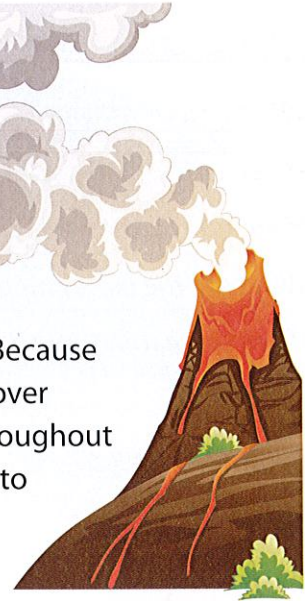


Note: Before you begin to read the text, answer Question 1 on the opposite page.

Unseen Volcanoes Build New Land

Some of the world's biggest volcanoes have never been seen. Why? Because they lie far below the sea! Earth's largest mountain ranges zigzag all over the ocean floor. More than 5000 volcanoes have been discovered throughout these ranges. Every day, at least one volcano erupts, causing hot lava to pour onto the sea floor. The ocean's cold water cools the lava almost immediately, turning it into rock. Layers of this rock build up. If the rock rises above the ocean surface, it forms an island.



Hawaii and Iceland are volcanic islands. Hawaii is still growing. Its active volcanoes still erupt, and their lava adds more land.

The world's newest volcanic island appeared in 1963 near Iceland. Sailors saw a huge cloud of smoke and steam. They moved their ship closer and witnessed the birth of a new island. This island kept growing for the next three and a half years. Its name is Surtsey.

Even lava that doesn't reach the sea's surface affects land. Over a long time, the lava on the ocean floor expands and pushes on the continents. This causes them to move a little. Each of Earth's seven continents moves from 2.5 – 7.62 cm a year. This means that Earth's surface is always changing. A million years ago, Earth looked different than it does today. A million years from now, it will have changed again.

