Counting Islands: What Is an Island and How Many Do You See?

The world is made of many landforms. In order to understand a place, children should have knowledge of different kinds of landforms.

Overview
The world is made of many landforms. In order to understand a place, children should know the kinds of landforms that can be found.

Purpose
In this lesson, children will learn that islands are composed of land surrounded by water and how islands are formed in the ocean through volcanic action. They will also write and understand the numbers 0-20 by creating a counting book.

Materials
- A large piece of blue construction or poster paper
- Smaller pieces of white paper cut in the shape of islands
- Markers to draw mountains, people, plants, rivers, etc.
- Pieces of paper for each child to make counting books.

Objectives
The student will be able to:

1. Draw islands (with human and physical features) surrounded by oceans.
2. Demonstrate understanding of counting 0 to 20 by drawing a specified amount of islands in a counting book.

Procedures
1. Tell the children a story about an imaginary time in the ocean. Explain that oceans are immense areas of salt water that can be very deep.

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Grade Level
K

Duration
1-2 class periods

National Geography Standards
ELEMENT TWO: PLACES AND REGIONS
4. The physical and human characteristics of places.

Arizona Geography Strand 4
CONCEPT 1 World in Spatial Terms
KINDERGARTEN
PO 4 Identify land and water on maps, illustrations, images and globes

Arizona Math Standard
Mathematics Common Core Standards
Counting and Cardinality
K.CC.3. Write numbers from 0 to 20. Represent a number of objects with a written numeral 0–20 (with 0 representing a count of no objects).

- Markers, crayons or colored pencils for each child
- Stapler
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2. Select 20 children to role-play the formation of islands as the story is told. The children are to pretend they are land deep in the ocean (They should squat down to do this.) Have one child stand near the blue paper (ocean).

3. Ask the students how many islands they see poking up from the ocean (none). Have the child with the blue paper show that no islands exist yet on the ocean.

4. Explain how underwater volcanic eruptions gradually raise the land until finally it sticks out of the ocean. Have a couple of children squat down and gradually stand up (as if growing). (You might model how the earth moves and shakes and then gets higher so they see the dynamics of the earth’s processes.) Once they are standing tall, explain that they are now islands in the middle of an ocean.

5. As each island is “grown” ask the child to place one of the paper islands on the blue paper. As the islands continue to grow, draw some mountains on the white island. For each island a volunteer should count how many islands are on the map and write the number on the chalkboard.

6. Repeat procedure #4 and #5 until all 20 islands have been created.

7. When all the islands are on the map, review with the children what they would find on these islands (mountains, plants, animals, people, etc.) and what makes an island (land totally surrounded by water).

7. Afterwards the children should make a counting book. In their books, the children should draw and label zero as ocean without any islands. Then one island on page 2, two islands on page 3, and so on, until pages are complete. Each island should be drawn so that it is clear that it is surrounded by water. They can also include plants, animals, people, etc. The children can also write out the number in words as well as in numerals. Students should also make a cover page with an appropriate title such as "Counting Islands."

8. When the books are finished make sure the pages are in the correct order

9. Children should practice counting forward beginning from any given number within the known sequence and not always begin at one.

Assessment
1. The ability to make a counting book with the numbers from 0-20 written correctly and with the appropriate number of islands on each page will show that the children can represent a whole number with a model.

2. If they draw the islands surrounded by water this will indicate they understand the concept of island.

3. If they can count from any given number forward, this will indicate they understand the number sequence.

Each of these can be evaluated as Excellent, Satisfactory, or Needs Improvement.

Extensions
Read books such as How Mountains are Made by Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld or The Little Island by Golden MacDonald and Leonard Weisgard. These books give more information about how islands are formed and how plant and animal life appear on the islands.

Teach about islands in connection with an island country or state such as Japan or Hawaii. The children could draw the appropriate number of
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major islands for the chosen place. Then extensions would include discussing human characteristics of the culture that evolve because it is an island culture.

A third extension would be to have the children collect interesting counting books.

**Sources**
