

Intended for Grades: 8-12 **Est. Time:** See *timeframe below*

Lesson Title: **THINK BEFORE YOU ACT: Strategies for Kōnane, Strategies for Life**
(Lesson #2 related to *Makahiki*)

Timeframe: *Introduction*, 10 min.; *Action & Consequence Discussion*, 10-20 min.; *Gathering Materials*, 30-60 min. (Variable; option as homework) *Ask and You Shall Receive Lesson (Opt.)*, 20 min.; *Making Board*, 30-60 min.; *Tournament*, 30-60 min.

Lesson Purpose: Students will:

- * Create a *Kōnane* game set and learn how to play this game
- * Be introduced to strategies for success relevant to *Kōnane* as well as life
- * Participate in a *Kōnane* tournament to apply knowledge of strategies

Background Information:

Kōnane is the Hawaiian version of checkers. Two players face each other across a playing surface referred to as the **Papa Mū*. Each player challenges each other's strategic prowess by maneuvering their black or white pieces across the board, capturing pieces as the game goes on.

Historically, *Kōnane* was played in Hawai'i for many reasons. A game could determine the outcome of a feud or solidify a future plan for a marriage. Before beginning a match, the two parties declared their desired prize if they should win.

Often times, *Kōnane* was played in ancient times to help pass the time and hone young Hawaiians' strategic thinking. The game was perfect for teaching youth the important lesson of thinking about one's action before doing. One rash move on the *Kōnane* board and the whole game is lost; sometimes that also meant the loss of life, limb, or village land.

There are many legends that surround famous *Kōnane* games, from Poli' ahu and ' Aiwohi to Lonoikamakahiki and Kaikilani (Story of Lonoikamakahiki and Kaikilani included in this lesson plan).

**Papa Mū*: a square grid of indentions carved into the flat surface of a rock.
Sizes of a *Papa Mū* varied depending on the surface size available.

Application to Learning Environment:

* *Advisory*: It's important that youth learn the consequences of their actions in a safe and nurturing environment, and *Kōnane* is the perfect strategy game to share this lesson. Learners not only learn about action and consequence, they also learn about systematic thinking and critical mapping through creating their strategies for *Kōnane* success.

* *Hawaiian History*: Introduce this ancient Hawaiian game still relevant in today's modern world through Hawaiian studies in elementary, middle or high school. Learners can then have the ability to share a piece of ancient Hawai'i with their peers and families.

* *Ho'okama'aina to the Surrounding Environment*: Gathering pieces for the *Kōnane* board requires Learners to go into surrounding environments to find needed materials, whether recycled materials from an urban environment or pebbles and coral from a local beach.

* *NOTE*: When gathering materials, it is absolutely essential that you ask for permission. See the mini-lesson "To Ask is to Receive" at the end of this lesson plan.

Materials:

- For each Set:

- * One 15"x15" (or larger) piece of muslin material (fabric that you can write on)
- * 50 black pieces (I.e.: bottle caps or pebbles) *50 white pieces (I.e.: bottle tops of coral)

- To Share:

- * Permanent Pens * Yard Stick or rulers
- * Optional to edge fabric: Needle & thread, sewing machine, fabric tape or fabric glue, Iron and Board
- * Options for storage:
 - Cordage - 2 feet per board (To tie each board with playing pieces inside; use any cord or make a small rope out of *hau*, raffia, or ribbon. OR
 - Container - to store pieces and folded or rolled up board

Preparation:

- a. Read the story of Lonoikamakahiki and Kaikilani (See below)
- b. Run through instructions and create your own *Kōnane* Game set as a sample
- c. Play the game once or twice with family or colleagues to help you understand the game and its strategic nuances enough to explain the lesson to the Learners.

Steps:

1. Introduce the *Kōnane* Game through the story of Lonoikamakahiki (See lesson #1). Then share the story (below) entitled *Lonoikamakahiki and Kaikilani*.
2. As a class, discuss the actions and consequences in this story. Have students recommend ways the characters could have acted differently and what the consequences might have been of those actions.
3. Ask students to think of the characters as if they were pieces on a *Kōnane* board. Talk about life circumstances that can be compared to the game.
4. Set up small groups (3-4 is optimal), based on how many boards you can make.
5. Before initiating work on creating their *Kōnane* set, ask students to do a group reflection as described below. Project or draw a model of this chart for students to copy:

Lonoikamakahiki and Kaikilani Reflection Activity: Share these directions:
Create a scenario showing cause and affect of an action. Perhaps its something like starting a rumor, or tripping someone in the hallway. What affect does that action have on you, the other person, and the entire school?

Create a similar chart and write notes about your discussion:

Action	Affect of Action		
	You	Other Person	School

Debrief by having groups share their reflections.

6. Distribute and discuss the student instruction sheet. Encourage group members to be responsible for different tasks.
7. Provide work time and help groups finish their *Kōnane* Set. Celebrate completion of sets by having time to practice the game and then have a *Kōnane* Tournament.

Reflection Questions:

- *What did you learn about preparing and playing this game that might help you in life?*
- *What did you learn about yourself and your group members from doing this project?*

Resources:

‘Ōlelo No‘eau - See below

“To Ask is to Receive” - Hawaiian Protocols for Gathering

A short story about collecting stones for Makahiki Games

“What do you think we should do to be *pono* about gathering stones for our Makahiki Games?” asked the Kumu helping this group learn how to hold a Makahiki Competition at their school.

The six students on the field trip to the ocean were quiet until a young girl with long black hair softly said, “Ask.”

“That’s *pololei*, yes, you ask,” shared their Kumu. “How?”

“You tell them why you would like to have them come with you... at least that is how we did it for our *‘ili‘ili* before,” answered the student, who had collected *pohaku* for hula in the past.

“Maika‘i, very good. Yes, you do ask by stating your intention, and also sharing who you are. Be specific about the purpose the stone will have. Be appreciative,” Kumu added.

She instructed the students to first walk the coastline, looking for a stone that they feel will be a good fit for the purpose. “Tell them why you are asking them to leave their *‘ohana*... ask them to consider if they would like to come with you, and then walk on down the beach. Be quiet and listen with your *na‘au*, your “gut” or intuition. As you return down the beach, observe which *pōhaku* sticks out, which one you notice again... it will call to you. If it wants to come, it will let you know by catching your attention, and it will feel light.”

“No way,” most kids mumbled in doubt, all but the hula dancer with the long hair.

It was a very quiet time when each student walked the beach. The Kumu saw them slowly look around, taking time to feel and observe. On the way back, each person slowly picked one stone to use for their Makahiki games, gathering only the number needed.

“It does feel lighter!” one doubting young man shared with a smile. Nods were seen from everyone. Each student easily carried their *pōhaku* back to the vehicle, giving thanks to the special place that provided them. Everyone present learned a lot about being quiet and listening that day.

Reflection Questions:

- *What did students learn about connecting with the world around them?*
- *How might this lesson relate to your own life?*

Hawaiian 'Ōlelo No'eau recorded by Mary Kawena Pukui:

Hāhā pō'ele ka pāpa'i o Kou

The crabs of Kou are groped for in the dark. (407)

Applied to one who goes groping in the dark. The chiefs held *kōnane* and other games at the shore of Kou (now central Honolulu), and people came from everywhere to watch. Very often they remained until it was too dark to see and had to grope for their companions.

Ka 'ili'ili o 'Ā'alāmanu

Pebbles of 'Ā'alāmanu (1405)

'Ā'alāmanu is in Puna, Hawai'i. The best pebbles of this district were found here and were much liked by the chiefs for the game of *Kōnane*.

Kū ke 'ehu o nā wahi 'auwa'a li'ili'i

How the spray dashes up before the fleet of little canoes. (1900)

An expression originating in the game *Kōnane*. Trifling things are as dust to experts. Used in chant of 'Aukelenuiaikū.

Wā 'ōlelo i Kauanakakai

Loud talking at Kauanakakai (2919)

Said of much boisterous talking. The chiefs liked to play games such as *kōnane* at Kauanakakai, and their shouts and laughter could be heard for some distance.

The Story of Lonoikamakahiki and Kaikilani

Retold by Lehua Ah Sam

Lonoikamakahiki was a famous chief of all of Hawai'i Island over 500 years ago. He was known for his skill in Makahiki games like *nane* (riddles), *Mo'omo'o* (boxing), *Kukini* (foot racing), and *'Ō'ō ihe* (spear throwing). Lonoikamakahiki had several wives of high distinction. His favorite, however, was the young Kaikilani, a daughter and relative of several influential chiefs of the districts of Hawai'i.

It took him several years to finalize his reign of over Hawai'i Island. During this time, Lonoikamakahiki heavily depended on the aid of Kaikilani's family to secure the different districts under his reign. This often left him gone from home for months at a time, and Kaikilani grew lonely during these times.

This favorite wife soon befriended a young man from the *alo ali'i* (court of chiefs). While Lonoikamakahiki was away, the two young lovers would meet secretly, sharing *mele* that they composed for each other.

Finally, Hawai'i Island was secured under Lonoikamakahiki, with loyal chiefs established in each of the six districts: Hilo, Puna, Ka'ū, Kona, Kohala, and Hāmākua. Seeking to increase his *mana* (power), Lonoikamakahiki decided to take a small entourage, including his favorite Kaikilani, on a visit to the chiefs of Moloka'i.

It took several days for the fleet of canoes to arrive in Moloka'i from Hawai'i. It took even more weeks for the chiefs to visit, meet, and make agreements between their kingdoms.

While Lonoikamakahiki and Kaikilani were away, her young lover began to pine for her presence. His desire to see her was so great that he found his way to Moloka'i. (*Now, it is important to note, that Lonoikamakahiki had no idea of his wife's infidelity, and he still held her in the highest esteem.*)

One day, Lonoikamakahiki was playing *kōnane* (Hawaiian checkers) with Kaikilani in the peninsula of Kalaupapa. It is customary that no one speaks while sitting at the *papa mū* (*kōnane* board), creating a quiet environment to concentrate on your *kōnane* skills.

In the silence of their game, a voice was suddenly heard chanting from the cliffs overlooking Kalaupapa. The *mele* (chant) was so sweet, like a lover's caress.

Kaikilani instantly recognized the voice of her lover chanting a *mele* they composed. She was determined to ignore him, however, not wanting to alert her husband to her duplicity.

Several more moves were made on the *papa mū*, yet still the young man's voice could be heard chanting his sweet *mele* to his lover. A few more moves later it became apparent that Lonoikamakahiki was becoming distracted by the voice.

He began to listen carefully, and being skilled in the arts of oratory and composition, he quickly realized the *kaona* (hidden meanings) behind the young lover's chant.

“Is he chanting to you? Is that your lover?” yelled Lonoikamakahiki, breaking the kapu (restrictions) of silence at the *papa mū*.

“No, I only love you,” replied Kaikilani, trying to calm her husband’s rage.

“I don’t believe you, he is chanting directly to you!” screamed Lonoikamakahiki. In a fit, of rage he picked up the large *papa mū* and struck Kaikilani across her head with the board, knocking her out and leaving her for dead.

Lonoikamakahiki quickly gathered his most loyal companions from his *alo ali’i* (chiefly entourage) and departed for Honolulu without even a backward glance to Kaikilani.

After Lonoikamakahiki departed in anger, Kaikilani’s attendants rushed to her aid. They healed her wounds and returned a dejected Kaikilani to Hawai‘i Island. When she arrived, her family became enraged at the ill treatment of Kaikilani. One of the greatest insults is to strike someone across the head, their most sacred part of their chiefly body. Her high ranking also demanded respect and proper treatment, which secured the loyalty of many of Lonoikamakahiki’s supporters.

Her family quickly began to rebel against Lonoikamakahiki, disavowing any loyalty to him and his rule. They began skirmishes across Hawai‘i Island, disturbing the hard earned peace.

Lonoikamakahiki heard the news while on his travels. He soon regretted his actions, as he knew he did not have enough support to quell the uprising of Kaikilani’s family.

He quickly organized his *alo ali’i* to return to Hawai‘i Island where he engaged in a *ho‘oponopono* process with Kaikilani and her family in order to right his unjust actions.

After a long, arduous *ho‘oponopono* process, the family forgave Lonoikamakahiki and swore allegiance once again, on the condition that Lonoikamakahiki would never again mistreat his wife Kaikilani.

Thus, Lonoikamakahiki was able to secure his reign through making *pono* his actions, and forgiving Kaikilani for her indiscretions.

Source: “He Moolelo No Lonoikamakahiki: Keiki a Keawenuiaumi A O Ka Moopuna Wiwo Ole a Umialiloa A o ke Keikialii Hoopapa Kaulana o Hawaii Nui o Keawe” Ka Hoku o Hawaii. 8 Iulai 1909.

KŌNANE INSTRUCTIONS

Creating a Game Set

Kōnane is played when two players face each other across a playing surface referred to as the *Papa Mū*. They challenge each other's strategic prowess by maneuvering their black or white pieces to capture his or her opponent's pieces.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

For each Set:

- * One piece of muslin material - Minimum 15" x 15" - Maximum 20" x 20" (*Use any strong, light colored fabric that you can use the pens on; cardboard or thick paper can also work if fabric is not available.*)
- * 50 black pieces (I.e. bottle caps, pebbles) *50 white pieces (I.e.: bottle tops, coral pieces)
- * 2-3 feet of cordage (to tie board w/ pieces inside) OR 1 container to hold pieces & board

To Share:

- * Permanent Pens * Pencils * Rulers
- * Needles & thread, sewing machine, or fabric tape
- * Iron and ironing board (*optional*) *Straight pins
- * Newspaper or scratch paper (to put under fabric when using pens)

STEPS TO MAKING A PAPA MŪ (Game Board):

a. DRAW THE GRID:

- Lay out the piece of muslin material.
- Using a pencil first, draw a 10x10 grid of 1.25" squares in the center of the material.
- When lines are accurate, trace with a felt pen.

b. BIND THE EDGES (as needed):

- Fold cut edge in ¼" and iron flat; repeat fold & iron, then secure edge with stitching or tape. (*Note - No Iron? Then work as a team to fold and pin edges before securing with thread or tape, or cut edge with pinking sheers to keep material from unraveling.*)

NOTE: To Store your Game Set:

- * Place pieces in the center and pull up the edges; then secure bundle with the cord.
- OR
- * Find a container to hold the pieces and a folded or rolled up *Papa Mū*.



Papa Mū created on muslin fabric with a cut edge that was used to test some natural dyes (brown and black marks).

NĀ KĀNAKA - The Game Pieces:

Game pieces are sometimes referred to as *kānaka*, which also means people. Look around your community and find a resource that you could use to create your *kānaka*. As a group, decide where to collect your *kānaka* or game pieces.

For a 10x10 square board, you will need 50 *kānaka* ‘*ele*’ *ele* (black pieces) and 50 *kānaka kea* (white pieces).

Find temporary storage for your pieces until the game board is completed. Be ready to share what your group decided to use for their pieces, why they chose these items, and where they were gathered.

Let’s Play Kōnane!

RULES OF THE GAME:

Game Objective:

Trap the other player’s pieces so that they cannot move, thus surrendering to you.

Rules:

- Pieces can only move up and down or left to right and not allowed to move diagonally.
- When players jump over their opponent’s pieces, they can claim them.

Set Up:

- Place black and white pieces in an alternating pattern across the whole board.

*Using
black
stones
& shells*



To Play:

- Black Player moves first by removing a black piece from the board from center or a corner.
- White player then selects to move one of his pieces adjacent to the empty space.
- Players take turns jumping over opponent pieces until one can’t make any more moves.

Tournament Rules:

- Challenge players of other teams in a round robin elimination. The team with the most victories wins the tournament.