

## Lesson 2: The Big Picture: Coast Salish Culture – 70 min.

**Short Description:** By analyzing and comparing maps and photographs from the Renton History Museum’s collection and other sources, students will gain a better understanding of Coast Salish daily life through mini lessons. These activities will include information on both life during the time of first contact with White explorers and settlers and current cultural traditions.

### Supported Standards:

- 3rd Grade Social Studies
  - 3.1.1 Understands and applies how maps and globes are used to display the regions of North America in the past and present.
  - 3.2.2 Understands the cultural universals of place, time, family life, economics, communication, arts, recreation, food, clothing, shelter, transportation, government, and education.
  - 4.2.2 Understands how contributions made by various cultural groups have shaped the history of the community and the world.

### Learning Objectives -- Students will be able to:

- Inspect maps to understand where Native Americans lived at the time of contact in Washington State.
- Describe elements of traditional daily life of Coast Salish peoples; including food, shelter, and transportation.
- Categorize similarities and differences between Coast Salish pre-contact culture and modern Coast Salish culture.

**Time:** 70 min.

### Materials:

- Laminated and bound set of *Photo Set 2*

### Warm-Up 15 min.:

Ask students to get out a piece of paper and fold it into thirds.

- 5 min.: In the top third, ask them to write: What do you already know about Native Americans (from the artifacts you looked at in the last lesson)? Give them 5 min to brainstorm.
- 5 min.: In the middle, ask them to write: What do you still want to know? Give them 5min to brainstorm answers to this.
- 5 min.: Ask students to share their answers to these two questions.

### Main Activity – Learning about Duwamish Life and Culture (45 min.)

A. Three Maps; The Salish Sea and Surrounding Basin, Coastal Languages and Cultures, and The Historic Black River,

Ask students to look at Maps #1, #2, and #3. Read the accompanying text aloud, either as the instructor or as students take turns (as the same text is printed on the back of the images).

Back text:

“Native Americans have called the Pacific Northwest home for thousands of years. The Native Americans from the Pacific Northwest area are called the “Coast Salish” people. They made the Salish Sea and surrounding basin their home. Coast Salish people speak similar languages called Lushootseed and have many similarities in their cultures, but are distinct groups.<sup>1</sup> The specific group that made up the original residents of Renton are called the Duwamish.

The Duwamish lived along the rivers of the region. In Renton, they used to live along the Cedar and the Black Rivers, but Duwamish people lived all the way up to the Seattle area, too. Duwamish actually means “people of the inside” because Duwamish people would row up the rivers inside the land (and away from the coast).<sup>2</sup>

The Black River once connected Lake Washington and the Cedar River with the Duwamish River and drained into the Puget Sound. The Black River had a thriving salmon population that the Duwamish relied heavily upon for food. In 1912 Rentonites created a channel to drain the Cedar River into Lake Washington to stop the flooding in downtown Renton<sup>3</sup>. In 1916 the Montlake cut (by the University of Washington) was completed. When the channel opened, the level of Lake Washington dropped 16 feet and fell below the level of the Black River. The Black River dried up within a couple months, destroying the salmon population.”

After the class has read the text and looked at Map 1 and 2 of the Coast Salish region, ask students to turn to a partner and discuss some of these questions:

- Where is Canada on this map? Where is Seattle? Where is Renton?
- Does the Coast Salish area stop at the border? What is it centered around instead?
- How many different language territories do you count?
- What is the difference between Coast Salish and Duwamish? (Culture vs. tribe, group of tribes vs. one tribe.)
- How do you think the Duwamish people felt when their main source of food (salmon) was destroyed when the Black River dried up?

## B. Canoes

Resource: Image of Canoe

Back text:

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<sup>1</sup> “Lushootseed Language (Whulshootseed, Puget Sound Salish).” *Native Languages*. 2015. Accessed June 13, 2017. <http://www.native-languages.org/lushootseed.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Walker, Richard. “10 Things You Should Know About the Duwamish Tribe.” *Indian Country Today*. July 16, 2015. Accessed June 13, 2017. <https://indiancountrymedianetwork.com/news/politics/10-things-you-should-know-about-the-duwamish-tribe/>

<sup>3</sup> Lane, Greg. “Black River disappears in July 1916.HistoryLink.org Essay 2624,” August 25, 2000. Accessed August 11, 2017. [https://web.archive.org/web/20110621220131/http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&File\\_Id=2624](https://web.archive.org/web/20110621220131/http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&File_Id=2624)

“Duwamish people were, and still are, incredibly skilled at making canoes. Canoes could be used for fishing or hunting on rivers and lakes, or in the ocean.<sup>4</sup> They also could be used to move people around; some canoes held up to 30 people.<sup>5</sup> When they pick a tree to use for the canoe, Duwamish people look to see if it is the right size, if it is straight, if it is smooth or has lots of branches, and what its guarding spirit is like.<sup>6</sup> Then they chop it down or might control fire around the bottom and burn it down.<sup>7</sup>”

### C. Food:

Resource: Images of Clams, Stinging Nettles, and Thimble Berries, all traditional Coast Salish food

Back text:

“Like other Coast Salish people, Duwamish people ate nutritious resources from the forests, rivers, and ocean. The forests provided nettles, blueberries, wild blackberries, acorns, and other plants. Animals such as deer, elk, rabbits, and a variety of birds also made up part of the Native diet. They caught, prepared, smoked and dried fish, shellfish, and other animals.<sup>8</sup>”

Today the Duwamish people still harvest and eat many of the traditional plants and animals listed above, along with other foods from local grocery stores and restaurants.

### D. Longhouses:

Resource: 1 picture of an archaeological dig of a Longhouse site in Renton and 1 map of Duwamish Village Sites

Back text:

“Duwamish homes, or longhouses, were also made out of cedar. Generally, several families would live inside the longhouse together. Take a careful look at the house posts shown in the photograph. Washington Coast Salish peoples did not carve totem poles, but they did carve house posts like the ones you see in the photograph.

When White people moved to the Seattle area for the first time in the 1850s, the Duwamish tribe took up at least 17 villages near Elliott Bay, Duwamish River, Cedar River, Black River (which no longer exists), Lake Washington, and Lake Sammamish.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> “Coastal Salish Canoes and Paddles.” Jamestown Tribe. Accessed June 13, 2017.

[http://www.tribalmuseum.jamestowntribe.org/hsg/documents/lp\\_canoespaddles.pdf](http://www.tribalmuseum.jamestowntribe.org/hsg/documents/lp_canoespaddles.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> “Coastal Salish Canoes and Paddles.” Jamestown Tribe. Accessed June 13, 2017.

[http://www.tribalmuseum.jamestowntribe.org/hsg/documents/lp\\_canoespaddles.pdf](http://www.tribalmuseum.jamestowntribe.org/hsg/documents/lp_canoespaddles.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.jamestowntribe.org/history/hist\\_canoe.ht](http://www.jamestowntribe.org/history/hist_canoe.ht)

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.jamestowntribe.org/history/hist\\_canoe.ht](http://www.jamestowntribe.org/history/hist_canoe.ht)

<sup>8</sup> “Salish Bounty: Traditional Native Foods of Puget Sound.” *Burke Museum*. Sept. 14, 2013. Accessed June 13, 2017. <http://www.burkemuseum.org/blog/salish-bounty-traditional-native-foods-puget-sound>

<sup>9</sup> Long, Priscilla. “Duwamish Tribe wins federal recognition on January 19, 2001, but loses it again two days later.” Historylink. Jan. 20, 2001.

There are some historic maps that show where large Duwamish settlements used to be but even more existed at one point in time. Through archaeologists' collaborative efforts with tribes, traditional knowledge, science, and technology is becoming better understood. Archeologists found the remains of a very large longhouse in Renton in the late 1970s. The longhouse was so large as many as five families could have been living in it. There was evidence inside the longhouse of many different types of activities and trade.

Discuss some of these questions:

- How many village sites do you see on the map?
- What language are the village names in?

#### E. Potlatches

Resource: 2 Images of Potlatches, one a watercolor by James Swan of a Potlatch in Port Townsend and one of a modern potlatch.

Back Text:

“Duwamish people had, and still have, big gatherings, or celebrations, that they called potlatches. Potlatches were held for many different reasons including reasons that may be familiar to you: building a new longhouse, raising a mortuary pole, the birth of a baby, the coming of age of a child, a marriage, taking a leading position in the village, or taking a new and more honorable name. Unlike our celebrations, where the person being honored is given gifts, the host will also give the guests gifts such as food, clothing, or other valuables -- like the objects you looked at. If you are invited to a potlatch and get a beautiful gift, you are expected to invite that person to your potlatch later and give them a gift that was just as good, or better.

During the potlatch, different events take place, like singing and dancing, sometimes wearing masks or other impressive clothing. At many potlatches, spiritual ceremonies take place for different occasions.”

Discuss some of these questions:

- Why does your family host celebrations?
- Who receives gifts? The host or guests?
- What benefits might come from the host giving gifts?

#### F. Treaties and Reservations:

Resource: Image of Chief Seattle and Map of Washington Reservations

Back text:

“When white people came to the Pacific Northwest in the 1850s, they met countless Duwamish people living in the way we've just described. Chief Seattle was one of the

leaders of the Duwamish people. The city of Seattle was actually named after Chief Sealth.<sup>10</sup>

Chief Sealth and 81 other leaders from local tribal nations signed a treaty with the U.S. government in 1855. They agreed to give up most of their land, as long as the government gave them the right to fish and hunt on the smaller piece of land that they were allowed to keep (a reservation) and the government continued to view them as sovereign nations.<sup>11</sup> But the United States government did not always keep its promises and as more white people came to the area, the Duwamish and the white people began to fight. Between 1855 and 1904, 94 Duwamish longhouses were burned down.<sup>12</sup>

Discuss some of these questions:

- What is a nation? Is it different than a state?
- What is a treaty?
- How do you think the Duwamish people felt when they were forced to move?

A nation is a large body of people, associated with a particular territory, that possess a government peculiarly its own. A treaty is an agreement between two countries agreeing to a set of rules. The tribes signed treaties because the United States Government recognized them as separate nations.<sup>13</sup>

## G. Boarding Schools

Resource: Boys with buckets, Tulalip Indian School, ca. 1912, UW Special Collections  
Notes from UW Special Collections: Every student at the boarding school spent at least half of his or her day working in some part of the operation. Boys rotated about every six weeks between jobs as carpenter, engineer, farmer or dairyman; girls were assigned to sewing, darning, laundry and kitchen work.

Back text:

“Starting in the 1860s and until the 1920s, the United States government began taking Native American children from their families and sending them to Indian boarding schools far from their homes. Duwamish children were sent to several schools around Renton, like the Tulalip Indian School near Everett, or further away, like Chemawa near Salem, Oregon.<sup>14</sup> When they were there, students had to follow

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<sup>10</sup> Blecha, Peter. “Seattle’s Duwamish Tribe celebrates new Longhouse and Cultural Center on January 3, 2009.” HistoryLink. Accessed June 13, 2017. <http://www.historylink.org/File/8894>.

<sup>11</sup> Crowley, Walt. “Native American tribes sign Point Elliott Treaty at Mukilteo on January 22, 1855.” HistoryLink. Posted March 13, 2003. Accessed June 13, 2017. <http://www.historylink.org/File/5402>.

<sup>12</sup> Blecha, Peter. “Seattle’s Duwamish Tribe celebrates new Longhouse and Cultural Center on January 3, 2009.” HistoryLink. Accessed June 13, 2017. <http://www.historylink.org/File/8894>.

<sup>13</sup> Dictionary.com. Accessed June 13, 2017. <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/nation>

<sup>14</sup> “Between Two Worlds: Experiences at the Tulalip Indian Boarding School” Hibulb Cultural Center. <https://www.hibulbculturalcenter.org/assets/pdf/Between-Two-Worlds.pdf> and King, Marsha, “Tribes confront

strict rules. They were not allowed to do anything from their Duwamish culture – like wear Duwamish clothes or speak the Duwamish language and were punished when they did.<sup>15</sup> Some died from diseases.<sup>16</sup> Today, Duwamish children can attend public, private, or Tribal schools and live at home with their families.”

Over time, the government relaxed its rules against Native Americans. They were allowed to host potlatches again starting in 1934.<sup>17</sup> Boarding schools were shut down by the 1960s.<sup>18</sup> But Native Americans still face many challenges.

#### H. Life Today

Resources: #1, Image of Swinomish Chairman and NCAI President Brian Cladoosby with Cultural Coordinator of the Swinomish Tribe and members of First Nations; #2 image provided by the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe; #3 image provided by the Duwamish Tribe.

Back text:

“There are more than 25,000 Coast Salish peoples in the United States and Canada today.<sup>19</sup> Today, tribes hold potlatches and have canoe races. Duwamish people still do traditional crafts such as weaving and carving. (See our list of local craftspeople for more resources.)

Some Duwamish people live on reservations. There are 29 Native American reservations in Washington State and 326 in the entire country. The Muckleshoot Reservation the closest to Renton and many Duwamish live there.

Some Duwamish people don't live on reservations. They might live anywhere from cities to small towns to rural areas. There are many Duwamish living in the Seattle area that are not associated with the Muckleshoot. They might associate with the Duwamish Tribe instead.

The Duwamish people are still “the people of the inside.” They live in Western Washington communities, attend schools and universities, and work in local fisheries,

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painful legacy of Indian boarding schools.” *The Seattle Times*. Feb. 3, 2008. Accessed June 13, 2017.

<http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/tribes-confront-painful-legacy-of-indian-boarding-schools/>

<sup>15</sup> King, Marsha, “Tribes confront painful legacy of Indian boarding schools.” *The Seattle Times*. Feb. 3, 2008. Accessed June 13, 2017. <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/tribes-confront-painful-legacy-of-indian-boarding-schools/>

<sup>16</sup> “Between Two Worlds: Experiences at the Tulalip Indian Boarding School” Hibulb Cultural Center. <https://www.hibulbculturalcenter.org/assets/pdf/Between-Two-Worlds.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> Zeman, Scott C., “Chronology of the American West: From 23,000 B.C.E Throughout the Twentieth Century. ABC-CLIO.

<https://books.google.com/books?id=KK1q6N16zIAC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Chronology+of+the+American+West:+From+23,000+B.C.E.+Through+the+Twentieth+Century&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjzwuyqucbWAhUC0GMKHUASBskQ6AEIKDAA#v=onepage&q=Chronology%20of%20the%20American%20West%3A%20From%2023%2C000%20B.C.E.%20Through%20the%20Twentieth%20Century&f=false>. Accessed 9/27/2017

<sup>18</sup> King, Marsha, “Tribes confront painful legacy of Indian boarding schools.” *The Seattle Times*. Feb. 3, 2008. Accessed June 13, 2017. <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/tribes-confront-painful-legacy-of-indian-boarding-schools/>

<sup>19</sup> “Coast Salish.” *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Accessed June 13, 2017. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Coast-Salish>.

hospitals, and offices. The Duwamish people encourage everyone to learn more about their culture by visiting with them at local events held at the Muckleshoot Reservation and the Duwamish Longhouse.<sup>20</sup>”

### Wrap-Up (10 min.)

In the final third of their piece of paper, ask students to brainstorm what they learned during this lesson that they had not already known about Coast Salish and Duwamish life.

Ask students some of these questions and lead a discussion:

- What new things did we learn about today?
- What did we find most interesting?

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<sup>20</sup> Renton History Museum, “Native American Cultural Contacts, Performers, and Artists” *Coast Salish Curriculum*. Unpublished. 2017