Story Idea:  Sport Fishing

Summary:  The waters around Haida Gwaii are well known for great fishing.  Salmon, halibut and other species make for exciting fishing and excellent eating.

Facts:
- Fishing charter businesses operate out of Masset, Port Clements, Queen Charlotte and Sandspit.
- Most charter companies on the islands are small, locally owned businesses.
- Several companies operate large fishing lodges on the west coast of the islands, which typically draw guests who fly in and out without visiting the rest of the islands.  Although some residents find employment at these lodges, others argue that they take fish away from locals without bringing revenue into the island communities.
- The most popular salmon species for recreational fishing are chinook and coho.  Chinook salmon (also called spring salmon) are the largest salmon, and can be caught in the spring, summer and early fall.  The smaller coho salmon can be caught in the summer and early fall.
- Groundfish, such as halibut and ling cod, also make for delicious eating.  Halibut, the largest flatfish in BC waters, can weigh over 200 kg.
- The best known areas for ocean fishing are the west coast (accessed by going through Skidegate Narrows from Queen Charlotte or Sandspit) and the north coast around Masset.
- Freshwater fishing is also an option.  Salmon can be caught in rivers in the fall, and cutthroat trout and dolly varden can be caught whenever allowed by regulations.
- Throughout the winter, there are several excellent steelhead runs on the islands.  The Tl’et, Yakoun and Copper rivers, among others, are great places to fish steelhead.

Suggested Itinerary:
Spend a day on the water with a local guide.  You can have your catch cleaned and packaged at a local fish processing facility (in Masset or Queen Charlotte) or do it yourself and have a meal of fresh fish.

More Information:
Urs Thomas, a local executive of the Sport Fishing Advisory Board, can be contacted for information on current issues affecting sports fishing on the islands.  Email: info@goldenspruce.ca.


The Department of Fisheries and Oceans website for recreational fishing is http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/index-eng.htm.  Fishing licenses can be purchased online.