

# Celebrate!



**Asian and Pacific Islander American Heritage Month**

## Hula Dance (History)



Hula is a Polynesian dance form accompanied by chant (oli) or song (mele). It was developed in the **Hawaiian Islands** by the **Polynesians** who originally settled there. The hula dramatizes or portrays the words of the oli or mele in a visual dance form.

A hula dance is a choreographed interpretation of a poetic text, or mele, that tells a story through hand and arm gestures and rhythmic patterns. In this lesson, students will learn about the history of hula, the gestures and movements of hula, and the meaning of this Hawaiian dance. They will create and perform a hula dance that tells a story. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BFT-M18N2A4> (Telling Stories with Hula)

There are also two main positions of a hula dance: either sitting (noho dance) or standing (luna dance). Some dances utilize both forms.

## Hula Dance



There are many sub-styles of hula, with the main two categories being Hula ‘Auana and Hula Kahiko. Ancient hula, as performed before Western encounters with Hawai‘i, is called *kahiko*. It is accompanied by chant and traditional instruments. Hula, as it evolved under Western influence in the 19th and 20th centuries, is called ‘*auana* (a word that means "to wander" or "drift"). It is accompanied by song and Western-influenced [musical instruments](#) such as the [guitar](#), the [‘ukulele](#), and the [double bass](#).

**There are also two main positions of a hula dance:  
Sitting (noho dance), or, standing (luna dance).  
Some dances utilize both forms.**

Many hula dances are considered to be a religious performance, as they are dedicated to, or honoring, a Hawaiian goddess or god. The lei and tapa worn for sacred hula were considered imbued with the sacredness of the dance, and were not to be worn after the performance. Lei were typically left on the small altar to Laka found in every hālau, as offerings.



## Learning Hula

### Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Locate Hawaii on a world map
- Learn about the origins of Hula Dance.
- Experience the style and meaning of the Hula Dance (via video clips)
- Learn the hand gestures, footwork and expressions used in hula dance.
- Select (5) hand/body movements and practice for greater understanding.
- Create a short original hula dance that tells a story.
- Perform a short hula dance (preferably outside in a natural setting)
- Create a “Hula Garland” made of leaves and string, to wear while dancing.



## Learning Hula

### To Do:

- Watch the videos posted on the next page.
- Observe how the movements are used to represent natural elements and to tell a story.
- Study the hand gestures, footwork and expressions used in hula dance.
- Select (5) hand/body movements and practice for greater understanding.
- Use the movements to create a short original hula dance that tells a story. Perform the dance barefoot in a natural setting. Create a lei/garland made of leaves and string to wear around your neck.

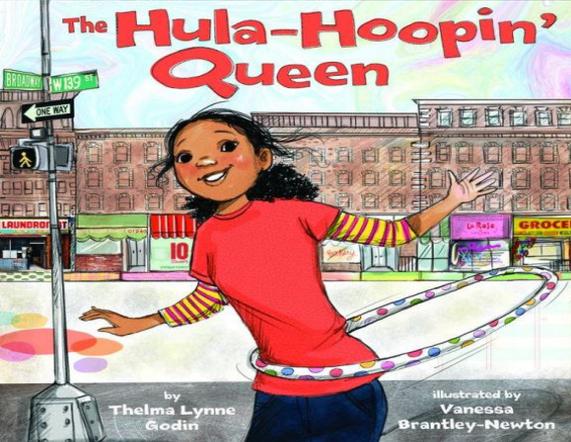


## Learning Hula

Asian and Pacific Islander American Heritage Month Lessons/Activities

### Videos to Watch

- 1) Basic Hula Tutorial - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mgiL3--Ug9U>
- 2) How to Hula Dance - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1qO10aSsWSU>
- 3) Male Hula - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ekguA\\_YQVmo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ekguA_YQVmo)
- 4) Hot Hula Dance - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q3x-3l8wFiQ>
- 5) Hula Dancer on Big Shots - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9HUQmpBjGA>
- 6) Becoming a Hula Champion - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-NhPqimnr3o>



## Learning Hula

### Learning Points:

- What is the origin/culture of Hula Dance?
- What do the movements of the Hula Dance represent?
- What hand movements/gestures did you select and why?
- How did this activity help you to express yourself?
- Which video clip was the most helpful learning tool and which for fun?
- Make a video recording of you answering the above questions and of you performing the movements that you learned or created to tell your story.

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