

SOCIAL STUDIES — GEOGRAPHY · P4–P7

Oirthir na h-Alba — Scotland's Coastline & Islands

P4–P7

Scotland's islands

1

Orkney

70+ islands (20 inhabited), northeast Scotland. Low-lying, fertile, treeless. Remarkable prehistoric sites — Skara Brae (5,000-year-old village), Ring of Brodgar, Maeshowe. Viking heritage — Norse was spoken here until the 16th century.

2

Shetland

100+ islands (14 inhabited), the most northerly part of the UK (60°N — same latitude as Oslo, Alaska). Strongest Norse influence of any Scottish islands. Famous for Shetland ponies, Fair Isle knitwear, and traditional fiddle music.

3

Outer Hebrides (Western Isles)

100+ islands, including Lewis & Harris, North and South Uist, Benbecula, Barra. The Gaelic heartland — approximately 52% of residents speak Gaelic. Stornoway is the main town.

4

Inner Hebrides

Skye (largest inner island), Islay, Jura, Mull, Staffa (Fingal's Cave), Iona (early Christian monastery of Columba). More varied than Outer Hebrides.

5

Ecological importance

Scotland's coastline (over 10,000 km) is among the most important in Europe for seabird colonies, grey seals, dolphin and whale populations, and rare habitats (machair — flower-rich grassland).



6

Scottish coastline length

Scotland's coastline is estimated at 10,250 km — longer than the coastline of France. The fjord-like sea lochs (similar to Norwegian fjords) dramatically increase the length.

