



Learning Through Stewardship:

Raising Salmon at King Traditional Elementary

At King Elementary, we believe that learning comes alive when students engage with the world around them. Each year, several classes participate in a unique, hands-on project: raising salmon as part of their study on life cycles and environmental stewardship. This school-wide learning experience is guided through our Library Learning Commons and connects science, culture, and community in meaningful ways.

The journey begins in the classroom, where students explore the interconnectedness of ecosystems and discover why salmon are considered a keystone species. Lessons highlight Indigenous perspectives, including land acknowledgements, traditional fisheries, and the cultural significance of salmon in ceremony and sustenance. Students also learn about conservation, sustainability, and the importance of taking only what we need to protect our environment for future generations.



Through engaging activities such as wall displays, STEM-based lessons, videos, and hands-on worksheets, students deepen their understanding of salmon biology, commercial and sport fisheries, and the economic and cultural roles salmon play in British Columbia. This foundation sets the stage for an unforgettable experience: caring for live salmon eggs.



With guidance from a local hatchery expert, students receive 55 coho salmon eggs to nurture in a classroom incubator fishtank. As the eggs develop into smolts and fry, students observe each stage of the salmon life cycle, record their findings, and learn the vocabulary and science behind migration and survival. Later in the year, the entire school celebrates by releasing the young salmon into Downes Creek at Downes Bowl, a powerful moment of stewardship and connection to our local habitat.



The learning does not stop there. To complete the life cycle study, the hatchery expert returns with adult salmon for a dissection lab. Working in small groups, students apply the scientific method to identify and label anatomical features, gaining a deeper appreciation for biology and environmental science.

This project is more than a science lesson. It is an opportunity for students to engage with their community, develop environmental awareness, and understand the vital role they play in protecting local ecosystems. We are proud of the hard work, and environmental stewardship understanding reflected by our students and hope that these experiences will continue to inspire curiosity, responsibility, and a lifelong respect for the natural world

