

Trace Your Aquatic Roots

The water that borders on, or runs through, your community is a vital link with the past and the future. You can gain insight into the heritage of a water body by exploring its history, while letting your imagination flow forward, envisioning a future in which people, wildlife, and aquatic ecosystems can exist in harmony.

- Divide your class into groups. Have each choose a topic relevant to a local aquatic environment: for example, geology, wildlife, transportation, pollution, natural disasters, fisheries, agriculture, Aboriginal peoples, colonization, or recent history.
- Brainstorm to identify information sources, including historical archives, old newspapers, historical societies, biologists, senior citizens, and teachers of history, science, and geography.
- Research your chosen topic, such as how a river or coastline has changed, what wildlife species have disappeared or been introduced, what explorers found when they first arrived, and how Aboriginal people have been affected by local events.
- Based on your information, create a class map of the water body. Each group should contribute additional artwork representative of its findings, posting drawings at pertinent sites on the map, while reporting on its topic in historical sequence from past to present.
- Follow up by conducting a class discussion about major historical changes to the aquatic environment. Create a time line depicting these important events.
- Work to form a positive image of the future of your water body. Envision the successful completion of habitat projects and solutions to environmental threats. Consider what human actions would be required to make it happen.
- Share your views on aquatic heritage with your school through a concert, play, or other media.