

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Reading

Before reading the text *Across the Pacific* read the question below:

1. What is the main purpose of the text, *Across the Pacific*?

Now read the text with this question as your focus.

2. After reading, write an answer to this focus question.

Across the Pacific



The Pacific Ocean covers one-third of the Earth's surface. Small islands are sprinkled across the enormous blue expanse and often isolated from each other by great areas of sea. The islands that make up Polynesia (meaning 'many islands') were settled by seafarers from places that are now called Indonesia and Malaysia. These people spread gradually across the Pacific looking for new lands to settle. Between 2000 BC* and 1000 AD**, they navigated incredible distances in sturdy dugout canoes, 'reading' changes in the swell of the sea, the patterns of the stars and the easterly winds. They brought with them a patterned pottery called Lapita (above left), which has become an archaeological clue to their movements. The settlers adapted to the different environments they found, from the dry atolls to the lush and fertile volcanic islands. They reached Tonga and Samoa by at least 1000 BC and developed their own customs and a society that was ruled by chiefs. By about 1000 AD, Polynesians had reached Easter Island, New Zealand and the easterly islands of Hawaii.



DID YOU KNOW?

Gigantic stone statues line the coast of Easter Island. The people carved these guardians of the island from soft volcanic stone, then dragged them to platforms on the cliff edges.