

Hui Panalā‘au: Young male colonists as Hawaiian culture keepers and practitioners in the remote Pacific Islands

The Hui Panalā‘au secret expedition in the South Seas required long term settlement on small remote islands and atolls, where Native Hawaiian men were selected for the tasks of surviving and dedicating parts of their lives to establish U.S. control and claim over the Line Islands of Baker, Howland, and Jarvis. Initially, these men came from Kamehameha School and were Native Hawaiian, and were recruited based on criteria of: “being grown up,” knowing how to “fish in the native manner,” swimming and handling a boat well, and having the ability to survive the remoteness and “rigors of a South Seas existence.”

You have read about and watched short video clips from the Hui Panalā‘au Digital Library as part of Lesson 2, with focus on the compelling question: ***How does culture play roles in human-environment interactions and social organization?***

In small groups you will take some time to consider the different tasks colonists were instructed to carry out by the U.S. government on these remote islands and atolls. After the role-playing activity you will now consider these cultural values, skills, knowledge, and mindsets of these 130 or so young men and how their experiences growing up in Hawai‘i have helped them to survive and thrive in the harshest conditions of Baker, Howland, and Jarvis Islands.

Think about how the lives of these young men in Hawai‘i, *prior* to their expedition and colonization experiences in the remote Pacific, helped them to survive and be successful with living and carrying out tasks for several months at a time while on Baker, Howland, and Jarvis Islands.

To help you better understand the kinds of knowledge, skills, values, and mindsets that these young men brought with them to these remote islands in the Pacific, watch the short video [Culture Keepers: Miki‘ala Ayau Pescaia](#) and read about mo‘olelo ‘o Kalaupapa and Miki‘ala’s role as a “culture keeper” who uses the history and knowledge of Moloka‘i to strengthen and continue her connection to the place she calls home, and develop a sense of belonging to where she comes from.

The video Mo‘olelo ‘O Kalaupapa Culture Keepers introduces us to Miki‘ala Ayau Pescaia. She tells us about her job as an Interpretive National Park Ranger at Kalaupapa National Historical Park on Mo‘olelo where she grew up on the northern coastline of Moloka‘i. She was raised by her tutu (grandparent), a historian and storyteller in Pelekunu, her father’s home. From her tutu Miki‘ala heard many stories. Nowadays she shares these stories about her ‘ohana (family) and the lessons she learned from kūpuna (elders). Her stories show how Native Hawaiians did not invent STEM but found the necessary tools and knowledge in the place where they lived.

Through careful observation (*kilo*) they used their senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and intuition) and what they found in their natural environment to live in harmony with their environment and be healthy.

In Kalaupapa there is a strong connection to the wind (*makani*). Miki'ala describes how *ahukapalili* makes your clothes flutter, and *kuialalipoa* brings the smell of lipoa (*limu*, seaweed) up from the coastline. To dry clothes, they arranged stones to create a solar clothes dryer. Native Hawaiians also used triangulation or GPS, a Global Positioning System – lining up landmarks (*ko'a*) to locate fishing holes and where the freshwater springs were.

Miki'ala points out that Native Hawaiians had the concept of GPS (Global Positioning System) hundreds of years ago, that they had these abilities to use their bodies and landmarks to sense and observe the weather and patterns in the weather, much like the tools we use in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) today. At the end of the story, she says: "I love when I have the chance to share *mo'olelo*, that starts to pull those abilities back into our *kino* [bodies] and into our consciousness [minds], that we are our *kūpuna*."

Before you go outside to *kilo* and conduct careful observations of your own, discuss in small groups what you now know after listening to Miki'ala share her stories, and what you have learned about the Hui Panalā'au and their experiences.

1. From your readings and watching of videos from the Hui Panalā'au Digital Library, what was it like for the colonists to survive on Baker, Howland, and Jarvis Islands? Were there certain skills, values, knowledge, and mindsets that helped them to survive? What kinds of things did they see and hear, and how did they live off the land?

2. What does it mean to *kilo*? What was the importance of *kilo* for Hui Panalā'au as they worked to colonize these remote islands?

3. What does it mean to “live in harmony” with the environment? What kinds of things did Hui Panalā‘au do to live their lives in harmony with the environment while also carrying out the tasks given to them by the U.S. government?

4. Why was it important for the men of Hui Panalā‘au to use *kilo* and other skills, the wisdom of their *kūpuna* (elders), and experiences growing up in Hawai‘i to understand and know more about where they lived for months at a time? How did this help them to survive and thrive in the remote Pacific Islands?

LET’S GO OUTSIDE TO EXPLORE, OBSERVE, AND CONNECT TO OUR PLACE!

Now that we are outside, you will use your skills of *kilo* to make sense of your surroundings – the practices of *kilo* are what Hawaiians used in the past and what is continued to be used today. When you *kilo*, you are using your **six senses** (sight, smell, touch, hearing, taste, and intuition) *and* human-made tools and practices (we use these same skills in STEM, today!) to learn about your environment and solve problems based on your observations.

Here are the guidelines for doing this kilo activity today, working in small groups with an assigned group leader:

1. Always *kilo* using your senses first, even before speaking or doing anything (stay still, breathe in and out slowly). Think before you speak and act. **Today you will not be using your sense of taste. No tasting of anything in your environment.** Always follow the instructions of your teacher and group leader.
2. Stay in the area where your group is, always. If you have a group leader, then always stay with that person. You should never go outside of the school area and

never cross the street. Listen to the call or signal to return to the meeting place where you started.

3. On your observation sheet for this Ke Kilo activity, you will be writing down words, ideas, and questions about what you notice around you. You will also be drawing what you observe. Please be silent and still so that you can use five of your six senses today: sight, hearing, touch, smell, and feeling (intuition). Do this for 15 to 20 minutes in two to three different spots outside, wherever your group leader takes you. If you do not have your own clipboard your leader will be taking down these ideas and notes for you. (You will have time to write and draw once back inside the classroom.)
4. Have an open mind, be curious, and be ready to explore!

Ke Kilo Activity Observation

Date:	Place: (Ask for help from your peers and teacher for this) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specific Location: (school name or other place name where your school is located) Town or City:
Time:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ahupua‘a (Land-to-Sea area) and Moku (District):
Season: (Circle one)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ho‘oilo</i> (cooler, wetter season, October to April)• <i>Kau</i> (hotter, drier season, April to October)	

Papahulilani (Sky)

How is the...**Weather?** (Write about the weather you observe outside today. Is it raining hard or drizzling? Is it sunny and hot? What is the temperature outside? Is it dark/gray in the sky? Is it cool and wet? Windy or still?)

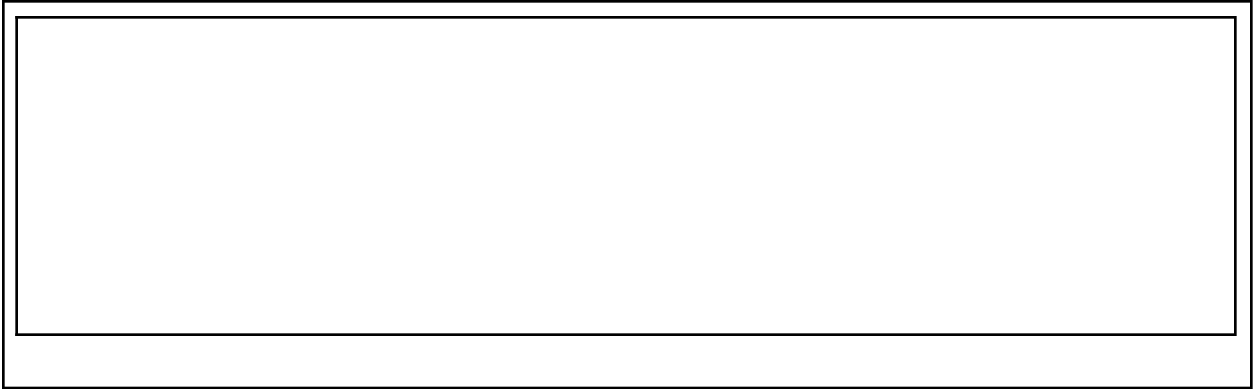
How are the...**Clouds?** (What are the shapes of the clouds? Are there many clouds or very few or none? What colors are the clouds? Write about what you see.)

How is the... **Wind?** (Is there a breeze blowing? Does it feel cool, sticky (wet), dry, or hot? What direction is the strongest, most noticeable wind coming from? Do you know the direction (North, South, East, West) or place where the strongest wind is coming from (such as *ma uka* (from the mountainside), *ma kai* (from the ocean), or a place name that you know)? Write down your answers as if you are describing this to a family member.

Papahulihonua (Land and Ocean)

What do you observe about your place outside? Write about any interesting things you notice about this place where you are right now. Is there a mountain range? Is there a stream running by? Can you see the ocean from where you are? Write about any part of the land and ocean that you can see, smell, hear, and feel/touch.

Do you also have any feelings coming from inside your gut, your *na'au* (intuition) that is calling out to you? Do you feel calm, nervous, happy, or upset?



Draw with details the things that you observed in each section. (You will color in these drawings when back in the classroom.)

<p style="text-align: center;">Papahulilani (Sky)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Papahulihonua (Land and Ocean)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Papahānaumoku (Living Things)</p>	
<p>PLANTS:</p>	<p>ANIMALS:</p>

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(*Ke Kilo Activity* (n.d.) adapted from the Waikalua Loko I'a education program, Pacific American Foundation)