

Robert Boyle (1627-1691) lived at a time when many young men in England were becoming interested in science and in making scientific experiments. He himself was a great scientist in chemistry. His life was spent in scientific research and he made a number of important discoveries. He was one of a group of learned men who often met together to discuss new developments and discoveries in science; this “invisible college”, as it was called, eventually became the Royal Society in 1660.

Boyle was born in Ireland. When he was eight years old, he went to school at Eton, in England, and three years later he set off to travel in Europe with his French private teacher. While he was in Italy, he studied the work of the great scientist Galileo. Having returned home, he began carrying out his own experiments. He and his assistant, the inventor Robert Hooke, made an air-pump which enabled him to perform experiments with air and to discover, for example, that air is essential for breathing, for burning, and for the transmission of sound.

Boyle believed that all matter was made up of what he called “primary particles” and thus he anticipated modern atomic theories.

980. Which of the following is NOT true about Boyle?

- ① He somehow predicted the emergence of modern atomic theories.
- ② He devoted his life to studying and doing scientific experiments.
- ③ He met the great scientist Galileo when he was in Europe.
- ④ He went to Europe when he was only 11 years old.

981. What does the “invisible college” refer to in the first paragraph?

- ① Boyle’s regular meetings with other scientists
- ② The Royal Society that Boyle established himself
- ③ Secret discussions on new developments in science
- ④ The building where Boyle did his scientific experiments

982. Which of the following countries is NOT mentioned in the passage?

- ① Italy
- ② England
- ③ Ireland
- ④ France

983. Which of the following can be concluded from the passage?

- ① Boyle was most probably born in a family with a good financial status.
- ② The air-pump enabled Boyle to develop his theory of primary particles.
- ③ It was Robert Hooke who helped Boyle make most of his discoveries.
- ④ While traveling in Europe, Boyle and Hooke made an air-pump.