

Plato research paper

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Plato Research Paper Ryan Lathrop 2/11/12 Per. 2 Plato's birth date is not exactly known. It is said that he was either born between 427-430 B. C. He was the son of wealthy and influential Athenian parents . Many of his relatives were involved in Athenian politics, although Plato himself was not. When Plato was a young man, he went to listen to Socrates, and learned a lot from Socrates about how to think, and what sort of questions to think about. When Socrates was killed in 399 BC, Plato was very upset (He was 30 years old when Socrates died) . Plato began to write down some of the conversations he had heard Socrates have. Practically everything we know about Socrates comes from what Plato wrote down. After a while, though, Plato began to write down his own ideas about philosophy instead of just writing down Socrates' ideas. One of his earlier works is the Republic, which describes what Plato thought would be a better form of government than the government of Athens. Plato thought that most people were pretty stupid, and so they should not be voting about what to do. Instead, the best people should be chosen to be the Guardians of the rest. (Remember Plato was from a rich aristocratic family so he probably considered himself among the best people!). Plato also thought a lot about the natural world and how it works. He thought that everything had a sort of ideal form, like the idea of a chair, and then an actual chair was a sort of poor imitation of the ideal chair that exists only in your mind. One of the ways Plato tried to explain his ideas with the famous metaphor of the cave. He said, suppose there is a cave, and inside the cave there are some men chained up to a wall, so that they can only see the back wall of the cave and nothing else. These men can't see anything outside of the cave, or even see each other clearly, but they can see shadows of what is going on outside the cave. Wouldn't these prisoners

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come to think that the shadows were real, and that was what things really looked like? Theories Suppose now that one of the men escaped, and got out of the cave, and saw what real people looked like and real trees and grass. If he went back to the cave and told the other men what he had seen, would they believe him, or would they think he was crazy? 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. Plato splits up existence into two realms: the material realm and the transcendent realm of forms. Humans have access to the realm of forms through the mind, through reason, given Plato's theory of the subdivisions of the human soul. This gives them access to an unchanging world, invulnerable to the pains and changes of the material world. By detaching ourselves from the material world and our bodies and developing our ability to concern ourselves with the forms, we find a value which is not open to change or disintegration. We perceive a different world, with different objects, through our mind than we do through the senses. It is the material world, perceived through the senses, that is changing. It is the realm of forms, perceived through the mind that is permanent and immutable. It is this world that is more real; the world of change is merely an imperfect image of this world. Plato splits up existence into two realms: the material realm and the transcendent realm of forms. Humans have access to the realm of forms through the mind, through reason, given Plato's theory of the subdivisions of the human soul. This gives them access to an unchanging world, invulnerable to the pains and changes of the material world. By <https://assignbuster.com/plato-research-paper/>

detaching ourselves from the material world and our bodies and developing our ability to concern ourselves with the forms, we find a value which is not open to change or disintegration. We perceive a different world, with different objects, through our mind than we do through the senses. It is the material world, perceived through the senses, that is changing. It is the realm of forms, perceived through the mind that is permanent and immutable. It is this world that is more real; the world of change is merely an imperfect image of this world. A form is an abstract property or quality. Take any property of an object; separate it from that object and consider it by itself, and you are contemplating a form. For example, if you separate the roundness of a basketball from its color, its weight, etc. and consider just roundness by itself, you are thinking of the form of roundness. Plato held that this property existed apart from the basketball, in a different mode of existence than the basketball. The form is not just the idea of roundness you have in your mind. It exists independently of the basketball and independently of whether someone thinks of it. All round objects, not just this basketball, participate or copy this same form of roundness. Plato's Death Plato lived a long life and died of old age. He died around 347 BC. So he lived for about 80-83 years old. His contributions to math, science and astronomy changed people's views forever. Sources [www. gap. system. org/history](http://www.gap.system.org/history) [www. e-torredebabel. com](http://www.e-torredebabel.com) [www. historyguide. org/ancient/plato. html](http://www.historyguide.org/ancient/plato.html)