

Our Earth: Land, Water & Continents

Parent & teacher guide · Ages 4–8 with a grown-up

A five-minute conversation

Identify one land area and one water area, explain which covers more of Earth's surface, and find one named continent with adult support.

Start beside Gina at the globe: "What do you notice?" Explain that a globe is a round model of Earth, and this map shows Earth on a flat surface. Find one land area and one water area together. Next, count the ten equal parts in the strip: seven blue parts represent water and three represent land, approximately. Finally, let your child choose one continent to find. Read its name together; remembering all seven names is optional.

Can you show me some land and some water?

Answer cue: Point to a continent for land and to the blue ocean around it for water. Antarctica counts as land even though ice covers it. Use the labels and shapes as well as colors.

What covers more of Earth's surface: water or land? What picture clue helps?

Answer cue: Water covers more. The strip has seven equal blue parts and three land parts. It is a rounded model of surface area; the more precise figure is about 71% water-covered.

Which continent do we live on, and where can we find it?

Answer cue: An adult identifies the family's continent using a familiar atlas or globe if needed, then helps the child locate its label. The answer depends on where the family lives. This overview does not show cities or every island, and no address needs to be shared.

Keep the idea clear

This poster uses a common seven-continent model: North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia and Antarctica. Schools may group or name continents differently. Oceania is a wider region that includes Australia and many Pacific islands. Europe and Asia share connected land. Map colors help separate regions; they do not show the real color of all land. Flat maps change shapes and sizes, and the globe view shows only one side at a time. A few islands are shown in a neutral color; their regional groupings can be explored with a more detailed atlas.

One new noticing is enough. Pointing, speaking, signing, drawing or listening are all ways to join in.

Take a finger journey

Materials: The poster and an adult; optional paper and crayons. A globe or atlas may help an adult locate a home continent, but no purchase or physical trip is needed.

1. Choose one labeled continent on the poster. Read or listen to its name together.
2. Trace along part of its coast with a finger, or ask an adult to describe the meeting of land and ocean. No writing on the poster is needed.
3. Choose another continent and describe where it is on this map. If an ocean lies between them, point to the water in between.
4. Optional: draw a simple land shape with water beside it. Say that it is your model, not an exact world map.

What the model can show

A coastline is where land meets the sea. The poster is a simplified map for finding broad regions. Its decorative colors and flat shape should not be measured as exact Earth areas; use the equal ten-part strip for the approximate land/water comparison.

A response to keep

The continent I explored

The land and water I noticed

A place I would like to learn about next

Follow the learning

Return to the map after the Water Cycle poster. Find an ocean and imagine one drop's next step into the cycle.

Where Did My Water Go? — Continue from water on Earth to Gina and Ollie's story about where water goes. This is a water-cycle connection, not a continents atlas.

Sources

U.S. Geological Survey · How Much Water is There on Earth?:

<https://www.usgs.gov/water-science-school/science/how-much-water-there-earth>

National Geographic Education · Continent: <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/Continent/>

National Geographic Education · Globe: <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/globe/>

National Geographic Education · Map: <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/map/>

In the classroom

A 20-minute lesson

Learning aim: Learners identify land and water, use the ten-part strip to compare surface coverage, and locate one continent with support.

Prepare: Display or print the poster. Read the three answer cues and the continent-convention note. Check the home-continent answer before the lesson; do not collect children's addresses. Optional atlas or globe, paper and crayons.

Words to explore

globe — A round model of Earth.

map — A flat picture that represents a place.

continent — A large region of Earth's land.

surface — The outside of something.

3 min · Notice the globe

Invite one observation. Name globe as a round model and map as a flat representation.

5 min · Find and compare

Point to one land area and water. Count the ten equal parts together, then compare seven and three. Explain that the strip is approximate.

8 min · Take a finger journey

Pairs choose a continent and take turns locating it and following a coast on the poster. Offer adult description as an equal participation option.

4 min · Explain and connect

Ask the core check. Let learners point, speak, sign, draw or dictate. Invite one next topic: water's journey, an animal habitat or Earth's inside layers.

Understanding check

Show land and water. Which covers more of Earth's surface, and how does the strip help us tell?

Answer guidance: A named continent is land; the surrounding blue ocean is water. Seven of the strip's ten equal parts are blue and three are land, so it represents more water than land. This is approximate. Identify any one labeled continent with adult help; full seven-name recall is not required.

For a first step, compare just land and water. Read names aloud or describe shapes and positions. For an extension, compare two continent positions or notice connected Europe and Asia. Accept pointing, speech, signing, listening or a drawing; color naming is not required.

Next discoveries

Solar System — Zoom out to see Earth among the eight planets.

Water Cycle — After finding water on Earth, follow how it moves through the water cycle.

Animal Habitats — Zoom in from a continent to the food, water, shelter and space an animal needs.

Inside Earth — Compare Earth's surface with a cutaway of the layers beneath it.

Our discovery record

Use words, marks, a drawing or an adult's notes. Keep this page with you; nothing needs to be uploaded.

My question or idea

What I noticed

What I think now

What I want to explore next

Stories to continue together

Kiddos Books · Read with confidence.

<https://apps.apple.com/app/id6720721998>