

Intended for Grades: 4-6 **Estimated Time:** 45-60 min.

Lesson Title: KALO-OLGY

Lesson Purpose: Students will use the metaphor of the *kalo* (taro) to represent their 'Ohana (family) and connections to their genealogy.

Materials & Preparation:

- * Construction paper (multi-colors)
- * Glue sticks, scissors (enough for all students if possible)
- * Card stock (green can be used for the leaf, brown for corm, and other colors can be used as background)
- * Image of kalo leaf and corm for students to copy
- * Pens/pencils/ colored pencils, for each student

Background Information:

Read the article (See below) to understand the importance of kalo in Hawaiian culture.

Steps:

1. Introduction to Kalo-ology: Discuss with students:
 - What does the word 'Ohana mean?
 - What is *kalo* and why is it important?
 - What does genealogy mean? Why is it important to know your genealogy?

2. Talk story about the different parts of the *kalo* and how they represent 'ohana:

Hulu Hulu - Roots:

Start with the *hulu hulu*, or roots of the *Kalo* plant, as they represent the *kupuna* (ancestors). Share and talk story about how the *hulu hulu* is your connection to your grandparents and ancestors. The deeper the roots, the farther back you can talk about them.

Kalo - Corm:

The *Kalo* corm represents the parents. Sometimes, parents can be defined as an aunty, uncle, or *tutu*.

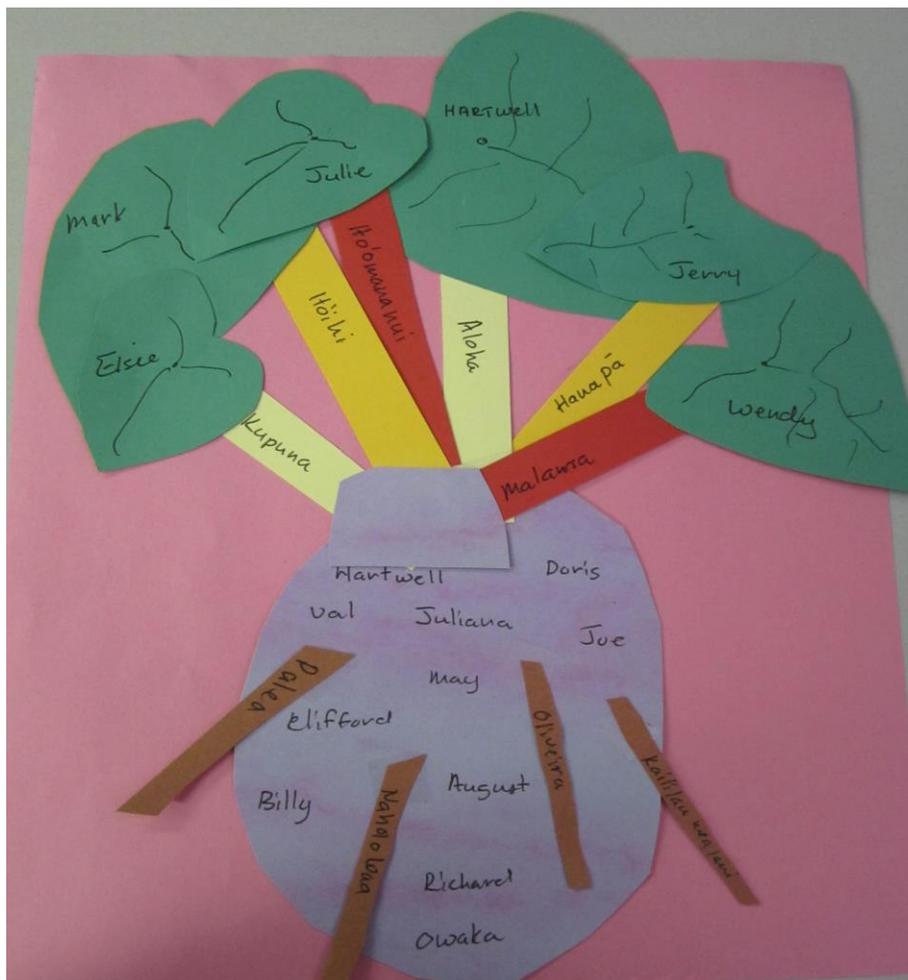
Ha - Stem:

The *Ha* or stem of the *kalo* plant represents family values. What are family values? Share and talk story about your family values. Why is it important to have family values? What values will you pass on to your children?

Lau - Leaf:

The *lau*, or leaf of the *kalo* plant represents YOU and your siblings.

3. Instruct students to create a picture of their 'ohana using the above information. Have them draw and cut out the parts of the *kalo* and then add names and family values. See example below.



Reflection Questions: Invite students to think and research about the following:

What does my last name mean?

Where did my ancestors come from?

Did my ancestors have any hereditary health problems?

What family traditions do we still practice?

Resources:

Alternative lesson plan: Do this activity as a scavenger hunt, using rocks, twigs, leaves, and branches as the materials. Have students assemble what they find using the above information.

Article below can be found at:
<http://honoluluweekly.com/cover/story-continued/2006/03/food-for-life/>

Food For Life

This is a story about love. The love of a father for his daughter. The love of a mother for her son. The love of a brother for his brother. And the love of a people for their land.

It starts with Wakea, the divine father whose offspring include the Hawaiian islands of Hawai'i, Maui, Kaho'olawe, Lana'i, Moloka'i, Kaua'i, Ni'ihau—and a beautiful daughter named Ho'ohokukalani. Wakea loved his islands, and he fell in love with Ho'ohokukalani, too. Their union engendered a way to care for his children forever.

Together Wakea and Ho'ohokukalani birthed a son. But he was lifeless and gnarled like a root, and his mother's heart was broken. Haloanakalaukapalili—Haloa of the shaking leaves—they named him and buried him in the soil. Haloa, long stalk, Haloa, long breath, Haloa, long life. From Haloa sprouted a shoot. He became the first taro plant, the kalo. And Ho'ohokukalani was pregnant again. She gave birth to another son, healthy and strong, and he was called Haloa, the first Hawaiian, progenitor of the Hawaiian people and namesake of his older brother.

Haloa, long stalk. The younger brother tended to his older brother, and the kalo grew abundantly. Haloa, long breath. The lo'i generated oxygen, vitalizing its surroundings. Haloa, long life. The kalo fed the people, and its medicinal leaves aided the sick. But Haloa brought even more.

By Haloa's hand, the land became fertile. He created a work ethic and established a collective kuleana by this reasoning: Haloa came from the land, so Hawaiians came from the land. Keep the land alive, and the culture is perpetuated.

Mo'olelo like this, like stories of all indigenous peoples, are passed on from one generation to the next, keeping history alive. Passing them on without applying their lessons, however, is as foolish as having a treasure map without bothering to look for the treasure.

As social and political issues tug back and forth at the future of Hawai'i and the people who live here, there are a lot of questions that need to be answered. Questions about land use, questions about the watershed, questions about injured communities, questions about sustainability.

The story of Haloa gives an answer. Healing the land will heal the people. For 2,000 years, Hawaiians have been farming kalo laboriously, understanding that the health of the ecosystem reflects the health of the kalo. When the kalo flourishes, it means the streams are flowing with clean, cool freshwater. The streams continue down to the ocean, providing a critical breeding

ground. O'opu, hihiwai and opae spawn at the mouth of the river and make their way back upstream. The reef stays healthy, and so do the reef fish. If the small fish are healthy, the big fish come in. The fishpond—the community refrigerator—stays full. You have questions about sustainability? Ask Haloa. Or as Hawaiians say, take care of your older brother and your older brother will take care of you.

Haloa, long stalk. Haloa, long breath. Haloa, long life. Share huli (taro shoot), and you're sharing Haloa. Share poi, and you're sharing Haloa. Take it literally, take it figuratively, or even rearrange the letters—share Haloa, and you're sharing aloha. And aloha, well, that is love. And this is a story about love.

Oh, poi!

Packed with nutrients and cultural distinction, poi feeds the body and the spirit

The transformation of kalo to poi is a unique process of engagement. There is a physical aspect—a command of the heavy stone pestle, the pohaku ku'i 'ai, specially chosen and meticulously carved by hand; the repetitive rotation of the wrist that directs the stone to its target on the papa ku'i 'ai, the wooden board; the coordination between hands, one splashing water on the stone, the other smashing the kalo uniformly until it turns from starchy corm to gummy pudding. And there is a metaphysical aspect—the steady, mesmerizing rhythm of the stone slapping against the viscous paste; the living energy that the focused pounder works into the food, soon to be recycled by its consumers; the smooth, purple-gray matter that ultimately repels water as surely as it just absorbed it. It's a labor of love that is rewarding—there is nothing like freshly pounded pa'i 'ai, the voluptuous precursor to poi.

Today, giant mills can churn out thousands of pounds of poi per day, reducing the poi lover's prep time from several hours to several minutes. As a result, poi pounding has become somewhat of a lost art, making aficionados truly appreciate a hand-pounded helping. But whether it's self-pounded or machine-mixed, eaten out of a bowl or out of a bag, sweet or sour, two fingers or three fingers thick, one thing remains the same: Poi is good for you.

Considering that poi was the staple of the traditional Hawaiian diet—ancient Hawaiians were estimated to consume anywhere from four to 15 pounds of poi per day—its many nutritional benefits are greatly under-heralded. Poi is a complex carbohydrate that combines starch and dietary fiber. It has been proven to reduce cholesterol, thereby reducing the risk of heart attack. It's low in fat and protein, and contains vitamins A, B6, B12 and C, calcium, iron, potassium, magnesium, phosphorous and zinc. A one-cup (8.5 ounces) serving has 120 calories—less than a cup of rice, which has 250.

Endurance athletes can capitalize on poi's gradual release of carbs, resulting in a prolonged energy boost over four hours. Weight watchers can also benefit. Participants of Dr. Terry Shintani's 1989 Hawai'i Diet—high in complex carbs and low in fat and protein—also known as the Wai'anae Diet (conducted in conjunction with the Preventive Health Department at the Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive Health Center), lost an average of 17.1 pounds over 21 days eating only foods available in pre-contact times (kalo, sweet potato, breadfruit, greens, limu, fish and chicken).

Poi is easily digestible and hypoallergenic, a liberator to those who suffer from asthma, eczema and gastro-intestinal diseases. Prepared with no man-made additives, it's also an ideal baby food alternative to cereals. It has even been suggested that poi's a great remedy for seasickness and hangovers.

By custom, personal differences are put aside by those who gather around the poi bowl. This is out of respect for Haloa. Each new kalo plant is the replanted stem of another, an unbroken chain of genealogy—and Haloa is the source that unites Hawaiians as a family. From 'oha, the shoots that grow out of the kalo, comes 'ohana—'all from the shoots.' An 'olelo no'eau says, 'Make no ke kalo a ola i ka palili,' or 'The taro may die but lives on in the young plants that it produces/We live on through our children.' Isn't that the ultimate purpose of food, after all.

Sample Kalo Picture

