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## 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.*



## Required Materials

- **Slide deck:**  
Yes, We Can!
- **Assessment:**  
[Yes, I Can!](#)  
Pg 100-101  
1 per student
- **Signup Sheet:**  
[Taking Action](#)  
Pg 102  
1 copy
- **Driving Question Poster** from Activity 1

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:

Project	Challenge	Outcome
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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:
- How did these examples make you feel?
  - Did you find anything to be surprising, daunting, or inspiring?
  - What skills, tools, or interests did these collaborators need to accomplish their goal?

## Activity

- 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?
- Ask for a few students with different opinions to share their thinking.
- 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.
- Give each student a copy of the [Yes, I Can!](#) handout and read through the instructions together.
- Give the class about 20 minutes to complete the handout.
- In pairs, small groups, or a gallery walk format, ask students to share their work.
- 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 signup 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.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

# 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.

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

## Interests

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

Art	Debate	Leadership	Singing
Band	Dance/Movement	Math	Social studies
Business	Drama	Metal working	Sports
Choir	Engineering	Music	Technology
Civics	Foreign language	Poetry	Wood working
Communications	Gardening	Public speaking	Writing
Computer science	Geography	Reading	
Cooking	History	Robotics	
Crafting	Journalism	Science	

## 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.

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

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# Signup Sheet: Taking Action

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

Boat Traffic	Emissions from Factories	Pesticides
Boat Noise	Habitat Loss	Pollutants from Farms
Climate Change	Hunger	Pollutants from Factories
Dams & Passage Barriers	Impervious Pavement	Pollutants from Urban Runoff
Drought	Improper Disposal of Medicine	
Emissions from Vehicles	Leaks from Vehicles	

