

IELTS – Reading - True, False, Not Given**Building Stonehenge**

Stonehenge, located in Wiltshire, England, is one of the most famous prehistoric monuments in the world. Archaeologists believe that it was constructed in several stages, with the earliest structure built about 5,000 years ago. The Stonehenge we see today was completed around 2500 BC.



The formation consists of a ring of standing stones, each around 13 feet high, seven feet wide, and weighing approximately 25 tons. The stones are set within earthworks in the middle of the densest complex of Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments in England, including several hundred burial mounds.

Historians have debated Stonehenge's purpose for centuries. It is believed to have been used as an astronomical observatory, a religious site, or even a place for healing. Its alignment with the sunrise on the summer solstice indicates its significance in tracking solar events.

The construction of Stonehenge is a marvel of engineering. The large stones, known as sarsens, are believed to have been brought from Marlborough Downs, a distance of about 20 miles. The smaller bluestones were transported from the Preseli Hills in Wales, nearly 200 miles away. This feat would have required tremendous effort, involving hundreds of people over several decades.

Recent discoveries suggest that Stonehenge was part of a broader sacred landscape. It includes a now-buried stone circle known as 'Bluestonehenge' and the massive 'Superhenge' located at Durrington Walls, just two miles away. The entire area is a testament to the ingenuity and spiritual depth of its builders.

Despite its age, Stonehenge continues to be a source of wonder and mystery, attracting millions of visitors from around the world. It remains an enduring symbol of Britain's ancient past and a fascinating subject of ongoing research and speculation.

Do the following statements agree with the information in the text?

TRUE *if the statement agrees with the information*
FALSE *if the statement contradicts the information*
NOT GIVEN *if there is no information on this*

1. Stonehenge was constructed over 5,000 years ago.
2. Each stone in Stonehenge weighs about 25 tons.
3. Stonehenge is one of the few Neolithic monuments in the area.
4. The main purpose of Stonehenge was religious.
5. Stonehenge aligns with the sunrise on the winter solstice.
6. The stones were sourced from locations both near and far from the site.
7. The construction of Stonehenge took several decades.
8. 'Bluestonehenge' is a larger circle than Stonehenge.

ANSWER KEY

1. FALSE - The text mentions that the earliest structure of Stonehenge was built about 5,000 years ago, but the Stonehenge we see today was completed around 2500 BC, which is less than 5,000 years ago.
2. TRUE - The text states that the standing stones are each around 13 feet high, seven feet wide, and weigh approximately 25 tons, confirming the statement.
3. FALSE - The text mentions that Stonehenge is set within the densest complex of Neolithic and Bronze Age monuments in England, which includes several hundred burial mounds, indicating that it is not one of the few in the area but part of a larger complex.
4. NOT GIVEN - While the text suggests Stonehenge might have been used as an astronomical observatory or a religious site, it does not definitively state that its primary use was religious.
5. NOT GIVEN - The text specifically states that Stonehenge aligns with the sunrise on the summer solstice, not the winter solstice. Although it may also align in winter, this information is not stated in the text.
6. TRUE - The text indicates that the large sarsen stones were brought from Marlborough Downs, about 20 miles away, and the smaller bluestones from the Preseli Hills in Wales, nearly 200 miles away, supporting the statement.
7. TRUE - The text mentions that transporting the stones and constructing Stonehenge would have required tremendous effort, involving hundreds of people over several decades, which agrees with the statement.
8. NOT GIVEN - The text mentions a now-buried stone circle known as 'Bluestonehenge' but does not provide information regarding its size compared to Stonehenge.