

# What Are Islands and How Many Do You See?

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**Grade Level** PreK and K  
**Duration** 1-2 class periods

## National Standards

**GEOGRAPHY**  
**Element 2: Places and Regions 4.** The physical and human characteristics of places.  
6. How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions

## AZ Standards

**MATHEMATICS**  
**Counting and Cardinality**  
K.CC.A.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).

## Arizona Social Science Standards

**GEOGRAPHY**  
**The use of geographic representations and tools help individuals understand their world.**  
K.G1.1 Use, explore, and construct maps, graphs and other geographical representations to support content focus. Key concepts include but are not limited to graphing local weather and mapping the classroom.  
K.G1.2 Explore locations in stories shared.

## 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 paper
- Smaller pieces of tan paper cut in the shape of islands
- Crayons
- Drawing paper cut in half

## Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Draw islands (with human and physical features) surrounded by oceans.
2. Count from 0 to 20.

## Procedures

*Note: To save time, a classroom volunteer could cut and assemble the sheets of paper into books for the students to complete.*

1. Read the book, [An Island Grows](#) by Lola Schaefer or tell the children a story about an imaginary time in the ocean. Explain that oceans are immense areas of saltwater that can be very deep. Through earth processes, an island can evolve.
2. Select 20 students 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.) Select one student to stand near the blue construction/poster 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 under water 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 student to place one of the paper islands on the blue paper. For each time islands appear, ask a volunteer to count how many islands are on the map now.

## Counting Islands

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).
8. Distribute drawing paper and crayons. Discuss that water is usually shown as blue in illustrations and islands would be some shade of brown.
9. Give the directions for making their books and model the first couple of pages.  
Title Page/Cover (Counting Islands)  
Page 1 = just blue ocean =0  
Page 2 = ocean and 1 island  
Page 3 = ocean and 2 islands  
Each island should be drawn so that it is clear that it is surrounded by water. They should also include plants, animals, people, etc. Students should write out the number in words as well as in numerals.
10. When the books are finished make sure the pages are in the correct order
11. Have students practice counting forward beginning from any given number within the known sequence and not always beginning at zero.

## Assessment

### Mathematics

The counting book can be graded for accuracy in the numbers being written correctly and for the appropriate number of islands on each page. Mastery will be considered 100%.

Teacher observation will assess the ability to count from any given number forward. Mastery will be considered 100%.

### Geography

The counting book can be assessed by observing if the islands are surrounded by water and contain some human or physical features. Mastery will be considered 80% if the pages are done appropriately.

## 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 major islands for the chosen place. Then extensions would include discussing human characteristics of the culture that evolve because it is an island culture.

## Sources

*An Island Grows* by Lola M. Schaefer, Greenwillow Books, 2006 ISBN 0066239303

*How Mountains are Made* by Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld, Harper Collins Publishers, 1995 ISBN 0064451283

*The Little Island* by Golden MacDonald and Leonard Weisgard Doubleday 1946 (a scholastic book since 1988 and a Caldecott winner). ISBN 0440408