



Finding the True Meaning

Lesson Plan for Grades 9-12

Focus Questions

What is the true meaning behind what the chant/chanter/song writer is saying?

Lesson at a Glance

Students will listen to the music and watch (*Maoli Nō* DVD). Students will describe how they feel following the DVD. Then, using selected songs or chants, students will try to determine kaona or the hidden meaning, from the lyrics (literal) meaning. Finally, the students will create their own chant, song (mele), dance, and reflection, expository, poetry, etc.

Key Concepts

Humans are part of nature and have a major affect on our land ('āina). The more we understand the importance and dependence of humankind and land, the better able we are to protect and preserve our 'āina. Education is the key!

Objectives

Students will be able to create a literary piece (poetry, expository, song). The literary piece may later be put to music, and dance.

Subject Areas

Language Arts, Hawaiian Studies

Time

1-2 class periods

Materials

Maoli Nō (Truly Native) DVD
DVD player
Hawaiian Dictionary

Standards Met

Content Standard: Range- 1. Write using various forms to communicate for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Benchmark: Write using fiction and nonfiction genres.

Composing Processes- 2. Use writing processes and strategies appropriately and as needed to construct meaning and communicate effectively.

Benchmark: Interact with others and see anew, solve writing problems, and use feedback to revise, and improve own writing.

Procedure

1. Play the *Maoli Nō* DVD. (Choose your favorite song.) Then play the interlude # 1 – *In the Forest Resides the Gods*.

“The ancient Hawaiians recognized gods everywhere in nature and honored a pantheon of natural deities. The upland forest was wao akua, the realm of the gods, and trees were physical manifestations of various gods in this spiritual realm. Entry into the forest was limited to a few consecrated individuals and involved a strict protocol, including a statement of identity and purpose and appropriate offerings. If the purpose was to collect trees, only a single tree or species could be collected at a time. The upland forest was sacred to Kū, the god of war, governance, and leadership. ‘Ōhi‘a lehua was the physical manifestation of Kū, and the taking of a large ‘ōhi‘a was regarded as a sacred action, requiring the most significant offerings.”

2. Now play the chant “Kau ka Hali‘a” and review the English translations for the chant as well as the songs that students heard.
3. Ask students to analyze the songs and chants and find the true meanings behind the words. Ask them to describe their feelings while listening to and viewing *Maoli Nō*.
4. Have students create their own chant, song (mele), dance, and reflection, expository, poetry, etc. Put these creations together in a booklet to be shared with others.

Extended Activities

- Take students on a field trip to a native forest, stream, or to the ocean that is related to one of the songs or chants on *Maoli Nō*.
- Visit a museum to gather information on Hawaii’s ancient flora, fauna, and waterways.
- Have students research material on native forests on the Internet, library, and talk with kūpuna.
- Map out your island ahupua‘a from mountain (mauka), to sea (makai) and find the chants from of your area. Translate with the help of kūpuna, and find the relationship as it may be applied to this day and age.