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The Easter Island Statues

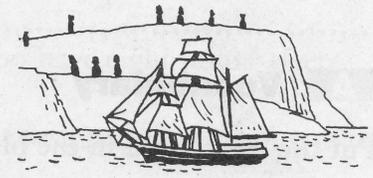
When the first sailing ship came to Easter Island in 1722, the captain and crew were afraid to land. They saw giants looking down at them from the high cliffs. The giants didn't move, so the ship **gradually** sailed closer. Finally, the sailors realized the giants were only **statues**. These huge carvings have **puzzled** the world ever since. Who made them? How did they get there?

Easter Island is a small dot in the South Pacific Ocean. It is hundreds of miles away from the nearest shipping route, and it is one of the most isolated places on earth. The nearest **mainland** is over 2,000 miles away in South America.

The biggest statue on Easter Island is over 60 feet high and weighs over 100 tons. There are hundreds of smaller ones, about 15 feet high. All of the statues are carved from stone and some wear stone hats. Their faces are **solemn** and unsmiling.

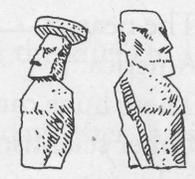
Earlier inhabitants of Easter Island carved the statues from the rocks in a volcanic **crater**. Next, they had to move the statues a long distance, in some cases more than ten miles, to **erect** them in their present position.

slowly

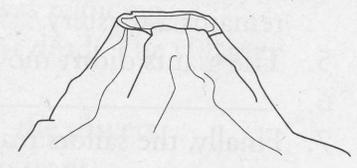


statues

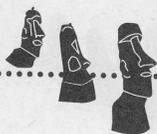
large mass of land



solemn



crater



No one knows for certain how the inhabitants **achieved** this very difficult feat. Some scientists say that palm trees grew on Easter Island in the past. They think the inhabitants cut the trees down and placed the heavy statues on the tree trunks. Then groups of seventy or more people rolled the statues to their present locations. Other scientists dispute this **theory** because there are no palm trees on the island today. More importantly, the **actual** purpose of the statues remains a mystery. Some, at least, were probably placed on the cliffs to **prevent** strangers from landing on the island.

The result, however, has been the opposite. **Crowds** of eager people come to gape at the statues. Easter Island is no longer a dot on the map. It has a modern airport and tourists visit from all over the world.

prevent ≠ allow

lots of people

A Vocabulary

Put the right word in the blanks. The sentences are from the text.

- | | | | |
|----------|---------|----------|-----------|
| statues | actual | theory | gradually |
| mainland | crowds | erect | puzzled |
| crater | prevent | achieved | solemn |

- The nearest _____ is over 2,000 miles away in South America.
- These huge carvings have _____ the world ever since.
- Other scientists dispute this _____ because there are no palm trees on the island today.
- More importantly, the _____ purpose of the statues remains a mystery.
- The giants didn't move, so the ship _____ sailed closer.
- _____ of eager people come to gape at the statues.
- Finally, the sailors realized the giants were only _____.

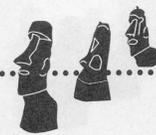
- Next, they _____ than ten m...
- No one kn... very diffic...
- Earlier inh... volcanic ...
- Some, at l...
- Their faces

B Vocabulary

Put the right wo...

- achieved
crater
gradually

- The island stretch of w...
- In _____ In practice,
- _____ the cathedra...
- There were star, asking
- Brandi _____ entrance exa...
- He was _____ window unt...
- The _____ on the invita...
- Mrs. Carson about the pe...
- The _____ expected it to
- In a game cal



8. The present inhabitants of Easter Island carved the statues.
9. There are many volcanos on the island.
10. There are no theories as to how the statues were placed in their present position.
11. No palm trees grow on the island today.
12. The statues were placed on the cliff to welcome tourists.
13. Today, many tourists visit Easter Island to look at the statues.

E Questions

The asterisk (*) means you have to think of the answer. You cannot find it in the text.

1. Is Easter Island large or small?
2. Which ocean is it in?
3. How far away is the nearest mainland?
4. What are the statues of Easter Island made from?
5. How tall is the biggest statue?
6. How much does it weigh?
7. Can you describe the faces of the statues?
8. Where were the rocks for the statues found?
9. How far were some of the statues moved?
10. Did the present inhabitants of Easter Island carve the statues?
11. What is one possible reason why the statues were carved?
- *12. Why do you think there is an airport on Easter Island?

F Main Ideas

Which is the main idea of this chapter? Choose one.

1. Long ago, statues were placed on Easter Island by the early inhabitants. Their purpose remains a mystery.
2. The early inhabitants of Easter Island spent years placing the statues in their present positions.
3. Easter Island is now a well known tourist resort.