

Aristotle

“The Philosopher”



Generally recognized as the best-educated individual of his or any time, and his mastery of all the world's knowledge places him on "the shortest of lists of the giants of Western thought

Aristotle studied and wrote about all areas of human knowledge and experience.

He was an eclectic thinker who had an impact on Western thought from epistemology to politics

Born in Macedonia, not
a citizen of Athens

Often resented by
Athenian philosophers

For 20 years he studied
with Plato, who
described him as “the
mind of the Academy.”



Like Plato, Aristotle believed in absolute truths.

For Plato, truth existed in the mind and had to be sought there.

For Aristotle, truth existed in the external world and had to be arrived at through study and observation.

Aristotle would say:

“We can only know what is part of our experience.”

“We search for scientific understanding and first principles.”

While talking about things that change we must identify that which does not change.

Aristotle asked, “What is its essence?”

Unlike Plato form does not exist apart from its object.

Objects always move toward their mature forms.

Form is more than structure, it is also its purpose or action.

Aristotelian Achievements

First to categorize branches of knowledge such as biology, physics, art, music, etc.

Developed the science of logic through argument.

Separated the study of weather from astronomy.

First to categorize animals in genomes and species.

First to study language and developed the syllogism.

Founded the study of psychology.

Founded Nicomachen ethics

- Good is the final purpose of man.
- Man is motivated toward self-perfection.
- Self-perfection is a state of contemplation, knowing and study.
- Goodness is a matter of individual conscience.
- Only secondary a matter of social behavior.
- First to separate social and individual conscience.
- The best life was a private life rather than public life.
- Individual morality more important than social morality.
- The individual is more important than the state.

Man is, at birth, an amoral being.

Must be taught how to behave in a moral way.



Aristotle established in Athens, the Lyceum, a school located near a favorite meeting place of Socrates.

He would walk with his students and discuss the wide range of subjects in which he had expertise.

These were the productive years of study, thought and writing.



Aristotle had been tutor to Alexander the Great.



After the death of Alexander the Athenians turned on Aristotle because of his relationship to Macedonia.

He was charged with the same crimes that Socrates had been charged with.

Rather than wait to be tried Aristotle withdrew to the Macedonian community of Chalcis, dying there of natural causes in 322 BC.

The Golden Mean



*So, what has Aristotle taught us
about being a good leader?*

- Base your opinions on objective criteria developed through study and research
- Avoid opinions based on subjective feelings
- Be tolerant of the opinions of others
- Treat everyone as individuals rather than members of a group
- Know that the individual is more important than the group or society
- Avoid societal pressures on individual thought
- Teach the young morality based on study and contemplation
- Avoid extremes and seek out “the mean.”