

Aristotle's beliefs essay sample



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Aristotle believed that all people by nature desire to know. A sign of one who knows is that that person can teach, while the person of experience without knowledge cannot. He defined wisdom as knowledge of principles and causes. In his *Physics* and *Metaphysics* Aristotle discussed the material and formal causes Plato used and also the efficient and final causes. The material cause explains what something is made of (out of which), the formal cause how it is made (into which), the efficient cause who made it (by which), and the final cause why it is made (for which purpose). For Aristotle the final cause or purpose of anything analyzes the metaphysical cause which is studied in teleology. Aristotle also perceived God in the beginning as well as the end as the prime mover and in the present as completely actual in contrast to the concept of potential. Aristotle also gave many lectures on the sciences of astronomy, meteorology, and biology. Aristotle analyzed the faculties of the soul as nutritive, perceptive, and intelligent, and he also discussed memory, sleep, dreams, and aging. At the Lyceum 158 Greek constitutions were gathered, and Aristotle's work *On the Athenian Constitution* has been useful in understanding the history of Athenian politics.

Although Aristotle agreed with his teacher Plato that poetry and drama are imitations, he disagreed in finding redeeming value for these arts and did not wish to censor or ban them. In his *Poetics* he noted that tragedy tends to portray those who are better and comedy those worse than people of the present day. Humans are the most imitative animal, delight in imitating, and learn much this way. Aristotle believed that learning is the greatest pleasure and is not just for philosophers but for all humanity. Thus the imitative arts

are not just entertaining but educational as well. Aristotle found that tragedy aroused the emotions of pity and fear in order to accomplish a purification of those feelings.

The six elements of a play he analyzed are the plot (story), character, theme (thought), language, spectacle, and music. The plot, like a fable, conveys meaning; characters portray moral qualities, and thought enunciates general truths. In a tragedy a good man must not be seen passing from happiness to misery or a bad man from misery to happiness, because these are morally repugnant nor does the falling of an extremely bad person from happiness to misery arouse pity or fear. In tragedy a person of intermediate character suffers misfortune not from vice or depravity but from an error of judgment. Aristotle held that moral goodness could be shown in any personage, even in women and slaves.

Aristotle classified the elements on whether they were hot or cold and whether they were wet or dry.

- Fire and earth were dry.
- Air and water were wet.
- Fire and air were hot.
- Earth and water were cold.

Aristotle was born in 384 BCE. at Stagirus, a Greek colony and seaport on the coast of Thrace. He was Plato's student.

He studies in the academy in Athens and later on he opened a school in the Athenian Lyceum where he taught in it.

The works of Aristotle fall under three headings: (1) dialogues and other works of a popular character; (2) collections of facts and material from scientific treatment; and (3) systematic works.

Aristotle viewed women as being inferior to male race. Although he held that moral goodness could be shown in any personage even in women and slaves.

He taught that knowledge of a thing requires an inquiry into causality and that the final cause (which is the purpose or the function of the thing) is primary.

Although Aristotle agrees with his teacher Plato that drama and poetry are imitations, he didn't wish to censor or ban them.

He also believed that humans are the most imitative animals delight in the imitating and learn that way, thus imitative arts are not just for entertaining but educational as well, because he believed that learning is a pleasure for all humanities.

In the first year of his residence at Chalcis he complained of a stomach illness and died in 322 BCE.