Activity 8: Yes, We Can!
A series of short case studies highlight how human passion and ingenuity can overcome seemingly insurmountable problems. Students then complete a skills and interests assessment to determine how they can use their talents and interests to help the Southern Residents.

Key Student Questions
• How can people work together to solve seemingly insurmountable problems?
• How can I best use my interests and talents to help the Southern Residents?
Key National Standards

CCSS
• CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2.B, 7.2B, 8.2B

C3
• D2.Civ.10.6-8.
• D4.7.6-8.

Supporting Vocabulary

Changemaker—One who desires change in the world and, by gathering knowledge and resources, makes that change happen.

Civics—The study of the rights and duties of citizens and of how government works.

Ingenuity—Skill or cleverness that allows someone to solve problems, invent things, etc.

Insurmountable—Impossible to overcome.

Preparation

Decide how you would like students to view the slide deck. This can be set up as a presentation or as a gallery walk. If you would like to set up a gallery walk, print the slides and speakers notes and arrange them around the room.

Introduction

1. Ask students to recall or free write about a time when they overcame a very difficult problem.
   a. What did they do to address the issue?
   b. Who helped them?
   c. How did they feel after the problem was resolved?

2. Have a few volunteers share their experiences.

3. In popcorn format, have students name societal issues that feel overwhelming or insurmountable. Climate change, crime, homelessness, poverty, systemic racism, etc.
4. Share the following excerpt with the class:

In the news, we often hear a lot of negativity about people, our communities, our country, and our government. For every negative example we hear, there are many more positive examples that we do not hear. Every day, people come together to solve small and big challenges—from designing and building the International Space Station to decoding the human genome—people are capable of accomplishing seemingly impossible problems when we work together.

5. Have students draw the following table on a piece of paper:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

6. Project the Yes, We Can! Slide deck or point out the stations around the room.

7. Instruct the students to write notes for each project as they listen to the slide deck or visit each station.

8. After the slide deck or stations have been completed, ask students to summarize their thoughts in popcorn or Think-Pair-Share format:

   a. How did these examples make you feel?

   b. Did you find anything to be surprising, daunting, or inspiring?

   c. What skills, tools, or interests did these collaborators need to accomplish their goal?

**Activity**

1. Assess how students are feeling about their ability to help the Southern Residents by conducting a Fist to Five poll with the following prompt: As a student, can you make a difference for the Southern Residents?

2. Ask for a few students with different opinions to share their thinking.

3. Explain that the class will now take some time to reflect upon how their own talents and interests can be used to help the Southern Residents.

4. Give each student a copy of the *Yes, I Can!* handout and read through the instructions together.

5. Give the class about 20 minutes to complete the handout.

6. In pairs, small groups, or a gallery walk format, ask students to share their work.

7. Ask students to list any additional issues they identified to help the Southern Residents and write these ideas on the Taking Action signup sheet. Pass the sign up sheet around the class and save it for Activity 9.
Driving Question
Review the list of questions from Activity 1. Cross off any questions that were answered in today’s activity. Add additional questions that may have arisen.

Discussion Questions
1. How much of a difference can young people make in addressing the problems facing our society? What makes their voices uniquely powerful? What examples from the past or present can you think of to support your opinion?
2. What qualities, skills, or perspectives are unique to young people and how might they help make their voices powerful?
3. Given that there are so many other people whose actions are affecting the Southern Residents, what difference do individual actions make?
4. What does the word changemaker mean to you?
5. What changes would you like to see happen in our school, community, state, country, or even the world to help the Southern Residents?

Public Product Option
Students can turn their Yes, I Can handout into a vision board, collage, poster, or blog post that can be shared with the school, their family, or the larger community.

Share Your Students’ Work
Help inspire Southern Resident conservation around the globe by sharing your experience with this unit. Tag photos, student work, and student quotes.
- Facebook: @NOAAFisheriesWestCoast
- Twitter: @NOAAFish_WCRO
- Instagram: @NOAAFisheries

Additional Resources

Article
Irrational or Only Human?
This article explains how behavioral economics drives our environmental choices.

Curriculum
The Power to Change the World
This unit from the New York Times helps young people understand how they can make a difference on social issues.

Framework
Social Change Ecosystem Map
This framework helps individuals understand how their values and roles can advance social change.

Video
Young People Are the Now (11:24)
Teacher Elizabeth Robbins describes how once young people have a framework for thinking of themselves as active players in their communities, their nation, or their world, they can achieve much more than we realize.
Yes, I Can!

We each can make a difference in our local and global communities. When we understand the things that we do well, what we enjoy doing, and the issues we care most about, it is easier to create change. Your passion can be the spark that inspires others, starts a new movement, and creates lasting change. Let's take some time to reflect upon our own skills and interests and discover how they can be used to help the Southern Residents.

Skills, Qualities and Characteristics

Directions: Circle your best skills, qualities, and characteristics. Add any that might be missing from the list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Active</th>
<th>Clever</th>
<th>Eager</th>
<th>Imaginative</th>
<th>Persistent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adventurous</td>
<td>Compassionate</td>
<td>Easy going</td>
<td>Introverted</td>
<td>Polite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amusing</td>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>Enthusiastic</td>
<td>Introverted</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulate</td>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>Self-reliant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>Coordinated</td>
<td>Focused</td>
<td>Loyal</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athletic</td>
<td>Courageous</td>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>Open minded</td>
<td>Thoughtful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware</td>
<td>Courteous</td>
<td>Generous</td>
<td>Organized</td>
<td>Unique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brave</td>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>Hard working</td>
<td>Original</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Dedicated</td>
<td>Helpful</td>
<td>Outgoing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capable</td>
<td>Dependable</td>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>Passionate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>Determined</td>
<td>Humorous</td>
<td>Patient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interests

Directions: Circle your favorite interests. Add any that might be missing from the list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Art</th>
<th>Debate</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Singing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Band</td>
<td>Dance/Movement</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>Social studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>Metal working</td>
<td>Sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choir</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civics</td>
<td>Foreign language</td>
<td>Poetry</td>
<td>Wood working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>Public speaking</td>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer science</td>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking</td>
<td>History</td>
<td>Robotics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crafting</td>
<td>Journalism</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ways to Take Action

Directions: Circle the civic actions that most interest you. Add any that might be missing from the list.

Create a petition  Create a public performance  Plan acts of civil disobedience
Create a social media campaign  Design public art  Raise money
Create an afterschool club  Educate others  Take legal action
Contact businesses  Engage the press  Volunteer
Contact lawmakers  Plan protests  Write an editorial

Issues Affecting Southern Residents, Salmon, and Watersheds

Directions: Circle the issues that most interest you. Add any that might be missing.

Boat traffic  Emissions from factories  Pesticides
Boat noise  Habitat loss  Pollutants from farms
Climate change  Hunger  Pollutants from factories
Dams and other passage barriers  Impervious pavement  Pollutants from urban runoff
Drought  Improper disposal of medicine
Emissions from vehicles  Leaks from vehicles

Reflect

1. Write at least two sentences to describe how your skills and interests can be used to help the Southern Residents. Be sure to cite specific examples from the lists above.

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

2. What skills or interests would you like to continue to develop? How might these skills and interests help you become a changemaker?

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
## Signup Sheet: Taking Action

**Directions:** Add your name below each of the topics that most interest you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boat Traffic</th>
<th>Emissions from Factories</th>
<th>Pesticides</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boat Noise</td>
<td>Habitat Loss</td>
<td>Pollutants from Farms</td>
</tr>
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<td>Climate Change</td>
<td>Hunger</td>
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<td>Drought</td>
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<td>Emissions from Vehicles</td>
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