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Intro to Philosophy

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### Reading Questions

List and explain three of the reasons Descartes gives for doubting what he thought he knew.

1. Descartes presents three arguments to himself to doubt his own beliefs and precedents.

The first is his argument of illusion in which he suggests that his sense may deceive and betray him as to what he is experiencing in real life. He then follows this argument by questioning his own reality and whether or not the life he is experiencing is really just a dream. He talks of how his dreams he experiences feel almost as real as when he wakes up. He then acknowledges that God would not deceive His creation since he is only supremely good. He then calls into question God's existence as a whole and how God may not exist entirely and how instead an evil demon may be inhabiting his thoughts and creating these delusions.

While still in the realm of doubt, what does Descartes say about the general sciences and mathematics and their place in our knowledge?

2. Descartes acknowledges that even when human perception of these concepts such as mathematics and general sciences is not understood or changed the concept stays the same. Descartes says "For whether i'm asleep or awake two and three added together is five and, and a square has no more than four sides." He says that these ideas have something more they contain "something indubitable."

What does Descartes ultimately argue is a strong and unshakeable basis for knowledge? How does he make his case?

3. He speaks of his existence being proven just by him being willing and able to doubt and think about such doubts. His thinking proves that he at least in his mental state exists and is able to process the world around him. Even if all his doubts are true and his world is not how he perceives it to be, the one thing he knows is that his doubts are true.

Explain some of the reasons Locke believes there are no innate ideas.

1. Locke believes there are no innate ideas because he knows all knowledge to be experienced differently. And that not all concepts and ideas are accepted by each and everyone. The concepts we do accept as true were not accepted because of their innate ideology but because of those who discovered the idea and then proved it to be true through teaching. People cannot accept ideas they do not understand which disproves innate ideas.

What is the significance of "children" and "idiots" in Locke's argument?

2. The "children" and "idiots" represent a group of people who are too open minded and impressionable to hold their own beliefs. Because children and idiots aren't able to hold these ideas and find in themselves if they are true by themselves.

Explain the concept of the "tabula rasa".

3. The "tabula rasa" is Locke's belief that we are born with blank minds and no idea how to distinguish truth. He says that it is only through experiences we have in our lives that we are able to discern the truth. These experiences also shape our beliefs and concepts we form in the future.

Describe in your own words what Locke means by "sensation" and "reflection" in describing the acquisition of knowledge.

4. According to Locke "sensation" aids in our perception and impression of things around us. Such as sensible objects and items we pick up that help us form ideas on these items. According to Locke knowledge is all that our minds are capable of comprehending through our perceptions. However, since there is no way to perceive knowledge of the entire world, systematic knowledge will not be possible unless we address the patterns around us and come to a conclusion.