

Study Questions 1

1. The title of our second reading was 'Modern Minds' which refers to a particular mindset of the people living in 'modern era' (post 1700), i.e. a set of beliefs that shape how you make sense of the world and yourself. What is a defining characteristic of the 'modern mind' according to the author?
2. In the same reading, the author quotes from Bourges about the literary works of Shakespeare to further support his point about the transformation of the mindset of people of the modern era. How does this example help the author to make his case?
3. Can you cite other arguments and/or evidence from the reading, the author uses to convince the reader to his case about 'Modern Minds'?
4. The last part of the same reading goes on to talk about an event involving Tycho Brahe to pin down the date of the start of the Scientific Revolution. What is the importance and relevance of this event to be seen as a starting point of a new era?
5. If you were asked to summarize the main point of this reading in a concise manner (a 4-5 sentence paragraph), how would you do it? You can use the answers you provided above.
6. In our first reading, Carl Sagan talks about a 'Baloney Detection Kit' as a way of determining the quality of ideas offered for consideration. What are some of the fundamental tools of that kit?
7. 'Carl Sagan and Stephen Hawking are scientific authorities in the field of astronomy providing public with irrefutable knowledge about our universe'. What is the problem with this statement from the perspective of ideas presented about science in our first reading?