

# What is the Salish Sea?



- Unique bioregion unlike any other place on Earth.
- The green boundary line includes all watersheds with rivers that flow directly into the sea.
- First known use of the term was in 1988, by Bert Webber (marine biologist, Bellingham, WA). Formally adopted by the U.S. and BC in 2010.
- Meant to unify the combined waters in the region and honor the Coast Salish indigenous peoples, all who share a common linguistic and cultural origin.

# Who are the Southern Resident Orcas?



The Southern Residents are a unique, but **endangered**, community of orcas whose foraging range spans the northern west coast of the United States, the Salish Sea, and up through southern British Columbia. This orca community is unlike any other orca community in the world based on their distinct culture, specialized diet, foraging habits, foraging range, dialect, and family structure. Southern Resident orca culture is passed down from grandmothers and mothers to the newest generation, meaning all these habits, traits, and their dialect are learned behaviors.

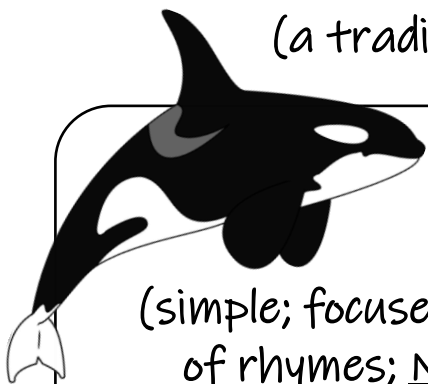
**Southern Resident orcas do not mix, play, breed, or spend time with any other type of orcas but themselves.**

Currently numbering less than 75 individuals, which is thought to be half of their historical population size, Southern Resident orcas were greatly impacted by the capture era of the 1960s and 1970s, when orcas were round up for display at marine attractions throughout North America. When capturing wild orcas was banned, Southern Residents began a slow recovery until the mid 1990s. Abrupt declines in wild salmon availability, the Southern Resident's prime prey resource, became problematic throughout their foraging range. Southern Resident orca mortality began to trend with dwindling salmon numbers, and from 1995-2001 their population suffered a 20% reduction of individuals. This prompted Canada and the United States to enact federal listing for these orcas, protected under the Species At Risk Act (SARA) in 2003, and the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 2005.

Though they have been listed for more than 15 years, the Southern Residents are still facing serious threats and their population has continued to decline. Food availability and quality, toxicants in the water, and anthropogenic (man-made) underwater noise disturbance compound to create life-threatening conditions for the orcas. Join Orca Action Month efforts throughout June, and visit our website: [thesalishseaschool.org](http://thesalishseaschool.org), to learn more about what we're doing, and what YOU can do to help Southern Resident orcas.

# WRITE AN ORCA-INSPIRED HAIKU

(a traditional Japanese form of poetry using imagery from the natural world)



## HAIKU

(simple; focuses on syllables instead of rhymes; NO wrong answer!)

## WORD & THEME SUGGESTIONS

### NOUNS: WILDLIFE, PLACES, THINGS

SALISH SEA | SALT WATER | ISLAND | OCEAN | SEA | WATER  
ECHOLOCATION | SALMON | LUNCH | DINNER | SNACK | SPLASH |  
POD | FAMILY | TAIL FLUKES | DORSAL FIN | BACK | BLUBBER  
SAN JUAN ISLANDS | GRANDMA | BROTHER | SISTER | MOTHER  
COUSIN | AUNT | UNCLE | DAUGHTER | SON | TEETH  
SADDLE PATCH | CULTURE | LANGUAGE | CLICKS | WHISTLES

USING SPECIFIC NAMES OF PLACES AND NAMES  
OF SPECIES ARE GREAT!

### VERBS: DESCRIPTIVE WORDS

BIG | LARGE | HUGE | SMALL | LITTLE | BLACK | WHITE  
ACOUSTICAL | UNIQUE | BEAUTIFUL | AWESOME | AMAZING  
SMOOTH | SLEEK | NOISY | QUIET | STEALTHY | APEX PREDATOR  
POWERFUL | SECRETIVE | STUNNING | TIRED | HAPPY | SLIPPERY  
WET | MAMMAL | WARM-BLOODED | INSPIRING  
WONDERFUL | LOVELY  
AND MORE!

YOU CAN INCLUDE HOW YOU **FEEL** ABOUT SOUTHERN RESIDENT  
ORCAS! DO THEY MAKE YOU HAPPY? EXCITED? FEEL ADVENTUROUS?

## MADE UP OF 3 LINES

THE FIRST LINE HAS 5 SYLLABLES

THE SECOND LINE HAS 7 SYLLABLES

THE LAST LINE HAS 5 SYLLABLES

## BUT WHAT ARE SYLLABLES?



All words have **syllables**. A syllable is a single, unbroken  
**vowel sound within a word we speak out loud.**

LEAF has **one syllable**; LEAF (clap)

SEAWEED has **two syllables**; SEA (clap) WEED (clap)

CONIFER has **three syllables**; CON (clap) IF (clap) ER (clap)

## EXAMPLE HAIKU:

In (1) emerald (3) seas (1) = 5

Shadow (2) black (1) and (1) brilliant (2) white (1) = 7

Orca (2) Matriline (3) = 5

~Amanda Colbert, Education & Outreach Coordinator

## WORD BRAINSTORM

List some words that describe orcas:

COLORS:

SIZE:

BODY PARTS:

WHERE DO THEY LIVE?

WHAT DO THEY EAT?

WHAT IS THEIR POPULATION STATUS?

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THEM?

WHAT STORY ARE YOU TRYING TO TELL?

## WRITE AN ORCA-INSPIRED HAIKU

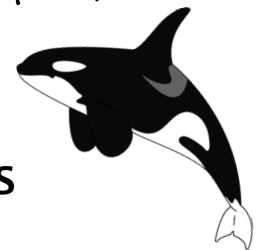
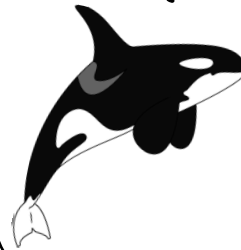
(a traditional Japanese form of poetry using imagery from the natural world)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

AGE: \_\_\_\_\_

### - HAIKU -

(simple; focuses on syllables instead of rhymes;  
NO wrong answer!)



THE FIRST LINE HAS 5 SYLLABLES  
THE SECOND LINE HAS 7 SYLLABLES  
THE LAST LINE HAS 5 SYLLABLES

EXAMPLE:

*In emerald seas  
Shadow black and brilliant white  
Orca matriline*

*~Amanda Colbert, Education & Outreach Coordinator*

YOURS:

\_\_\_\_\_ (5)

\_\_\_\_\_ (7)

\_\_\_\_\_ (5)