

**Record: 1**

**Title:** Ocean features.

**Benchmarks:** Earth & Space Sciences -- Earth -- Oceans, Lakes & Water

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**Authors:** Oliver, Clare

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**Abstract:** The article describes ocean basins, the ocean floor and islands. There are plains, mountains, and valleys under the ocean in areas called basins. Cooling molten rock from inside the earth cools and forms part of the ocean floor. An atoll, another feature of the ocean, is a ring-shaped coral reef that encloses a deep lagoon. This atoll can sometimes swallow islands. New islands form when an underwater volcano erupts. (Copyright applies to all Abstracts)

**Lexile:** 870

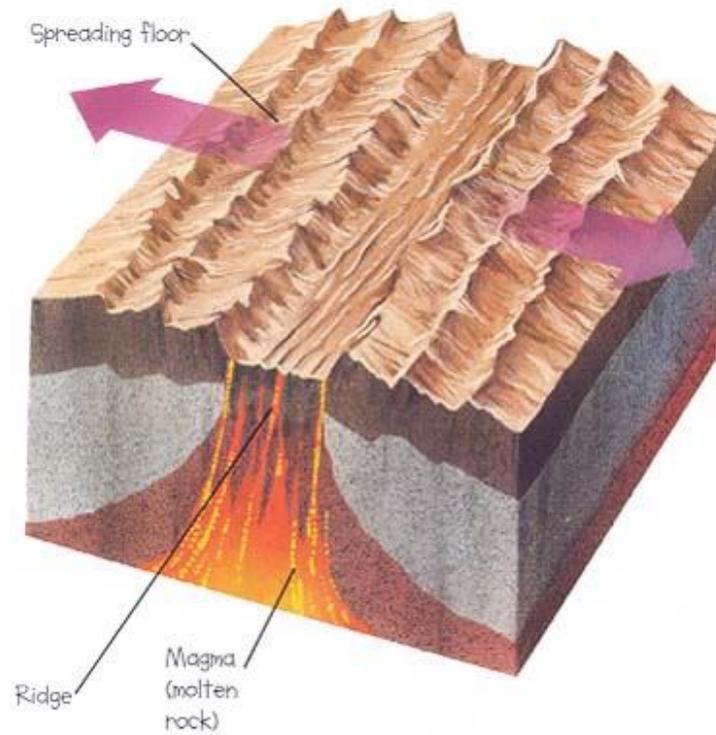
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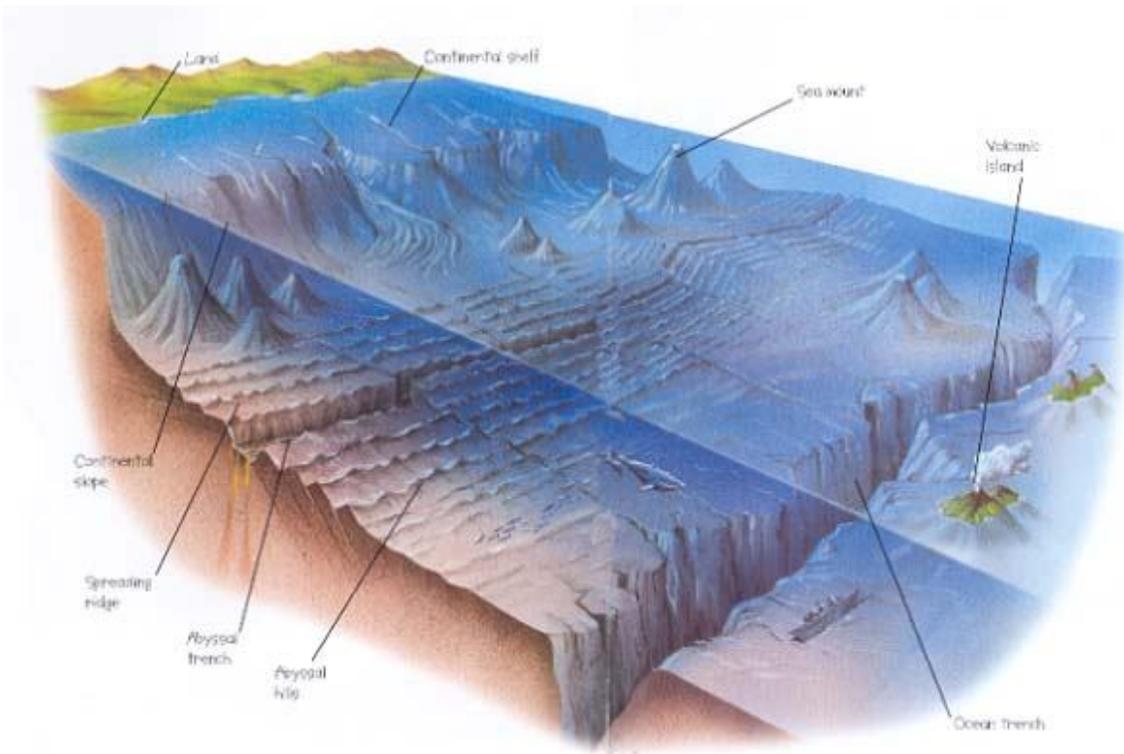
**Database:** Book Collection: Nonfiction

**Ocean features**

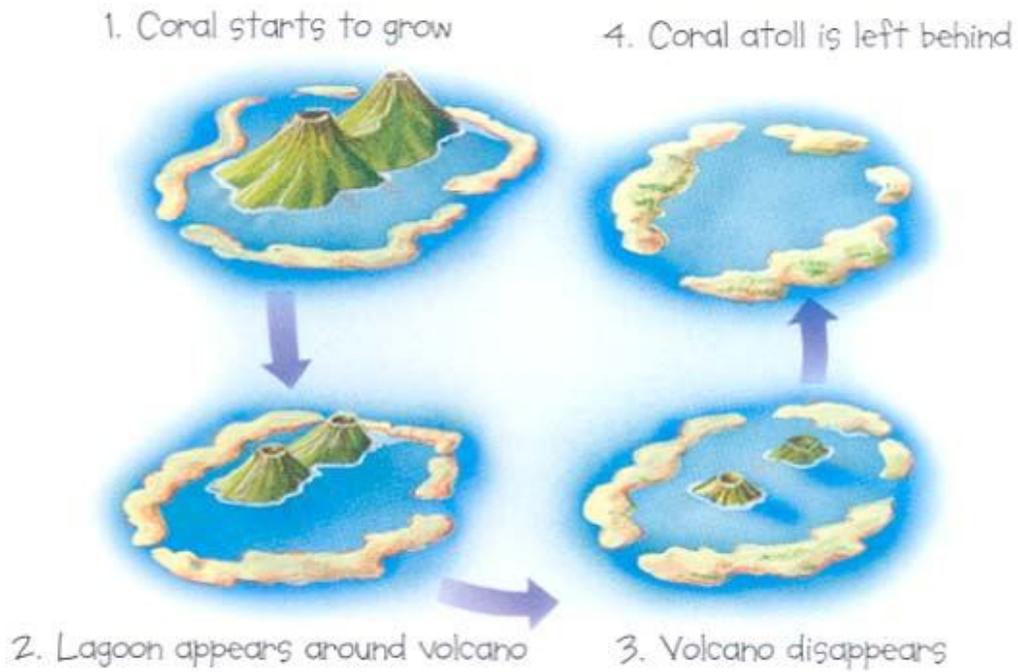
- **6 There are plains, mountains, and valleys under the oceans, in areas called basins.** Each basin has a rim (the flat continental shelf that meets the shore) and sides (the continental slope that drops away from the shelf). In the ocean basin there are flat abyssal plains, steep hills, huge underwater volcanoes called seamounts, and deep valleys called trenches.
- **7 The ocean floor is spreading.** Molten (liquid) rock inside the Earth seeps from holes on the seabed. As the rock cools, it forms new sections of floor that creep slowly out. Scientists have proved this fact by looking at layers of rock on the ocean floor. There are matching stripes of rock either side of a ridge. Each pair came from the same hot rock eruption, then slowly spread out.
- **8 Some islands are swallowed by the ocean.** Sometimes, a ring-shaped coral reef called an atoll marks where an island once was. The coral reef built up around the island. After the volcano blew its top, the reef remained.
- **9 New islands are born all the time.** When an underwater volcano erupts, its lava cools in the water. Layers of lava build up, and the volcano grows in size. Eventually, it is tall enough to peep above the waves. The Hawaiian islands rose from the sea like this.



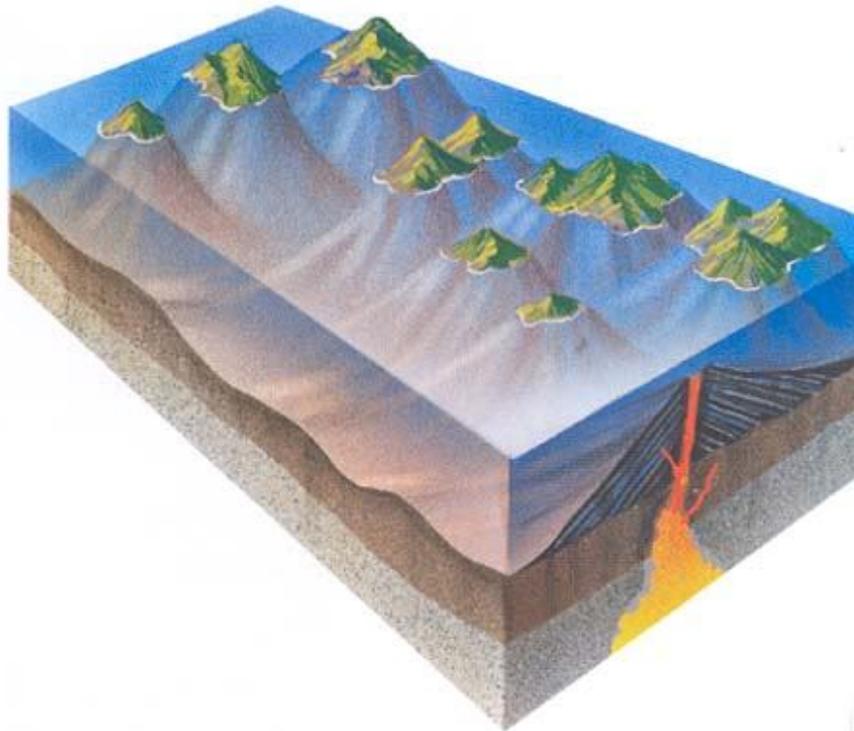
*Magma (molten rock) escapes from the seabed to form a ridge. This ridge has collapsed to form a rift valley.*



*Under the oceans there is a landscape similar to that found on land.*



*An atoll is a ring-shaped coral reef that encloses a deep lagoon. It can form when a volcanic island sinks underwater.*



*There are more Hawaiian islands still to come--Loihi is just visible beneath the water's surface.*

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By Clare Oliver

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