



# Activity 3: Life's Short and Then You Spawn: A Play for Sock Puppets

**Audience:**

Grades K - 6, Grades 7-10 mentoring younger students

**Time:**

30 minutes

**Setting:**

Indoors

**State Essential Learning Requirements**

Science: 1.2, 1.3

Arts: 3.1

**Overview:**

Sock puppets tell the story about the life cycle of salmon.

**Objectives:**

To introduce the concept of the Salmon Life Cycle.

**Critical Questions Addressed:**

1. Life History

**Materials:**

Five sock puppets provided in Trunk representing eyed egg, alevin, fry, smolt or adult.

**Sock:** Hello boys and girls! I am Susan a Sockeye Salmon, but people just call me Sock....I think it's because I look like one. I am here today to tell you about my LIFE-CYCLE. Does anyone here know what a life-cycle is?

Well, a life cycle is basically the story of my life. Humans start off as babies, turn into children, then become teenagers, and eventually they become adults that have new babies. The life-cycle of a salmon is kind of like that only a little different.

The story of my life begins and ends in the waters of mountain streams and rivers. I will lay as many as 5,000 eggs in a rocky nest called a REDD that I make in the bottom of a shallow stream. A male salmon will come along and fertilize the eggs. The eggs grow and develop into (show eyed-egg puppet) eyed-eggs for about two months before they hatch.

**Al:** And that is when I emerge from the egg! I am Al one of only 1,000 ALEVINS to hatch from the 5,000 eggs my mom Susan Sock laid. After my brothers and sisters and I hatch we stay in the gravel nest getting protein, sugars, and vitamins from this yolk sac that is attached to my underside. Do you know any other animals that live off of a yolk sac?

That is right, baby birds that are still in the egg absorb food from the yolk sac that is in the shell. In fact, many animals live off of a yolk sac of some sort during parts of their life cycle.

After my yolk sac is all used up and gone, I am finally big enough and ready to leave the Redd. Now, I am called a FRY. Here is my older sister Frenchie Fry.

**Frenchie:** Thank you Al! Well, now that my yolk sac is gone, I have to find my food for myself, so I have to leave the nest. Usually the better food is found downstream where the water is deeper and the things I like to eat live. My favorite foods are things like small insects and tiny plants. The problem is, when I leave the REDD there are even more predators that would love to eat ME! So, I have something that helps me hide. Does anyone know what the word is that means I can hide from predators?

That's right I am CAMOUFLAGED! I have these neat stripes on my side called PARR STRIPES to help hide me from predators. If I am successful at hiding from predators, I will stay in the river for

months or even years getting bigger and bigger. But eventually I will start to migrate downstream to where the river meets the ocean called an ESTUARY.

**John:** By the time Frenchie makes it to the estuary, she will be called a SMOLT. I am John Smolt, and I am probably two or three times heavier than Frenchie because of all the bugs and plants I ate on my way to the estuary. Now that I am here though, I will spend a few weeks swimming around in this area getting my body used to salt water since I will be heading for the ocean after my time in the estuary.

After I leave the estuary I will be in the open ocean for up to five years eating all sorts of things. Does anyone know what an adult salmon eats?

That is right, I eat lots of different things like shrimp and other crustaceans, plus anchovies, herring and even other, smaller fish. After growing up and becoming an adult salmon, I will eventually make my way back to the estuary.

**Sock:** That is right John, and what is really neat, is that all salmon go back to the exact same estuary and the exact same stream that they came in on....all of that with no road signs or stopping to ask directions. Adults recognize the same unique smells of their home stream and as returning adults can return to the exact area they emerged from and make their own REDD to lay eggs in. And, the whole thing starts over again!

So, that is my life-cycle...the story of how I grew up to become and adult. The only thing is...I wish MY mom could have taken some pictures so I could have a baby book...(sigh) oh well. Thanks boys and girls, and remember there are ways that we can make sure all salmon have a clean, nice place to lay their eggs. Remember the five "R"s: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Respect, and Responsible! Have a great day!

**Adaptation:** Create more eggs, alevin, fry, smolt and salmon from old socks or other craft materials. Adapt the play, so that each student representing one of the stages speaks a partial line or sentence. Involve the whole class.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT:\*\*** Created by Bruno Bowles and Education Team at Northwest Trek, Eatonville, Washington.



# Life's Short and Then You Spawn: A Play for Sock Puppets

## Student Worksheet

1. **Sock:** Hello boys and girls! I am Susan a Sockeye Salmon, but people just call me Sock....I think it's because I look like one. I am here today to tell you about my LIFE-CYCLE. Does anyone here know what a life-cycle is?
2. **Sock:** Well, a life cycle is basically the story of my life. Humans start off as babies, turn into children, then become teenagers, and eventually they become adults that have new babies.
3. **Sock:** The life-cycle of a salmon is kind of like that only a little different.
4. **Sock:** The story of my life begins and ends in the waters of mountain streams and rivers.
5. **Sock:** I will lay as many as 5,000 eggs in a rocky nest called a REDD that I make in the bottom of a shallow stream.
6. **Sock:** A male salmon will come along and fertilize the eggs.
7. **Sock:** The eggs grow and develop into (show eyed-egg puppet) eyed-eggs for about two months before they hatch.
8. **Al:** And that is when I emerge from the egg! I am Al one of only 1,000 ALEVINS to hatch from the 5,000 eggs my mom Susan Sock laid.
9. **Al:** After my brothers and sisters and I hatch we stay in the gravel nest getting protein, sugars, and vitamins from this yolk sac that is attached to my underside.
10. **Al:** Do you know any other animals that live off of a yolk sac? That is right, baby birds that are still in the egg absorb food from the yolk sac that is in the shell. In fact, many animals live off of a yolk sac of some sort during parts of their life cycle.
11. **Al:** After my yolk sac is all used up and gone, I am finally big enough and ready to leave the Redd. Now, I am called a FRY. Here is my older sister Frenchie Fry.
12. **Frenchie:** Thank you Al! Well, now that my yolk sac is gone, I have to find my food for myself, so I have to leave the nest.
13. **Frenchie:** Usually the better food is found downstream where the water is deeper and the things I like to eat live.
14. **Frenchie:** My favorite foods are things like small insects and tiny plants.
15. **Frenchie:** The problem is, when I leave the REDD there are even more predators that would love to eat ME!

16. **Frenchie:** So, I have something that helps me hide. Does anyone know what the word is that means I can hide from predators?
17. **Frenchie:** That's right I am CAMOUFLAGED! I have these neat stripes on my side called PARR STRIPES to help hide me from predators.
18. **Frenchie:** If I am successful at hiding from predators, I will stay in the river for months or even years getting bigger and bigger.
19. **Frenchie:** But eventually I will start to migrate downstream to where the river meets the ocean called an ESTUARY.
20. **John:** By the time Frenchie makes it to the estuary, she will be called a SMOLT. I am John Smolt, and I am probably two or three times heavier than Frenchie because of all the bugs and plants I ate on my way to the estuary.
21. **John:** Now that I am here though, I will spend a few weeks swimming around in this area getting my body used to salt water since I will be heading for the ocean after my time in the estuary.
22. **John:** After I leave the estuary I will be in the open ocean for up to five years eating all sorts of things. Does anyone know what an adult salmon eats?
23. **John:** That is right, I eat lots of different things like shrimp and other crustaceans, plus anchovies, herring and even other, smaller fish.
24. **John:** After growing up and becoming an adult salmon, I will eventually make my way back to the estuary.
25. **Sock:** That is right John, and what is really neat, is that all salmon go back to the exact same estuary and the exact same stream that they came in on....all of that with no road signs or stopping to ask directions.
26. **Sock:** Adults recognize the same unique smells of their home stream and as returning adults can return to the exact area they emerged from and make their own REDD to lay eggs in. And, the whole thing starts over again!
27. **Sock:** So, that is my life-cycle...the story of how I grew up to become an adult. The only thing is...I wish MY mom could have taken some pictures so I could have a baby book...(sigh) oh well.
28. **Sock:** Thanks boys and girls, and remember there are ways that we can make sure all salmon have a clean, nice place to lay their eggs.
29. **Sock:** Remember the five "R"s: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Respect, and Responsible! Have a great day!
30. **Eyed egg puppet:** (in line 7.) Silent or make up own lines.