**What role do salmon play in local First Nations along our coast and inland?**

1. **Introduction**
2. Topic Question

What role do salmon play in local First Nations along our coast and inland?

1. Introductory Statements
2. Salmon have a significant role to First Nations’ economy
3. Salmon have an important role to First Nations culture
4. Salmon are important to First Nations spiritually
5. **Salmon play an important role in First Nations’ economy.**
6. First Nations have a long history of harvesting salmon
7. Historically, many First Nations groups wealthy due to a booming trade economy based on salmon
8. A variety of advanced fishing gear allows First Nation to target different species of salmon at the same site and monitor salmon populations
9. In the Fraser River Canyon, fishers would gaff or dip-net for fish
10. In shallow or slow-moving streams, weirs were used to lead the salmon into traps or fishers with other equipment
11. These indigenous fishing techniques were efficient, and the harvesting was controlled and regulated
12. Indigenous fishers found economic opportunity during the 19th century in industrial fishing
13. The money earned from fishing paid for supplies in the winter
14. Although some First Nations communities oppose the idea of farm-raised salmon, many First Nations communities support them, as it provides a significant source of income
15. Farm-raised salmon is BC’s largest agricultural export, contributing to over 1.4 billion dollars. A portion of this money goes directly to First Nation communities

1. **Salmon have an important role in the culture of the First Nations.**
2. The Legend of the Salmon People are stories told by many First Nations
3. These tales helped to shape traditions and lifestyle of First Nations people
4. The stories about the Salmon People have changed over time to pass on lessons learned through history
5. The stories tell the First Nations people to maintain the fishing traditions of the First Nations and to not overfish for commercial purposes
6. The stories warn First Nations to not become too greedy and to respect nature and the salmon
7. The stories preserve the First Nations’ culture and are told by the First Nations to teach future generations to respect the salmon people
8. The First Nations people tell people to appreciate living in harmony with the salmon people
9. Salmon are a symbol of the First Nations, representing regeneration and perseverance
10. Many First Nations stories and artwork involve salmon, showing the First Nation’s connection to nature and struggles to maintaining their cultural identity
11. See Diagram A in Appendix - Image of a First Nation traditional symbol of salmon
12. See Diagram B in Appendix – Image of an Aboriginal salmon pillar carving
13. **Salmon are important to First Nations’ spiritual identity.**
14. First Nations believe in a spiritual world, and that it is connected to the physical world.
15. First Nations believe that salmon give people the gift of life
16. First Nations believe animals have spirits, and that they enter the human world to provide to food and other resources to humans. Once their body is used, the animals return to their own world and can return to the human world again.
17. First Nations respect the animals to ensure that they will return
18. People would throw the entire fish skeleton into the water after the salmon was eaten believing its spirit would rise again
19. First Nations legends tell tales of salmon granting knowledge and powers to shamans
20. To First Nations, salmon are often associated with twins and carved in pairs
21. **Conclusion**
22. First Nations along our coast and inland are deeply connected to salmon in many ways. They are an essential component to their economy, culture, and spiritual identity.
23. The First Nations’ deep relationship with salmon allow them to connect with nature and to maintain the ecosystem.

**Appendix**

Diagram A:



Retrieved from: <https://artinas.com/legend/salmon/>.

Diagram B:



Retrieved from : <https://cyclewriteblog.wordpress.com/2015/05/07/salmon-art-leaps-into-pacific-west-coast-imagination/>

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