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Answers

Test yourself: Pascal's thoughts

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Pascal published a book on the conic sections in algebra when he was 17.	True
Modern computers are also descendants of his calculating machines — a proto-computer that he made in 1752 still works.	False: modern computers are also descendants of his calculating machines — a proto-computer that he made in 1652 still works
Pascal's mother had died when he was very young and from 1646 the remaining family all became closely associated with a religious movement based in a convent at Port-Royal. This movement, led by Jean Giullebert, was a splinter group from the Catholic sect known as Jansenism.	True
Pascal's personal journey reached its peak late on the night of Monday 23 November 1654, between 10.30 p.m. and 12.30 a.m. He had a sort of personal epiphany of the type that is often described as a religious experience.	True
Pascal held that people's greatness comes from not realising that they are inconsequential and wretched.	Pascal held that people's greatness comes from knowing that they are inconsequential and wretched.
Pascal's wager forms a neat, self-contained adjunct to the arguments of natural moral law.	Pascal's wager forms a neat, self-contained adjunct to the arguments of natural theology.
For Pascal it is not the heart, but reason that craves God.	For Pascal it is not reason, but the heart that craves God.
For Pascal, Descartes was merely depicting a sort of 'God of the Gaps', filling in the limited space available before contemporary science could take over and provide answers.	True
He realised that people's paradoxical natures (characterised by both intellectual potential and wretchedness), is met by a divine paradox. This entails both the omnipotence of divine glory and the weakness of Christ.	True

Pascal lived at the same time as another great Enlightenment figure, Spinoza (1632–77).

True

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