



The Birth of the Islands

Lesson Plan for Grades K-3

Focus Questions: Why is Hawai‘i such a special place? How did the Hawaiian Islands form?

Lesson At A Glance:

Students will create a map (physically on the playground, then drawn on paper) that shows where Hawai‘i is relative to other land masses. They will locate the Hawaiian Islands on the map.

Key Concepts:

The Hawaiian Islands were formed by volcanic eruptions. The islands are very isolated from other lands.

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Describe how Hawaiian volcanoes are formed
- Illustrate where lava erupts from a volcano
- Dramatize volcanic eruptions
- Create a map that shows where Hawai‘i is relative to other land masses and locate the Hawaiian Islands on the map.

Time: 1 week

Materials:

Maoli Nō DVD, DVD player

‘Ōhi‘a Project activities – “If I Were a Volcano” and “On the Hot Spot”

Book “*Dear Katie, The Volcano Is A Girl*” (by Jean Craighead George)

Subject Areas: Science, Social Studies (geography), Art (drama and visual arts)

Standard Met:

Science Standard 6: Physical Earth and Space Science: Nature of Matter and Energy. Understand the nature of matter and energy, forms of energy (including waves) and energy transformation, and their significance in understanding the structure of the universe. Benchmark SC 2.6.1: Identify ways to change the physical properties of objects

Procedure:

1. Show the beginning part of the chant “Aloha Mai Au Ku‘u ‘Āina” on the Maoli Nō DVD, where scenes of volcanic eruptions are shown. If student interest remains high, play through the entire chant. Ask students to point out things they recognize. Here is a good place to introduce the connection between the volcano and the chant. Discuss how Hawaiians are connected to the volcano through its creation, songs, and dance (bring up the pictures of dancers shown in the video).
2. Conduct the ‘Ōhi‘a Project activities, “If I Were A Volcano” and “On the Hot Spot.”
3. Read and discuss the story, “Dear Katie, the Volcano is a Girl.”
4. Take students out to the playground and have them create a map, using their bodies, of the Hawaiian Islands relative to other land masses (e.g. Japan, North America, South America, South Pacific). Emphasize how far Hawai‘i is from any other large landmass.
5. Back in the classroom, have students draw a simple map of the Hawaiian Islands in relation to other land masses.

Extended Activities

One fun exercise to demonstrate the concept of the “hot spot” would be to make a mock formation of the islands. Make a “hot spot” using a red piece of construction paper. Take eight volunteers from the class and name them after each of the islands. Line them up seated in the actual order of the islands. Take the “hot spot” and pass it over the heads of the students, one at a time. As you do so, instruct the students to “grow like a volcano.” Now you have your own student-island-chain.

