



Reading Week Essay Assignment

What Is Science? Comparing Philosophers of Scientific Method

In this essay, you will compare and evaluate two major philosophers' accounts of how science works.

Choose **two of the following four thinkers**:

- Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*
- Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*
- Imre Lakatos, *The Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes*
- Paul Feyerabend, *Against Method*

Write an essay that **presents each author's view, compares them, and develops a clear thesis** about their differences (or unexpected similarities). You may devise an original theme and/or incorporate the following themes from class:

- How science progresses
- The role of failure
- Rationality of science
- Flexibility of method

The goal is to synthesize what you've learned and take a position on how science *should* be understood. You may support your claims with content from the Monday technical lectures (Dean Ruth, ICON, Base Power), from the Feynman lectures, or content from your two philosopher's books.

Specifications

Length	1200–1500 words (approx. 4–5 double-spaced pages)
Citations	MLA or Chicago-style
Due Date	Monday May 12, 12PM (noon)
Submission	Typed PDF, submitted on Populi



Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Points
Clear, arguable thesis	20
Accurate summary of each philosopher	20
Thoughtful comparison and contrast	20
Engagement with at least 2 core themes (e.g., method, failure)	15
Clarity, organization, and writing style	15
Use of examples or case studies	10