

DESCARTES

Study Questions

*DISCOURSE ON METHOD*

Full Title: *Discourse on the Method for Rightly Conducting One's Reason and for Seeking Truth in the Sciences.*

Part I:

What flaw does Descartes find in all previous philosophy and science?

Part II:

What remedy does Descartes propose to correct this flaw?

*MEDITATIONS*

Full Title: *Meditations on First Philosophy in Which the Existence of God and the Distinction of the Soul from the Body Are Demonstrated.*

Meditation I:

What grounds does Descartes offer for doubting knowledge gained through the senses?

Meditation II:

What is the first truth, according to Descartes, that we can know with absolute certainty?

Meditation III:

- a) What is the origin of our idea of God? What is it about our idea of God that makes it certain that we did not cause it?
- b) What is the nature of God's activity?
- c) What does Descartes' argument for the nature and existence of God contribute to the argument of the *Meditations* as a whole?

Meditation IV:

- a) What is the origin of error? How is human error connected to human freedom?
- b) What kind of explanation cannot be used to explain what happens in the physical universe?

Meditation V:

- a) What can be known about the nature of material objects?
- b) How does God's existence follow from His essence?