

5.3 Why should we be good?

Key Vocabulary

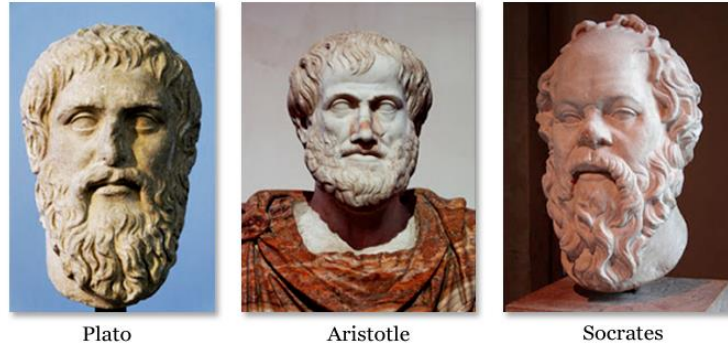
| Word | Definition |
|---------------|--|
| allegory | A metaphorical story (fable) with a deeper meaning |
| reincarnation | A soul's passage from the body after death and its rebirth in a new body |
| Soul | A human being's essence, the ineffable part of a human unlimited by the body |
| Karma | The Buddhist concept that your good and bad actions will affect your future, particularly any future life |
| bhavacakra | A Buddhist depiction of the cycle of birth, life and death |
| deontological | An approach to moral philosophy that focuses on duty and rules – an action is bad if it breaks a moral rule and good if it follows one |
| utilitarian | An approach to moral philosophy that focuses on the consequences of actions, particularly on actions that promote happiness. Morally good actions are those that promote the greatest happiness for the most people. |

Fun fact!

Plato used 'thought experiments' to explore and explain his ideas

KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER

The Great Greek Philosophers



Plato

Aristotle

Socrates

The Allegory of the Cave

In the allegory "The Cave", Plato describes a group of people who have lived chained to the wall of a cave all their lives, facing a blank wall. The people watch shadows projected on the wall from objects passing in front of a fire behind them and give names to these shadows. The shadows are the prisoners' reality, but are not accurate representations of the real world. The shadows represent the fragment of reality that we can normally perceive through our senses, while the objects under the sun represent the true forms of objects that we can only perceive through reason. Socrates explains how the philosopher is like a prisoner who is freed from the cave and comes to understand that the shadows on the wall are actually not the direct source of the images seen. A philosopher aims to understand and perceive the higher levels of reality. However, the other inmates of the cave do not even desire to leave their prison, for they know no better life.



Key Questions to ask yourself

- What can we learn about the meaning of life from the great philosophers?
- What is the deeper meaning behind the Allegory of the Cave?
- What would you do if you had a magic ring that made you invisible?

Bhavacakra



In the middle of the Wheel are the three causes of all suffering. These are known as the Three Fires: they are greed, ignorance and hatred, represented by a rooster, a pig and a snake. They are shown linked together, biting each other's tails, reinforcing each other. What might these symbols represent?

THE CATEGORICAL IMPERATIVE

The categorical imperative is a central concept of Kantian deontological moral philosophy used to evaluate motives for action.

1ST FORMULATION

"Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law" (Kant, 1785, p. 30).

EXAMPLE

The Example of Deception

According to Kant, lying and deception are, under all circumstances, forbidden. This is because if lying were to become a universal action, the concept of trust would no longer exist.

Utilitarianism

