Approaching the Inquiry Process from a

CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Nalani 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.

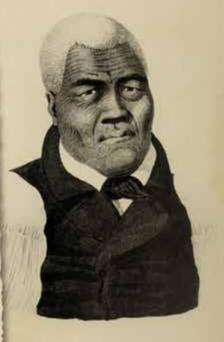


Figure 2. King Kamehameha I, honored through the name of the schools.

amehameha Schools is a private educational institution supported by the endowment of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop (1831-1884) (see figure 1), the last direct descendant of King Kamehameha I. In her last will and testament, the princess directed the five trustees of her estate to erect a school for Hawaiian children (Bishop 1883). Her wish was to improve the capability and well being of her people through education and provide an environment where each would have an opportunity to practice and perpetuate Hawaiian values and traditions. Pauahi's desire was fulfilled three years after her death. In 1887 Kamehameha Schools (KS) was founded and named after her great-grandfather King Kamehameha I (see figure 2).

In 2008 the librarians of Kamehameha Schools began their own inquiry into how they might infuse Hawaiian values and traditions into their curriculum. Having already used Mike Eisenberg and Bob Berkowitz's Information and Technology Skills for Students, the school librarians at Kamehameha decided to model their work after the Big6 (Eisenberg and Berkowitz 2013).

An initial meeting of a core group of the school's K–12 librarians set two goals. The first was to inspire their Hawaiian students to carry on the traditions and learning styles of their ancestors who were exceptional craftsmen and tradesmen. They had learned their specialties through inquiry and created a culture of people who were hardworking, skilled, and, as Hawaiian historian and scholar Samuel Manaiakalani Kamakau wrote in his book, Ruling Chiefs of Hawai'i, "possessed of much learning" (1992, 237).

The second objective was to infuse the library's curriculum with Kamehameha Schools' Working Exit Outcomes (WEO) (see figure 3). The WEO is a framework for learning that incorporates Hawaiian cultural understanding and 21st-century skills. The framework outlines outcome expectations of the knowledge all students of Kamehameha Schools K—12 should acquire before graduation.

The word "inquiry" means to seek or request truth, information, or knowledge. And this was to be Kamehameha's quest. As a young boy the future ruler's "classroom" consisted of all that surrounded him: the stars in the heavens above, the land on which he walked, and the vast ocean that encircled his island home. Knowing Kamehameha would someday become king, Nae'ole, Kamehameha's first kumu (coo-moo), or teacher, guided his pupil's inquiry using the environment as his classroom resource. Kamehameha was taught to prepare himself to be a leader: to be observant, to listen, to study, to think, and to perpetuate this knowledge for future generations. In this way his real-life experiences were made purposeful and relevant.

KS librarians want their students to be able to do the same, to use inquiry to learn about the world around them while incorporating the fundamental skills of information literacy. 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.



Figure 3. Kamehameha Schools' Working Exit Outcomes (background image: Takano 2010).



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

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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: I) 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 authorative 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'oma'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'opa'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 'Olelo 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).



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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!

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