



Debate! Debate! Debate!

(well, sort of...)

Background: Historians often search for ways to define modernity. In this quest to define the beginning of the modern age, people look to the development of different ideas and events to do so. Some historians focus on political changes, others on religious ideas, etc. (think “PRIMES”). In short, defining the modern age often depends on what one values as important in history.

Your Mission: Decide (and defend) the extent to which a particular country entered the modern age in the 16th and early 17th century.

Activity Description: Each person will be assigned to a group, and each group will be assigned a country. Read about your assigned country in Chapter 12 of your text, and as a group, decide if that country reached the modern age in that time period. Your group will have to present arguments to the class to defend your position. Furthermore, you will need to answer (perhaps venomous??) questions from the class that will be designed to refute your group’s stance.

Keep the following in mind...

- You must decide on how your group defines *modernity* in order for you decide on whether or not your country became modern in this period
- Everyone will need to read about all of the countries
- We will spend certain days studying this information as a class (with perhaps the occasional quiz)
- In addition to presenting/defending your ideas, your group will need to prepare questions to ask other groups
- You will need to inform the class ahead of time regarding your group’s position (i.e. “We will argue that our country did (not) enter the modern age at this time”)

The Countries: *Spain, England, France, The Dutch Republic, The Germanies*

