

# Easter Island

Lesson Map: <http://esriaustralia.com.au/education/SpatialActivity19>

## Engage

*All about Easter Island.*

- ☐ Where is Easter Island?
- ☐ Easter Island (known as Rapa Nui or (Isla de Pascua) is located in the Pacific Ocean.
- ☐ Easter Island is well known for the 887 stone statues throughout the island. These statues were created by the Rapa Nui people during their time on the island. How they were made, what they symbolise and how they were transported remain a historical debate.
- ☐ The dates that the island was settled are not exact, but radiocarbon analysis shows that it could range from 300 to 1200 AD. By 1700, all the trees on the island had been cut down.
- ☐ It is believed that the statues on the island, which are called the Moai, were carved from volcanic ash from the Rano Raraku volcano. These statues sit with the head above ground, but most extend into the soil until approximately the torso. It is believed that each statue represents an ancestor, most likely a king or chief.

## Explore

*Where are Moai statues located on Easter Island?*

- Click on the Lesson Map URL above to open the map. In the 'details' pane, under 'content', tick the first checkbox to turn on the layer 'Location of significant Moai statues.' Turn off all other layers.
- Investigate by zooming in on Easter Island.
- ? Where are most of the Moai statues located? *[On the coastline of Easter Island]*

## Explain

*The history of Easter Island, including settlement.*

- ? Tick the checkbox to turn on the layer 'Historical locations.' There are two

Download student worksheet [here](#).

Time

15 minutes

Activity

Investigate the ancient world of Easter Island.

Learning Outcome

Students will be able to:

- Locate Easter Island.
- Observe the spatial distribution of Moai statues.
- Identify the distance the ancient chief travelled on canoe to arrive at the island.
- Theorise explanations for transportation of Moai heads.

ACARA Curriculum Link

[Year 8 History: The ancient to the modern world](#)

[ACDSEH013 | ACDSEH067 | ACDSEH068](#)

Teacher Feedback:

To share your feedback on this, or any Spatial Activity, please contact [education@esriaustralia.com.au](mailto:education@esriaustralia.com.au)

islands that it is theorised the Rapa Nui people settled from. Zoom out to find where these locations are. What is the name of these two islands? *[Gambier Islands and Marquesas Islands]*

- According to oral tradition, the Rapa Nui chief, Hotu Matu'a travelled from one of these Polynesian islands on a canoe with his captain Tu'u ko Iho.
- ? Click the 'Measure' tool that is on the horizontal banner. Click the ruler (second icon) to change to distance. On the drop down menu, select 'Kilometers.' From Marquesas Islands, how many kilometers did these men travel on a canoe? *[Approx. 3500 kms]*
- ? A canoe can travel approximately 5 kms in one hour. How many hours did it take the men to reach Easter Island? *[700 hours/30 days]*
- ? Zoom in on Easter Island. The house icon is where historians suggest the first landing and settlement occurred. Zoom in on the area. Why do you think this would be a good place to land, compared to the rest of the island? *[It is a sandy beach compared to the rest of the rocky cliffs]*

## Extend

### *Heads will roll?*

- ? There are three major volcanoes on Easter Island, represented by the volcano symbol. By clicking on each symbol, find out the name of these volcanoes. *[Volcano Terevaka, Volcano Puakatike, Volcano Rano Kau]*
- There is one more feature on the map. Click on the falling rocks symbol. This is the Rano Raraku Quarry, where 95% of the statues were made from volcanic ash.
- ? Repeat the above measurement step to find the distance between the quarry and a distant Moai statue. What is the distance?
- ? There are many theories about how these statues were moved from the quarry to the locations. What are some theories you have about how they were moved?

## Next Steps:

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Learn more about ArcGIS Online, and apply for your ArcGIS Online School subscription at <http://esriaustralia.com.au/education>

