

## Summarizing Chapters Handout

*If Stones Could Speak*, by Marc Aronson

Important Details	Summary	Central Idea
<p>Chapter 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stonehenge is a mysterious circle of stones.</li> <li>It was built 4,500 years ago.</li> <li>Mike and the Riverside Project team are leading the expedition.</li> <li>There are many mysteries to be solved at Stonehenge.</li> <li>People have been studying the site for thousands of years. (caption on p. 8)</li> <li>We must always continue to ask questions to gain knowledge. (p. 9)</li> <li>"As I discovered, when we think it new ways, the past reveals fresh secrets."</li> <li>There have been many theories about what it represents.</li> <li>Stonehenge is comprised by a series of sites linked together.</li> <li>A new idea can capture the attention of the world.</li> </ul>	<p>In this chapter, we learn that Stonehenge is a mysterious circle of stones in Western England. Mike and the Riverside Project team are archaeologists who studied Stonehenge. The author, Mike Aaronson, explains that it is important to ask questions to gather new information and form new ideas.</p>	<p>This book is going to be about questioning what others believe to be true in order to learn more, and how Mike and his team accomplished that.</p>
<p>Chapter 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stonehenge is made up of a series of large and smaller stones.</li> <li>The people who built Stonehenge treated the stones like wood.</li> <li>The stones on the top (lintels) are held in place using a mortise and tenon joint.</li> <li>The is most likely the same way wooden beams were attached during this time (before nails).</li> <li>Sarsens are the tall stones that hold up the structure, made of sandstone.</li> <li>The sarsens came from 18 miles away.</li> <li>The smaller stones (bluestone) came from 150 miles away.</li> <li>No one is sure how the people moved the stones from one place to another.</li> <li>"Instead of guessing how the stones</li> </ul>	<p>In this chapter, we learned that Stonehenge is made of two kinds of stone (sarsen and blue stone) that both came from locations far away from where Stonehenge is. The people that built Stonehenge treated the stones like wood as they constructed it, using special joints called mortise and tenon joints.</p>	<p>The people who constructed Stonehenge were very precise and used extreme care to construct Stonehenge.</p>

<p>were moved archaeologists continue to ask the more interesting question: why?" (p.15)</p>		
<p>Chapter 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mike's mom brought him to Stonehenge as a baby.</li> <li>• When Mike was a child, workers laying pipe near his home found an ancient burial site with human bones.</li> <li>• Mike decided he wanted to be a scientist who could "dig up relics like that make sense of them."</li> <li>• Mike's teachers were not supportive of his dream to be an archaeologist.</li> <li>• He became one anyway and taught at Sheffield University.</li> <li>• He and his wife worked in different parts of the world. (p. 19)</li> <li>• Mike and his wife did research in Madagascar.</li> </ul>	<p>Mike was a child who was inspired to be an archaeologist after watching a group of workers accidentally discover an ancient burial ground with human bones in it. Although his teachers weren't encouraging, he ended up becoming an archaeologist and studying all over the world.</p>	<p>Mike wanted to become an archaeologist for most of his life and was motivated as a young boy after watching workers discover an ancient burial ground near his home.</p>
<p>Chapter 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the past, only famous men were able to become "master archaeologists."</li> <li>• Mike and his wife traveled to Madagascar in 1991 in order to research there.</li> <li>• Mike was studying the ancient people in Madagascar and got a call from BBC TV.</li> <li>• They were doing a documentary about Stonehenge and wanted a person from Madagascar because there were similarities in the tombs and "standing stones."</li> <li>• The BBC director thought someone from Madagascar could give new insight into what Stonehenge meant. (p. 22)</li> <li>• Mike asked Ramilisonina, a retired archaeologist from Madagascar who was an expert.</li> <li>• Ramilisonina had been to England once, but never to Stonehenge. (p. 23)</li> </ul>	<p>Ramilisonina is a retired archaeologist from Madagascar who has dedicated his life to learning about the ancient people of Madagascar. After being approached by BBC TV for a documentary about Stonehenge, Mike invited Ramilisonina to bring a fresh perspective to the site.</p>	<p>Ramilisonina is an archaeologist who Mike asks to come to Stonehenge to help look at the site with "fresh eyes."</p>

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<p>Chapter 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ramilisonina hated filming at Stonehenge because it was so cold.</li> <li>Ramilisonina’s theory about Stonehenge was that “the stones were put up for ancestors. You build out of stone when you want something that will never fade away.”</li> <li>Ramilisonina believed that Stonehenge was built “to usher, to welcome, the honored dead into their permanent home.”</li> <li>There have been many theories about Stonehenge over the past 300 years. (caption on p. 26)</li> <li>All of the people who have studied Stonehenge in the past believed it was a type of temple.</li> <li>Ramilisonina saw Stonehenge in a completely different way than anyone else had before. (p. 27)</li> <li>In Madagascar stone houses for the dead are “matched with a house made of wood, where people live.”</li> <li>This helped Mike connect the Southern Circle to Stonehenge.</li> </ul>	<p>Ramilisonina’s view of Stonehenge was different than anyone else’s before. He and Mike came up with a theory that Stonehenge was for the dead and was linked to the Southern Circle, a place for the living.</p>	<p>Ramilisonina’s theory about Stonehenge is different from anyone’s before, he teaches us that it is important to continue to questioning things, even after theories have been made.</p>
<p>Chapter 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linking the Southern Circle and Stonehenge was a difficult claim to make because it wasn’t clear if they were from the same time period.</li> <li>“I realized that I had been completely wrong to believe that the quest unlock the secrets of the past ended before i was born; just the opposite.”</li> <li>“The timelines of ancient history in books were educated guesswork.”</li> <li>Richard Atkinson was in charge of Stonehenge in the 1950s.</li> </ul>	<p>After finding confusing evidence from Atkinson that dated the stones making up Stonehenge in a way that didn’t make sense, Mike formed the Riverside team to continue to study Stonehenge and question the work of past archaeologists. After much struggle, the team was granted a small area to study.</p>	<p>Mike wasn’t afraid to question past archaeologists’ work in order to understand the history of Stonehenge. When something didn’t make sense, he didn’t accept it - he kept searching for answers no matter how difficult the process was.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ He was a the kind of archaeologist that many people imagine (elegant, wise gentleman who knew it all)</li> <li>○ He believed that he found “the ramp used to raise one of the stones in place”</li> <li>○ He also found an antler pick that he believed was used as a tool by the people who built Stonehenge.</li> <li>● Carbon-14 dating is a process that is used used by modern archaeologists to date anything that used to be alive. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It uses the carbon that is left in the organism to date it within 150-200 years.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Mike used carbon-14 dating to “redate” the antler pick more accurately and found it was actually a match to the time that the other stones were raised (2600-2500 B.C.).</li> <li>● Mike needed to make a choice: would he “let Ramilsonina’s insight fall into silence” or “he could take up the challenge himself.”</li> <li>● Mike got together a group of archaeologists and called them “the Riverside team.”</li> <li>● They began the long process to seek permission to dig at Stonehenge.</li> <li>● After much back and forth, Mike was able to begin to dig at a very small area and they tested the soil.</li> </ul>		
<p>Chapter 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Mike and his crew found an ancient ditch near the Southern Circle</li> <li>● The cows at the Southern Circle were a problem for the Riverside Team</li> <li>● They discovered “giant stands of wood” that they believed were posts for houses</li> <li>● Mike and a driver found “clear evidence that people had lived, worked, and eaten right there.”</li> </ul>	<p>Mike and his crew continued to look for evidence to prove Ramilsonina’s theory to be true, and they found it. They located remains from at least 9 homes and “Pay dirt: black soil filled with animal bones, scraps of pottery and flint” that proved “people had</p>	<p>Mike and the Riverside Team found evidence (in the remains of the homes, and the animal bones) that people lived and used Stonehenge and that proved Ramilsonina’s theory was true.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They found the remains of 9 houses</li> <li>• This was “the first real evidence ever found of where and how people lived and when they used Stonehenge”</li> <li>• The animal bones that were found showed that the ancient people ate pigs and cows</li> <li>• The pigs were “typically about nine months old when they died...must have been cooked and eaten midwinter.”</li> <li>• “The cows’ teeth were more difficult to age”</li> <li>• The animals were brought to the site from between 30 and 70 miles away.</li> </ul>	<p>lived, worked, and eaten right there.”</p>	
<p>Chapter 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The summer solstice brings 35,000 travelers to visit Stonehenge to see the “rising sun. color the avenue and then split the pillars”</li> <li>• The team found the “real” avenue they had been looking for that connects Stonehenge to the Southern Circle.</li> <li>• The avenue was paved with flint.</li> <li>• The pattern of the sun running through the site(s) reverses on the shortest day of winter</li> <li>• “The turning of the entire year was marked by Stonehenge and the Southern Circle.”</li> <li>• The team discovered “Bluehenge... a circle of bluestones, originally from Wales, that once stood here beside the riverbank.”</li> <li>• Mike reviewed the records that Atkinson has taken over many years of studying Stonehenge to check on the “mismatch” with dates.</li> <li>• He looked closely at the dating of the ramp that Atkinson believed was used to place some of the stones.</li> <li>• Mikewasableto“fix”theerrorand identifiedthatsarsenswereraised “between2600and2480B.C. (p. 46)</li> </ul>	<p>After discovering the avenue that connected the Southern Circle to Stonehenge, the Riverside Team was able to correct an error made long ago by the archaeologist, Atkinson. Mike was able to officially match the dates of those “misdated” sarsens to match the other dates he previously identified. These dates were “a perfect match.”</p>	<p>Mike and the Riverside team followed the archaeological process carefully and were able to not only make important discoveries, but also correct errors made by previous archaeologists in order to prove theories.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The antler picks that were previously found matched these dates.</li> </ul>		
<p>Chapter 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After making three big discoveries at Stonehenge (“the houses, the bones, and the avenue”) Mike and the Riverside team “got permission to spread out.”</li> <li>They believe that the Bluestones were brought to Stonehenge “from that Welsh homeland was a way to link ancestries with the people of south and southeast England, where the local stones were sarsen.”</li> <li>They also discovered that the homes they discovered would have looked just like homes built around Britain at the time.</li> <li>“The Cursus is a very long, thin rectangle.”</li> <li>There are many “natural ridges in the landscape near Stonehenge” that would allow the “rising sun” to “inch along”</li> <li>The site was eventually “closed down” as the culture shifted and “people broke into smaller bands” as “the old ways of living changed.”</li> </ul>	<p>Mike, Ramilsonina, and the Riverside team made new discoveries that helped them understand Stonehenge.</p> <p>They believe that Stonehenge was built where it is because of the land and the summer and winter solstices, that stones were brought to the site to link ancestries from different parts of England, that Stonehenge was a place to honor the dead and have celebrations, and that the Southern Circle was a place to live and gather. They believe that Stonehenge was shut down because the culture shifted.</p>	<p>Mike, Ramilsonina, and the Riverside team made new discoveries that helped them understand Stonehenge.</p>
<p>Epilogue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marc Aronson believes that, “It is about putting aside what you think you know, what has been passed along, and being willing to trust what you yourself see and to test it rigorously.” (p. 56)</li> <li>Aronson describes a description of a boy finding carving on the stones because he looked “with clear eyes” (p. 56)</li> <li>Aronson believes that the BBC opened up the study of Stonehenge to the entire world when they invited Ramilsonina to be a part of the study (p. 57)</li> <li>Many archaeologists believe that their studies (from all around the world) help them have new and fresh perspectives</li> </ul>	<p>Marc Aronson inspired his readers to follow Mike, Ramilsonina, and the Riverside teams’ lead and keep looking, researching, and seeking out answers. He wants people to continue to ask questions and seek answers, even if it is about things that have been previously “discovered.”</p>	<p>Marc Aronson wrote this text to encourage readers to trust themselves to see things with fresh eyes and allow themselves to find answers using a thoughtful process.</p>

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- Mike and the Riverside team and a true team - Mike functions as their spokesperson, but all of their expertise together is what makes them so successful

The central idea of If Stones Could Speak is:

- It is important to have a willingness to trust your instincts, look at things in new way, and test your new ideas.

What details convey this idea:

- People have been studying the site for thousands of years. (caption on p. 8)
- We must always continue to ask questions to gain knowledge. (p. 9)
- "Instead of guessing how the stones were moved archaeologists continue to ask the more interesting question: why?" (p.15)
- He and his wife worked in different parts of the world. (p. 19)
- The BBC director thought someone from Madagascar could give new insight into what Stonehenge meant. (p. 22)
- Ramilisonina had been to England once, but never to Stonehenge. (p. 23)
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- Many archaeologists believe that their studies (from all around the world) help them have new a fresh perspectives whenever they dig - they don't get stuck in one mindset (p. 57)