

ENLIGHTENMENT SALON: SCIENCE in SOCIETY

During the mid 1700s, salons were popular get togethers for scientists, philosophers, artists and anyone interesting in debating ideas. They would traditionally be hosted by a wealthy woman. Individuals came to discuss ideas, debate others but also to entertain. Witty repartee and banter were highly prized.

What will happen?

During the salon certain issues will be discussed. You will be expected to represent your side as forcefully as possible.

For each issue you will be put in a group of 3: one person will argue FOR, one AGAINST and one will represent the UNDECIDED.

During the Salon you will be expected to represent the side of the argument that you drew. Your goal is through use of reason, logic, clever put downs, incisive questions and witty banter convince the UNDECIDED person of your side.

The host and hostess may at any moment declare ‘well, enough of that’ and bring up a new topic.

What is expected of you?

Participation in the salon. You will have time to be a “FOR”, an “AGAINST” and an undecided. Remember whether you are representing a side or “undecided,” asking questions is often the best strategy. You should use ideas and quotes from thinkers from the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment.

What is the homework?

Wednesday Night: Prepare for the Salon

Friday Night: For homework you will be asked to do a 1 ½ page reflection

How will I be graded?

Quality of Participation in Salon:	50% (preparation and salon engagement)
Reflection	50% (depth of analysis, clarity of writing)

Topics:

- #1: Women should be allowed in combat situations
- #2: Humans are basically greedy
- #3: You have the right to live in any nation you wish
- #4: Knowledge is built more by evidence than reason
- #5: The police procedure known as “stop and frisk” is part of the social contract
- #6: A student should be able to say anything he or she wants in class
- #7 All college education should be paid for by the government
- #8 Faith plays a larger role in humans than does reason
- #9 Marijuana should be sold legally
- #10 Other topics suggested by you???

PLEASE REMEMBER TO USE TERMS WE HAVE DISCUSSED IN CLASS:

- the power of deduction
- the power of induction
- empiricism
- rationalism
- Plato’s cave
- the world of shadows
- Newtonian physics
- false idols (4 idols)
- human nature
- greed
- *tabula rasa*
- State of nature
- Natural laws
- life, liberty & property
- the role of the government
- absolute rule
- the social contract
- role of the consent
- freedom of speech
- religious tolerance
- freedom
- justice
- free will
- rights of the accused
- any others we have discussed

Name: _____

FOR

TOPIC #:

1. What would scientists or philosophers of this period say:

2. Are there any direct quotes you could use?

3. What are 3 key arguments you will make?

1.

2.

3.

4. What are 3 questions you will ask the other side?

Name: _____

AGAINST

TOPIC #:

1. What would scientists or philosophers of this period say:

2. Are there any direct quotes you could use?

3. What are 3 key arguments you will make?

4. What are 3 questions you will ask the other side?

Name: _____

UNDECIDED

TOPIC #:

1. What would scientists or philosophers of this period say?

2. Are there any direct quotes that pertain to this discussion?

3. What do you think the FOR side will argue?

4. What do you think the AGAINST side will argue?

5. What are 5 questions will you ask either side?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

REFLECTION To be completed after the salon. You have two choices here. First, you can reflect on the process you went through. Or your second option is that you can write a trialogue on one of the topics (per the style of Galileo and the *Dialogue Concerning Two World Systems*)

Option 1: A Reflection Essay

There were two interlocking factors in each argument: the construction of the argument itself (its logical structure) and the evidence used to support that argument. In a 1 to 2 page essay, please reflect on the style and substance of each argument.

Consider the following questions (no need to answer them all)

- How did you go about making arguments for or against your topic? What logical or empirical tools did you use? If an undecided, which tools did the others use?
- As an undecided, which types of arguments were most convincing and why?
- Which of your peers most influenced your thinking? How did they do this?
- Which types of evidence did you rely on to make an argument? To convince someone else? Which types of evidence did you find most persuasive? Least persuasive?
- Which evidence was missing or could someone have added to persuade you?

Option 2: A Dialogue a la Galileo

This is your chance to be a playwright. An author. A fun thinker.

Write a “trialogue” on one of the topics in which you were engaged. Think about the forms of argumentation that each person could use and the types of evidence they mustered. This should NOT be a rewriting of the dialogue you had, but rather a new dialogue between three people that demonstrates an engaged and thoughtful conversation around your topic. One person in the dialogue should be FOR the issue, another should be AGAINST, and another should be UNDECIDED. What are the factors that determine how the UNDECIDED person comes to his or her conclusion? What are the arguments made and the evidence mustered?

Expectations

- Clear paragraph structure
- Inclusion of clear and specific evidence
- Appropriate use of concepts and terminology
- References to specific texts or authors (either direct quotes or summaries)
- Demonstrates independent analysis

How reflections will be graded

- Clarity of language and ideas
- Strength of argument and ideas
- Appropriate grammar, spelling, use of vocabulary, sentence structure, etc...
- An “A” paper stretches our thinking; a “B” paper is thoughtful but not challenging; a “C” paper or below needs work.