

# CALLING THE SALMON BACK TO THE ELWHA: POEMS FOR THE ADVENTUROUS ANADROMOUS



## ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

What combination of factors, both natural and manmade, is necessary for healthy river restoration and how does this enhance the sustainability of natural and human communities?

## GUIDING QUESTION:

How can asking someone or something to respond to a request help to build understanding?

## OVERVIEW:

In this lesson students will write a “question and answer” poem that uses two voices, one to call the salmon back to the River and the other to respond to the caller. Students will perform their poems.

## TIME:

Two class periods

## MATERIALS:

- Computer/internet access
- Pencil/paper
- Question and Answer Poems
- Student pages (printable handout)
- Reflection Journal (printable handout)

## PROCEDURE:

1. Review the Essential Question, introduce the Guiding Question. Have students take a few minutes to respond to the first Reflection Journal page then take a few minutes to talk about their responses.
2. Review the life cycle of salmon and the salmon associated with the Elwha River. Tell the students that once the dams have come down salmon are expected to return to

the Elwha River. Tell them they will write a question and answer poem asking the salmon to come back to the River.

3. Tell the students that question and answer poems don't have to rhyme, but they are structured in that there is a question then an answer. Have the students look at the poems provided they range from the simple, to the silly, to the complex. Point out the question and answer structure of the poems.
4. Have the students use the chart on the Student page to brainstorm a list of questions and responses. The students will use their lists to organize their poems.
5. Give students class time to work on the poems. They may need to do some research on the Elwha and its salmon for ideas and facts.
6. When students have completed their poems, have them plan to read aloud either with one other student, or with several others in a chorale reading.
7. Share the poems with the National Park Service by emailing copies to \_\_\_\_\_. Perhaps we'll publish them on our web site.

#### ASSESSMENTS:

- Reflection Journal pages (rubric included)
- Question and Answer Poem (rubric included)
- Student Page completion

#### WASHINGTON STATE STANDARDS:

##### READING:

1. **EALR 2:** The student understands the meaning of what is read.
  - a. **Component 2.3:** Expand comprehension by analyzing, interpreting, and synthesizing information and ideas in literary and informational text.

##### SOCIAL STUDIES:

1. **EALR 5: SOCIAL STUDIES SKILLS** The student understands and applies reasoning skills to conduct research, deliberate, form, and evaluate positions through the processes of reading, writing, and communicating.
  - a. **Component 5.2:** Uses inquiry-based research

##### WRITING:

1. **EALR 1:** The student understands and uses a writing process.
  - a. **Component 1.6:** Adjusts writing process as necessary.
2. **EALR 2:** The student writes in a variety of forms for different audiences and purposes.
  - a. **Component 2.2:** Writes for different purposes.
3. **EALR 3:** The student writes clearly and effectively.
  - a. **Component 3.1:** Develops ideas and organizes writing.

<p><b>Puppy in the House</b></p> <p>Who broke the window? <i>It wasn't me. Wag, wag!</i></p> <p>Who chewed the rug? <i>It wasn't me. Lick, lick!</i></p> <p>Who made a puddle? <i>It wasn't me. Woof, woof!</i></p> <p>Who's the best puppy in the world? <i>That would be ME! (Wag, lick, woof!)</i></p>	<p>UPHILL</p> <p>by: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)</p> <p><b>D</b>OES the road wind up-hill all the way? <i>Yes, to the very end.</i></p> <p>Will the day's journey take the whole long day? <i>From morn to night, my friend.</i></p> <p>But is there for the night a resting-place? <i>A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.</i></p> <p>May not the darkness hide it from my face? <i>You cannot miss that inn.</i></p> <p>Shall I meet other wayfarers at night? <i>Those who have gone before.</i></p> <p>Then must I knock, or call when just in sight? <i>They will not keep you standing at that door.</i></p> <p>Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak? <i>Of labour you shall find the sum.</i></p> <p>Will there be beds for me and all who seek? <i>Yea, beds for all who come.</i></p>
<p>1</p>	

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Children, Schools and Families. Poetry - Structured poems.  
<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primaryframework/literacy/planning/poetry/structuredpoems>  
3/13/09

**Ah, Are You Digging on My Grave?**

Ah, are you digging on my grave,  
My loved one? -- planting rue?"  
-- *"No: yesterday he went to wed  
One of the brightest wealth has bred.  
'It cannot hurt her now,' he said,  
'That I should not be true.'"*

"Then who is digging on my grave,  
My nearest dearest kin?"  
-- *"Ah, no: they sit and think, 'What use!  
What good will planting flowers produce?  
No tendance of her mound can loose  
Her spirit from Death's gin.'"*

"But someone digs upon my grave?  
My enemy? -- prodding sly?"  
-- *"Nay: when she heard you had passed the  
Gate  
That shuts on all flesh soon or late,  
She thought you no more worth her hate,  
And cares not where you lie.*

"Then, who is digging on my grave?  
Say -- since I have not guessed!"  
-- *"O it is I, my mistress dear,  
Your little dog, who still lives near,  
And much I hope my movements here  
Have not disturbed your rest?"*

"Ah yes! You dig upon my grave...  
Why flashed it not to me  
That one true heart was left behind!  
What feeling do we ever find  
To equal among human kind  
A dog's fidelity!"

*"Mistress, I dug upon your grave  
To bury a bone, in case  
I should be hungry near this spot  
When passing on my daily trot.  
I am sorry, but I quite forgot  
It was your resting place."*

**FATHER WILLIAM by: Lewis Carroll (1832-1898)"**

YOU are old, Father William," the young man said,

"And your hair has become very white;

And yet you incessantly stand on your head--

Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

*"In my youth," Father William replied to his son,*

*"I feared it might injure the brain;*

*But, now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,*

*Why, I do it again and again."*

"You are old," said the youth, "as I mentioned before,

And have grown most uncommonly fat;

Yet you turned a back-somersault in at the door--

Pray, what is the reason of that?"

*"In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his gray locks,*

*"I kept all my limbs very supple  
By the use of this ointment --  
one shilling the box --*

*Allow me to sell you a couple?"*

"You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are too weak

For anything tougher than suet;

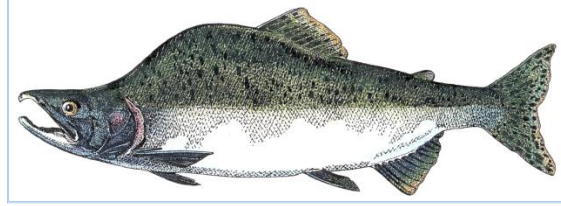
**Thomas Hardy**

Yet you finished the goose,  
with the bones and the beak--  
Pray, how did you manage to  
do it?"

*"In my youth," said his father,  
"I took to the law,  
And argued each case with my  
wife;  
And the muscular strength  
which it gave to my jaw  
Has lasted the rest of my life."*

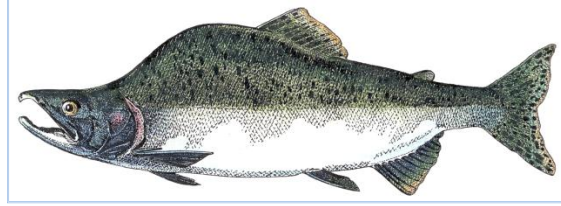
"You are old," said the youth,  
"one would hardly suppose  
That your eye was as steady  
as ever;  
Yet you balanced an eel on the  
end of your nose--  
What made you so awfully  
clever?"

*"I have answered three  
questions, and that is enough,"  
Said his father; "don't give  
yourself airs!  
Do you think I can listen all day  
to such stuff?  
Be off, or I'll kick you down-  
stairs!"*



Elwha River Restoration  
**Calling the Salmon Back to the Elwha**  
**Reflection Journal 1**

Do you think salmon will come back to the Elwha River if you ask them to? Why or why not?



Elwha River Restoration  
**Calling the Salmon Back to the Elwha**  
Student Page

**YOUR TASK:**

1. Take a look at the four example poems, notice that they are structured like a conversation in which one speaker asks a question and another speaker responds. All four poems have the same structure, but notice that the first poem *Puppy in the House* is very simple, a children's poem, while the other poems are more complicated and sophisticated. Listen to the words Lewis Carroll chose for *Father William*. The words along with the order in which he uses them give the poem a rolling, silly, ticklish sound. Now listen to the words in *Ah, Are You Digging on My Grave*. Read slowly, the words are pleading and cruel. Within the question and answer structure your poem can do anything, it can rhyme or not, it can be sad or silly, but it needs to have sound. You need to choose your words carefully to make your poem strong, concise and musical. Think of this as a song to the salmon.
2. In your poem one speaker must be a salmon. The other speaker can be you, someone else, or another salmon.
3. The main idea of your poem, what you want your reader to know, is that after the dams on the Elwha come down the River will once again be accessible to wild salmon. Your objective is to ask the salmon to return with questions about their whereabouts, What they are doing? Who they are with? When they will be back? Or other questions. You can tell them all about the beautiful river waiting for their return. The salmon should reply as honestly as possible. They may have questions of their own. The responder may become the questioner. Use the planning sheet to come up with ideas for your poem beyond the ones you've just gotten. Brainstorm as many ideas as you can. You must use at least six of them in the poem
4. You probably want to do a little research or review for ideas about how your salmon can respond. Check out these web sites:

[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/pugetsound/species/salmon\\_cyc.html](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/pugetsound/species/salmon_cyc.html)

<http://www.goldseal.ca/wildsalmon/story.asp>

<http://www.5counties.org/BasicSalmonInfo800.htm>

[http://www.sf.adfg.state.ak.us/Static/Statewide/aquatic ed/adfgTeacherGuide/cha  
pter2.html](http://www.sf.adfg.state.ak.us/Static/Statewide/aquatic_ed/adfgTeacherGuide/cha<br/>pter2.html)

Brain  Storm

### Question and Answer Poem Idea Sheet

Write who the questioner is here:	Write who the responder is here
Possible questions	Possible Answers



5. Now identify the ideas from your idea sheet that you like best by circling them.
6. Use the ideas you circled to craft your poem.
7. Use the organizing sheet to give your questions and response poem order. Write with a pencil in case you want to reorganize.

Question 1	Response 1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6

8. When you have your questions and answers organized to your logical liking, put them into stanzas.
9. Look at your words do they mean exactly what you want them to? Do they create images in your mind? Could you use a stronger word?

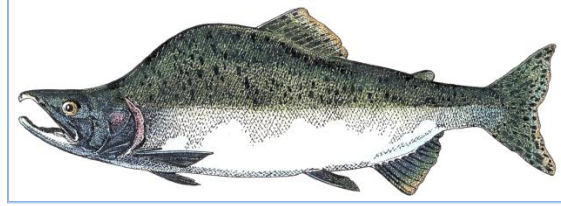
10. Listen to your words, do they have music? Do they create images in your mind?  
Can you employ better words or a different arrangement of words?

11. Arrange your poem into stanzas. Remember a stanza in poetry is a series of lines arranged together into a pattern. Look at the example poems for ideas. You must have at least six stanzas.

Stanza 1 Question and response
2
3
4
5
6

\*Use notebook paper if you need more stanza room.

12. Construct your poem. Choose someone to read it aloud with you. How does it sound? Does your poem create images in your partners mind? Does it need more work?
13. Edit, proofread, edit and proofread again, then again!
14. When you are 100 percent sure that every word is working, type your poem.
15. Finally pick a partner or a group to perform your poem for the class. Practice before you perform. Make sure your readers can understand and pronounce every word. Be strong and clear as you call the salmon back to the Elwha.
16. Send us a copy of your poem at \_\_\_\_\_. We might publish it on the Olympic National Park web site.
17. Ask your teacher for a copy of the grading rubric and for a due date.
18. Enjoy your creation!



Elwha River Restoration  
**Calling the Salmon Back to the Elwha**  
**Reflection Journal 1**

How has writing your poem helped you to understand the journey of the salmon back to the Elwha?

Do you like your poem? How could you have constructed it differently?

## **Reflection Journal Rubric**

### **Outstanding response (4)**

An outstanding reflection journal response is an original, thought-provoking response to the questions raised in the prompt. It contains specific examples from both the student's experiences as well as the classroom material whenever possible. It asks original, provocative, relevant questions. It is also virtually free of grammatical errors.

### **Above-average response (3)**

An above-average journal thoroughly addresses the questions raised in the prompt. It contains specific examples from both personal experiences as well as the classroom material whenever possible. It asks provocative, relevant questions. It may contain some minor grammatical errors.

### **Average response (2)**

An average journal competently addresses the issue raised in the prompt. It contains some examples from both personal experiences as well as the classroom material whenever possible. It asks relevant questions. Grammatical errors may be present, but they will not impede the reader from understanding the context of the sentences.

### **Below-average response (1)**

A below-average journal does not competently address the issue raised in the prompt. It contains few examples from personal experiences or the classroom material. It asks easy questions. Grammatical errors are so rampant that they impede the reader from understanding the context of the sentences.

### **Failure to respond to the assigned prompt (0)**

A failing journal does not address the issue raised in the prompt at a middle school level. It contains very few examples of personal experiences as well as classroom material, or the student fails to respond at all. Grammatical errors are so rampant that they impede the reader from understanding the context of the sentences.

## Question and Answer Poem

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
<b>Focus on Topic (Content)</b>	The topic is salmon coming back to the Elwha This idea stands out and is supported by detailed questions and answers	The topic of salmon coming back to the Elwha is clear but the supporting questions and answers are general.	The topic of Salmon coming back to the Elwha is somewhat clear but there is a need for more supporting information in the questions and answers	The topic of salmon coming back to the Elwha is not clear. There is a seemingly random collection of questions and answers.
<b>Adding Personality (Voice)</b>	The writer seems to be writing from knowledge or experience. The author has taken the ideas and made them "his/her own."	The writer seems to be drawing on knowledge or experience, but there is some lack of ownership of the poem.	The writer relates some of his /her own knowledge or experience, but it adds nothing to the discussion of the poem.	The writer has not tried to transform the information in a personal way. The ideas and the way they are expressed seem to belong to someone else.
<b>Commitment (Voice)</b>	The writer successfully uses several reasons/appeals to try to show why the reader should care or want to know more about the topic.	The writer successfully uses one or two reasons/appeals to try to show why the reader should care or want to know more about the topic.	The writer attempts to make the reader care about the topic, but is not really successful.	The writer made no attempt to make the reader care about the topic.

<b>Sequencing (Organization)</b>	Questions and answers are placed in a logical order and the way they are presented effectively keeps the interest of the reader. All six or more stanzas are well-constructed.	Questions and answers are placed in a logical order, but the way in which they are presented/introduced sometimes makes the writing less interesting. Most of the six stanzas are well-constructed.	Some questions and answers are not in a logical or expected order, and this distracts the reader. Most of the six stanzas are well-constructed.	Many questions and answers are not in a logical or expected order. There is little sense that the writing is organized. Less than six stanzas lack structure and appear incomplete or rambling.
<b>Grammar &amp; Spelling (Conventions)</b>	Writer makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.
<b>Capitalization &amp; Punctuation (Conventions)</b>	Writer makes no errors in capitalization or punctuation, so the poem is exceptionally easy to read aloud.	Writer makes 1 or 2 errors in capitalization or punctuation, but the poem is still easy to read aloud.	Writer makes a few errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and interrupts the flow.	Writer makes several errors in capitalization and/or punctuation that catch the reader's attention and greatly interrupts the flow.