

# Lesson 9: The Future of the Great Bear Sea

**Overview:** Students will learn more about the cultural significance of weaving and totem pole art specific to the Haida territory.

**Subjects:** Science, Art, Language Arts

**Suggested Time:** 3-5 classes (45-60 minutes)

## Materials and Resources:

- Computer, projector and screen
- Lesson 9 Film Clips:
  - Chiefs Robe (2 mins)
  - Interview Carver (4 mins)
  - Legacy Pole (7 mins)
  - First Nations History Overview (sound clip or film clip) (14 mins) – *optional*
- Teacher Background – Lesson 9
- 9.1: First Nation Art

## Learning Objectives:

Students will:

1. Understand that marine planning is key to creating a sustainable future for all British Columbians.
2. Understand the value of traditional knowledge and how it contributes to culture and sustainability and planning for the future.
3. Explore the ideas of stewardship and leadership in planning for the future of marine resources and ecosystems in the Great Bear Sea.

## Lesson Context

Students will look specifically at culture through weaving and totem pole art that has been created by First Peoples in Haida Gwaii. The students will explore how cultural artefacts can hold history, mark events and tell stories. Students will consider how these cultural components of the Great Bear Sea region and First Nations history can contribute to marine planning, as an important step for the future of the Great Bear Sea and its resources. Students will create their own symbolism of the collaboration on the marine plans in the Great Bear Sea to mark this event and create their own art to tell their own story of this stewardship.

## Learning Activities

### Activity 1: Culture and Tradition (45-60 minutes)

1. Divide the class into eight groups. Each group will receive a word to discuss and describe in one sentence. Four groups will be given the word **culture** and four groups will be given the word **tradition**.
2. Once all eight groups have a sentence to describe the word, consolidate the eight groups into four groups. Have two groups who were working on the description of culture meet and two groups who were working on the description of tradition meet. Have the groups share their descriptions and create a new description using the new ideas presented.
3. If time permits repeat this process, so that the four groups consolidate into two groups. Have the groups share their descriptions and create one last new description using the new ideas presented.
4. Share the descriptions with the other half of the class.
5. Brainstorm some the examples of culture and traditions that the students can think of with respect to the First Nations in the Great Bear Sea region, or others that they are familiar with. (Additional resources may be needed depending upon students knowledge of First Nations culture and traditions).

### Activity 2: Designing Art (45-60 minutes – 2-4 classes)

1. Watch the film clip **Chiefs Robe** and **Interview Carver**.
2. Use **9.1: First Nation Art** to highlight key points and have the students fill out information as you discuss the Haida Gwaii region as a large group.
3. Review the purpose of the marine plans and how collaboration is involved to

create these marine plans to help conserve the Great Bear Sea.

4. Explain to students that they will now have an opportunity to create their own work of art about the Great Bear Sea and how people are coming together to plan for the future and protect this special area. By creating this work of art, they will be marking the special event of collaborative marine plans. Their art must celebrate the collaboration of all groups and conservation efforts in the Great Bear Sea.
5. As a class, brainstorm on the board words and ideas that come to mind that could be included in their art. For example: environment, tradition, culture, marine plans, teamwork, Traditional Knowledge, research, stewardship, First Nations, collaboration, future, etc.
6. Provide students with some options for creating 2D or 3D art pieces. For example, 2D versions can be done with paper and pencil crayon/felts as sketches to create a weave pattern or a totem pole sketch. Or 3D versions can be done weaving construction paper or building totem poles using construction paper or cardboard.

**Teacher Note:** Remind the students that weaving or the carving of a pole often has protocols associated with the process so as the students create their own versions it is important the students do this with respect.

7. Provide students time to construct their artwork and create an artist statement explaining the symbolism and meaning.
8. Share the artist statements and remind the students that it takes collaboration to put up a totem pole just like how it takes collaboration to create marine plans to conserve the Great Bear Sea.
9. Watch the film clip **Legacy Pole** and note the teamwork that it takes to place the pole.

### Extension Ideas

- Research First Peoples art and artists in your community. Take a field to trip to visit art in the area or consider hosting an artist in the classroom.
- Listen to the sound clip or watch the film clip **First Nations History Overview** to learn more about the history of First Nations as told by Doug Neasloss, Chief Councillor, Kitsoo/Xai'xais Band Council & Resource Stewardship Director, Kitsoo/Xai'xais Integrated Resource Stewardship Authority.

### **Assessment Ideas**

- Formatively assess students' engagement in individual and group work as well as large group discussion.
- Assess student work from the lesson.
- Assess students' completed artwork and artist statement.

## Teacher Background – Lesson 9

Weaving and totem poles are two types of First Peoples art. Both forms of art can tell stories, mark events and hold history. This is important to showcase culture, traditions and knowledge. Art connects the past to the world now and is another way that history can be shared through generations.

Two examples of art from the Haida Nation are included in this lesson. There is international recognition of Haida art that has helped the Haida Nation in ways politically because people know who they are because of that connection to art. Art is also used for feasts, vests or blankets with their crests. At graduation students will get a name and a blanket to mark the occasion. Art is very much integrated into the culture and tradition.

### Weaver

Evelyn Vanderhoop, a master weaver from the Haida Nation, was working on a chief's robe. The pattern that she was weaving and creating in the film is called Qinga who the ancestors depended upon. He controls the ocean, the weather and he's a leader and ruler of many sea creatures. The Haida people have been very concerned about the environment and ocean and the ability to provide for future generations. They are looking back at the stories told from their ancestors about the power of the ocean and how to be respectful. These stories still connect to world now and it is important to carry on these traditions. In the past the weaving used to be done with mountain goat wool. The Haida Nation did not have mountain goats on the islands so they would travel by canoe to the inland people who would climb the mountains in the spring when the goats were losing their warm undercoat to trade for the mountain goat wool.

### Pole Carver

Jaalen Edenshaw, a Haida carver, shares the Gwaii Haanas pole that he worked on to celebrate the anniversary of the creation of Gwaii Haanas and the agreement between Canada and the Haida Nation. It also pays respect to the Haidas who stood in the line at Athlii Gwaii (Lyll Island) to stop the logging. It marks a pivotal turning point for the Haida Nation asserting their authority over the land.

## Vocabulary

**Culture:** the sum of attitudes, customs, and beliefs that distinguishes one group of people from another. Culture is transmitted, through language, material objects, ritual, institutions and art from one generation to the next.

**Tradition:** customs, beliefs, knowledge that is passed from one generation to the next.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## 9.1: First Nation Art

First Nation art is more than art. It...

- Holds history
- Marks events
- Tells stories

Additional Notes:

Both the chief's robe and the Gwaii Haanas pole are connected to the ocean. Use your own words to describe how these examples of Haida art are connected to the ocean.

How is art in the Haida Nation connected to culture and tradition?

List any symbolism or knowledge of the meaning of certain animals used in First Nation art from the film clips and other knowledge or research.