



# Salmon Summer in Kodiak

**Grade: 4<sup>th</sup> and up      Time: 1 or 2 sessions**

Developed by Jenifer Cameron, Art Specialist



- KIT INCLUDES:**
- lesson plan
  - vocabulary board
  - book: Salmon Summer in Kodiak
  - salmon envelopes (5)
  - salmon boards:
    - artwork by B. Billman
    - anatomy
    - common names
    - lifecycle (poster)
  - color wheel
  - process boards (2)
  - project sample
  - set of design elements (24)

- MATERIALS:**
- Construction paper
    - 6" x 9" white
    - 7" x 10" cool colors
    - 7" x 10" warm colors
    - 9" x 12" black
  - watercolor paints, brushes
  - markers (small, colors)
  - markers (thin & thick, black)
  - scrap paper (4" x 6" approx.)
  - table salt and small paper cups
  - scissors
  - glue
  - Alaska map in classroom

**LESSON DESCRIPTION:**  
Through the book Salmon Summer in Kodiak, students learn about an Aleut boy who lives on Kodiak Island and fishes for salmon. Students create a 2D painting with warm or cool colors that incorporates designs inspired by salmon and traditional Aleut hunting hats.

**VOCABULARY:**

line                                      subsistence  
 pattern                                    resources  
 geometric  
 analogous color  
 Aleut/Alutiiq

**ART ELEMENTS:**

Line  
 Shape/Form  
 Color  
 Value  
 Texture  
 Space/Perspective

**ART PRINCIPLES:**

Pattern  
 Rhythm/movement  
 Proportion/Scale  
 Balance  
 Unity  
 Emphasis

**CONTENT CONNECTIONS:**  
Alaska resources

**THEMES:**  
Place

**OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:** Students will:

learn about salmon fishing, subsistence lifestyles and salmon resources in Kodiak.  
 learn how to find analogous colors on the color wheel.  
 use traditional Aleut designs to create a work of art.  
 locate Kodiak on a map of Alaska.

**PREPARE:**

Teachers should read and practice the lesson before teaching to assure student success.

- Materials to prepare include:
- cut construction paper, 6" x 9" white, 7" x 10" warm and cool colors
  - lay out salmon envelopes in central area along with scrap paper (re-supply salmon if necessary)
  - put teaspoon of salt in small paper cups
  - fill small water cups

## ENGAGE AND EXPLORE:

Gather students close to the whiteboard, or general area, to record ideas.

Salmon is one of Alaska's most valuable, renewable resources and is celebrated in tradition, culture, economics, lifestyles and art. It is hard to go anywhere in Alaska and not hear people talking about salmon. (Ask students to brainstorm the many ways salmon affects peoples' lives in Alaska.) Some ideas may include:

- a. someone makes his or her living from commercial fishing
- b. fishes for salmon for food (**subsistence**)
- c. has a tourism business outfitting sport fishermen
- d. monitors the health, habitat and numbers of salmon
- e. is involved in the marketing of salmon
- f. is looking for a good fishing hole
- g. is just looking for a good salmon dinner
- h. creates artwork about salmon

### Creating Knowledge

1. Share with students the book Salmon Summer by Bruce McMillan. This story is about the day in the life of a boy living on Kodiak Island. Locate Kodiak Island on a map.
2. After sharing the story, discuss with students the concept of subsistence fishing, salmon as a resource for other animals on the island, and what summer is like for Alex on Kodiak Island.
3. Discuss Alex's cultural heritage. He is Alutiiq, which is a different group than the Aleut of the Aleutian Islands. Information about his heritage is at the end of the book.
4. Display the boards (3) showing the life cycle of a salmon, salmon anatomy, and the common salmon names. Focus on the concept that salmon are a **renewable resource**. Briefly go over the anatomy of a salmon and the common names. This will help them choose the salmon they will be using in their artwork later.
5. Have students return to desks, picking up **one** white paper and **one** colored paper on their way.
6. Pass out water, watercolor paint sets, brush and table salt. Salt and watercolors can be shared.

## CREATE:

Display the vocabulary board, color wheel, "Spirit of the Sockeye" artwork, painting teaching board, and lesson example.

Discuss with students the artwork by Blaine Billman. He created the images inside the salmon shape using the art technique called "pointillism" with a pen and ink. He is showing traditional Pacific Northwest Coast designs inside the salmon form. Explain to the students they will be creating a work of art similar to Blaine Billman, but will be using patterns familiar to the Aleut/Alutiiq culture.

## Creating Artwork Part 1--Background

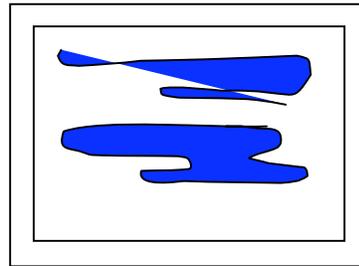
1. Have students glue their white paper to the colored paper, leaving a border around the edge.

Discuss with students the vocabulary word “analogous”. Explain to students analogous colors are next-door neighbors, or are right next to each other on the color wheel. Demonstrate for students how to find analogous colors on the color wheel. There can be 2 or even 3 analogous colors connected on the color wheel.

2. Students will wet their paper using a brush and water only. This type of watercolor technique is called wet-on-wet. Be sure to demonstrate how to gently pull the brush in one direction and then another across the paper. Discourage “scrubbing” the paper with the brush.

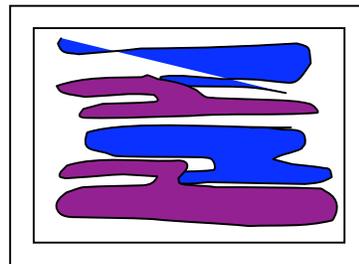
3. Students now choose one color to paint into the water on their paper, leaving some white paper showing. Paint should be watery and “move around” on the paper.

Paint should be very watery and move around a bit. This is called wet-on wet watercolor painting.



4. Have students rinse their brush and choose an analogous color to fill in the white spaces. Have them refer to the color wheel if they don't know which color to choose. If they want to use 3 analogous colors, that is ok.

Colors will flow into each other. This creates a watery background for the salmon.



5. Students will now sprinkle small pinches of salt into the wet areas on their background paper. They must work quickly to get the salt into the puddles. If the areas dry, have them add water **before** adding salt. **The effect will not be the same if they add water to the salt.** Discuss briefly the chemical reaction that is taking place. The salt crystal is absorbing the water. Because there is paint with the water, you will be able to see the effects of this process. **Set painting aside to dry. Clean up paints and water.**

## Creating Artwork Part 2--Salmon

- Students will need glue, scissors and markers at their desk.
- Display the teaching board showing the Xeroxed salmon shape.
- Pass out the Aleut Design Elements paper to students.
- Have students choose a salmon from the envelope and a piece of scrap paper.

Discuss with the students the design techniques and patterns used on the Aleut Design Elements paper. These patterns and designs are typically found on the Aleut hunting hats used by the Aleuts of the Aleutian Islands. Traditional Alutiiq designs are still being researched, but some were influenced by the designs of the Aleuts, or visa versa. For this lesson, students will be using these Aleut design elements to fill in their salmon.

Ask students:

- Describe the shape of the hunting hats. (oval, short visor, long visor, open top)
- What function did they serve? (blocking the sun and glare on the water)
- Can they think of any hats today that have this shape? (baseball caps)
- What challenges did the artists have painting the designs on the hats? (using geometric shapes and patterns on curves, thin and thick areas)

*Note: Further research or websites on Aleut hunting hats can generate additional information. (www.anchoragemuseum.org)*



**Jacob Simeonoff Alutiq, Old Harbor, Kodiak 1992 (Anchorage Museum)**

### **Making the Salmon**

1. Cut out the salmon along the edge of the fish. Keep all fins intact!
2. Flip salmon over to the blank side and place on scrap paper. **Outline** the shape of the salmon with the thick black marker. Be sure to get the black outline on the cut paper salmon. Draw in the head and the tail area using curved lines.
3. Draw designs inside the salmon shape, using a small black marker. Think of new ways to arrange **patterns and geometric designs**.
4. Fill in the designs with markers, using the same **analogous colors** as students used in the background.

### **Putting it all Together** (students need glue and black construction paper)

- Gently brush off salt from background paper. If some remains, it is ok. More texture!
- Carefully glue salmon to background paper using white glue.
- Glue background to 9" x 12" black construction paper.
- Sign name on colored paper border with a pencil in the right hand corner.
- Students may add the date in the left hand corner.
- A title can be added between the date and their name.
- Glue the information sheet about the lesson to the back of the artwork.

