

The Red Team Fish Project

Tuesday, November 23rd, 7E1 class from Harkins Middle School Red team took a trip to the MSA (Miramichi Salmon Association) to launch the teams cross curricular fish raising project.



When they got there, the first part of the project was spawning the fish. Spawning is a process that takes time. First you take a female fish (we used brook trout but they also spawn salmon at the hatchery) and you simply stroke the bottom of the fish's stomach to release the eggs into a metal bowl. The next step of the process was to fertilize the females' eggs with the males' milk, or also known as reproductive fluid. We then rinsed the eggs and put them into a "fish boat", which is a wooden strainer that keeps the eggs underwater.



Then the other two grade 7 classes went and found out how to sort the eggs. 7L and 7E2 had the opportunity to take the eggs out of the tray and put them in a machine called the counter. A wheel picked up the eggs and shined a light in them to determine if it was dead or alive. The living eggs were then shot out of the machine with a gentle squirt of water. Next, the living eggs were shocked. This process can be done manually or by machine. Shocking the eggs allows us to determine which eggs should continue to be developed. The reason why these eggs are sorted and not just put into one bucket all together, is because the dead eggs could easily spread disease and infection. Another way to prevent the dead eggs from spreading disease is to use a chemical called formaldehyde to disinfect the dead eggs.



We are now very excited to be entering the next phase of our project. The grade eights on the red team will be going to the MSA hatchery to pick up our fish eggs on March 16th. We have learned how to count the eggs using the mathematical process called volumetric. We will use this to count out our eggs that we will be taking back to the school.



As a team, we will then study and watch our new fish friends grow. There will be a tank set up on the red team floor. We will be monitoring their growth and learning about the life cycle and the local water ecosystem. We will then be releasing the brook trout in June. We are proud to be taking part in this conservation project. We would like to thank Dr. McQuaid and the Miramichi Salmon Association for supporting our project. Stay tuned for updates and pictures of our new fish friends! ☺





