

Biography Activity

The Enlightenment and Revolutions

Francis Bacon (1561–1626)

Francis Bacon was an English statesman and philosopher. Bacon began his career as a lawyer, served as a member of Parliament, and eventually became an adviser to King James I. Bacon's fame is mostly based on his philosophical writings. His essays were popular during his lifetime, but his masterpiece, *Novum Organum* (1620), had long-lasting influence. In this work, he proposes the scientific method, a form of reasoning to be used to understand the natural world. Bacon believed that science should be based on induction: making specific observations and gathering facts to develop a general principle. He also believed that humans could use science to control nature and improve living conditions, an idea that was new in Bacon's time.



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More About the Image: This portrait of Sir Francis Bacon is an engraving.

- 1. Identifying Central Issues** How does inductive reasoning relate to the scientific method?

- 2. Drawing Inferences** The title of Bacon's masterpiece, *Novum Organum*, is Latin for "New Instrument." Why do you think Bacon used that title?
