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.

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Grade Level: K-1
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
GRADE 1
PO 4 Recognize characteristics of physical features
   a. physical (i.e., continent, ocean, river, lake, mountains, islands

Arizona Math Standard
STRAND 1 Number Sense and Operations
CONCEPT 1 Number Sense
GRADE K
PO 1 Make a model to represent a given whole number 0 through 20.
GRADE 1
PO 1 Make a model to represent a given whole number 0 through 100.

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 gain a better understanding of what is an island and what are oceans and seas. They will learn how islands are formed in the ocean through volcanic action and how this creates mountain ranges.

Materials
- A large piece of blue construction or poster paper
- Ten smaller pieces of white paper cut in the shape of islands
- A marker to draw mountains
- Eleven small pieces of paper for each child to make 1-10 counting books.
- Markers, crayons or colored pencils for each child
- Stapler
Counting Islands

Objectives
The student will be able to:

1. Draw islands (with mountains) surrounded by oceans.

2. Demonstrate understanding of counting to 10 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.

2. Select 10 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.)

3. 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). Once they are standing tall, explain that they are now islands in the middle of an ocean.

4. As each island is “grown” ask another child to place one of the paper islands on the blue paper. As the islands continue to grow, draw 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.

5. Repeat procedure #4 nine times until all 10 islands have been created.

6. When all the islands are on the map, review with the children what they would find on these islands (mountains) and what makes each of them an island.

7. Afterwards the children should make a counting book. In their books, the children should draw and label one island on page 1, two islands on page 2, three islands on page 3, and so on, until 10 pages are complete. Each island should be drawn so that it is clear that it is surrounded by water. 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

Assessment
The ability to make a counting book with the numbers from 1-10 written correctly and with the appropriate number of islands on each page will show that the children can represent a whole number (or 10 whole numbers) with a model.

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

Extensions
Read books such as How Mountains are Made by Kathleen Weidner Zoehfield 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 so their counting book would be larger or smaller than five. Then extensions would include discussing
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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