

Héen yikdéi nax
too.aat
Let's go to the river

Tlingit Cultural Significance:

If not one of the most important disciplines in the life of a Tlingit education was to listen. One had to be very discipline to stay still and not talk or cause a disruption to the teacher. This could be at story time or during a (Ku.éex') when history could be told and how one should speak to the opposite clan. Listing to the history of ones clan history and as well as the history of other clans when it was presented. This was a time that the character of the youth would be developed for both women and men.

In traditional times young men when turning to adolescent were taken in by there uncles, which would be their maternal uncles (mothers brother). The uncles taught them what was needed to know and skills it took to be successful; fishermen and providers. And of course there were many other skills that were taught to the young men other than fishing.

This education continued on through out life. Once the nephew learned the techniques for being a successful provider he was given the responsibility to practice his skills.

Overview:

Traditionally a clan clamed a river and was responsible for taking care of and making sure that it was not abused or kept clean. If another clan were to request to use the river that they were given the responsibility of taking care of the saying would be; (go ahead and use the river but use it as a dish). What does this little parable mean? Just as one uses a dish at home when h/she is done with it they clean it. So someone else can use it.

A teacher can invite an elder to their class room to speak about they use of a river or a story that relates to rivers or fish.

The first lesson will focus on what a gaff hook is called in the Tlingit Language. Then going to the river and the name of the river be told in Tlingit. And then the names of the fish

Nouns:

Verbs:

k'ex'áa	Gaff hook	woogoot	Went
héen yík	River	nax too.aat	walk there
xáat	Salmon	Aadéi nax too.aat	Let's walk there
Lukaax.adí	Sockeye Clan	Át has uwa.át	They arrived there
Ch'ilkóot Heení	Chilkoot River	Has woo.aat	They went
Kaas'	Pole	Yéi nay.oo	Use It
Haa káak has	Mothers male sibling	Kaa adí	Belongs to
S'ix'	Bowl	Ku.éex'	invite

*note: the speaker in the recording pronounces this yéi neey.oo, which is a regional dialect, but we have maintained the standard spelling yéi nay.oo for consistency.

Two Young Men and their Gaff Hook's

One of the most important things in life in the Tlingit education was to listen. Listening to the history of ones own clan history and as well as the history of other clans when it was presented. This was a time that the character of the youth would be developed for both women and men.

Long ago young men or boys were taken in by there uncles, which would be their mothers brothers. They taught them (nephews) what was needed to know and skills it took to be successful fisherman and providers. And of course there were many other things that were taught to the young men and boys (nephews) other than fishing but this is a short story to help our children to understand responsibility and safety?

Once an individual learned the techniques for being a successful provider he was given the responsibility to practice his skills.

As this story goes, there were these two young boys/men that were taught and trained by their uncles how to make a gaff hook, (k'exáa). Each community and each clan had the responsibility of taking care of a river (heen yíkt). So they did not have to go far for fish and work on fish (xáat). The river we want to go to today is called "Ch'ilkóot Heení". This River and Land base belongs to the Lukax.adí Clan, Raven, clan crest is the fresh water Red Sockeye.

These two young boys or young men (yadak'yátsk'u) started of with equal opportunity. The time has come for them to exercise their skills. They get ready to harvest what they want. To do this work first they get their gaff hooks (k'exáa), each is making sure that everything is secure on the gaff hook (k'exáa); each examines their gaff hooks to make sure that everything is ready for use, making sure that all that is needed is ready for the work to be done.

Each are fishing very well catching what they want to supply the family or clan for the winter months. They would also be thinking of the times when there may be a need for salmon to help another family or clan in time of need.

Aha, Ch'ilkóot Heení has wugoot. They go to the river, with boots on and begin fishing. Eitsk' ho ho, the fish is plentiful. So they are out there fishing the day is full of excitement. Each catches their catch. They both get ready for the next phase for the fish to be taken care of. Each cleans the fish (Xáat) and soaks them in fresh water, now to the next phase.

One of the brothers takes his gaff hook (k'exáa) and takes it to the waters edge with a brush. He begins to brush and clean his gaff hook. Takes it to his storage area and finds a nice place to hang his gaff hook. And all the other tools that they used to prepare the fish are then cleaned, now they are ready for the next time they have to go fishing. His clan brother is just a little behind. He dose what he can to take care of his fish (Xáat). He is still running a little behind. So when it comes to his gaff hook (k'exáa) he

rushes. He looks at his gaff hook then really doesn't think too much and just throws his gaff hook (k'exáá) into the grass next to his storage area.

They both go back to where they will clean their fish (Xáat) and begin to clean the remains of the salmon (Xáat) and put the remains into it the river.

As each one lives' as always, preparing and gathering foods for the winter. The year passes and as every year its time to go fishing once again. So they both get prepared and gather their tools. The young man or boy who took great care and cleaned his tools was ready for the next season. He gets his tools, looks them over making sure everything is in order and goes fishing. The young man or boy that threw his gaff hook (k'exáá) in the grass has some trouble he can't find his gaff hook (k'exáá). He remembers that he in his own mind he put the gaff hook where he could find it. So he begins looking for it. I know that I left it here somewhere. Feels through the grass and finally finds it. Aha, feeling some what satisfied that he found his gaff hook (k'exáá); he looks at his tools half hazard and sees that it's not to clean but uses them anyway.

His clan brother by this time has gotten most of his fish that he wants to prepare. And for some reason the other young man or boy is having a harder time catching his fish. Well, last year if you remember he didn't clean his gaff hook (k'exáá) so the fish are swimming away from him. Aha, why he may think, but if you remember that he did not clean his gaff hook the previous year so the fish can smell the old slim and blood that he did not wash off (k'exáá) the previous year. So he has to work harder to catch fish (Xáat).

His clan brother is already finished fishing and cleans up all his tools as how his uncle taught him. And places the bones and whatever was removed from fish into the river.

His clan brother finally gets what he can and is working very hard to catch his wants. It takes him longer and he's working harder. Also because he has to work harder he can't catch as many fish (Xáat) because time is running out. So again it came to his gaff hook (k'exáá) and he does what he did last

year just throws his gaff hook (k'exáá) to the ground. This same place once again in the grass near his tool shed.

Aha, oh this poor gaff hook (k'exáá) is feeling so bad thinking to himself oh my owner doesn't even care about me. Through the winter he's so cold, wet, and bugs and worms are crawling on him under him and mud is getting on him.

The year passes again. The one that keeps he's tool ready and clean is ready as soon as the season begins. His clan brother is looking again for his gaff hook (k'exáá). Finally finds it and begins his work

By the time the young men or boys are fishing the one that had his tools clean and ready finishes early again. The other brother is even having to work harder and having a harder time. The fish are swimming away from his hook. He has to go out further for his fish and is expending a lot of energy. Having to go out further it is more dangerous for him catch his fish. As he is fishing he catches a large fish which takes his hook from his stick (kaas'). So he ends up not catching the fish he needs for the winter. Yei awe



Dialog

Dasa iyasháat?

What did you catch?

X'aakw áwé xwáa sháat.

I caught a red sockeye.

X'aakw áwé xwáa sháat.

I caught a red coho.

X'óon sá iyasháat.

How many did you catch

Daxoon x'aakw awe xwaasháat.

I caught four king salmon.