



## Materials

Approximately 10' rope or jump rope (dam turbines)

1-3 sea bird, seal, or sea lion stuffed animals (competitors for salmon)

Hand-held drum or other noise-maker (vessel noise)

3 or 4 hula hoops or old bike tires (orca graveyard and salmon graveyard)

Set of blue, red, and white poker chips (food: Chinook and chum salmon)

## Objective

Go out to forage for as many fish as possible and live to form a superpod without harm from obstacles in the Salish Sea.

## Set-up

Set the course up in a large area outside or in a gym. Have the "dam" at the "river-" end and the "boats" at the "ocean" end.

Assign each student an actual whale (their adopted whales), using the family trees from The Whale Museum. Even if students are going to play salmon in the game, they will become a whale for the "superpod" at the end.

Divide students into 4 groups:

3 southern resident killer whale pods (J, K, and L) and one group of salmon.

Select adult or student volunteers to play one of the following roles, representing obstacles faced by Southern Resident Killer Whales:

**Dams:** turn a jump rope that salmon must jump through before going out to sea.

**Birds, seals and sea lions:** compete for salmon. Have a few volunteers with bird or seal stuffed animals gathering chips during foraging time.

**Ship noise:** "ships" will beat a drum (or other noisemaker) to represent noise pollution underwater.

## How to play

Have each pod gather together and begin in one corner/area of your playing field. Have salmon pick up a handful or two of poker chips. Tell the students that blue chips are Chinook salmon, white are chum, and red are either of those (red chips will represent fish with bioaccumulated toxins, but keep this secret).

1. With the course set up and all volunteers in place, start the jump rope spinning.
2. At the *outmigrate* signal, salmon students will line up at the jump rope to attempt to pass through the dam without getting turned to salmon slurpees by the turbines. If a salmon makes the jump rope stop, that salmon is dead and has to return its poker chips to their container and wait in the salmon graveyard (hula hoops in the “river”).
3. If the salmon makes it through the dam and out to sea, she will spread her poker chips out in the ocean. These will represent individual salmon that orcas can catch.
4. At the *forage* signal, all orca pods will forage for salmon, picking up poker chips and tagging salmon students while trying to avoid obstacles.
5. Obstacles: If the drummer gets within 1 ft of a whale, the whale must go to the orca graveyard (hula hoops in the “ocean”). Make light of the fact that *Orcinus orca* means *belonging to the god of the underworld*. If seals, sea lions, or birds get the poker chips, there are fewer fish for the orcas.
6. At the *end-foraging* signal, they must regroup with their pods and gather around the teacher, who accounts for how many chips were gathered.

They survived IF they got: > 5 king salmon, > 10 chum salmon (smaller fish)  
< 3 red poker chips (explain bioaccumulation of toxins)

leading to compromised immune systems, early offspring mortality, and early death.

7. Send all the dead to the graveyard!
8. Release the dead (resurrect the whales) so all can participate in the superpod.
9. Have whales rejoin their pods. Have former salmon turn to their adopted killer whale.
10. Pods will now form straight lines, shoulder to shoulder with their pod members, facing the other pods. They will become totally silent and wait for the signal.
11. At the *superpod* signal, they can rush together, breaching, cartwheeling, tail-lobbing, spyhopping, vocalizing, etc. in celebration.
12. Gather together and discuss what was fun and challenging about the game and what the various experiences inspired them to think about:
  - a. Having an obstacle preventing salmon from making it to the dinner table
  - b. Having noise affecting your concentration
  - c. Having competition for prey
  - d. Discovering that some of the salmon caught contained toxins
  - e. Superpod fun

