

Approaching the Inquiry Process from a **CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE**

Nālanī Naluai
nanaluai@ksbe.edu

Ho'onui i ka 'ike – A LEARNING PROCESS IMBUED
IN THE HAWAIIAN CULTURE



Figure 1. Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop (1831–1884), benefactor of Kamehameha Schools.



Figure 2. King Kamehameha I, honored through the name of the schools.



Figure 4. Ho'onui i ka 'ike poster (background image: Racoma 2008).

These school librarians want to inspire their students to follow the learning styles of their early Hawaiian forebearers and believe students' ability to do so is innate and very much within each student's capacity to achieve.

The information literacy process, as outlined in Eisenberg and Berkowitz's Big6, is: 1) task definition, 2) information-seeking strategies, 3) location and access, 4) use of information, 5) synthesis, and 6) evaluation. Keeping Eisenberg and Berkowitz's research process in mind, KS librarians made a list of Hawaiian terms that corresponded to each stage of this research process but were more reflective of Hawaiian cultural concepts and values. Helping students to connect to their ethnic roots, these steps ask each student to: 1) prepare, 2) listen and obey, 3) observe and notice, 4) study and comprehend, 5) showcase, and 6) perpetuate. A Hawaiian/English dictionary was used to translate the terms to Hawaiian. Finding a direct English translation for any foreign word is difficult, and Hawaiian is no exception. To address this issue, KS librarians instead translated the actions to be accomplished at each stage of the inquiry process. For example, *task definition* most closely correlated with *to prepare*, which in Hawaiian is *ho'omākaukau*. (The prefix *ho'o*, when added to a base word, means to do something.)

Their school librarians' list of Hawaiian terms represented the actions connected to early Hawaiian ways of learning. How did they know this? These actions are translated in the *Hawaiian Dictionary* by Mary Kawena Puku'i and Samuel H. Elbert, both considered to be authoritative scholars in the Hawaiian language. A poster of the *Ho'onui i ka*

'ike process (see figure 4) outlines the Hawaiian terms and their English translations, each term followed by examples of three actions grounded in traditional Hawaiian thought.

Ho'omākaukau (prepare)
My mind, body and spirit are ready.
My materials are ready.
My attitude is positive.

Ho'olohe (listen and obey)
I respect and pay attention to the teacher (*kumu*).
I value the ideas of the *kumu* and my peers.
I know my assignment(s) and what I need to do.

Ho'onānā (observe, notice)
I seek to understand.
I carefully observe and review.
I look for reliable sources.

Ho'omā'ama'a (practice)
I apply and practice what I learn from my *kumu*.
I create inquiry questions to guide my research.
I read and take notes.

Ho'opā'a (study and comprehend)
I organize ideas to convey a clear message.
I rewrite in my own words.
I ask questions to clarify.

Ho'opuka (showcase)
I synthesize and create.
I evaluate, revise my work, and give credit.
I am tested (*hōike*) and share my new knowledge.

Ho'omau (perpetuate)
I persevere.
I hold fast to the knowledge
(*'ike*).
I pass on and live the *'ike*.

KS librarians also wanted to infuse the school library curriculum with Kamehameha Schools' Working Exit Outcomes (WEO), specifically the section that focused on *Ke Ao 'Imi Na'auao—Knowledge and Wisdom*. Each of the four categories of *Ke Ao 'Imi Na'auao* begin with a Hawaiian aphorism, taken from *'Ōlelo No'eau: Hawaiian Proverbs and Poetical Sayings* (1983), a collection of native Hawaiian proverbs and sayings Mary Kawena Puku'i (1895–1986) began gathering when she was fifteen years old. They are evidence of traditional Hawaiian beliefs that have been orally handed down through the generations and that capture the wisdom and knowledge of Hawaiian *kupuna* (elders) in their own words.

The following proverbs were selected from Puku'i's book to support the *Ho'onui i ka 'ike* document:

Nānā i ke kumu—Look to the source.
Utilize various sources to foster inquiry and seek knowledge. (Examples of sources would be *kupuna*, *kumu*, *loea*, *mo'olelo*, *wahi pana*, *mo'omeheu*).

Ua lehulehu a manomano ka 'ikena a ka Hawai'i—Great and numerous is the knowledge of the Hawaiians. We create, share and apply knowledge in

purposeful and relevant ways. Engage in critical thinking to apply traditional knowledge to my contemporary context.

Lawe i ka ma'alea a kū'ono'ono—Take wisdom and make it deep. Transform my knowledge through the blending of imagination, intuition, and intellect.

He aupuni palapala ko'u; 'o ke kanaka pono'o ia ko'u kanaka—Mine is a kingdom of education, the righteous man is my man.
Seek and apply knowledge ethically.

These *'Ōlelo* guided KS librarians' own inquiry process on traditional Hawaiian learning. Other resources included *Resource Units in Hawaiian Culture*, in which Donald D. Kilolani Mitchell stated, "[Hawaiian] Education was direct and effective" (1992, 249).



Nālani Naluai
is a school librarian at Kamehameha Elementary School in Honolulu, Hawai'i. She

is a member of AASL and the vice president of programming for the Hawai'i Association of School Librarians. She is also a National Board Certified Teacher—Library Media.

The slogan of the schools is *I mua Kamehameha*, which means to go forward, Kamehameha. The librarians of Kamehameha Schools agree and believe within each of their Hawaiian students lies the ability to be, as expressed in the following, *'Ōlelo no'eau*:

Ua lehulehu a manomano ka 'ikena a ka Hawai'i—Great and numerous is the knowledge of the Hawaiians. We create, share and apply knowledge in purposeful and relevant ways.

I mua, Kamehameha!

Works Cited:

- Bishop, Bernice Pauahi Paki. 1883. "Ke Ali'i Bernice Pauahi Paki Bishop (1831–1884) Will and Codicils." <www.ksbe.edu/pauahi/will.php> (accessed June 10, 2014).
- Eisenberg, Mike, and Bob Berkowitz. 2013. "Big6 Skills Overview." <<http://big6.com/pages/about/big6-skills-overview.php>> (accessed June 5, 2014).
- Kamakau, Samuel Manaiakalani. 1992. *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii*, rev. ed. Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools Press.
- Mitchell, Donald D. Kilolani. 1992. *Resource Units in Hawaiian Culture*, rev. ed. Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools Press.
- Puku'i, Mary Kawena, and Dietrich Varez. 1983. *'Ōlelo No'eau: Hawaiian Proverbs and Poetical Sayings*. Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press.
- Puku'i, Mary Kawena, and Samuel H. Elbert. 1986. *Hawaiian Dictionary: Hawaiian-English, English-Hawaiian*, rev. and enl. ed. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
- Racoma, Robin Yoko. 2008. *Ho'onui I Ka 'ike*. Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools.
- Takano, Alan. 2010. *Kamehameha Schools: Working Exit Outcomes*. Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools.