

# River & Estuary Jugglers

Grades: 3-6

Subject, Science, Language  
Arts

Time required: 20 minutes

**Key Concepts:**

*River and estuary habitat is important for fish, wildlife, and people.*

**Objectives:**

*Students will name important habitat, plants, and animals of the estuary.*

SQUAMISH RIVERS &  
ESTUARY

Key Words:  
Water bodies

Skills:  
Description, gathering information,  
discussion



**Background:**

This game can help students remember the names of key characteristics of the Squamish Watershed and the complex interactions of the Squamish Estuary and local rivers and streams.

The game also stresses the importance of working together as a group—a critical aspect for the management of water resource and watershed management.

**Materials:**

- Tennis balls or other small balls
- String (optional)



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## Procedure:

1. Review what students have learned so far about local rivers, streams or the estuary. See background information from other activities.
2. Brainstorm with students the names of river or estuary water bodies (including the rivers and streams that flow into the estuary). Now come up with a list of plants and animals that live in the estuary or in local streams.
3. Have students stand in a circle and think of a water body, plant or animal from the lists. Or, you can put the names on a piece of paper in a hat or bowl and have students pick one to select their juggler “identity.”
4. Ask students to name their water body, plant or animal and what they know about it – going around the circle one by one. Students can share knowledge about each other’s river or estuary “personae” if a student needs more information.
5. Begin the game by picking a student, saying the name of their water body, plant or animal and then tossing the ball to him or her. That student then tosses the ball to another student saying their personae. Continue tossing the ball until everyone has had the ball at least once.
6. Now speed up the game, when this gets easy – add one or two more balls.
7. Wrap up by asking students to recap what they know about river or estuary water bodies, plants and animals. Can they remember the names of each others’ river or estuary personae?

## Extensions:

1. After tossing the ball several times, introduce a ball of string to the game. In this case, begin in a similar manner as above but students will toss the ball of string to another student that is directly affected by him or her. For example, a student who is a heron can pass the string to a young salmon, who passes it to an eagle, etc. Continue on until all students are connected to the “web of life.”

## Evaluation:

1. Have students:
  - a. Research a plant or animal of the estuary and write a paragraph describing their plant or animal.
  - b. Name at least 3 water bodies important to the Squamish watershed.

## Community Connections:

1. Take a field trip to the location or habitat of several of the student’s “personae.”

## Resource:

This activity has been adapted from “River Jugglers” from *Give Water a Hand* (1996). *Give Water A Hand* is a program of the University of Wisconsin - Environmental Resources Center. Support for Give Water a Hand is provided by National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; the US Department of Agriculture, CSREES and NRCS; Church & Dwight, Co., Inc., and the University of Wisconsin.

<http://www.uwex.edu/erc/gwah/>

**Taking it Home:**

1. Ask students to look at a map of the Squamish area with their families and find their own house location and the water bodies and habitats of the plants and animals nearby. Bring the map back to class and discuss what they found out. Hint: you can use the maps from the Squamish Streams Around the Corner activity.

