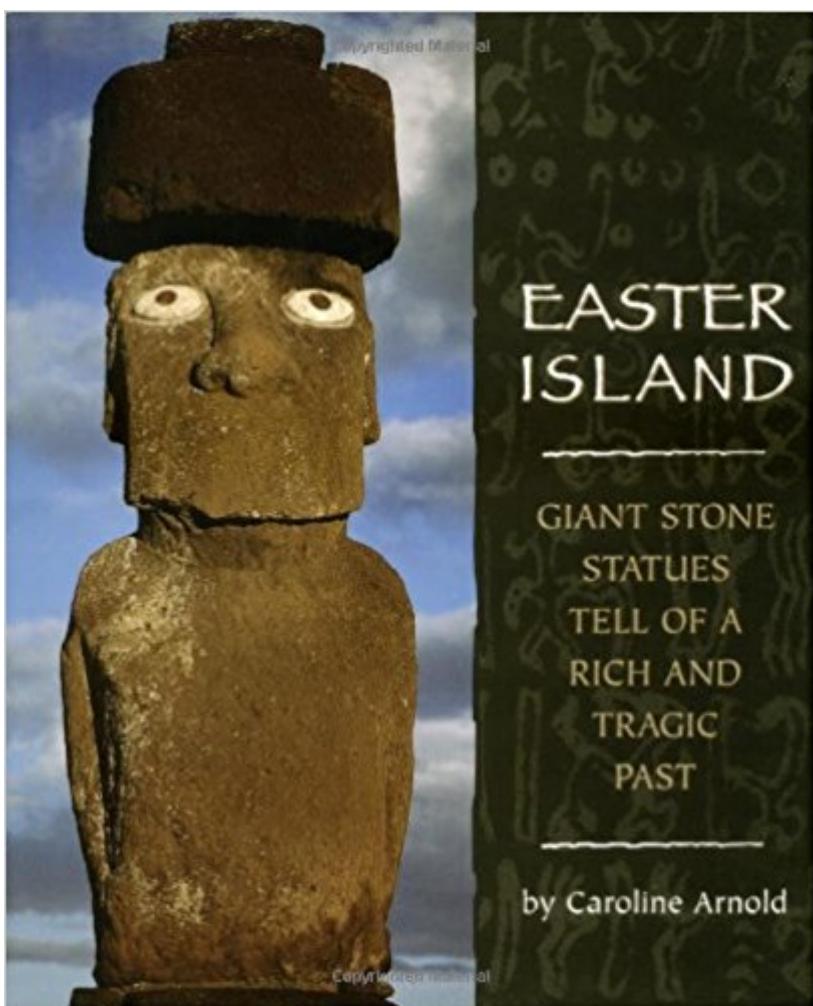


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# Easter Island: Giant Stone Statues Tell Of A Rich And Tragic Past



## **Synopsis**

In about A.D. 400, a group of seafarers reached a small, isolated island in Polynesia and founded a new settlement. They developed a rich and complex culture that lasted more than a thousand years. The population eventually declined, and soon all that remained were a few inhabitants and hundreds of mysterious giant stone statues in varying stages of disrepair. Caroline Arnold explains how archeologists and other scientists and scholars have pieced together a history of Easter Island by studying its natural resources, listening to family stories and Polynesian legends, and examining the statues and other clues the people left behind. Photographs, taken by the author, provide a stunning visual accompaniment to this clear and concise account of one of the most remote--and fascinating--places on earth. GLOSSARY, BIBLIOGRAPHY, INDEX.

## **Book Information**

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Age Range: 10 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 - 7

## **Customer Reviews**

Grade 3-6-Arnold provides a clear and concise look at the island and the many mysteries that surround it, detailing its early settlement, its people and resources, and the rise and fall of its rich and complex civilization. One of the most intriguing questions that remains unanswered is how the ancient Rapanui people carved and erected hundreds of giant stone statues found all over the island. The author carefully explains how scientists have theorized on the early history and how the

decimation over time of the island's natural resources and its isolation from trade routes may have led to its decline in population. The book concludes with a quick look at the tourism that is renewing pride in the unique heritage of the few hundred remaining Rapanui people, as the island becomes a model open-air museum. A map is included but it does not begin to convey the remoteness of the area, which is better described by Arnold's text. Several of the full-page color photographs are breathtaking, while smaller pictures illustrate specific points from the text. The glossary includes phonetic pronunciations of Rapanui words and a list of resources includes the Easter Island Web site (which offers more details on the language, music, art, and culture of the island). Jeanette Larson, Texas State Library, Austin Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Easter Island, an isolated plot of land in a remote part of the Pacific Ocean, is best known for the huge stone statues that dot the landscape. The statues are the obvious hook to get kids involved in the history of the island, but the material is presented chronologically: the discussion begins with the arrival of the first settlers and leaves the statues until midway in the book. As usual, Arnold provides a solid, cogent text, but this one is also a bit staid, with typeface that's somewhat difficult to read. Fortunately, the color photographs are excellent, crisp and lush, particularly those of the statues. The pictures capture the height and breadth of these monoliths, which generally range from 19 to 23 feet tall, though the biggest is 65 feet. Once the text gets into the how and why of the statues, it takes off. Island life and other artifacts, including wood carvings, petroglyphs, and tablets of hieroglyphic-like writing, are also discussed. The book concludes with the various theories surrounding the disappearance of the island population. A little-discussed but fascinating topic. Chronology and bibliography appended. Ilene Cooper

I bought this for my nephews. It is a good book about Easter Island for kids. Good information, not too much detail and stays fact based (no aliens or magical theories about the Moai).

An excellent informational book about Easter Island and its mysterious past. Short chapters break the book into easily manageable sections. The vocabulary is appropriate for the intended age group. Factual information is clearly separated from theories. When applicable, multiple theories are presented. Crisp, clear photographs throughout the book serve to clarify the narration. A glossary, complete with pronunciation guide, is included along with an index.

Easter Island is one of the most interesting places in the world, but you would never know it from

this text that is so much like geography textbooks of old that you don't want to even turn the page. What does keep you turning the pages are the pictures which are quite beautiful and, in themselves, illuminating... A worthy effort, with solid information...

The book was a gift. The recipient was very happy with it. Well written book. Just enough information for the age of the person wanting it.

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