

## Post-Reading Reflections

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Now that you've had a chance to learn about the Rationalist, use your new knowledge to answer these questions.

1. What was Descartes's proposal, and how did his Scholastic education influence it?
2. Give a brief summary of the role methodic doubt plays in Descartes's overall effort to discover certain knowledge.
3. How is skepticism important to Cartesian philosophy?
4. What is the evil genius, and what is its significance to the Cartesian Genesis?
5. Can the Evil Genius refute the cogito? Is there any way to "refute" the cogito?
6. Give Descartes's argument for the existence of God in your own words and then analyze it. Is it convincing? Why or why not?
7. How did Descartes answer the materialists' rejection of free will?
8. What is the mind-body problem? How does Descartes deal with it? Is he successful? Why or why not?
9. What is the "view from nowhere" and why is Susan Bordo troubled by its cultural pervasiveness?

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Now that you've had a chance to learn about the Skeptic, use your new knowledge to answer these questions.

1. Outline the development of the "epistemological turn" from Descartes through Locke and Berkeley to Hume.
2. In your own words, reconstruct the basic empirical critique of rationalism.
3. What is the *tabula rasa*? What is its significance to Locke's empiricism?
4. Explain the philosophical significance of the question "Does a tree falling in the forest make a sound if no one is there to hear it?" Then answer it as Berkeley would.
5. Why is the distinction between impressions and ideas important to Hume's philosophy?
6. Apply the empirical criterion of meaning to an example of your own choosing.
7. How does Hume's bundle theory of the self affect his reasoning regarding personal identity and immortality.
8. How does Hume account for the external world?
9. Sketch Hume's analysis of cause and effect.
10. Summarize and analyze Hume's critique of the argument from design.
11. Construct a Humean analysis of some contemporary moral issue. What are the advantages of Hume's approach? The disadvantages?
12. Why does Hume say "I am ready to throw all my books and papers into the fire, and resolve never more to renounce the pleasures of life for the sake of reasoning and philosophy"?