

STRENGTHENING ATTENTION AND MEMORY SKILLS THROUGH HAWAIIAN MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

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Learning examples of traditional Hawaiian music and dance uses aural, visual, and kinesthetic sensory dimensions and can strengthen attention and memory skills.

INTRODUCTION TO ANCIENT AND MODERN HAWAI'I

The chain of islands in the Pacific Ocean roughly mid-way between the California coast and Japan is known as Hawai'i. Although today these islands are part of the United States – the fiftieth state to join the country – two hundred years ago they were independent islands with their own chiefs, their own customs, language, foods, music and dances. Their way of life was very different from Europeans and Americans who were living at the same time. The ancient Hawaiians, who had no written language, learned from watching and listening and had to remember all their stories and important facts.

Today much of the landscape of Hawai'i is as beautiful as it was then. There are miles of seashore with palm trees waving in the warm breeze. There are grass-covered hills and mountains made a deep green by the frequent tropical rains. There are tall waterfalls that bring water from the mountain tops to the coast. Over a thousand plants, including gorgeous colorful flowers, are native to Hawai'i.

Of course, today you also find highways, shopping malls, lots of hotels where tourists flock, and schools much like the schools we have here on the mainland United States. Although English is now the main language in the islands, some schools teach children Hawaiian and many grandparents have passed down the language in their families over the years.

The Hawaiian Nose Flute – This ancient instrument is called the *ohe hano ihu* in Hawaiian. It is still



played today by people interested in the ancient culture. It is made of bamboo. Teachers of the nose flute in Hawai'i explain that the ancient Hawaiians believed that the air from the nose was more pure than the air from the mouth. The *ohe hano ihu* has a sweet, delicate tone which you can hear played by the presenter's first nose flute teacher, Anthony Natividad. Go to **YouTube: Anthony Natividad playing nose flute.**

Work Chant –Hawaiians used lively chants to help them work well together. This particular call-and-response chant is called *I Ku Mau Mau*. It was used to give the ancient Hawaiians the energy and determination needed to haul logs to make canoes. To see it performed by the hula school to which the presenter belongs, Halau O Lilinoe, go to **You Tube: I Ku Mau Mau Chant at 2013 Ho'olaule'a Halau O Lilinoe**. The words transcribed to the English alphabet are:

Leader:	I ku mau mau	Stand up together
Group:	I ku wa	Stand and shout
Leader:	I ku mau mau	Stand up together
Group:	I ku wa	Stand and shout
Leader:	I ku mau mau I ku huluhulu I ku lanawao	Stand together Haul with all your strength Under the mighty trees
Group:	I ku wa	Stand and shout
Leader	I ku lanawao	Stand under the mighty trees
Group:	I ku wa I ku wa huki I ku wa ko I ku wa a mau A mau ka eulu E huki e Kulia	Stand and shout Stand and pull Stand and haul Stand and haul Haul branches and all/Haul now Stand up

Basic Hula Steps –The *kaholo* and the *hela* are the two most basic steps of the hula, ancient and modern. Note: If possible, students should remove their shoes to experience the steps. Socks are fine. Basic hula steps are shown in practice on **YouTube**. Look for **Basic Hula Steps** recorded by **whatsherface1015**.

Ipu – This is a small drum made from a hollowed-out and dried gourd. It can be used to accompany dance or can be used as part of a dance. For a demonstration, go to **YouTube**, search under **ipu** and select **Hawaiian Dance and Music Instruments**.



Bamboo Sticks - *Pu'ili* are pairs of bamboo sticks struck against one another and against the dancer's body used in hula performances. See them used on **YouTube** at **Hula dancers use pu'ili slit sticks made from bamboo**.



Ipu Heke – The large, double-gourd drum is used by the teacher or lead student to mark the beat for the dancers.



Numbers 1-5 in Hawaiian: The children learn the numbers one to five for later use in a song

and hula. The stressed syllable is in capital letters. They are:

- 1 – ekahi (ayKAHee)
 - 2 – elua (ayLOOah)
 - 3 – ekolu (ayKOloo)
 - 4 – eha (ayHAH)
 - 5 – elima (ayLEEma)
- In the **YouTube** video **Count in Hawaiian by Andre Adoloffo**, you can hear as well as read these numbers.

Song “Holoholo Ka’a” (“Riding in the Car”) – An entire performance of the song performed by **Jesse Tinsley** is available on **YouTube**. Search for **Holoholo Ka’a Song** and his name.



Ukulele – The ukulele is an instrument in the guitar family. Hawaiians were introduced to the guitar in the 19th century. The story goes that the king of the Hawaiian Islands invited Spanish cowboys to come to the islands to teach Hawaiians how to manage a growing cattle population. The cowboys came with guitars and the Hawaiians learned how to play them and adapted the instrument to their own style. They created the ukulele, too. An example of great ukulele playing can be found on **YouTube** with **Jake Shimabukuro** at **143 Kellys Song**.

Hula “Holoholo Ka’a” – Different hula groups use varying steps for this hula, but most start out the same in the first three lines. You can find it on **YouTube** under **Real Hula presents Holoholo Ka’a**.

