"THE UNEXAMINED LIFE IS NOT WORTH LIVING".
(SOCRATES 400 BC)
Ancient Greece Philosophers

- Famous Greek philosophers: Socrates, Plato and Aristotle

- Philosophy means, “love of wisdom”. What is wisdom?
Plato- Background

- **Plato 428-348 or 347 BC**
- Socrates student
- Wealthy family
- Started out with career in politics, but left when he realized that politicians weren't truthful -- didn't think clearly
- Started his own university, "The Academy," in 387 BC
- Was all about "ideas" as truth -- ideas exist in perfect truthful state in our minds
- Physical world is misleading, and therefore not what you should base truth upon
- Constant struggle for humans is discovering the reality of the world while balancing what you know to be true, and what the physical world is showing you to be true
- People born with knowledge in their heads; knowledge gathered as moved from life to life
- Recalling knowledge from previous life called anamnesis -- it's how you can know something without having first hand experience of it
- Point of education is to draw out the knowledge that's already in your head; use dialogues to do this
- Prolific writer - approximately 24 books; wrote in dialogues so it's easy to read, and he had a sense of humor, too

- Republic, which describes what Plato thought would be a better form of government than the government of Athens. Plato though that the best people should be chosen to be rule the state, not the people by voting.
- It is written as a fictional dialogue between Socrates and Plato’s brother.

**What is an allegory?**
A story where the things in the story represent other things (also think parable, metaphor). Plato’s allegory is about a cave.
Read: Plato’s Allegory of a Cave
Video: Allegory of a Cave

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYKNAdbhQ-w&feature=player_embedded
Task 1: Finding meaning

- What is the meaning of the “Allegory of the Cave”? 
Allegory to illustrate “our nature in its education and want of education”.

In the dialogue, Socrates describes a group of people who have lived chained to the wall of a cave all of their lives, facing a blank wall. The people watch shadows projected on the wall by things passing in front of a fire behind them, and begin to ascribe forms to these shadows. According to Socrates, the shadows are as close as the prisoners get to viewing reality. He then explains how the philosopher is like a prisoner who is freed from the cave and comes to understand that the shadows on the wall do not make up reality at all, as he can perceive the true form of reality rather than the mere shadows seen by the prisoners.

The Allegory is related to Plato's Theory of Forms according to which the "Forms" (or "Ideas"), and not the material world of change known to us through sensation, possess the highest and most fundamental kind of reality. Only knowledge of the Forms constitutes real knowledge. In addition, the Allegory of the Cave is an attempt to explain the philosopher's place in society: to attempt to enlighten the "prisoners"
Plato says that we are like those men sitting in the cave: we think we understand the real world, but because we are trapped in our bodies we can see only the shadows on the wall. One of his goals is to help us understand the real world better, by finding ways to predict or understand the real world even without being able to see it.