

Plato's allegory of the cave in relation to school teachers or students



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The Allegory of the Cave Plato's parable, The Allegory of the Cave, could symbolize today's teachers and The sun in the parable would represent teachers, with the prisoners standing for students of all ages. The cave denotes the familiarity of beliefs not based on knowledge, but feeling or hearsay. The shadows and echoes are the feelings and hearsay of the prisoners. The journey toward knowledge is when a prisoner travels into the light. When a teacher gives their student a thirst for knowledge and truth, it's like Plato's The Allegory of the Cave example of a prisoner coming to view the world under the sunlight and seeing the truth for the first time. In Plato's story, the prisoners were chained to a cave wall with the inability to move their heads. All the prisoners could see were shadows and all that they could hear were echoes. These shadows and echoes are like feelings and hearsay. Many people have false notions based on hearsay and feelings. One misconception an elderly relative of mine has is the belief if medicine is followed by water the medicine is watered down and ineffective. It does not matter how many times I explain that a medicine's dosage is what makes it effective, their feelings on this matter does not waiver. Many people try different methods of things not by knowledge, but because of what a neighbor recommends. If all the knowledge a person has comes from feelings and hearsay, it would be like hearing echoes and seeing shadows in a cave. No truth can be found until someone wants to walk in the sun. Teachers, like the sun in the story, must educate their students in truth. Some teachers with an aggressive or harsh style tend to put students off. A teacher must illuminate the subject they teach for their students. Just like the harsh sun beating down on a prisoner's weak eyes in the parable, if the learning process is too taxing or painful, a student will only learn enough to <https://assignbuster.com/platos-allegory-of-the-cave-in-realtion-to-school-teachers-or-students/>

pass the course, not permanently retaining the knowledge. This could lead to a student staying ignorant, because being ignorant is easy. Looking into the sun hurts and takes an effort, just like the learning process.

Another important comparison is the cave and ignorance. Some students refuse to learn because of the familiarity of ignorance. The cave was all that the prisoners knew. Some released prisoners would flee from the light for the refuge of the cave. It is very easy to slide through school, only doing enough work to pass, but not to learn the thirst of knowledge. Upon high school graduation, a person fleeing from the light will go into a menial job and live their life in the familiar darkness of the cave. Other students go on to higher education, seeing the sun, but stop short of full knowledge. These students are content to live on the mouth of the cave. A third class of students live to learn for the rest of their lives. These students stand in the sun and observe the world around them.

The most important lesson of The Allegory of the Cave is the humanity of students. Teachers and administration often treat students like statistics. What works for the majority does not always work for every single student. Not every student wants to come into the light and learn, just like not all of the prisoners of the cave wanted to leave. A child can resist learning because of their feelings or the hearsay of family members. Another student might want to learn and succeed because of special personal feelings and hearsay. Every student is different. Instead of being inflexible like the sun, teachers must also be open enough to try different methods of teaching. In the end, a student has to have the drive to learn.

Plato's parable teaches that not every student will decide to walk into the light of knowledge and truth, wrapping themselves in the familiarity of the <https://assignbuster.com/platos-allegory-of-the-cave-in-realtion-to-school-teachers-or-students/>

ignorant cave. However, the students that walk unflinchingly into the sunlight have the opportunity to learn to shine brighter than the sun teaching them.