Descartes, Post reading Quiz

1. In general, what are the problems that Descartes sees with the sciences and knowledge of his culture?
2. In section 2, Descartes says that his goal was never more than to reform his own thoughts, and that he disapproves of what he calls trouble-making persons, i.e. reformers.
   1. Please explain why Descartes says that, in light of the analogy between the house and knowledge.
   2. In light of Part 6, do you think Descartes says true to his word?
3. What are the four steps of the method Descartes lays out?
4. What are the four rules for life that Descartes gives himself while he is developing his method?  Why does he need those rules? (I.e. what purpose do they serve?)
5. What role does his doubt serve, in relation to both his overall goal and his method?  What does Descartes think is absolutely indubitable?
6. “. . . if there were such machines having the organs and the shape of a monkey or of some other animal that lacked reason, we would have no way of recognizing that they were not entirely of the same nature as those animals; . . .” (Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, p. 31).
   1. What is Descartes saying about animals?  What is his point about nature in general?
   2. What implications follow from that claim about living bodies, particularly when it comes to the human body?
7. What does Descartes give as the reasons as to why he ultimately decided to publish when he did?  Why did he publish in French?