

Activity #6

# Mascots, Icons, and ‘Aumakua

**Length:**

One class period

**Prerequisite Activity:**

None

**Objectives:**

- Demonstrate understanding of native and non-native species.
- Practice critical thinking skills with regard to mascot choices.
- Investigate Hawaiian cultural connections to animals.
- Develop reading comprehension.

**Vocabulary**

‘Aumakua

Icon

Mana

Mascot

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## ●●● Class Period One: Learning About Names

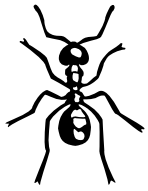
### Materials & Setup

For each student

- Student Pages “Mascots, Icons, and ‘Aumakua” (pp. 6-8)
- Student Pages “The ‘Aumakua – Hawaiian Ancestral Spirits” by Herb Kāne (Courtesy of Hawai‘i Division of Aquatic Resources, ©2004) (pp. 9-10)

### Instructions

- 1) Pass out the Student Pages “Mascots, Icons, and ‘Aumakua” and “The ‘Aumakua – Hawaiian Ancestral Spirits by Herb Kāne.” Go over the answers for page one in class, and then allow students to finish on their own. (They will need access to the Internet or a library.)
- 2) Ask students what they know about their school’s mascot: Why might the school have opted for that particular mascot? When was it chosen? Who chose it? If it is an animal, is it native to Hawai‘i? Do they feel the mascot is an appropriate representative of the student body? Why or why not? What qualities does it embody? Have students write a list.
- 3) Have students name all the native Hawaiian plant, animal, bird, fish, or insect species they can think of that embody the qualities they listed, or other commendable qualities.
- 4) Allow students to vote for a class mascot based on what they’ve brainstormed.

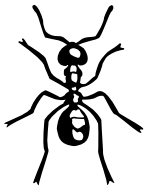


## Journal Ideas

- Write a story, using the *'aumakua* legend as an example.
- How might cultural traditions, such as the Hawaiian belief in *'aumakua*, influence how a culture treats its natural resources?

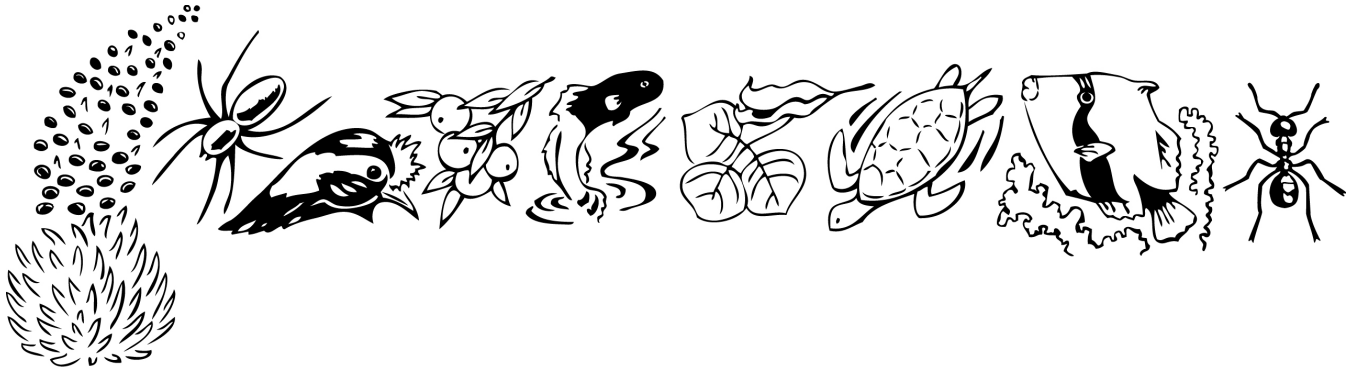
## Assessment Tools

- Participation in class discussion
- Student pages
- Journal entries



Teacher Version

**Mascots, Icons, and 'Aumakua**



The **icons** for this curriculum were carefully chosen: a wolf spider for the module concerning the Alpine-Aeolian habitat, an *'ākohekohe* (crested honeycreeper) for the Rain Forest module, a green sea turtle for Coastal, and a *humuhumunukunukuāpua 'a* for Marine. Each of these native species is emblematic of the ecosystems it represents. For the invasive species module, a fire ant was chosen because it's one of the alien pests that threatens native Hawaiian habitats.

What is the purpose of choosing a **mascot** or symbol? List several reasons.

- To create a sense of pride
- To represent a particular place
- To evoke admirable qualities, such as courage, persistence, or nobility
- To spotlight something that needs attention, for example, an endangered species

What is your school mascot?

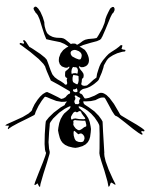
Do you agree with your school's choice of mascot? Why or why not?

[Any well-thought-out answer will suffice.]

What are the qualities it represents?

Possible answers:

- |              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| fierceness   | strength        |
| loyalty      | grace           |
| duty         | resourcefulness |
| nobility     | wisdom          |
| courage      | power           |
| perseverance |                 |
| uniqueness   |                 |



## Activity #6

### Invasive Species Unit 1

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Name some Hawaiian species—birds, fish, mammals, insects, or plants—that have similar qualities and identify those characteristics.

Suggestions:

*Āhinahina*, silversword: plant evolved to survive extreme winds, snow, and solar radiation; possesses spectacular, sweet-scented blooms

*Ulua*: fierce fighter, long-distance swimmer

*ʻIo*, Hawaiian hawk: regal, excellent vision

*Pueo*, Hawaiian short-eared owl: graceful, excellent hunter

*Puhi*, moray eel: colorful, fierce defender of its territory

*Manō*, tiger shark: fierce, powerful, graceful

*ʻOʻopu*: Hawaiian goby: tenacious fish that climbs 100-foot waterfalls

*Koa* tree: strong, keystone species, captures moisture from air to nourish watershed, valuable wood, used to make voyaging canoes

*ʻŌhiʻa* tree: beautiful, keystone species, provides food and shelter for native birds and insects, used to make house posts

Happy-faced spider: stylish, friendly seeming, unique in the world

Find the answers for the following:

National bird: American bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

Hawaiʻi State bird: Hawaiian goose, *nēnē* (*Branta sandvicensis*)

Hawaiʻi State mammal: Hawaiian monk seal (*Monachus schauinslandi*)

Hawaiʻi State fish: *humuhumunukunukuāpuaʻa*, trigger fish (*Rhinecanthus rectangulus*)

Hawaiʻi State flower: yellow hibiscus, *maʻo hau hele* (*Hibiscus brackenridgei*)

Hawaiʻi State motto: *Ua Mau ke Ea o ka ʻāina i ka Pono* (The life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness)

Hawaiʻi Island lei: *lei ʻōhia lehua* (*Metrosideros polymorpha*)

Maui lei: *lei lokelani*, damask rose, (*Rosa damascena*)

Molokai lei: *lei kukui*, candlenut tree, (*Aleurites moluccana*)

Lānaʻi lei: *lei kaunaoa*, Hawaiian dodder, (*Cuscuta sandwichiana*)

Kahoʻolawe lei: *lei hinahina*, Hawaiian heliotrope, (*Heliotropium anomalum*)

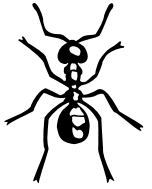
Molokini lei: *lei kala*, sargassum, (*Sargassum echinocarpum*)

Oʻahu lei: *lei ʻilima* (*Sida fallax*)

Kauaʻi lei: *lei mokihana* (*Rutaceae Melicope anisata*)

Niʻihau lei: *lei pūpū*, Niʻihau shell

Choose an item from the list above. Write a paragraph supporting or disagreeing with its selection as a mascot or representative. If you disagree with it, suggest a replacement and give reasons for why your choice would serve as a better representative.



In Hawai‘i, people often refer to animals such as sharks, turtles, or owls as their ‘*aumakua*, or guardian spirits. According to Hawaiian tradition, ‘*aumakua* are deified ancestors that appear in the form of specific animals, plants, or natural phenomena such as clouds, rainbows, or wind. Many myths and stories describe the protective powers of these ‘*aumakua*. Read the following story by Hawaiian cultural leaders Herb Kāne.

Does your family have an ‘*aumakua* or do you know of any families with ‘*aumakua*?

[any well-thought-out answer will suffice]

How does the Hawaiian tradition of recognizing and honoring ‘*aumakua* differ from the Western custom of choosing a mascot or state animal? How is it similar?

Hawaiians believe that ‘*aumakua* are their ancestors, invisible spirits that inhabit an animate or inanimate form (such as a rock, rainbow, plant, or animal). They are not chosen, but inherited along with the family’s genealogy. Western mascots are animals, plants, or natural phenomena that are chosen for their inspiring qualities. Both ‘*aumakua* and mascots symbolize honorable traits.

How does Herb Kāne define *mana* in his essay?

Mana was the force that powered the universe, expressed in everything from the movements of stars to the growth of a plant or the surge of a wave.

Human mana = life force, charisma, inherited talents, intelligence, and other virtues  
Certain talents within a family passed down the line of seniority

According to Kāne, how do ‘*aumakua* help people? Name five ways.

‘Aumakua might help canoe makers, physicians, and kapa makers do their work. They could bring warnings of impending danger, comfort in times of sorrow, or be helpful in other ways: chase fish into nets, guide a lost canoe to safety.