

# Allegory of the cave assignment

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BUSTER**

To be, or Not to be Educated “ How could they see anything but the shadows if they were never allowed to move their heads? ” (Plato). Plato’s, The Allegory of the Cave, questions people’s perception and thought of education using an analogy of a cave. He describes the behavior of human nature in two forms: uneducated and educated. He also tells about how the roles of uneducated people and educated people played out in society then and today. In the beginning of the allegory, Plato describes what the cave looks like. He tells of a cave that has people chained to a wall, a blazing fire, and a supreme puppet master.

The people chained to the wall have been there all their life, only knowing what is shown before them to be true. All the people ever see is the illusions that the puppet master makes. The puppet master holds up figures and their shadows are shown because of the fire. When the shadows show on the cave’s walls, the chained people guess what the figures are. They do this their entire lives. Whichever chained person is the cleverest and guesses the figure the fastest is crowned. He is crowned because of his ability to name the object. The analogy of the cave layout represents the uneducated people in society.

Since the people are chained, they can only barely move their head from side to side. They do not know what is outside the cave, so they have not fully grasped the possibility of there being a world outside of their own. The chained people have believed that there is no other life than the objects that move before them on the wall. They have centered their whole lives’ around it. The puppet master is an analogy of the government. The puppet master is showing the objects and hoping that the uneducated, chained people will

believe them and fall for the trick to believe that the objects are just shadows and nothing else.

Further on in the story, Plato tells of one of the chained people being let go. Once the chained person is let free, he stands up, and eventually sees that the shadows have been objects all along. Plato then questions if the man would believe that the objects or the shadows would be more real. The man then is forced into the main light source called the sun. It is blinding to him at first because he has never seen it before, but then his eyes grow accustomed to it and can now see reality. He then sees all the earth and all its glory, and then he sees the sun for what it truly is.

The sun determines the seasons and the growth of everything around it. He then thinks about if he were to ever go back to the cave. He wonders if his eyesight would be the same in the darkness and if he would get laughed at because of it. The point that Plato is trying to make in this segment of the story is the point of what education or enlightenment can do to a person. Once that person fully understands what is going on around him, he becomes more versatile. Once the free man goes into the light and sees the world he becomes educated.

He wonders about the prisoners because he has sympathy about how they are not seeing the earth and the sun and enjoying the life outside of the cave. The point Plato makes by this is that if he were to go back down in the cave, he would not be able to see the shadows of what they originally were because he now has knowledge. Once a person sees a new way to perceive life they will never be able to see it the way they did before. At the end of

the allegory, Plato stresses on the point of having wisdom. He says that the people that will truly rule and that are rich will be the people that have wisdom and virtue.

He also points out at the end of the story that the people that have philosophy will look down on the people who only have political ambition. These two ending points are the main points of the allegory. In sum, The Allegory of the Cave defines the reason to have education in your life. The way to education is through wisdom and not cleverness. In order to seek wisdom and enlightenment, you must seek the real truths of the world and not be hypnotized to believe in any other truth. Works Cited Plato. The Allegory of the Cave. N. p. : n. p. , n. d. Print.