*.
2. As a class, conduct the scanning stage of each inquiry project through discussion.
 - a. What are some species at risk that the class has discussed?
 - b. Why are these species’ populations becoming depleted?
 - c. What are some of the human impacts on these species at risk?
3. Inform students that their news segments must include the following information:
 - a. Description of the species they’ve chosen
 - b. Factors that put it at risk
 - c. Ideas about how we can help the species (locally and/or globally)
 - d. Indigenous knowledge of the species. For example, Indigenous legends about the species; ways Indigenous people may have used the species; how Indigenous people viewed or respected different species
4. Have students work individually or in pairs on their news segments, conducting research, writing scripts and practising. Circulate around the class to make sure all students are on task and have chosen a species at risk. Suggest the [read](#) section of the *Species at Risk* pathway as a place to begin their online research.
 - a. You may wish to sign out tablets or laptops to help your class to conduct research.
 - b. Students may wish to contact people in their community who are actively working on species-at-risk issues. They can start by contacting local government or a nature centre.

5. Once students have finished their research and practised their news segment, have them present to the class. Depending on your class period length, presentations could be done on the same day or in the following class.
 - a. Differentiated learning: if some students are uncomfortable presenting to the whole class, you may wish to divide students into smaller groups for presentations and then have groups report back to the whole class.

6. Once presentations are complete ask the following discussion questions:
 - a. What are some of the ways we found to help species at risk?
 - i. In what ways do you think we could put these ideas and initiatives into action?
 - ii. How do you think the government can/should help in recovering species at risk?
 - iii. What can we do in our school and/or classroom to try and help species at risk?

7. Ticket out the door: Have students give themselves a self-assessment for their mini inquiries in the form of two stars and a wish (two things they think they did well and one thing they think they could improve on).

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