

LESSON 5 - GOOD INTENTIONS



ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

What combination of factors both natural and manmade is necessary for healthy river restoration and how does this enhance the sustainability of natural and human communities?

GUIDING QUESTION:

How did an 1881 law in Washington interfere with the support of the building of the Elwha Dam and what was the consequence for salmon? What did the building of the dam do for the economy of the Port Angeles area?

LESSON OVERVIEW:

The Territory of Washington code of 1881 made it a crime for anyone to obstruct the passage of salmon in any waterway. When Thomas Aldwell built the lower Elwha Dam in 1912 it became clear during construction that the dam was an impediment to salmon. Aldwell failed to include a fish ladder or passage as required by law making the Elwha Dam an illegal dam. In 1913 Washington State fish commissioner, Leslie Darwin, found a loop hole in the 1881 law that allowed the Elwha Dam to function legally. In this lesson, students will read about the loop hole and the subsequent repeal of the 1881 law and its replacement by a 1914 law that allowed below dam hatcheries to be built instead of waterways. The Elwha Dam is important in that it set a precedent for dams in Washington. The students will then compare the early economic gain from the dam to the Olympic Peninsula in the form of hydropower with the loss of the salmon and write an editorial for *The Port Angeles Evening News* either supporting the dam or supporting the salmon.

TIME:

Two block class periods

MATERIALS:

- Pencil and paper
- Computer access
- Reflection Journal Pages (printable handout)
- Student pages (printable handout)

PROCEDURE:

1. Review the essential question; introduce the guiding question.
2. Hand out Reflection Journal pages then have students take a minute to write down their ideas about the questions. Ask students to share any thoughts they have written about.
3. Handout the student pages. Students will research and answer some questions about the loophole in the 1881 Washington Code that allowed the Elwha Dam to function legally. Students will research and answer questions on the economic impact of the dam to Port Angeles and the Olympic Peninsula, and then its impact on salmon.
4. Students will use the information from the reading and questions to write a letter to the editor of *The Port Angeles Evening News* (1916-1972) either supporting the legality of the dam and its promise of prosperity or supporting the protection of salmon.
5. Hand out the second Reflection Journal Page. Give students time for a final reflection the lesson.

ASSESSMENTS:

- Reflection Journal (see rubric)
- Editorial (see rubric)

WASHINGTON STATE STANDARDS:

READING

1. **EALR 2:** The student understands the meaning of what is read.
 - a. **Component 2.2:** Understand and apply knowledge of text components to comprehend text.

SOCIAL STUDIES

1. **EALR 1: CIVICS** The student understands and applies knowledge of government, law, politics, and the nation's fundamental documents to make decisions about local, national, and international issues and to demonstrate thoughtful, participatory citizenship.
 - a. **Component 1.4:** Understands civic involvement.

WRITING

1. **EALR 2:** The student writes in a variety of forms for different audiences and purposes.
 - a. **Component 2.2:** Writes for different purposes.
2. **EALR 3:** The student writes clearly and effectively.
 - a. **Component 3.1:** Develops ideas and organizes writing.

RESOURCES AND ENRICHMENT:

Letter writing help for struggling students:

http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/letter_generator/



Elwha River Restoration
Reflection Journal Page 1

Have you ever done something that got you in trouble but you got out of it because of a loophole, a way of escaping a difficulty?



**Elwha River Restoration
Student Pages**

TASK #1: READ AND THINK

The Territory of Washington code of 1881 made it a crime for anyone to obstruct the passage of salmon on any waterway. When Thomas Aldwell built the lower Elwha Dam in 1912 it became clear during construction that the dam was an impediment to salmon. Aldwell failed to include a fish ladder or passage as required by law making the Elwha Dam an illegal dam. In 1913 Washington State fish commissioner, Leslie Darwin, found a loop hole in the 1881 law that allowed the Elwha Dam to function legally.

1. Use the provided web sites to describe the loophole, a way of escaping a difficulty, which Washington State Fish Commissioner, Leslie Darwin, evoked in order to make Thomas Aldwell's illegal dam legal.

2. Do you think it's alright to use loopholes to get out of legal difficulties? Why or why not?

Use these web sites to answer the questions.

http://books.google.com/books?id=TXGB-5KhZrIC&pg=PA134&lpg=PA134&dq=Leslie+Darwin%22+hatcheries&source=bl&ots=jkb7FbIkZi&sig=7nso_y9LwSlZ8iqwOERmDUCzszl&hl=en&ei=vkeoSeDPO4Gctwf2hszjDw&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=1&ct=result#PPA134,M1 (pg.130-136)

<http://www.washingtontrout.org/Rusted%20Sheild%20FINAL.pdf> (pgs.7&8)

<http://www.fws.gov/westwafwo/fisheries/Publications/FP208.pdf> (“Fish and Fisheries” pgs8&9)

3. How did the Elwha Dam help to bring economic prosperity to Port Angeles, Washington and the Olympic Peninsula at the beginning of the 20th Century?

4. How did the dam affect the salmon?

Use the web sites below along with the previous web sites to answer the questions.

http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=pf_output.cfm&file_id=7590

http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&file_id=8210

http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~cses/csessite/restricted/EreadDocs/watershed_9.pdf



Elwha River Restoration Student Pages

TASK #2: TRAVEL BACK IN TIME

Use the information you have gathered from the reading you did to answer the questions about the legality of the first Elwha Dam, its economic value and its effect on salmon to write a letter to the editor, a letter expressing an opinion, to *The Port Angeles Evening News*.

The Port Angeles Evening News began publication in 1916 and ended publication in 1972. According to the book *Port Angeles, USA* by McCallum and Ross (1961) p. 134, “The early days of Port Angeles newspapering were typical of frontier journalism – rowdy, uninhibited, always embattled, always poverty stricken, but **seldom dull**.” Pretend the year is 1916, the lower dam had been in operation since December 12, 1913, when according to an article in *The Olympic Leader* (a weekly Port Angeles newspaper) the “juice” (electric power) was turned on in Port Angeles, write your letter either in support of the dam and its promise of prosperity or in reaction to the blocking of salmon. Remember the year is 1916 and salmon are seemingly abundant but...

Think about whose point of view you want to take in writing your letter are you one of the town’s promoters – a dreamer who sees an exciting future for Port Angeles? Are you a saw mill owner or employee, a logger, a doctor, a mother, a fisherman, a Native American? Are you a grizzled old homesteader who lives on the Elwha River above the dam? Who are you and what is your opinion about the dam?

When writing a Letter to the Editor remember:

1. Your letter must be relevant. In 1916 the operation of the dam would have been important to the Port Angeles community.
2. Your letter must be logically organized. First, state the argument you are opposing, then state your own position, give your evidence and suggest solutions. Finally, restate your position in a strong concluding statement.
3. Stick to one topic.
4. Follow proper letter writing format.

http://www.writing.engr.psu.edu/workbooks/letter_format.html

5. Address your letter “Dear Editor:”
6. Use your personal opinion but your personal opinion is not enough, be rational and back your opinion with facts.
7. Use persuasive language. Use clear, direct, active language. Get to the point right away.
8. Be brief, 200 -250 words – clear and concise letters are more likely to be published.
9. Get your facts right. Be able to back up your opinion with verifiable facts.
10. It’s OK in a letter to the editor to be emotional and to use emotional language, but be careful not to be too emotional. Too much anger or self- righteousness will turn your readers off. Try to be emotional but balanced.
11. Try to be entertaining. You can have facts and figures and still write an entertaining letter. Try using humor in expressing your opinion.
12. Proofread, proofread, and proofread! Then have someone else proofread! Then proofread again.
13. Have fun

RESOURCES:

Some Guidelines for Composing Letters to Editors

<http://www.fair.org/index.php?page=122> from FAIR: Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting
<http://kaboom.org/Advocate/PlaymakersWantedJointheNetwork/WriteaLettertotheEditor/tabid/716/Default.aspx> from Playmaker

A sample letter from the American Library Association

<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/aaslproftools/toolkits/sampleletter.cfm>

A Sample Letter to the Editor from a Middle School Student:

http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/edumat/hreduseries/hereandnow/Part-4/9_action-activity5-sample.htm

Sample Business Letter Format

http://www.writing.engr.psu.edu/workbooks/letter_format.html

Check with your teacher for deadlines and a grading rubric for your letter.



Elwha River Restoration
Reflection Journal 2

Now it's time to return to the present. Today, knowing what we know about the loss of salmon in the Elwha River would you have written the same letter? Why or why not?

How much influence do you think Letters to the Editor have on local government?

Grading Rubric for a Letter to the Editor

Outstanding response (4)

The beginning of the letter grabs the reader with a strong and clear identification of the issue and statement of personal opinion. It makes three or more excellent points of evidence with good support. The letter summarizes the issue and personal opinion in a strong concluding statement. Proper letter format is used. Letter is 200-250 words. Sentences and paragraphs are complete and varied. Words are well-chosen and clear. The letter is logical and sticks to the topic. The letter contains no spelling, grammatical or usage errors.

Above-average response (3)

The beginning of the letter clearly identifies the issue and states an opinion. The letter makes two excellent points of evidence with good support. The letter summarizes the issue and personal opinion in a concluding statement. Proper letter format is used. Letter is 200 - 250 words. Sentences and paragraphs are complete. Word choice is good. The Letter is logical and sticks to the topic. The letter contains one spelling, grammatical or usage error.

Average response (2)

The issue and personal opinion are not clearly stated at the beginning of the letter. The letter only makes one point of evidence with good support or it makes more than one point of evidence without good support. The concluding statement is weak and doesn't clearly restate the issue and personal opinion. Letter format is incorrect. Letter is more than 250 or less than 200 words. Sentences and paragraphs may be incomplete or wordy. The letter uses good words but is inconsistent in sticking to the topic. The letter contains spelling, grammatical or usage errors.

Below-average response (1)

The issue and personal opinion are not easily understood. The letter's evidence and support are weak. The concluding statement is unclear and fails to restate either the issue or a personal opinion. Letter format is incorrect. Letter is less than 200 words. Sentences are incomplete or wordy and unclear. Word usage is weak and the letter is illogical and inconsistent. There are many spelling, grammatical and usage errors.

Failure to respond to the assigned prompt (0)

No effort was made to identify relevant requirements. Letter was either left unfinished or not attempted at all.

Reflection Journal Rubric

Outstanding response (4)

An outstanding reflection journal response is an original, thought-provoking response to the questions raised in the prompt. It contains specific examples from both the student's experiences as well as the classroom material whenever possible. It asks original, provocative, relevant questions. It is also virtually free of grammatical errors.

Above-average response (3)

An above-average journal thoroughly addresses the questions raised in the prompt. It contains specific examples from both personal experiences as well as the classroom material whenever possible. It asks provocative, relevant questions. It may contain some minor grammatical errors.

Average response (2)

An average journal competently addresses the issue raised in the prompt. It contains some examples from both personal experiences as well as the classroom material whenever possible. It asks relevant questions. Grammatical errors may be present, but they will not impede the reader from understanding the context of the sentences

Below-average response (1)

A below-average journal does not competently address the issue raised in the prompt. It contains few examples from personal experiences or the classroom material. It asks easy questions. Grammatical errors are so rampant that they impede the reader from understanding the context of the sentences.

Failure to respond to the assigned prompt (0)

A failing journal does not address the issue raised in the prompt at a middle school level. It contains very few examples of personal experiences as well as classroom material, or the student fails to respond at all. Grammatical errors are so rampant that they impede the reader from understanding the context of the sentences.