

Pu‘upu‘u lei pali i ka ‘ā‘ī.

An imperfect lei, beautified by wearing.

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Context

I am employed by the Institute for Native Pacific Education and Culture (INPEACE), a non-profit organization that serves Native Hawaiian communities across O‘ahu's west side, the eastern region of Hawai‘i Island, and the western area of Kaua‘i. Within INPEACE, I am involved with the Keiki Steps program, which operates as a Hawaiian Culture-Based Education initiative. Our focus lies in providing a bilingual and immersion Family Child Interaction Learning experience tailored for children aged 0-5.

Presently, I am Kumu Alaka‘i (Site Coordinator/Lead Teacher) in a bilingual classroom setting in Ewa on O‘ahu. Our program primarily serves Native Hawaiian families, although, like many Kanaka Maoli, these ‘ohana come from various other backgrounds. As such, our approach integrates everyone’s native language into the educational environment. My current classroom comprises 14 haumana (students), seven boys and seven girls.

Ewa, situated on the southwestern point of O‘ahu, is a moku steeped in both historical significance and contemporary life. Once dominated by lush lo‘i kalo (taro patches, Ewa has transformed into a dynamic residential community while maintaining its deep cultural roots. The ‘āina here is rich with stories—each breeze carries whispers of the kupuna (ancestors) who once cultivated these lands, and each wave that touches the shore speaks of generations who fished in the kai (sea).

The community of Ewa is diverse, a blend of ‘ohana who have lived here for generations and newcomers. Many Native Hawaiian families in Ewa trace their lineage back to this ‘āina, with mo‘olelo (stories) of their ancestors' connection to the ‘āina passed down through the generations. This connection is seen in the continued practice of mālama ‘āina (caring for the land), where families engage in mālama loko i‘a (fishpond restoration), Lei making from mea kanu (plants), and traditional farming practices such as growing kalo (taro) and ‘uala (sweet potato).

In this community, I am privileged to serve as Kumu Alaka‘i. Originally from Nānākuli in the moku of Wai‘anae, I bring the values and lessons from my upbringing into my teaching. Having lived in the Ewa area for the past five years, currently residing in Makakilo, my role is deeply rooted in both teaching and learning from the kaiāulu (community). My site is a place where the rich cultural heritage of Ewa is not only taught but lived. We engage in ‘ike kūpuna (ancestral knowledge) through ha‘awina (activities) such as sharing and learning ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and mo‘olelo, kilo (observation) of the natural environment, understanding the significance of wahi pana (sacred places), and learning the art of mele (song) and hula (dance) that tell the mo‘olelo of our pae ‘āina.

My haumana, who come from various backgrounds, are united by their shared experiences in this unique moku. They learn about the importance of kuleana (responsibility) to the ‘āina and each other, practicing mālama (care) through hands-on activities that connect them to the traditions of their own kūpuna. As a kumu in Ewa, my kuleana is to ensure that these practices and values are passed down to the next generation, nurturing a strong sense of identity and pride in the ‘āina they call home. Through Keiki Steps, I can a‘o aku, a‘o mai – teach and be taught.

Keiki Steps was founded to address the school-readiness requirements of young Native Hawaiian children and their families residing in economically disadvantaged areas. This is achieved by enhancing their involvement in a top-tier early education initiative that first emphasizes the importance of cultural authenticity with an added emphasis on school readiness. This year, we are also using our own culturally appropriate standards to ensure keiki are both confident in who they are and where they come from, as well as ready for whatever form of schooling they will be entering in kindergarten – English-medium, Hawaiian-medium, and anything in-between. We aim for keiki and ‘ohana to be supported wherever they are.

Coming from a background where my own family faced challenges, including poverty, alcoholism, drug addiction, and abuse, I often reflect on the impact that supportive resources could have had on our lives. This reflection motivates me in my current role as I strive to provide the kind of assistance and guidance, I wish my family had access to during my upbringing.

Rationale

Pu‘upu‘u lei pali i ka ‘ā‘ī.

An imperfect lei, beautified by wearing.

Even an imperfect lei looks beautiful when worn around the neck – as beautiful as flowers and greenery on the slope of a hill.

‘Ōlelo No‘eau #2765

Lei-making is a cherished tradition in Hawaiian culture, symbolizing love, honor, and the spirit of aloha. This curriculum unit on lei making has been developed to introduce preschool keiki to this culturally rich art form, fostering an early appreciation for their cultural heritage while promoting creativity and fine motor skills. This narrative outlines the reasons behind selecting lei-making as a focal point for this curriculum, emphasizing its importance to the community and its relevance to preschool education.

In our community, lei-making is more than an art; it is a practice steeped in tradition, representing the values of respect, hospitality, and connection to the land. Lei are crafted to celebrate significant events, honor individuals, and express emotions. By incorporating lei-making into the preschool curriculum, we aim to preserve this cultural heritage and pass it on to

the next generation, instilling a sense of joy and pride in our keiki. According to Pukui and Elbert (1986), "The lei is a symbol of love and aloha, a tangible expression of the Hawaiian values of sharing and caring". Teaching young Keiki the art of lei-making ensures that these values remain vibrant and continue to play a vital role in our community.

For preschool keiki, engaging in lei-making offers a multitude of developmental benefits. It enhances fine motor skills through the intricate processes of threading and weaving, supports cognitive development by teaching patterns and sequences, and fosters creativity as keiki design their own Lei. Moreover, introducing cultural practices at a young age helps keiki develop a sense of identity and belonging, promoting a positive self-concept. According to research by Goncu, Jain, and Tuermer (2007), early exposure to cultural activities supports children's socio-emotional development and helps them build a positive self-concept. Lei-making, with its hands-on approach and cultural richness, is an ideal activity to achieve these developmental goals, providing reassurance of the educational value of this curriculum.

My own journey with lei-making began in childhood, guided by my 'ohana, who taught me the significance of each flower and the stories behind different types of Lei. These moments were not only about learning a craft but also about bonding and understanding the deeper meanings of our traditions. Lei-making was not something I kept up with as I grew up; therefore, in creating this curriculum, I get to learn right alongside the Keiki I work with, sharing my personal connection and passion for this art form.

Research supports the integration of cultural arts into early childhood education. Carol D. Lee's work (2007) highlights how cultural modeling in education helps children connect learning to their cultural context, enhancing both engagement and understanding.

The lei-making curriculum unit fits seamlessly into our teaching schedule, particularly during the fall season, a time of harvest and gratitude. Fall is also a period rich with cultural events in our community, such as the Makahiki season, making it a suitable time for keiki to learn and practice lei-making. This unit will be integrated over four weeks, with weekly sessions dedicated to different aspects of Lei-making, including the selection of materials, various techniques, and the cultural stories behind each type of Lei.

The decision to create a lei-making curriculum unit stems from a deep respect for our cultural traditions and a commitment to early childhood education. Introducing preschool keiki to the art of lei-making aims to nurture their creativity, enhance their developmental skills, and instill a sense of cultural pride and connection. This curriculum unit not only preserves an essential aspect of our heritage but also enriches the educational experience of our youngest learners, laying the foundation for a lifelong appreciation of their culture.

Topic Summary

The Lei holds profound cultural significance in Hawaiian tradition as a tangible expression of aloha (love), honor, and respect. Rooted in Indigenous knowledge and practices, the art of lei-making embodies the interconnectedness of culture, language, and community in the Hawaiian context. This curriculum introduces young learners to lei-making's rich heritage and craftsmanship, fostering a deeper appreciation for Hawaiian culture and language while nurturing creativity and fine motor skills.

My dear hoa (friend) Kaleolani Kel'iikoa-Kapololū, who creates beautiful Lei and holds workshops as a kumu to teach the art of lei making, has generously agreed to kōkua (help) me as I go on this journey to learn about Lei and put this curriculum together. Kaleo explained to me what Lei meant to her. "For me, Lei making will always be aloha 'āina from making the Lei gathering mea kanu, and even the hands that kanu. A lei will always hold a story; the base of a lei is the 'ohana ties, and every lau or pua added is a member of the 'ohana, and it goes on and on until you have a full lei." (Keli'ikoa-Kapololū, 2024)

Central to the curriculum is exploring the various materials and techniques employed in lei-making, ranging from traditional to contemporary approaches. Drawing from Indigenous wisdom and contemporary resources, Keiki will learn about the significance of different lei materials, such as flowers, leaves, shells, and feathers, as well as the cultural protocols associated with their selection and use. Through hands-on activities and guided instruction, learners will engage in lei-making, from gathering materials to constructing their own lei designs.

Lei-making in Hawaiian culture encompasses diverse styles, each reflecting unique artistic traditions, materials, and techniques passed down through generations. From the intricate weaving of fresh pua (flowers) to the meticulous arrangement of pūpū (shells) and hua (seeds), the various styles of lei-making showcase the creativity and ingenuity of Indigenous artisans.

One of the most iconic styles of lei making is the "haku" lei, characterized by its intricate braiding or weaving technique using fresh pua, lau (leaves), or ferns. Haku lei are often worn as adornments for special occasions such as weddings, graduations, and hula performances. One must carefully select and arrange pua and mea kanu, weaving them together into elaborate patterns that evoke the beauty of the 'āina (land).

Another popular style of lei making is the "kui" lei, which involves stringing together individual pua or other materials onto a base thread or cord. There are three kinds of kui lei we will learn about: kui pololei – straight, single pattern, kui poepoe – circular, double pattern, and kui lau – back-and-forth pattern. Kui lei can feature many materials, including pua, pūpū, hua, and hulu (feathers), allowing endless creative possibilities. These lei are often worn as necklaces or draped over shoulders, symbolizing celebration, affection, and aloha.

Another style of lei-making is the Lei Hilo, which utilizes braiding and weaving patterns. We will utilize it as many of us have lā'ī (ti-leaf) readily available.

In addition to fresh floral Lei, Lei can be made using non-perishable materials such as pūpū, hua, and hulu. Shell lei, known as "pūpū" lei, feature shells collected from the shores of Hawai'i's pristine beaches, meticulously strung together to create stunning and durable adornments. Hua lei, or "lei po'o," showcases the natural beauty of Hawai'i's mea kanu, with hua carefully selected and arranged into intricate patterns. Feather leis, or "lei hulu," are prized for their exquisite craftsmanship and symbolic significance, often featuring feathers from native birds such as the mamō and 'ō'ō.

A few other styles of Lei making are wiliwili—twining, twisting patterns; humu humu papa or humupapa—sewing with a needle and thread; and kīpu'u, hīpu'u, nīpu'u—tying together, knotted patterns (Shimizu Ide, 1998).

Everyone should know what style lei to give a māmā who is laulau (pregnant). The wearing of Lei during pregnancy is approached with careful consideration, as expectant mothers exercise caution regarding their use. It is generally advised that laulau women opt for open-ended lei designs, as closed Lei may be perceived as potentially increasing the risk of complications, such as the umbilical cord becoming entangled or looping around the baby's neck. This cautionary practice stems from a desire to prioritize the safety and well-being of both the mother and the unborn child, aligning with cultural beliefs and traditions surrounding pregnancy and childbirth in many communities. As such, pregnant women often choose to err on the side of caution, selecting lei designs that offer greater flexibility and minimize the likelihood of unintended risks or discomfort during this special time (Yuen, n.d.).

Each style of lei-making carries its own cultural significance and symbolism, reflecting the values, traditions, and natural beauty of the Pae 'Āina. Whether crafted from fresh pua, pūpū, hua, or hulu, Lei serve as tangible expressions of aloha, connecting individuals to the 'āina (land), kai (sea), and lani (sky) of Hawai'i.

I want to teach keiki about planting mea kanu (native plants) that we will use to make our Lei. The article *Hawaiian Ecosystems and Culture* explains the significance of mea kanu to Lei best: For most people in Hawai'i today, making a lei and giving it to someone is a gesture of aloha (love and respect) that is a distinctive part of the islands' contemporary social culture. The Hawaiian Lei (a garland usually made of plant leaves, flowers, or seeds) has come to be recognized around the world as an expression of greeting and farewell, honor, congratulations, and love. However, only some people know that the Lei and its plant materials have deeper meanings in Hawaiian culture, especially before the modern era.

More than today's decorative social token, a lei and its making, giving, and wearing embody—from the Hawaiian cultural perspective—a profoundly felt personal and spiritual significance (Anderson-Fung & Maly, 2009).

We are privileged to have 12 empty māla beds at our site this year, which we plan to cultivate with various Indigenous and culturally significant plants. These māla will serve as living classrooms where students can engage in hands-on learning about traditional Hawaiian agricultural practices and the importance of mālama ‘āina. While we eagerly await the growth of these gardens, we recognize that it may take time for the mea kanu to mature.

In the meantime, we are exploring alternative ways to source the necessary mea kanu for our lei-making. We will partner with local community gardens and ‘ohana, who have access to mea kanu, ensuring that our haumāna still have the opportunity to connect and gather what mea we need. This approach allows us to maintain our commitment to fostering a strong connection between our haumāna and the ‘āina, even as we work to cultivate our own māla.

Furthermore, in the spirit of nurturing lifelong learning, I propose the dissemination of select botanical specimens to our haumāna. By providing them with the opportunity to cultivate these plants at home, we aim to extend the educational experience beyond the confines of the classroom, empowering our students to actively engage in cultivating and preserving Hawaiian botanical traditions for generations to come.

We will also learn about another material used in Lei making in wā kahiko (ancient Hawaiian times): iwi (bones). Although this is not a method of Lei making we use today, in wā kahiko, lei making was deeply intertwined with the natural world and spiritual beliefs, encompassing a diverse array of materials beyond pua and lau. One such example is the use of iwi in lei-making, reflecting the resourcefulness and ingenuity of Indigenous practices. In traditional Hawaiian culture, iwi held profound significance, symbolizing ancestral connections and spiritual power. Iwi from holoholona (animals), such as i‘a (fish), manu (birds), and holoholona ‘ai waiū (land mammals), were meticulously crafted into ornamental adornments, incorporating intricate designs and symbolism reflective of the natural world. These lei iwi were decorative and imbued with mana (spiritual energy), believed to bestow protection and blessings upon the wearer. By exploring older methods of lei making, such as the incorporation of bones, learners gain insight into the depth and complexity of Hawaiian cultural practices, fostering a deeper appreciation for the interconnectedness of tradition, nature, and spirituality.

Exploring the social-emotional dimension inherent in lei-making is a pivotal aspect that I aim to incorporate into this curriculum, fostering an enriching learning experience for both keiki and ‘ohana. As the Lei is crafted, the creator's mana, or spiritual essence, is imbued within it through sewing or weaving. This imbues Lei with a personal connection and significance. When

presenting a lei to someone, you are offering a piece of yourself, symbolizing a gesture of aloha and connection. Similarly, when receiving a lei, you accept a beautiful adornment and a token of the creator's spirit and goodwill towards you.

Through understanding this principle, it is imperative to infuse positive energy, or mana, into the Lei during its creation process. If one is experiencing emotions such as kaumaha (heaviness) or pīhoihoi (anger), postpone the lei-making activity until a more conducive emotional state is achieved. This precautionary measure ensures that the recipient of the Lei receives only positive and uplifting energy, aligning with the spirit of aloha inherent in Lei giving.

Moreover, the curriculum integrates language learning by incorporating Hawaiian vocabulary related to lei-making, enabling children to develop linguistic proficiency while deepening their cultural understanding. Educators can further contextualize the significance of lei-making within Hawaiian history and mythology by incorporating storytelling and oral traditions, fostering a holistic understanding of cultural practices.

You have read many different hua‘ōlelo (vocabulary) in this introduction, all of which will be taught to my haumāna. The incorporation of mo‘olelo will also be at the forefront of this curriculum. Here is one that will be utilized:

The Legend of Hi‘iakaikapua‘ena‘ena: In Hawaiian mythology, Hi‘iakaikapua‘ena‘ena, a revered sister of Pele, is deeply connected to the art of lei making. Known for her ability to prepare exquisite Lei and kava for her sister Pele, Hi‘iakaikapua‘ena‘ena embodies Hawaiian culture's nurturing and celebratory aspects.

Furthermore, the curriculum emphasizes the importance of sustainability and environmental stewardship in lei-making, encouraging children to explore eco-friendly alternatives and practices that honor the natural world. Through discussions and activities centered on environmental conservation and Indigenous knowledge systems, learners will develop a sense of kuleana (responsibility) toward protecting and preserving Hawai‘i's precious resources for future generations.

In alignment with the principles of place-based education, the curriculum seeks to create meaningful connections between learners and their local environment, fostering a sense of belonging and cultural identity. By incorporating huaka‘i (field trips) to botanical gardens, local farms, and cultural sites, keiki will have the opportunity to engage with community resources and practitioners, deepening their understanding of lei-making within its cultural and geographical context.

Overall, this curriculum aims to empower young haumāna to become stewards of Hawaiian culture and language, equipping them with the knowledge, skills, and appreciation needed to perpetuate the art of lei-making for generations to come. Through meaningful engagement with cultural practices and community resources, keiki will cultivate a sense of pride in their cultural heritage and develop lifelong skills that extend beyond the papa (classroom).

Alignment with Standards

Nā Honua Maui Ola (NHMO) Standard Alignment:

- **‘Ike Pilina:** Nurturing respectful and responsible relationships that connect us to akua, ‘āina, and each other through the sharing of history, genealogy, language, and culture.
- **‘Ike ‘Ōlelo:** *Using Hawaiian language to ground personal connections to Hawaiian culture, history, values, and spirituality and to perpetuate Indigenous ways of knowing and sharing.*
- **‘Ike Maui Lāhui:** *Perpetuating Native Hawaiian cultural identity through practices that strengthen knowledge of language, culture, and genealogical connections to akua, ‘āina, and kanaka.*
- **‘Ike Piko‘u:** *Promoting personal growth, development, and self-worth to support a greater sense of belonging, compassion, and service toward oneself, family, and community.*
- **‘Ike Honua:** *Demonstrating a strong sense of place, including a commitment to preserve the delicate balance of life and protect it for generations to come.*

Hawai‘i Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS) Alignment:

- **Physical Development (PD)**
 - Use small, precise finger and hand movements (e.g., strings small beads, cuts small pictures, uses small Legos) (PHM.KE.d)
- **Social-emotional development (SED)**
 - Recognize and describe own feelings (SE.KE.1)
- **Approaches to Learning (AL)**
 - Show eagerness to learn about a variety of topics and ideas (AL/LA.KE.a)
- **Cognition and General Knowledge (GK)**
 - Recognize, create, and repeat simple patterns (GK.KE.f)
- **English Language Arts and Literacy (LA)**

- Respond appropriately to statements, questions, vocabulary, and stories (LA.KE.j)

Student Learning Objectives

- **Students will be introduced to the cultural significance of lei-making in Hawaiian culture.**
 - Objective: Students will listen to mo‘olelo and participate in discussions about the role of Lei in Hawaiian culture, understanding that Lei are given to show aloha (love), pilina (relationship), ho‘olaule‘a (celebration), and hanohano (honor).
- **Students will practice basic lei-making techniques.**
 - Objective: Students will create simple Lei using materials like flowers, plastic needles, and yarn, focusing on easy-to-handle items to develop fine motor skills.
- **Students will develop fine motor skills through hands-on activities.**
 - Objective: Students will improve hand-eye coordination by threading flowers onto strings or manipulating leaves to make Lei.
- **Students will express their creativity and emotions by making their own Lei.**
 - Objective: Students will choose colors and materials to create their own Lei, reflecting on their feelings and understanding that it is essential to be mindful of what mana (power) you put into the Lei.
- **Students will practice social skills and cooperative play.**
 - Objective: Students will work together in small groups or pairs to help each other make Lei, fostering pilina (relationship), kā‘ana like (sharing), and ka‘a‘ike (communication).

Teaching Strategies

Mo‘olelo:

- Strategy: Begin each session with mo‘olelo that introduces the cultural significance of Lei in Hawaiian culture. Use stories that illustrate aloha, pilina, ho‘olaule‘a, and hanohano associated with Lei.
- Implementation: Use age-appropriate books, videos, or oral storytelling by mākuā or kūpuna (grandparents) to engage haumāna and deepen their understanding of Lei as symbols of love, relationships, celebration, and respect.

Hands-On Exploration:

- Strategy: Provide opportunities for hands-on exploration of materials used in lei-making, such as flowers, leaves, yarn, and plastic needles.
- Implementation: Set up sensory tables or exploration stations where haumāna can touch and feel different flowers and leaves, encouraging them to observe textures, colors, and scents. This exploration fosters sensory development and familiarity with natural materials.

Guided Lei Making Sessions:

- Strategy: Conduct guided Lei making sessions where haumāna learn basic techniques and create their own Lei.
- Implementation: Demonstrate step-by-step how to thread flowers onto strings, yarn, or twisting leaves, emphasizing fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination. Provide visual aids and individualized support as needed to ensure every child can participate and succeed.

Creativity and Emotional Expression:

- Strategy: Encourage haumāna to express their creativity and emotions through lei-making.
- Implementation: Allow haumāna to choose colors and materials that resonate with them personally. Discuss the importance of imbuing mana (power) into their Lei through positive intentions and thoughts. Facilitate discussions about their creations, promoting reflection and emotional expression.

Social Skills Development:

- Strategy: Promote the development of social skills by encouraging cooperative play and group activities while making leis.
- Implementation: Organize small groups or pair activities where haumāna work together to create Lei. Encourage sharing of materials, helping each other, and communicating effectively. Use language reinforcing pilina (relationships) and ka‘a‘ike (communication) among peers.

Cultural Integration and Reflection:

- Strategy: Integrate ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i (Hawaiian language) and cultural elements throughout the curriculum.
- Implementation: Teach basic hua‘ōlelo (Hawaiian words) related to Lei making (e.g., names of flowers, styles of Lei making, different colors, etc.). Incorporate mele (songs) or oli (chants) related to Lei or Hawaiian culture. Encourage haumāna to reflect on what they've learned about Hawaiian traditions and the meaning behind Lei.

Celebration and Sharing:

- Strategy: Conclude the curriculum with a celebration where haumāna showcases their lei creations.
- Implementation: Invite ‘ohana to a lei-making exhibition or performance where haumāna proudly display and share the Lei they've made. Haumāna can give the Lei to someone special. Encourage haumāna to explain the significance of their Lei, reinforcing cultural pride and confidence.

Student Assessment Plan

In assessing our Lei-making curriculum unit for preschoolers, we employ various developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive methods to gauge student learning and engagement. Through observational assessments, we closely observe students' participation in hands-on activities and their grasp of cultural concepts like aloha and pilina. Projects and reflections allow students to showcase their creativity and understanding through lei creations, while storytelling and verbal assessments encourage them to articulate their cultural learning. Peer and self-assessment promote collaborative learning, and family involvement enriches our understanding of how Lei-making fosters cultural connections within our community.

Observational Assessment:

- Method: Throughout the unit, conduct ongoing observations of students during hands-on activities, storytelling sessions, and cooperative play.
- Description: Use a checklist or anecdotal notes to document students' engagement, understanding of cultural concepts (e.g., aloha, pilina), and participation in Lei-making activities. Observe their fine motor skills development, ability to follow instructions and social interactions.

Project Completion and Reflection:

- Method: Have students complete individual or group lei-making projects.
- Description: Assess the quality and creativity of each student's lei creation. Encourage students to reflect on their Lei, discussing the materials chosen, the colors used, and the emotions or meanings behind their designs. Use rubrics or simple checklists to evaluate their ability to follow steps and their understanding of cultural significance.

Storytelling and Verbal Reflection:

- Method: Conduct verbal assessments through storytelling and group discussions.
- Description: Ask students to retell stories or mo‘olelo related to lei-making and Hawaiian culture. Evaluate their comprehension of critical cultural concepts and their ability to

express their understanding verbally. Encourage students to share their personal connections to Lei and what they've learned about aloha, pilina, and other values.

Creative Expression Assessment:

- Method: Include activities where students can express their understanding creatively.
- Description: Provide opportunities for students to draw or paint pictures related to lei-making or Hawaiian culture. Assess their ability to represent Lei in their artwork and their understanding of colors and materials traditionally used in Lei. Use open-ended prompts to encourage imaginative responses that reflect their cultural learning.

Peer and Self-Assessment:

- Method: Foster peer and self-assessment during cooperative activities.
- Description: Encourage students to work in pairs or small groups to evaluate each other's lei creations. Provide criteria for assessment such as craftsmanship, creativity, and adherence to cultural values. Promote discussions where students can offer constructive feedback and reflect on their own learning process.

Family Involvement and Documentation:

- Method: Involve 'ohana in the assessment process by integrating them into shared activities and interactive reflections.
- Description: Invite 'ohana to join their keiki in creating and showcasing their Lei and engage in discussions about its cultural significance. Collect feedback from 'ohana on their observations of their learning journey and their kaiki's cultural connections. Encourage 'ohana to share how participating in lei-making has influenced their child's understanding and appreciation of Hawaiian culture and how these experiences have impacted their family dynamics.

Classroom Activities

Ka Ha'awina (Activity): Mo'olelo of Hi'iakaikapua'ena'ena
Ka Wehena (Description): Keiki will understand the cultural and historical significance of lei through the mo'olelo of Hi'iakaikapua'ena'ena – the goddess of lei making.
Ke Kālainana'o (Objective): Introduce haumāna to the cultural significance of lei making through the story of Hi'iakaikapua'ena'ena and connect them with Hawaiian history and values.
Nā Kālai'ike (Standards): Nā Honua Mauli Ola (NHMO):

- **‘Ike Pilina:** Nurturing respectful and responsible relationships that connect us to akua, ‘āina, and each other through the sharing of history, genealogy, language, and culture.
- **‘Ike ‘Ōlelo:** Using Hawaiian language to ground personal connections to Hawaiian culture, history, values, and spirituality and to perpetuate Indigenous ways of knowing and sharing.
- **‘Ike Maui Lāhui: ‘Ike Maui Lāhui:** Perpetuating Native Hawaiian cultural identity through practices that strengthen knowledge of the language, culture, and genealogical connections to akua, ‘āina, and kanaka.

Hawai‘i Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS):

- **Social-Emotional Development (SED)**
 - Recognize and describe own feelings (SE.KE.1)
- **English Language Arts and Literacy (LA)**
 - Respond appropriately to statements, questions, vocabulary, and stories (LA.KE.j)

Culturally Responsive Principles:

- **Indigenous knowledge systems and language**
 - Traditional and/or cultural knowledge is included

Nā Lako (Materials): Mo‘olelo of Hi‘iakaikapua‘ena‘ena, props related to the mo‘olelo (e.g., lei, images of Hi‘iakaikapua‘ena‘ena)

Nā Ki‘inaa‘o (Teaching steps):

1. Introduce Hi‘iakaikapua‘ena‘ena and her significance in Hawaiian culture.
2. Read or narrate the mo‘olelo, focusing on her role and attributes.
3. Show visual aids related to the story.
4. Facilitate a discussion about themes and cultural significance.
5. Encourage personal reflection on the story’s impact.

Ka Ha‘awina (Activity): Sensory Exploration with Lei Materials

Ka Wehena (Description): Keiki will explore different materials used in lei making through sensory play, handling pua, lā‘au, and pūpū to learn about textures and colors.

Ke Kālaimana‘o (Objective): Familiarize haumāna with the materials used in lei making and enhance sensory exploration.

Nā Kālai‘ike (Standards):

Nā Honua Maui Ola (NHMO):

- **‘Ike Pilina:** Nurturing respectful and responsible relationships that connect us to akua, ‘āina, and each other through the sharing of history, genealogy, language, and culture.
- **‘Ike Piko‘u:** Promoting personal growth, development, and self-worth to support a greater sense of belonging, compassion, and service toward oneself, family, and community.

Hawai‘i Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS):

- **Physical Development (PD)**
 - Use small, precise finger and hand movements (e.g. strings small beads, cuts small pictures, uses small Legos) (PHM.KE.d)
- **Cognition and General Knowledge (GK)**
 - Recognize, create, and repeat simple patterns (GK.KE.f)

Nā Lako (Materials): Pua, lā‘au, and pūpū, sensory bin.

Nā Ki‘inaa‘o (Teaching steps):

1. Introduce various materials used in lei making.
2. Set up sensory bins with different textures.
3. Allow haumāna to explore and discuss their sensory experiences.
4. Connect materials to their role in lei making.

Ka Ha‘awina (Activity): Lei Making Basics - Lei Pua

Ka Wehena (Description): Keiki will create simple lei pua using pre-cut construction paper pua and string, learning basic lei making techniques.

Ke Kālaimana‘o (Objective): Teach haumāna basic lei making techniques and develop fine motor skills through hands-on practice.

Nā Kālai‘ike (Standards):

Nā Honua Maui Ola (NHMO):

- **‘Ike Maui Lāhui:** Perpetuating Native Hawaiian cultural identity through practices that strengthen knowledge of language, culture, and genealogical connections to akua, ‘āina, and kanaka.
- **‘Ike Piko‘u:** Promoting personal growth, development, and self-worth to support a greater sense of belonging, compassion, and service toward oneself, family, and community.

Hawai‘i Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS):

- **Physical Development (PD)**
 - Use small, precise finger and hand movements (e.g. strings small beads, cuts small pictures, uses small Legos) (PHM.KE.d)
- **Approaches to Learning (AL)**
 - Show eagerness to learn about a variety of topics and ideas (AL/LA.KE.a)

Nā Lako (Materials): Pre-cut flowers, string or yarn, plastic needles.

Nā Ki‘inaa‘o (Teaching steps):

1. Demonstrate basic lei making techniques.
2. Provide materials and guide haumāna through the process.
3. Support practice and refinement of skills.
4. Discuss the significance of lei pua in Hawaiian culture.

Ka Ha‘awina (Activity): Lei Making Basics - Tī Leaf Lei

Ka Wehena (Description): Keiki will make a tī leaf lei using 1 lā‘ī.

Ke Kālainana‘o (Objective): Teach keiki to make a tī leaf lei and understand their cultural significance.

Nā Kālai‘ike (Standards):

Nā Honua Maui Ola (NHMO):

- **‘Ike Pilina:** Nurturing respectful and responsible relationships that connect us to akua, ‘āina, and each other through the sharing of history, genealogy, language, and culture.
- **‘Ike Maui Lāhui:** Perpetuating Native Hawaiian cultural identity through practices that strengthen knowledge of language, culture, and genealogical connections to akua, ‘āina, and kanaka.

Hawai‘i Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS):

- **Physical Development (PD)**
 - Use small, precise finger and hand movements (e.g. strings small beads, cuts small pictures, uses small Legos) (PHM.KE.d)

- **Cognition and General Knowledge (GK)**
 - Recognize, create, and repeat simple patterns (GK.KE.f)

Nā Lako (Materials): 1 lā‘ī per keiki, scissors to debone lā‘ī.

Nā Ki‘inaa‘o (Teaching steps):

1. Introduce the significance of lā‘ī in Hawaiian culture. [lā‘ī resource](#)
2. Demonstrate how to create a tī leaf lei.
 - a. Debone lā‘ī, split down the middle, tie the 2 leaves together on the “bone” end, then create strips on each side from the center out approximately 1 centimeter apart. [tutorial](#)
3. Guide keiki through making their own tī leaf lei.
4. Discuss traditional uses and cultural importance of lā‘ī.

Ka Ha‘awina (Activity): Lei Making with ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i - Language Integration

Ka Wehena (Description): Keiki will use hua‘ōlelo (Hawaiian words) to describe the lei-making process and materials by matching hua‘ōlelo to ki‘i (pictures) of lei material.

Ke Kālaimana‘o (Objective): Integrate Hawaiian language into lei making to deepen cultural understanding.

Nā Kālai‘ike (Standards):

Nā Honua Maui Ola (NHMO):

- **‘Ike ‘Ōlelo:** Using Hawaiian language to ground personal connections to Hawaiian culture, history, values, and spirituality, and to perpetuate Indigenous ways of knowing and sharing.

Hawai‘i Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS):

- **English Language Arts and Literacy (LA)**
 - Respond appropriately to statements, questions, vocabulary, and stories (LA.KE.j)

Culturally Responsive Principles:

- **Indigenous knowledge systems and language**
 - Local Indigenous language(s) is integrated

Nā Lako (Materials): Hua‘ōlelo written on cardstock, ki‘i of lei materials.

Hua‘ōlelo:

Ka Lei: a garland or wreath made from flowers, leaves, or other materials.

Ke Kui: to string together, also meaning needle.

Ka Hilo: to twist, braid, spin
Ka Pua: flower
Ka Lā'ī: tī leaf
Ka Pūpū: shell
Ke Kaula: string

Nā Ki'inaa'o (Teaching steps):

1. Introduce hua'ōlelo related to lei making.
2. Use vocabulary cards during the activity.
3. Encourage haumāna to use say hua'ōlelo when matching to the correct ki'i.
4. Reinforce the cultural context and significance of the language.

Ka Ha'awina (Activity): Creative Lei Design and Reflection

Ka Wehena (Description): Keiki will design their own lei, reflecting on their personal feelings and choices of colors and materials.

Ke Kālaimana'o (Objective): Allow haumāna to express their creativity and emotions through their lei designs and reflect on the mana they put into their work.

Nā Kālai'ike (Standards):

Nā Honua Mauli Ola (NHMO):

- **'Ike Maui Lāhui:** Perpetuating Native Hawaiian cultural identity through practices that strengthen knowledge of language, culture, and genealogical connections to akua, 'āina, and kanaka.
- **'Ike Piko'u:** Promoting personal growth, development, and self-worth to support a greater sense of belonging, compassion, and service toward oneself, family, and community.

Hawai'i Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS):

- **Social-Emotional Development (SED)**
 - Recognize and describe own feelings (SE.KE.1)

Nā Lako (Materials): Assorted lei materials (pua, lau, pūpū, string, needle), reflection prompts

Nā Ki'inaa'o (Teaching steps):

1. Provide materials for lei.
2. Guide haumāna in choosing colors and materials.
3. Facilitate a reflection session where haumāna discuss their designs and emotions.
4. Document their reflections and creativity.

Ka Ha‘awina (Activity): Lei Making in Hui

Ka Wehena (Description): Keiki will work in pairs or small hui (group) to create a group lei, promoting cooperation and social skills.

Ke Kālaimana‘o (Objective): Foster social skills and teamwork through collaborative lei making.

Nā Kālai‘ike (Standards):

Nā Honua Maui Ola (NHMO):

- **‘Ike Pilina:** Nurturing respectful and responsible relationships that connect us to akua, ‘āina, and each other through the sharing of history, genealogy, language, and culture.
- **‘Ike Piko‘u:** Promoting personal growth, development, and self-worth to support a greater sense of belonging, compassion, and service toward oneself, family, and community.

Hawai‘i Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS):

- **Approaches to Learning (AL)**
 - Show eagerness to learn about a variety of topics and ideas (AL/LA.KE.a)
- **Social-Emotional Development (SED)**
 - Recognize and describe own feelings (SE.KE.1)

Nā Lako (Materials): Assorted lei materials (pua, lau, pūpū, string, needle)

Nā Ki‘inaa‘o (Teaching steps):

1. Organize haumāna into small groups or pairs.
2. Provide materials and instructions for creating a group lei.
3. Encourage sharing, helping and effective communication.
4. Observe and document social interactions and teamwork.

Ka Ha‘awina (Activity): Mo‘olelo and Verbal Reflection

Ka Wehena (Description): Keiki will participate in a group discussion to share their understanding of lei and Hawaiian culture.

Ke Kālaimana‘o (Objective): Reinforce cultural learning through verbal reflection and storytelling.

Nā Kālai‘ike (Standards):

Nā Honua Maui Ola (NHMO):

- **‘Ike ‘Ōlelo:** Using Hawaiian language to ground personal connections to Hawaiian culture, history, values, and spirituality, and to perpetuate Indigenous ways of knowing and sharing.
- **‘Ike Maui Lāhui:** Perpetuating Native Hawaiian cultural identity through practices that strengthen knowledge of language, culture, and genealogical connections to akua, ‘āina, and kanaka.

Hawai‘i Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS):

- **English Language Arts and Literacy (LA)**
 - Respond appropriately to statements, questions, vocabulary, and stories (LA.KE.j)

Nā Lako (Materials): Reflection prompts, chart paper to write what haumāna learned.

Nā Ki‘inaa‘o (Teaching steps):

1. Facilitate a group discussion on the significance of lei and what haumāna have learned.
2. Encourage haumāna to retell mo‘olelo or share their own stories.
3. Document verbal reflections and understanding of cultural concepts.

Ka Ha‘awina (Activity): Artistic Representation of Lei

Ka Wehena (Description): Keiki will create drawings or paintings representing their understanding of lei and Hawaiian culture.

Ke Kālamana‘o (Objective): Allow haumāna to represent their understanding of lei through art and reflect on the cultural elements.

Nā Kālai‘ike (Standards):

Nā Honua Maui Ola (NHMO):

- **‘Ike Pilina:** Nurturing respectful and responsible relationships that connect us to akua, ‘āina, and each other through the sharing of history, genealogy, language, and culture.
- **‘Ike Maui Lāhui:** Perpetuating Native Hawaiian cultural identity through practices that strengthen knowledge of language, culture, and genealogical connections to akua, ‘āina, and kanaka.

Hawai‘i Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS):

- **Cognition and General Knowledge (GK)**
 - Recognize, create, and repeat simple patterns (GK.KE.f)

Nā Lako (Materials): Drawing or painting supplies (ie. crayons, markers, paint, paint brushes,

construction paper)

Nā Ki'inaa'o (Teaching steps):

1. Provide materials for creating art.
2. Encourage haumāna to draw or paint their lei and related cultural elements.
3. Discuss the significance of their artwork and the colors and patterns used.
4. Assess their artistic representations and cultural understanding.

Ka Ha'awina (Activity): Hō'ike

Ka Wehena (Description): Keiki will showcase their lei creations in a celebration with their 'ohana, reflecting on their learning and cultural connections.

Ke Kālaimana'o (Objective): Celebrate the work of each haumāna and involve 'ohana in understanding the cultural significance of lei making.

Nā Kālai'ike (Standards):

Nā Honua Maui Ola (NHMO):

- **'Ike Pilina:** Nurturing respectful and responsible relationships that connect us to akua, 'āina, and each other through the sharing of history, genealogy, language, and culture.
- **'Ike Maui Lāhui:** Perpetuating Native Hawaiian cultural identity through practices that strengthen knowledge of language, culture, and genealogical connections to akua, 'āina, and kanaka.

Hawai'i Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS):

- **Social-Emotional Development (SED)**
 - Recognize and describe own feelings (SE.KE.1)

Nā Lako (Materials): Lei keiki created space in the lumi papa (classroom)

Nā Ki'inaa'o (Teaching steps):

1. Organize the event space and set up for displaying the lei.
2. Facilitate a moment where keiki can place their lei around the neck of the 'ohana member or guest they wish to honor.
3. Allow each keiki to share why they chose that person for their lei.
4. Lead a brief discussion where keiki reflect on their experience and what they learned.
5. Invite 'ohana to share their thoughts and experiences related to the lei.

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