

# beginners' weekly

## I Think. Therefore I am

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Today in 1650 René Descartes died after a life dedicated to philosophy, mathematics and science. Even today he is called '*The Father of Modern Philosophy*' and his work is studied in almost all university philosophy departments.

Descartes asked 'How can I know what really exists?' He then concluded that if he could think then he must exist because **SOMEBODY** must be having the thoughts. So, '*Cogito ergo sum*' or '*I think. Therefore, I am*' became his most memorable contribution to the world of ideas. This was an immense contribution. Up until then, philosophy was based on perception but this new idea was based on deduction.

He also offered an ontological argument of the benevolence of God. Nevertheless in 1663, the Pope banned his works in the *Index of Prohibited Books*.

He invented *Cartesian Co-ordinates* to express three dimensional objects by their x, y and z axes. His work directly lead to the invention of calculus and he invented the notation system of superscript which allows us to express the powers of exponents as we can see in one of the most famous equations of history :  $e=mc^2$