

# PRIMARY ELEMENTARY – PATHWAY 2

## Lesson 2

### Grades K-3 – First Salmon Ceremony

*“Celebration of the Salmon, Salmon Homecoming style, is a practice that has thrived in this part of the world for thousands of years. Our elders taught us that celebration in this traditional sense is an opportunity to show respect for gifts nature provides for us, for the life we have been given and for the many natural resources we enjoy. It is also an opportunity for us to share ideas and to learn from one another.” –Billy Frank, Jr. (1998, Excerpt from “Tell the Truth”)*

#### Instructional Support Materials

[Getting Started! – READ ME FIRST.](#)

[Favorite Traditions Worksheet](#)

[Favorite Traditions Worksheet \(Spanish Language Version\)](#)

[Suggested Letter to Parents](#)

[Parent Letter \(Spanish Language Version\)](#)

[First Salmon Ceremony](#)

[First Salmon Ceremony \(Spanish Language Version\)](#)

Posters or space for listing:

--Tribes in our region

--Plants and Animals (in our region)

Document camera or overhead projector (optional)

**PLEASE NOTE: The following book is not included within this lesson but may be purchased or acquired through your local library.**

P’esk’a and the First Salmon Ceremony, Scot Ritchie

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**Time:** Approximately 40 minutes

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#### Teacher Preparation/Materials:

Vocabulary:

- Native peoples, first peoples, indigenous, tribe (as used in reference to peoples/tribes) – having origins in a particular place
- Tribe: a group of people with common ancestry, in this context, first people of a place. (These terms can be used somewhat interchangeably but it is always

preferable to use the names of specific tribes when possible, or regional descriptors – Columbia River/Plateau, Puget Sound, and Pacific Coast tribes when referring to tribes in Washington.)

- Tradition, ritual, practices, culture
- Watershed, erosion, spawning, estuary

Send [parent letter \(Spanish Language Version\)](#) and [Favorite Traditions Worksheet \(Spanish Language Version\)](#) home with students for families to help complete one week prior to lesson being taught.

Prepare posters or space for lists (see above)

Review comments at the end of *P'esk'a*.

*More About the Sts'ailes People, Glossary, and Letter from Chief William Charlie of the Sts'ailes People.* Teachers may choose to integrate some of this information into the reading or share with students afterwards.

\*Note: This book might best be shared with a document camera or overhead projector. The pictures are detailed and enlargement for student groups could be helpful.

Lesson Procedures:

*We have been learning about each other's family traditions. Now we are going to learn about a tradition of the first people who live in this area where we live.*

- *Do you know or have a guess about who the very first people of this area were?*
- *Who are Native people? What is a tribe?*
- *Do you know the names of any Native tribes in this area?*

Name tribes in your region and post list on board to refer to.

*This story comes from the Sts'ailes Tribe, which is right across the border in Canada. It tells a story of a tradition that has been practiced in a similar way by many tribes in Washington State and other parts of the Pacific Northwest. This story takes place a long time ago, but the tradition is still practiced by many tribes today.*

Read *P'esk'a* and the [The First Salmon Ceremony](#)

During reading, draw attention to the details in pictures that identify cultural and environmental features associated with the natural and cultural history of your place.

- *Has anyone here ever been to a first salmon ceremony? What do you remember?*
- *Salmon have always been really important to tribes in the Pacific Northwest. As they always say, since the beginning of time.*

- *Why do you think that might be?*

Review story, asking students to notice and share about all of the plants and animals in the story. Record list.

Closure:

Because salmon are so important to the Native peoples in this region, they celebrate the salmon's return. It means that the salmon have returned, and that their life cycle is continuing. Tribal members celebrate this event by having a big feast. The First Salmon Ceremony is still celebrated by many Native people every year.

Scientists can learn about how humans and how we live, can impact salmon and the environment by looking at how many salmon are returning to their old spawning grounds. If they don't come back, that is a sign that something has interfered with the health and well-being of the salmon. We are going to be thinking more over the next couple of days about things we can do to help out salmon.

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**NOTES:**

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