



PYRAMIDS OF GIZA



STONEHENGE



EASTER ISLAND MOAI STATUES

## ROCK LEGENDS

My name is Tina Loft. I've always reveled in mystery and adventure, ever since I followed my father on an excavation the summer I turned 12. Do you know the pyramids of Giza? I went there at age 16. Have you heard of the Easter Island moai statues? I saw them on vacation at age 14. What about Stonehenge? I've been there, too. Don't ask me, though, how people managed to build these colossal monuments hundreds of thousands of years ago, and as for the reasons why they were constructed, there are no conclusive answers either.

Have you ever read Asterix comic books or seen the movies? I bet you didn't know that the "menhirs" Obelix is frequently seen carrying around are real. (1) \_\_\_\_\_. "Menhirs" – meaning long stones – are large, six to seven thousand-year-old, upright stones standing alone or in groups. They differ in terms of size but they tend to have a fairly similar square shape with uneven surfaces becoming smaller towards the top. The Carnac Stones which I saw are actually the most famous examples of aligned "menhirs".

I even got to see the largest existing menhir, which used to stand 65 feet tall and would have weighed 330 tons, but today lies fractured in four pieces in Locmariaquer. Just to get an idea, it's placed third on a list of the heaviest objects to be moved by humans without powered machinery. (2) \_\_\_\_\_. There are a number of theories, though, several of the most credible being that they were used as territorial markers, as early calendars or in religious ceremonies.

The best I've saved for last. This is one place you've definitely never heard of before, and that's probably because experts can't decide if it should even be considered a monument. (3) \_\_\_\_\_. Don't search Google Maps for an image, though, because the Yonaguni monument is a massive underwater rock formation.

Yonaguni monument is a rectangular formation noticed first by an explorer, approximately 490 by 130 feet and 88 feet tall. What makes the formation a site of controversy is its series of terraces and broad steps. (4) \_\_\_\_\_.

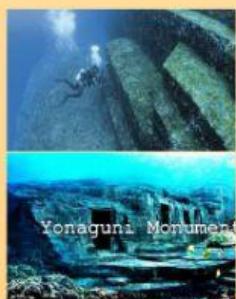
Those who believe that it is manmade say that the absence of loose blocks lying on the seabed is proof enough. (5) \_\_\_\_\_. Masaaki Kimura, an advocate of the theory that the formation is artificial, believes he can identify traces of drawings of animals and people engraved on the rocks.

Others, among them the geologist Robert Schoch, believe that it is nothing more than a natural formation. (6) \_\_\_\_\_. For them the matter has been settled, but for a handful of believers, it remains a mystery.

I will never get tired of roaming the planet to visit mysterious constructions!



MENHIRS



YONAGUNI MONUMENT

**Reading Comprehension.** Read the text again. Seven sentences have been removed. Choose from sentences A-F to fit the blanks from 1 to 6:

- A. These structures make this formation appear as if there was architectural design, as if it was once part of a city.
- B. It's in Japan, off the coast of the southern area of Ryukyu Islands.
- C. They are convinced that tectonic activity is responsible for creating the formation as Yonaguni lies in an earthquake-prone, with earthquakes tending to fracture rocks in a regular manner.
- D. As for what they were used for, nobody really knows for sure.
- E. I couldn't believe it but they actually exist; I saw them first-hand last summer.
- F. Their claim rests on the observation that individual rocks would be expected if the formation had been a product of natural erosion.

**VOCABULARY.** Match the highlighted phrases/words from the text with their meanings

a- Reveled in

1. Huge

b- Uneven

2. Supporter

c- Massive

3. Irregular

d- Advocate

4. Enjoyed

e- Engraved

5. Cut on a Surface