Olympia Oyster Library Research Project

With this lesson students learn about the ecology and conservation of an oyster native to Puget Sound, the Olympia oyster, *Ostreola conchaphila*. The lesson consists of two parts—a news article with background information and study questions, and a library research activity. It can be completed in 1-2 days of class time.

1) Students read a *Seattle Times* article (2007) describing ecology, conservation and restoration of the Olympia oyster in Puget Sound, and students answer four study questions based on the article. Reading the article and answering the questions could be assigned as homework prior to the library research activity, or the teacher could allow students to spend 20-30 minutes working on it in class, alone or in groups.

2) The library research activity, which can be completed in one day’s time, asks students to use what they learned from the news article to develop a hypothesis explaining why Olympia oyster populations are declining in Liberty Bay, Washington. Several hypotheses are suggested. Students must write out one hypothesis they wish to test and then identify at least one way they would gather data to test it. Students search the internet for resources that will help them design and carry out a test of the hypothesis. Students also use the internet to identify and get contact information for at least two people who could help them test their hypothesis.