

The Formation of the Hawaiian Islands

by Liana Mahoney

Hawaii is one of the fifty states of the United States of America. It is unique, however, in that it is not part of the U.S. mainland. Hawaii is located in the Pacific Ocean. It is an archipelago, which means that it's made up of many islands. While many U.S. states have many islands, only one that is made up of only islands.



With its warm temperatures and beautiful beaches, Hawaii is a popular place for vacation. These islands are also home to many unique plants and animals that have evolved deep within the earth over millions of years.

Scientists who study the formation of the Hawaiian Islands were formed around 5 million years ago in a place where magma (hot, molten rock) rises from the Pacific Ocean. The magma rises from a deep place in the earth called a hotspot.

Over time, as magma continued to ooze from the earth, the lava built up. Layer after layer accumulated over the hotspot. The layers of lava grew higher and higher, eventually forming a volcano.

Have you ever seen a conveyor belt, like the ones used at grocery stores to move your items toward the cashier? The surface upon which your items are sitting moves under them and takes them to a new place. Now, can you imagine a huge conveyor belt

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The Hawaiian Islands are a volcanic "hotspot." But that comes from the fact that the Hawaiian Islands were formed over a hotspot. The magma rises from a deep place in the earth called a hotspot. The magma rises from a deep place in the earth called a hotspot. The magma rises from a deep place in the earth called a hotspot.

Name : _____

that slowly relocates a volcano? This is similar to what happened to the volcanoes that formed at the hotspot in the Pacific Ocean. In this case, a large area of the earth's crust, called the Pacific Plate, acted as the conveyor belt. At the same time that the volcanoes were being formed, the ocean floor of the Pacific Plate gradually moved and shifted toward the northwest. This movement of the ocean floor pulled the first volcano away from the hotspot. Magma continued to ooze from the hotspot, cooled and hardened, and formed a new volcano above it. This process repeated itself over and over for millions of years, creating a string of volcanoes that each, in turn, appeared above the surface of the ocean.

It's very difficult to imagine a world that not even existed! Geological change, even today, is entirely different than it was completely over time of years. So, in the middle of the 19th century, Hawaii is - a gorgeous archipelago of places on earth!

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Islands. as we know it now did not even exist! Due to gradually changing tectonic plates, Hawaii may look completely different than it was millions of years ago. The islands would take millions of years to form. The "Hawaiian Islands" of Hawaii just as it is one of the most beautiful

Name : _____

The Formation of the Hawaiian Islands

1) Why are the Hawaiian Islands unique?

2) What are the two different contexts the word "hotspot" is used in the passage?

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3) What is the extr

last paragraph?

4) Why are the Pac

5) What does the author encourage readers to do in the final paragraph?

The Formation of the Hawaiian Islands

1) Why are the Hawaiian Islands unique?

The Hawaiian islands are not a part of the U.S. mainland. They are located in the Pacific Ocean and are made up entirely of islands.

2) What are the two different contexts the word "hotspot" is used in the passage?

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3) What is the extreme

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4) Why are the Pac

Just as the con

relocating the

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have been

forming the chain

of Hawaiian Islands.

5) What does the author encourage readers to do in the final paragraph?

The author wants the readers not to worry about the changes that might

take place to Hawaiian in the future, and just continue to enjoy the

beautiful place as it is.