

Questions for Text Analysis

Lucretius

1. What does Lucretius mean by the concept of “primal germs”?
2. What are these “primal germs” like?
3. What is the two-fold composition of nature?
4. How does Lucretius support his ideas of what matter is made of?
5. What is Lucretius’ reasoning on why nature is made all of solids?
6. What is Lucretius’ idea about the immortality of nature?
7. How is Lucretius’ concept of matter similar to that of Democritus?
8. How is Lucretius’ concept of matter different from that of Democritus?

Questions for Text Analysis

Robert Boyle

1. What does Boyle mean by "Three principals or Five"?
2. What does Boyle mean by "not any certain Determinant number of Elements"?
3. Why does Boyle distinguish himself from the Chymists?
4. What 3 ways does Boyle say Chymists have called Aristotle's logic into question?
5. Many historians name Boyle as the first modern chemist.
What evidence supports this claim?
6. Why might others argue that Boyle's work does not quite define chemistry as we know it today?

Questions for Text Analysis

Joseph Priestly

1. Why does Priestly say he is reluctant to publish his work?
2. Why does he publish despite his reluctance?
3. This passage gives an excellent insight into the Scientific Revolution of the 18th century. How was scientific discovery accomplished in this time period?
4. How was religion influential in this time of Scientific Revolution?

Questions for Text Analysis

Antoine Lavoisier

1. Why was Lavoisier reluctant to publish part of his work?
2. Why does he publish despite his reluctance?
3. What is notable about Lavoisier's description of his experiment, something that was not observed in writings of earlier scientists?
4. Considering our current standard for scientific reports, what is significantly missing from Lavoisier's?
5. Although Lavoisier's writing seems very modern compared to most of the other writers of his time, what does he fail to account for in his explanation, the omission that keeps him from being classified as a modern chemist?

Questions for Text Analysis

Joseph Proust

1. Proust argues that some authors are using the term “compound” incorrectly. What is term we would use today for the matter that they are describing that is not a compound?
2. Why would iron ore in variable composition be in conflict with Proust’s work?
3. What is an ore and why is it often not a compound?
4. To us, this scientific writing does not seem so difficult to comprehend. This is however, an important historical writing. What does this tell you about the way scientific discoveries progressed during the Scientific Revolution?

Questions for Text Analysis

John Dalton

1. The first paragraph describes physical properties of states of matter. What significant contribution does Dalton include in this paragraph that identifies him as a chemist?
2. What is the conflict that Dalton identifies in the second paragraph?
3. What conclusion does Dalton reach in the third paragraph?
4. How does Dalton's writing seem different from that of the other authors of this time period?