

The Story of Philosophy

- Philosophy started in Greece in 500BC as a 'scientific' means of understanding the world.
- Philosophers look at the facts, looking at for and against, then making a judgment.

Philosophy = The study of big questions that exist about the universe, life, values and knowledge

Wisdom = Having experience, knowledge and good judgement

Logic = A judgement based on reason, common sense and deduction

Philosopher 1: Socrates

- Socrates was the first of the 'Big Three' with Plato and Aristotle.
- He sought 'true wisdom', but believed that 'false belief' gets in the way.
- As such, he argued that he was wise as he recognised his ignorance in seeking true wisdom.
- He would ask questions to question people's assumptions, but was executed for questioning Athen's polytheism.

'I know you won't believe me, but the highest form of human excellence is to question oneself and others.' – Socrates

Socrates = A scholar, teacher and philosopher from Ancient Athens, Greece who lived between 470 B.C. and 399 B.C.

Socratic questioning = A method of gaining wisdom by asking a large range of people for their knowledge

Philosopher 2: Plato

- Plato was the second of the 'Big Three', studying under Socrates.
- He was interested in the nature of wisdom, wrote many dialogues and founded the Akademia of Athens.

Plato's allegory of the cave has three prisoners in a cave. One prisoner was released, saw the real world outside, but his experiences were rejected by the other two. – Plato

Plato = One of the Great Three Philosophers of Ancient Greece and student of Socrates who lived between 429 and 347 BC

Allegory = A story, poem, or picture that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning

Philosopher 3: George Berkeley

- George Berkeley was born in 1685 in Ireland and became a bishop.
- He argued that the world only exists because we see it, so all that exists are ideas.

'To be is to be perceived' – George Berkeley

George Berkeley = An Irish philosopher and Bishop who lived between 1685 and 1753

Existence = The fact of something being a reality

Perceive = To become aware or conscious of something

Philosopher 4: Confucius

- Confucius was born in 551 BC and focused on teaching ancient Chinese values, with his sayings being recorded in 'The Analects'.
- He believed character was formed by family and education, and that a good ruler should inspire people to follow him.

"By three methods may we learn wisdom: by reflection, which is noblest, by imitation, which is easiest, by experience, which is the bitterest" – Confucius

"If you think in terms of a year, plant a seed; if in terms of ten years, plant trees; if in terms of 100 years, teach the people" – Confucius

Confucius = A Chinese philosopher, teacher and politician from 551-479 BC

Virtuous = Having or behaving with high moral standards

Proverb = A short, well-known saying containing a piece of advice

Sacred Texts

- Sacred texts are important because they support key beliefs and guide our actions in life.
- Some are interpreted liberally (metaphorically) and literally (word-for-word).

Sacred: Holy; Devoted to a God or to religion

Sacred Texts: Holy writings that believers consider to be central to their practice or beliefs

Text 1: The Bible

- The Bible is a collection of 66 holy books and is believed to be the Word of God.
- It is split into two sections: the Old Testament which looks ahead to Jesus and the New Testament which is about Jesus and the early church.

Bible = the sacred text of Christianity, comprising 66 books

The Old Testament = The first section of the Bible; has the same content as the Jewish Tanakh

Sacred Text 2: The Qur'an

- Muslims believe the Qur'an is the word of Allah and was revealed to Muhammad over twenty-three years by the Angel Jibril in the 7th century A.D.
- It contains 114 chapters (called Surahs) and it is believed one can only understand it in Arabic.
- Muslims read it regularly for guidance, use it for prayer and some learn it all by heart to become a 'hafiz'.

Qur'an = the sacred text of Islam revealed to Prophet Muhammad and written in Arabic

Revelation = The revealing of knowledge or truth, often about God