

KNTV: PHILOSOPHY

PLATO

Programme-related questions (and answers)

1. Where did Plato live, and when was he alive?
(He was born in Athens, in ancient Greece, and lived from around 427 to 347BC.)
2. Describe three types of government criticised by Plato.
(Timocracy – a suppressive military government; oligarchy – a select group of wealthy people rule, and the poor have no say; tyranny – one dictator heads society and imposes his will on everyone.)
3. What kind of training did Plato advocate for philosopher kings?
(Two years of intensive training, 10 years of complex mathematical education, and training in military combat from a young age.)
4. What did Plato say that a country's rulers should do, in order to govern successfully?
(He said they should keep their natural urges under control, and should stretch both mind and body to their limits.)
5. What was the purpose of Plato's Academy?
(It was a place where students could attempt to answer philosophical questions through debate and discussion.)
6. Why were the ancient Greeks so fond of dance?
(They believed that dancing improved both physical and emotional well-being.)
7. Did Plato think highly of women?
(Yes, he thought they would make just as good leaders as men, and was the first to advocate equality for women.)
8. What happened to Plato's major influence, Socrates?
(He was accused of corrupting the young minds of Athens, and was forcibly poisoned in public.)
9. What was the state of government in ancient Greece in Plato's time?
(It was chaotic, and when the Spartans invaded, Plato decided to leave.)
10. What has happened to Plato's famous book, *The Republic*?
(It has been in print for an incredible two-and-a-half thousand years.)
11. What was Plato's ideal work force?
In a perfect society, Plato thought, there should be a skilled and diverse workforce including fishermen, vets and mechanics.
12. What kind of thinking did Plato believe was necessary for people to understand philosophy fully?
He said open-mindedness was essential, and that people should learn through what he called dialectic reasoning, a form of questioning and debate.

