

Lesson 1201: Ketchikan and Alaska's Panhandle Forests and Sea

[1201 – Ketchikan and Alaska's Panhandle Forests and Sea – In The Americas with David Yetman](#)

Learning Objective	Discussion Prompts	Lesson Activities	Vocabulary
Students will learn about the geography, ecology, and culture of Alaska's Panhandle, including Ketchikan's rainforest environment, marine life, salmon fisheries, and tourism.	Discuss the expansion of the United States due to land purchases from other countries and the cultural influences that those regions might have retained as a result of those acquisitions. Would the students in your area be more interested in learning about the indigenous culture and ecology or the logistics of living in one of the Alaskan islands? Justify your answer. Several businesses were mentioned to the host that experienced rapid growth but also declined just as quickly in the area. Talk about the strengths and weaknesses of those businesses and which ones could survive in today's economy.	Design a "commuter vehicle" specifically for Ketchikan that works equally well on a steep mountain trail, a rainy boardwalk, and a choppy saltwater channel. The Tongass National Forest is the largest national forest in the U.S. absorbing more carbon dioxide than it releases helping balance the climate change. Create at least one tool to share with residents that supports the timber industry while also preserving carbon dioxide. Salmon lives in both fresh and saltwater. Create a superhero with physical superpowers to transition from the ocean back to a tiny freshwater creek. Describe all the changes that make him a superhero.	anadromous biomass boisterous fjord glacial valley lichen muskala panhandle sear spawn
Social Studies Standard:			
People, Places, & Environments: F, G	Discuss some of the pros and cons about Misty Fjord becoming a National Monument. Today, would more people be in favor or against Jimmy Carter? Why?	Design a totem pole that represents your class today. Choose three animals to tell your class's story for future students, and explain why each animal belongs at the top, middle, or bottom of the pole.	

Alaska's Panhandle preserves vast tracts of the planet's dwindling temperate rain forests. Ketchikan, the largest town in the panhandle, lies at the edge of these forests, accessible only by boat or airplane. It perseveres in the shadows of former robust salmon fisheries, but now attracts tourists, undeterred by incessant rains, lured by marine life, exotic forests, and the spectacular national monument known as Misty Fjords.