Foxford Learning

YEAR 12 History
Paper 3, Option 33: The Witch Craze in Britain, Europe and North America, c1580–c1750

Over the course of the topic, I will be able to: -

Breadth Theme 2: The wider intellectual context — the coming of the age of science and reason, c1580–c1750

Key Vocabulary

Scientific Revolution	The transformation of natural philosophy through experiment and observation.
Empirical method	Drawing conclusions from systematic observation and experiment.
Materialism	The view that only physical matter exists; denies the supernatural.
Deductive reasoning	Drawing conclusions from general principles using logical steps.
Natural philosophy	The study of the natural world; precursor to modern natural science.
Royal Society	Founded 1662 to promote scientific enquiry, experiment, and knowledge.
Gresham College	London institution founded 1597, an early centre for natural philosophy.
Enlightenment	Intellectual movement emphasising reason, evidence, and individual rights.
Superstition	Belief in supernatural causation not supported by rational evidence.
Heliocentrism	The astronomical model placing the Sun at the centre of the solar system.
Tabula rasa	Locke's concept of the mind as a blank slate at birth; no innate ideas.
Rationalism	The principle that reason and logic are the primary sources of knowledge.

Key Skills

- Analyse and explain the social, economic, religious and political factors behind witch persecution.
- Evaluate the roles of key individuals and institutions in prosecuting or challenging witch belief.
- Analyse and evaluate contemporary source material related to the witch craze.
- Retrieve knowledge to construct verbal and written arguments related to the key topics.
- Compose effective responses to essay questions.

I will understand

Topic 1. Making sense of the universe, c1580–c1750 - The coexistence of new and older ideas; the impact of Johannes Kepler, Galileo Galilei, and Isaac Newton on European understanding of the natural world and cosmic order.

Topic 2. Changing approaches to human understanding, c1580–c1750 - Francis Bacon and the empirical scientific approach; the foundation of Gresham College 1597 and the Royal Society 1662; Thomas Hobbes's deductive reasoning and materialism.

Topic 3. John Locke and the Essay Concerning Human Understanding, 1690 - Locke's theory of knowledge and the tabula rasa; his challenge to innate ideas; the significance of his empiricism for dismantling the intellectual foundations of witch belief.