

Journey Onward



Hawaiian Star Compass

Grades: 4 -12

Learn how Polynesians navigated across the vast Pacific Ocean using only observation of natural signs such as stars, the Sun, birds, and ocean currents. Students will construct an interactive representation of the Hawaiian star compass, the basic mental construct for navigating Hawaiian voyaging canoes, which was re-created by Master Navigator Nainoa Thompson.

Outcomes

- Students learn Hawaiian and Polynesian names for and functions of the star compass and its “houses”—places where stars rise from and set in the ocean.
- Students learn about the importance of the sun, moon and planets for navigation.
- Students discover other wayfinding techniques or “nature clues” including the importance of ocean swells, winds, landmarks, and seamarks.
- Students recognize a correlation between Polynesian navigation techniques and observational science.

HCPS III Benchmarks

- SS.4.3.4: Describe the theories of early migrations from parts of Polynesia to Hawaii, including migration myths and legends.
- SS.4.3.5: Identify reasons that early explorers, settlers, and immigrants came to Hawaii or the Polynesian region and describe what their lives and experiences were like.
- SS.4.3.1: Explain the origins and culture of early Hawaiians.
- SC.8.8.9: Explain the predictable motions of the Earth and moon.
- SC.ES.8.6: Describe how winds and ocean currents are produced on the Earth’s surface.

Nā Honua Maui Ola Guidelines

- 1.1 Utilize a variety of learning materials and strategies that promote cultural traditions, language, history, and values.
- 1.8 Understand and appreciate the importance of Hawaiian cultural traditions, language, history, and values.
- 7.4 Communicate and participate in activities and special functions where Hawaiian is used.