Lesson Plan

A Mighty Migration

Book: *Life Cycle of a Salmon*
Series: Life Cycles
Level: Pioneer

Objective
To help students understand the role that migration plays in a salmon's life cycle.

Supplies
- *Life Cycle of a Salmon* book
- Access to the PBS Learning Media video "A Salmon's Journey": https://tpt.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/the-salmon-run/the-salmon-run-wild-kratts/

Before the Activity
Read the *Life Cycle of a Salmon* book out loud to students. Pull up the PBS Learning Media video in your web browser.

Activity
Many animals migrate. This means they move from one region in the world to another. This movement often happens because of changes in the seasons. For salmon, migration is a key part of their life cycle.

As a class, watch the PBS Learning Media video. Then ask students the following questions:
- Why do all salmon fry head to the ocean? (Answer: They go to the sea to grow. There is more food for them in the ocean. Salmon can grow big very quickly there.)
- What does this journey to the ocean involve? (Possible Answers: It involves swimming through rivers and streams. Sometimes fry swim actively toward the ocean. Other times, they let the river carry them. The journey also involves physical changes. Fry eat a lot and also spend time in the estuary to become used to the salt water.)
- How long do salmon stay in the ocean? (Answer: for years)
- Why do salmon eventually return to the freshwater streams where they hatched? (Answer: to lay or fertilize eggs)
- What does this journey home involve? (Possible Answers: jumping up waterfalls, swimming up rivers, swimming against the water's flow, etc.)
- What obstacles do salmon face on this journey home? (Possible Answers: dams, waterfalls, swift currents, bears and other predators, etc.)

Evaluation
Could students answer questions about salmon migration? Could they connect that migration to a salmon's life cycle?

Standards
This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading standards for informational text, grades 1 and 2 (RI 1.1; RI 2.1), and the National Science Education Standards' Content Standard C, grades K–4.