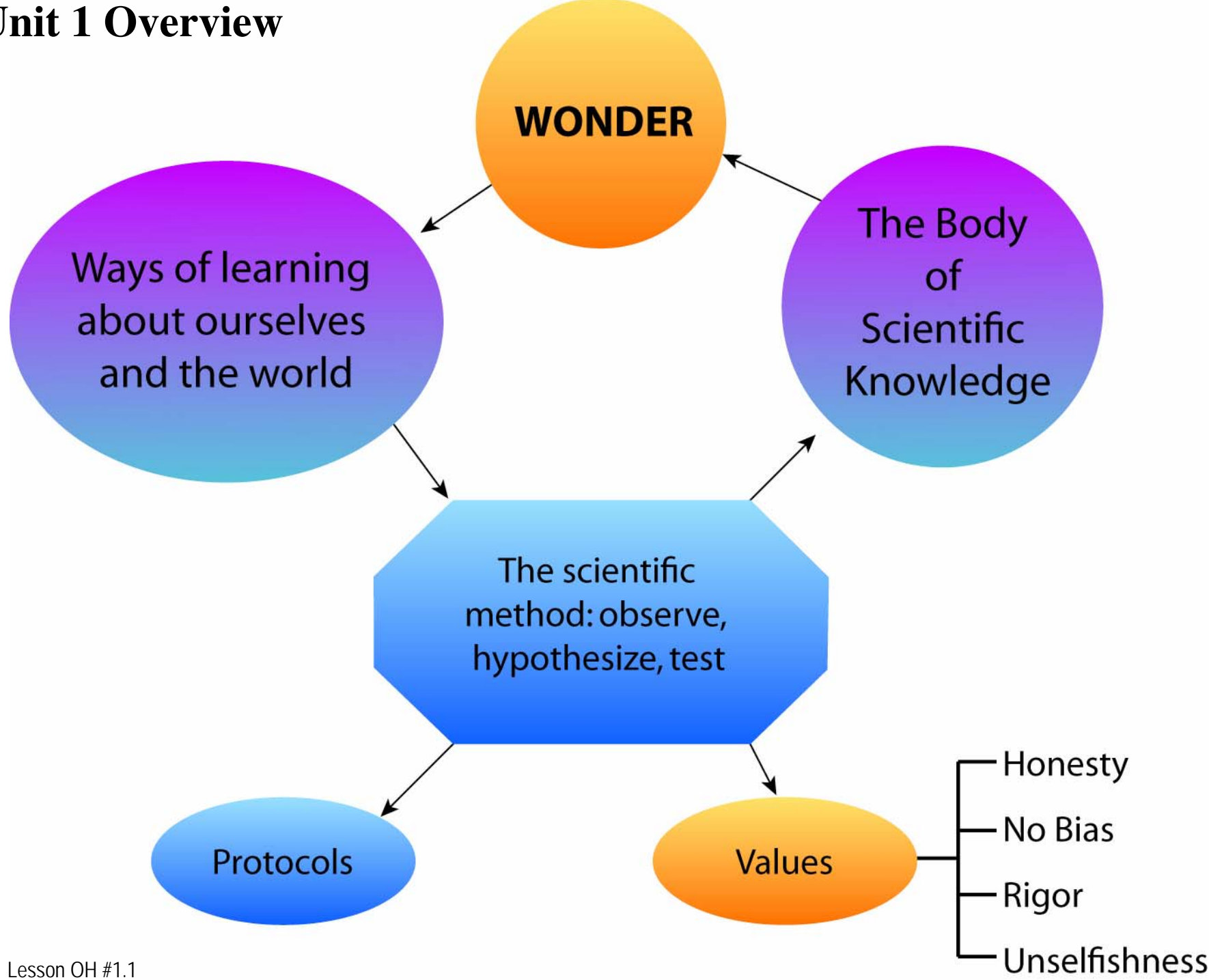
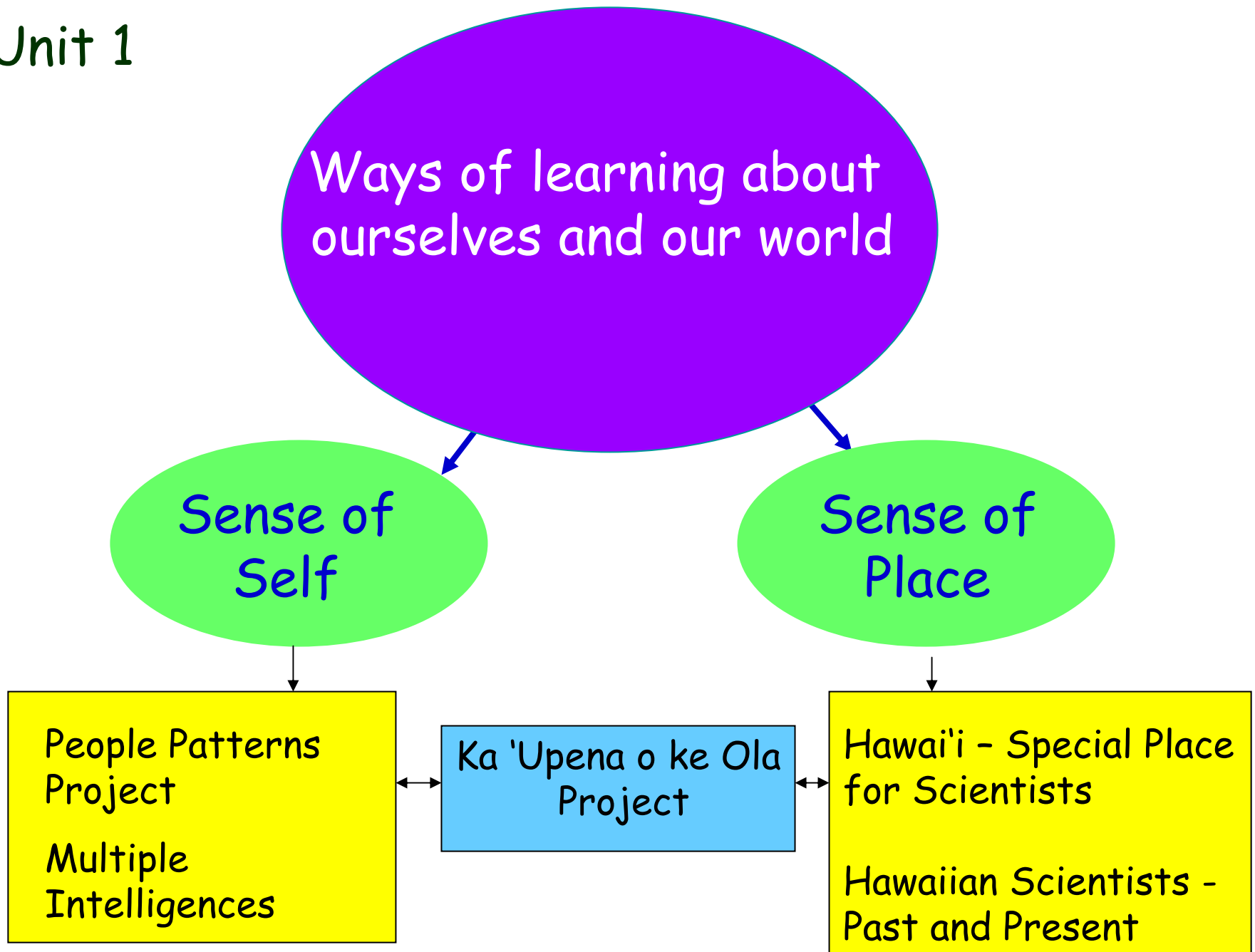


Unit 1 Overview



Unit 1





Who Were the Hawaiian Kāhuna?

Based on The Kahuna -Versatile Masters of Old Hawaii
by Likeke R. McBride

In ancient Hawaii, kāhuna were more than religious priests. They were the doctors, architects, scientists, educators, and agriculturalists. These masters were responsible for protecting resources and advancing knowledge. They worked to understand natural laws and human nature. They were the educated professionals of their time.

The kāhuna usually had over two decades of training! They were taught what to do from information learned through observations made by their ancestors and passed down through generations.

Each of the islands had centers of culture and achievement. The seat of science on the island of Hawai'i was in the Puna district. On the easternmost point of this island was an astronomical observatory, a school of navigation, a meteorological station, and a college of medicine.

Who Were the Hawaiian Kāhuna?

Children from the *ali'i* or ruling class were selected for these positions because of their intelligence, interest, and willingness to learn. Occasionally children from the common people (*maka'ainana*) were chosen for their outstanding abilities, but this was rare. Girls were admitted to some orders, yet they were banned from certain places and ceremonies.

The classes of kāhuna were divided into many orders or groups. Each had a specific school. Students were required to be quiet, watch, listen, and learn. Questions were discouraged and sometimes

forbidden. Only the scholars were encouraged to think, to perceive, and to ponder. The student was taught to observe, to seek, and to experiment within certain limits.

It was hoped that during his training each person would learn fast, show great patience, and strive to obtain understanding. In time, these students learned to make predictions and accomplish what was desired. A member worked to strengthen the order to which he belonged.



Who Were the Hawaiian Kāhuna?

At some graduation ceremonies, the students would vote for a person who did his best in all areas. In a final ritual, that graduate would then be given the choice piece of the commencement pig. This was an honor much like that of valedictorian, who is a special student speaker at today's graduations.



Only the kāhuna who had become skilled in many fields could be called a high priest. Reaching this honored level was hard. Hawaiian masters seldom gave all of their wisdom at once. A favored scholar was usually called to the master's deathbed, where a protocol was performed to pass on the dying teacher's final knowledge.

We are beginning to appreciate the wisdom of the Hawaiian masters. For example, medical men of today recognize that doctors of early Hawai'i were able to stop cancer, heart trouble, and other illnesses. Similar discoveries in the fields of agriculture, fishing, and

conservation may be of great benefit in the future.

Accomplishments of experts are difficult to recreate because much has been lost or concealed. What is understood stands as a monument to the natural intelligence of humankind.

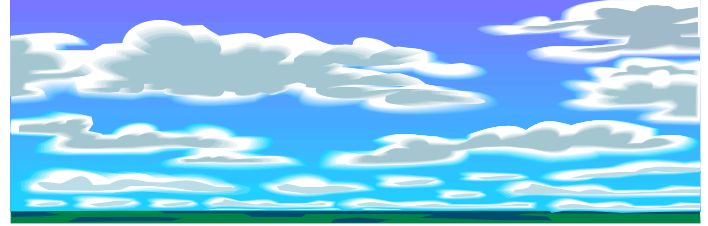


Connecting to the Story ~

1. Who were the kāhuna?
2. How were students taught or trained? Why might they have been taught this way?
3. Why might members work to strengthen their order or group?
4. What might the author mean by the last line: *"What is understood stands as a monument to the natural intelligence of humankind."*



Astronomers and Navigators



Meteorologists



Artists and Poets



Geologists

Agriculturalists & Botanists (planters & farmers)



Healers

Study tips: How to highlight



- Highlight the important words or phrases
- With a second color, highlight all vocabulary terms
- Don't highlight or underline bunches of text.
Not everything is of major importance.



6 Kāhuna stories located in separate word file entitled:

Unit 1 # 15 Kāhuna Stories (6)

HOMework

WHAT: Kāhuna Presentation

HOW:

1. Review guide and finish all steps.
2. Practice for presentation.

WHAT: Ka 'Upena Project

HOW:

1. Continue work on project.