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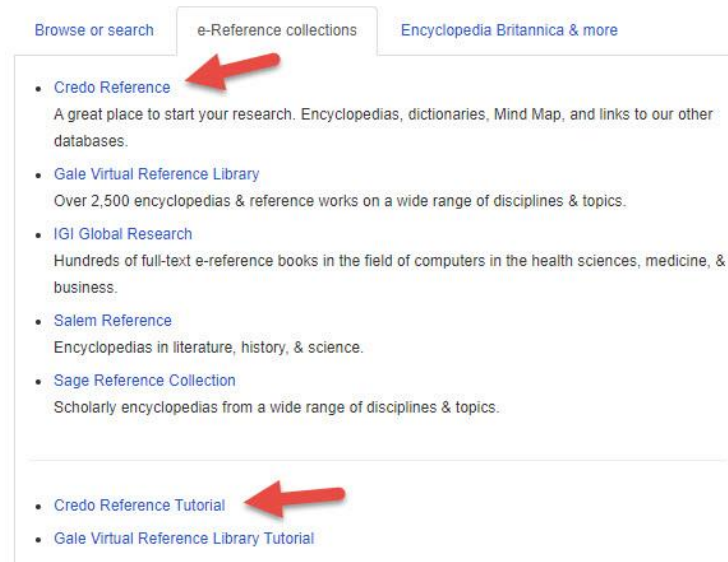
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- Merriam-Webster Dictionary  
This collegiate dictionary also includes a thesaurus.
- The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 6th edition, 2016.
- Oxford English Dictionary  
The definitive source for the history of the English language.

Word Histories & Placenames

- Brewer's Dictionary of Modern Phrase and Fable
- Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable
- Brewer's Dictionary of Irish Phrase and Fable
- Brewer's Curious Titles
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Frontispiece to the *Encyclopaedia* by Denis Diderot, 18th century engraving. Image from Art Museum Image Gallery



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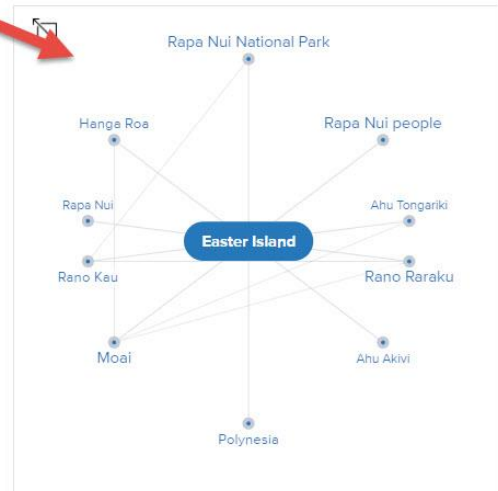
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Span. Isla de Pascua , Polynesian Rapa Nui , remote island (1992 pop. 2,770), 66 sq mi (171 sq km), in the South Pacific, c.2,200 mi (3,540 km) W of Chile, to which it belongs. Of volcanic origin, Easter Island is mostly covered with grasslands and is swept by strong trade winds. About half of the inhabitants are of...

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Island (pop., 2002: 3,791), eastern Pacific Ocean . Located 2,200 mi (3,600 km) west of Chile, it has an area of 63 sq mi (163 sq km). Initially inhabited c. ad 400 by Polynesians from the Marquesas , Easter Island has long been famous for its monolithic stone statues in human form. They are some...

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### Easter Island

from *Environmental History and Global Change: A Dictionary of Environmental History*

An isolated island in the E Pacific whose distinctive archaeological remains and environmental history provides an extreme example of the unforeseen impact of human activities on natural ecosystems. Because of this it has been used as a case study and cautionary disaster scenario to illustrate the value of environmental history. On this argument the fate of Easter Island, scaled up, provides a warning for the entire planet (Ponting 1992, Diamond 2005).

165 km<sup>2</sup> in area, rising to 509 m, 3,680 km from Chile, 2,080 km from the Pitcairn Islands, the island is famous for its enigmatic stone sculptures. Rang Raraku quarry, where the statues were carved, is c.550 m in diameter and contains 397 statues up to 21 m tall and weighing up to 270 t. Roads up to 8 m wide radiate out from the quarry. Along them are 97 more statues, seemingly abandoned in transit. On the island c.300 stone platforms are associated with 393 statues, all of which until a few decades ago had been thrown down.

The island was discovered in 1722 by Jacob Roggeveen, a Dutch explorer. The inhabitants had only small canoes and no domestic animals other than chickens. So how did they get there? Thor Heyerdahl (1950) believed that Easter Island had been settled from S America, using the Kon Tiki expedition (1947) as proof that this was possible. The appearance, language and tools of the inhabitants, however, suggests origins in Polynesia.

Around AD 1200 the first humans reached Easter Island, part of the last phase of settlement of the earth. With ample potential for crop

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