

K-W-L Chart Instructions

- **ONLY FILL OUT THE K+W SECTIONS** BY FRIDAY, 10/18 FOR 7B,E,D AND MONDAY, 10/20 FOR 7C,7D.
- For the K section, fill out what you know from last year with Mr. Smith.
- Include at least 3 questions or statements in the K and W sections.
- Review the powerpoint on Plato's Cave- on Archie- and fill out the K-W-L Chart.
- Pay specific attention to the section on the Divided Line in order to uncover Plato's metaphysical and epistemological beliefs expressed within the Allegory of The Cave.
- We will go over it in detail on the due date, so, if there are parts that you find difficult to understand, record what you are having issues with within the "W" section of the K-W-L Chart so you can gain a better understanding of the material on the due date.
- It is especially helpful if you form what you have trouble with as a SPECIFIC question such as, "[C]an you give a couple of examples that illustrate Plato's idea that there are varying degrees to reality?"

K-W-L Chart

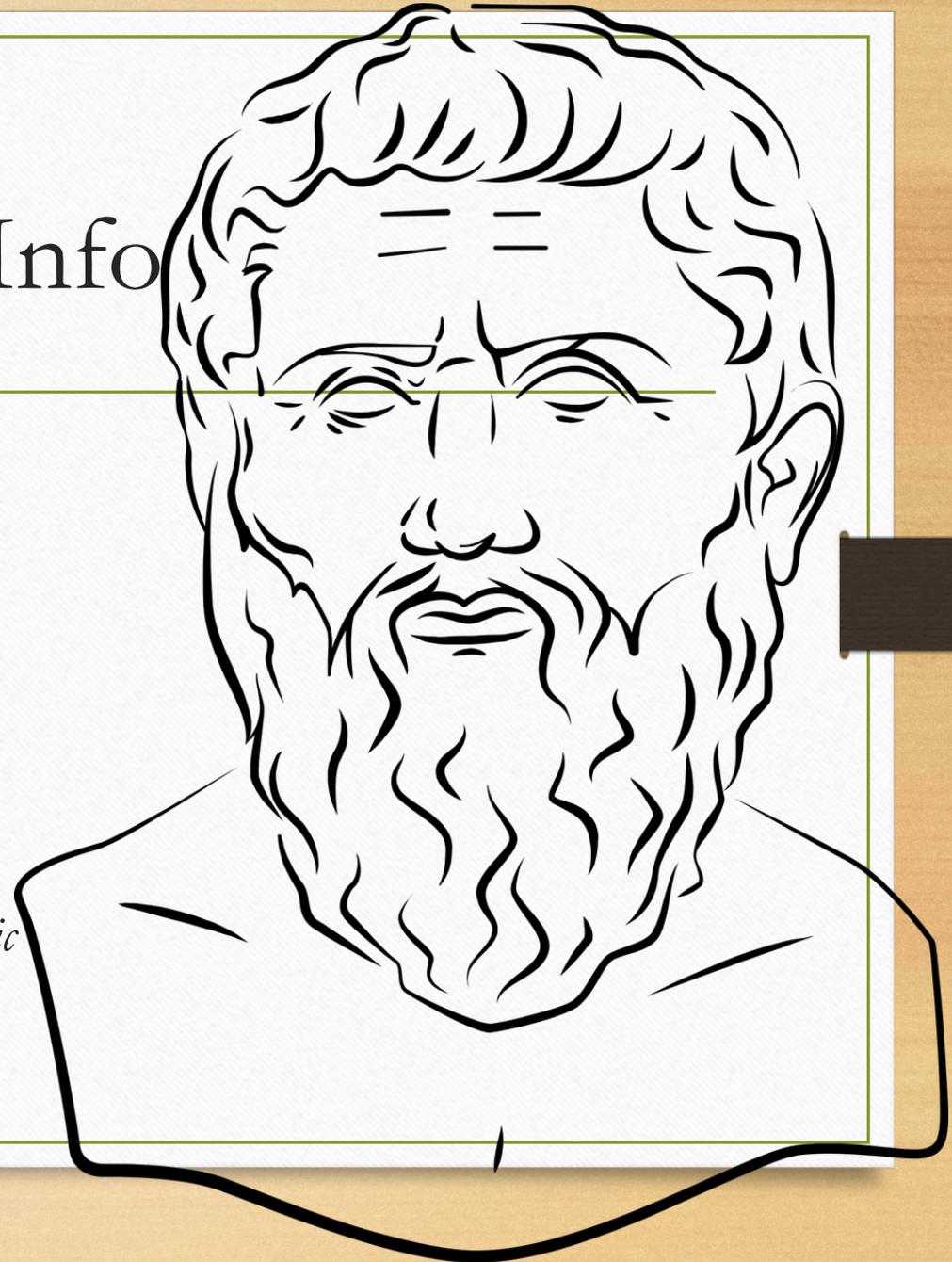
Assess what you know about a particular topic before and after you have engaged with it. Fill the the columns below with what you **K**now about the topic, what you **W**ant to know, and what you've **L**earned.

What do you K now about the topic?	What do you W ant to know?	What did you L earn?

Plato

Biographical Info

- Student of Socrates who later became Aristotle's teacher and mentor.
- Founded "The Academy" (387 B.C.) which many considered the beginning of academia as we know it in contemporary Western society (and throughout much of the world).
- Was the first philosopher in to offer a systematic, integrated theory of metaphysics (i.e. Theory of the Forms) and epistemology.
- *The Allegory of the Cave* appears in Book VII of *The Republic* (Plato's magnum opus) where Plato was primarily interested in the topic of justice.



Intro to the *Allegory of the Cave*

“In Book VII, Socrates presents the most beautiful and famous metaphor in Western philosophy: *The Allegory of the Cave*. **This metaphor is meant to illustrate the effects of education on the human soul.** Education moves the philosopher through the stages on the divided line, and ultimately brings him to the Form of the Good.”

<https://www.sparknotes.com/philosophy/republic/section7/>

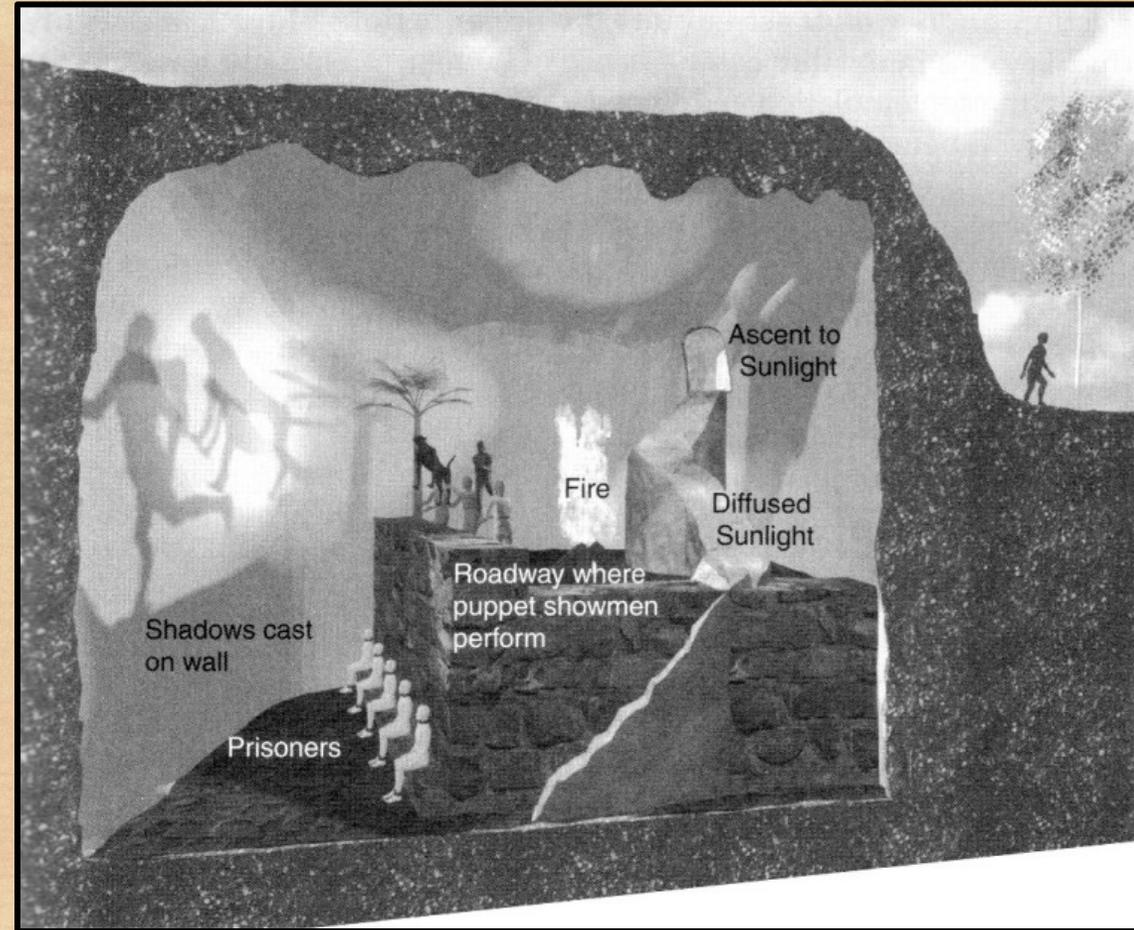
Intro to the *Allegory of the Cave*

“The *Allegory Of The Cave* is a theory put forward by Plato, concerning human perception. Plato claimed that knowledge gained through the senses is no more than opinion and that, in order to have real knowledge, we must gain it through philosophical reasoning. In the Allegory of the Cave, Plato distinguishes between people who mistake sensory knowledge for the truth and people who really do see the truth.”

<http://www.philosophyzer.com/the-allegory-of-the-cave-by-plato-summary-and-meaning/>

Allegory of the Cave

- Plato sets forth both his **metaphysics** (an inquiry into the nature of reality) and **epistemology** (the study of knowledge).
- There are two dimensions to reality:
 1. **World of Appearance** (the physical world; this is all that we experience with our senses)
 2. **World of Forms** (the immaterial, nonphysical world; loosely resembles the image of heaven and its perfection which is found in Western, monotheistic religions)



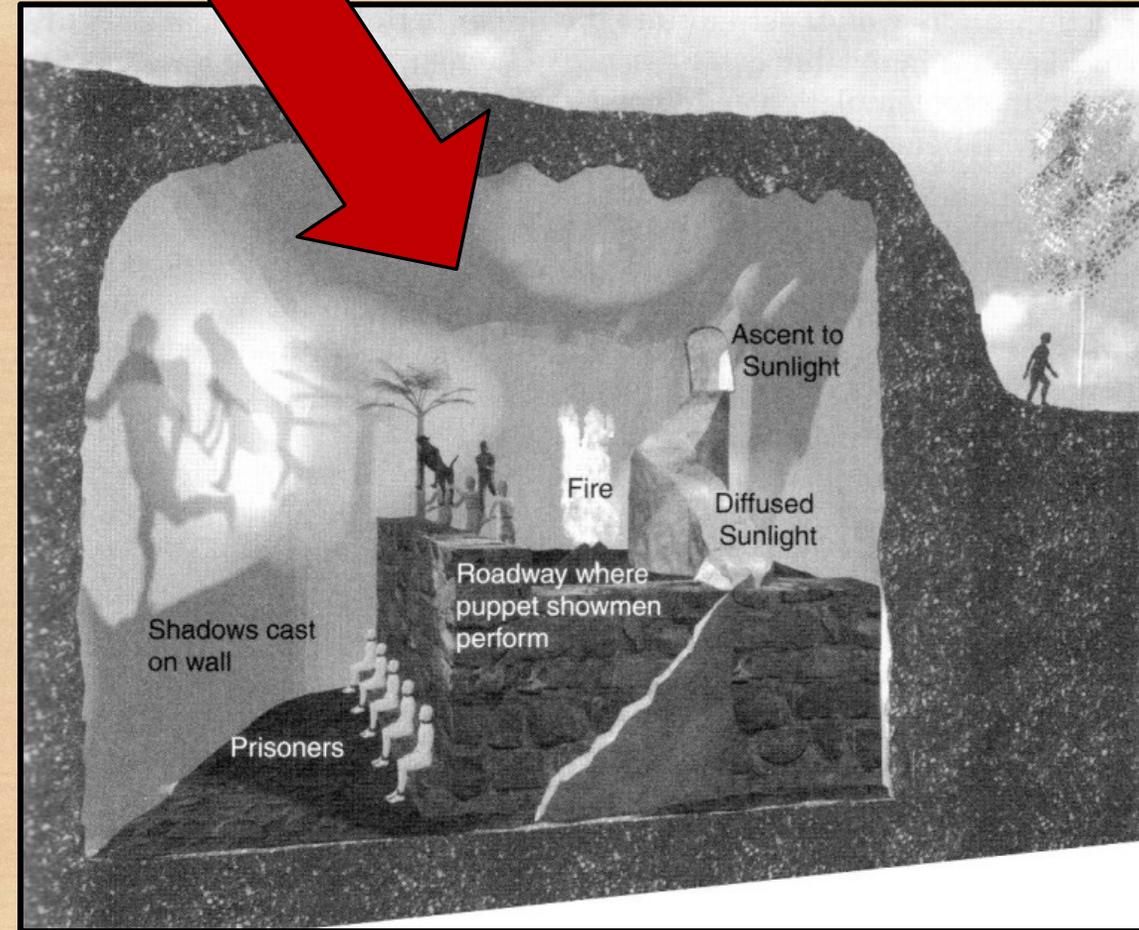
“Dualism”

Plato's belief that reality is composed of two dimensions (the *material* world of appearance and the *immaterial* world of forms) makes him a dualist. **Dualism** is the doctrine that “the world (or reality) consists of two basic, opposed, and irreducible principles that account for all that exists.”

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/dualism-religion>

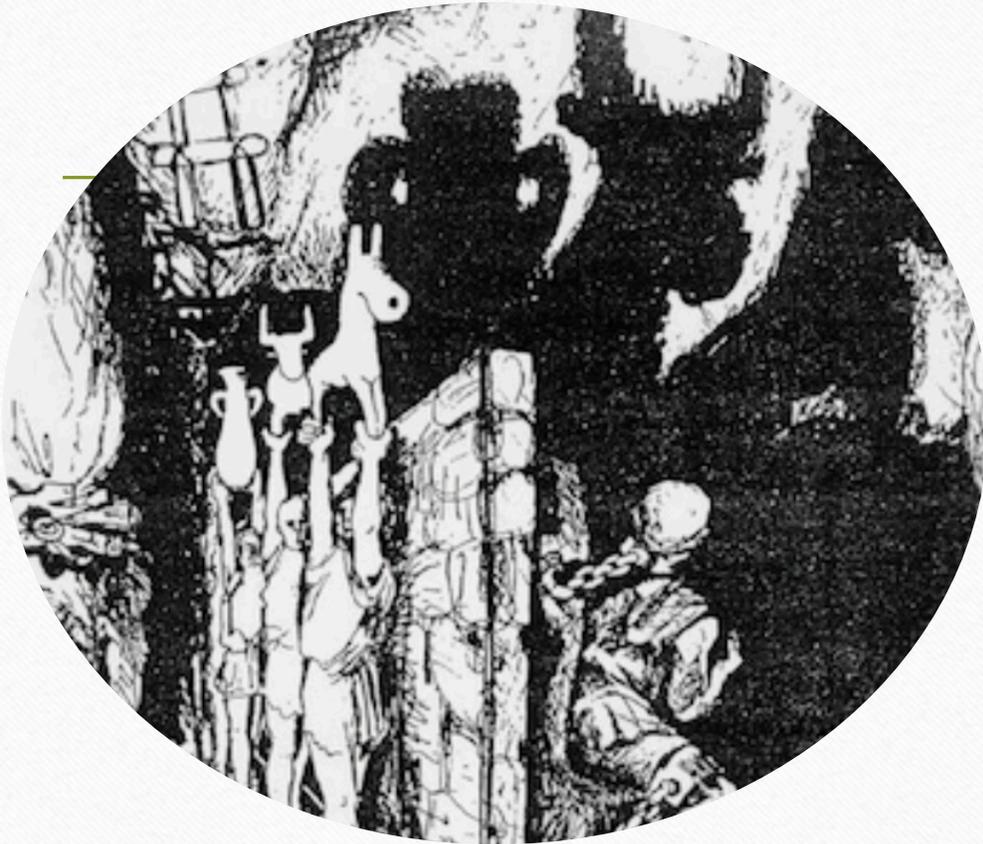
The World of Appearance

- The world of sense perception; these are the objects that we experience as physical, sentient creatures.
- **Examples:** horse, a man named John, this specific oak tree, a specific fork, a specific bed, etc. In experience, no object/item is ever experienced in its perfect form.
- Symbolized by the shadows and actual objects used to make the shadows inside the cave. (i.e., the world of appearance is represented by the inside of the cave in the Plato's allegory.
- To use a spiritual term, it is a place of “bondage,” where one only experiences faint copies of the perfect forms (more on this in a few slides)



In Bondage

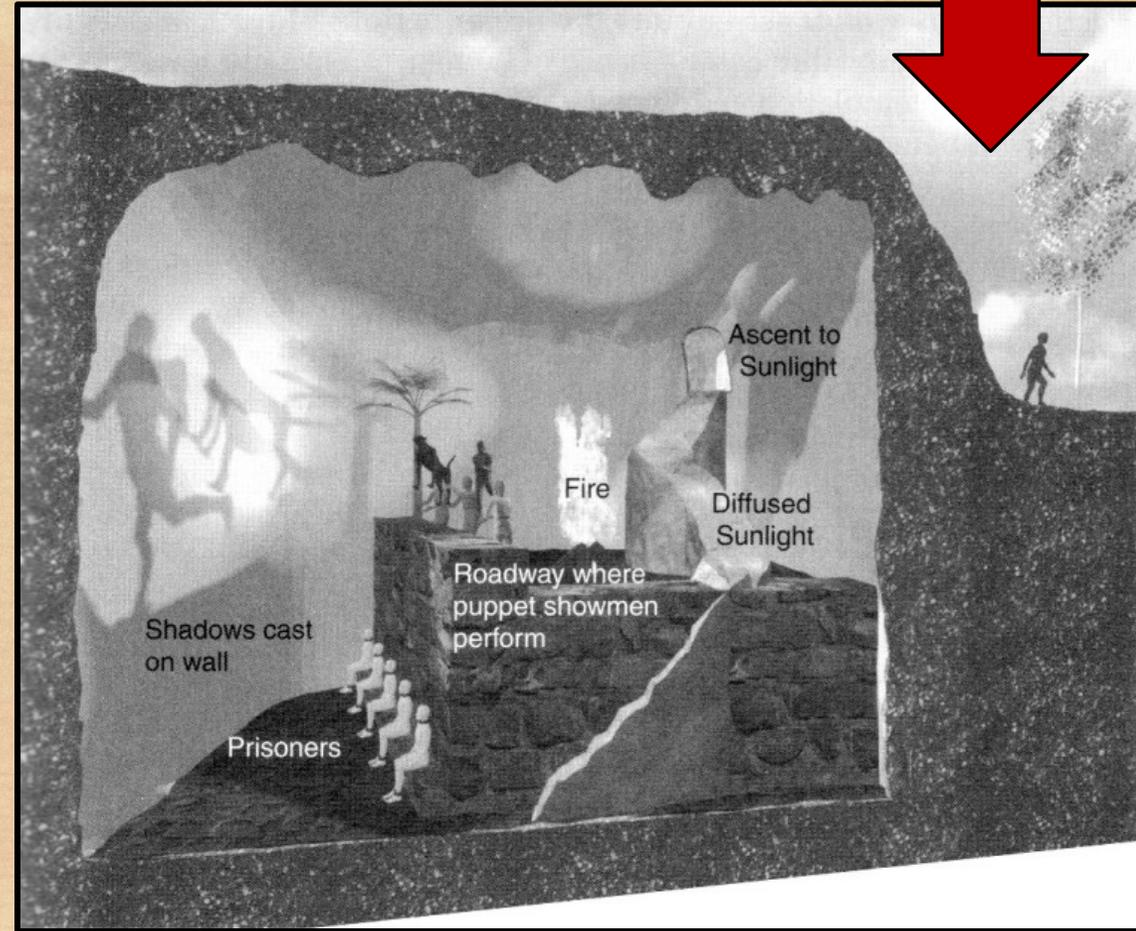
(not having knowledge)



[Socrates] And now, I said, let me show in a figure how far our nature is enlightened or unenlightened: --Behold! human beings living in a underground cave, which has a mouth open towards the light and reaching all along the cave; here they have been from their childhood, and have their **legs and necks chained so that they cannot move**, and can only see before them, being prevented by the chains from turning round their heads. ...To them, I said, **the truth would be literally nothing but the shadows of the images.**”

The World of Forms

- The realm of true reality (metaphysics).
- **Examples:** the form of horse (instead of a specific horse); the form of a man (rather than John specifically); etc.
- Each form is immaterial; however, it is **more real** than any material object we ever experience in the world of appearance.
- Symbolized by the space outside of the cave. In the light of the sun (the symbol for the supreme Form of the Good which is the source even of all other forms), one can gain true knowledge of the essence of things through philosophical contemplation.
- Each form is **perfect in essence**; it is the ultimate reality from which all imperfect **“copies”** (the individual objects we encounter in the world of appearance) acquire their reality



“Participation”

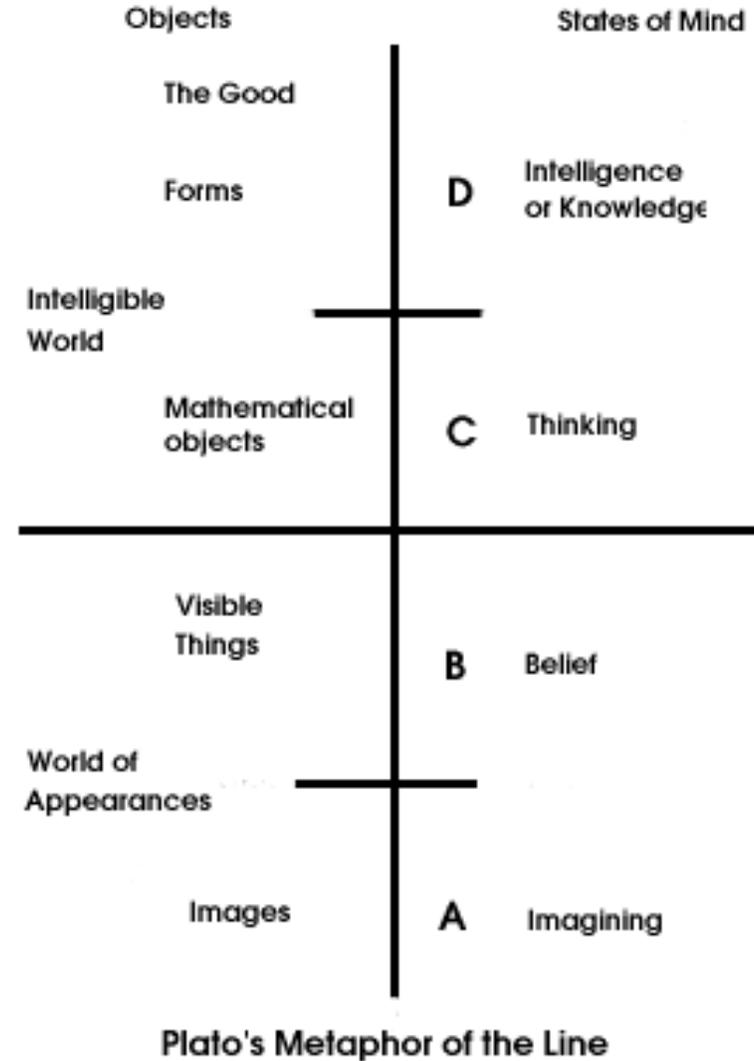
Plato’s word for this mystical process is “**participate.**” An imperfect horse in the world of experience gains its reality (as limited as it is) by “**participating**” in the form of horsiness which resides in a completely other dimension.

We have looked at Plato's **metaphysics** using the Allegory. Along with the Allegory, we will also use Plato's **Divided Line**, another one of his literary devices, to discuss his **epistemology**.

What is the Divided Line?

“The **divided line** is a visual metaphor for Plato's ontological (and epistemological) view of the Universe. Reality is **divided** into two basic parts: the invisible, unchanging realm of universals (or Ideas also sometimes called Forms), and the visible, ever-changing realm of particulars (i.e., physical objects).”

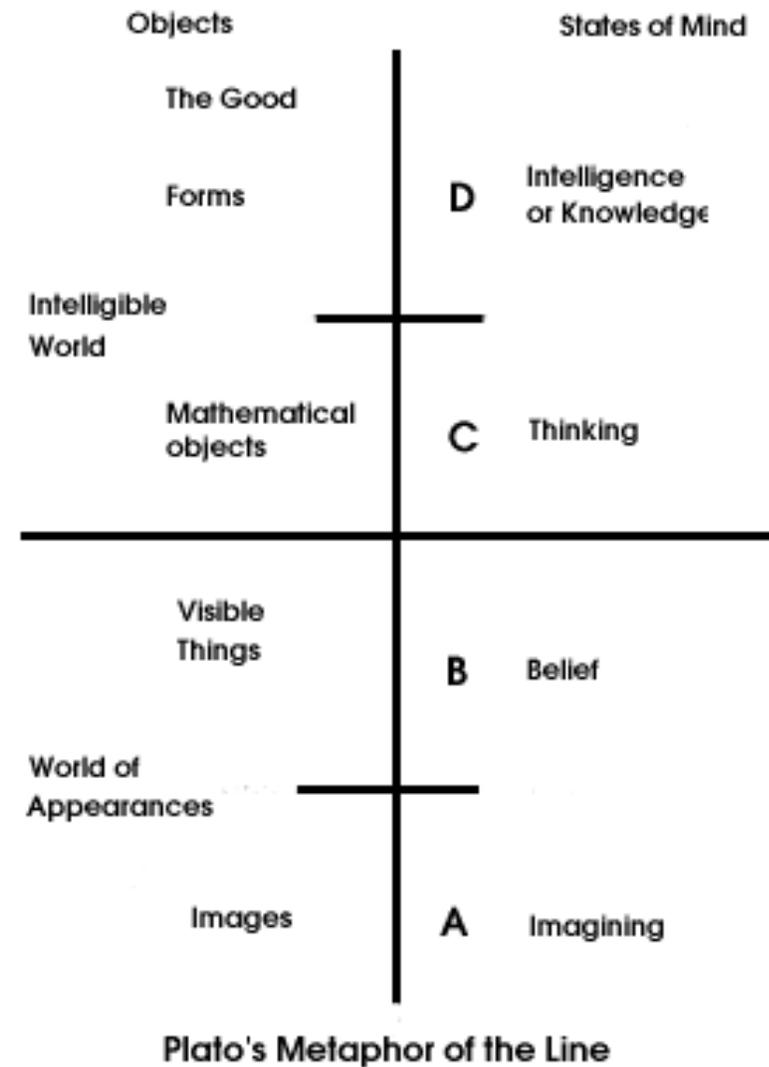
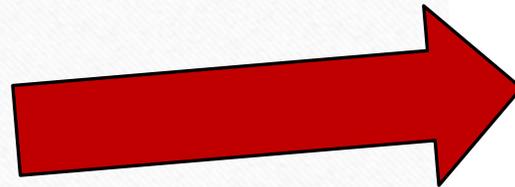
www.mesacc.edu/~bfvaughan/text/lex/defs/d/divided.html



Divided Line

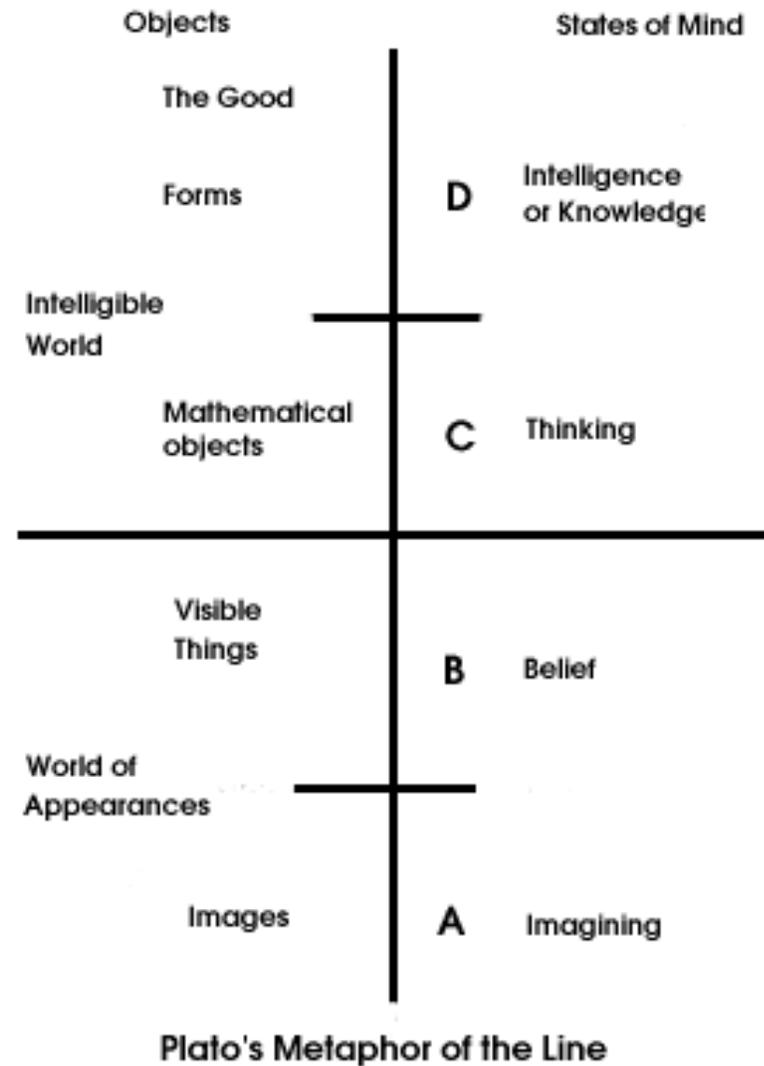
The perfect, timeless, universal **World of Forms** where true reality lies is represented by all that is above the horizontal line.

The imperfect **World of Appearance** is symbolized by all that falls below this horizontal line.



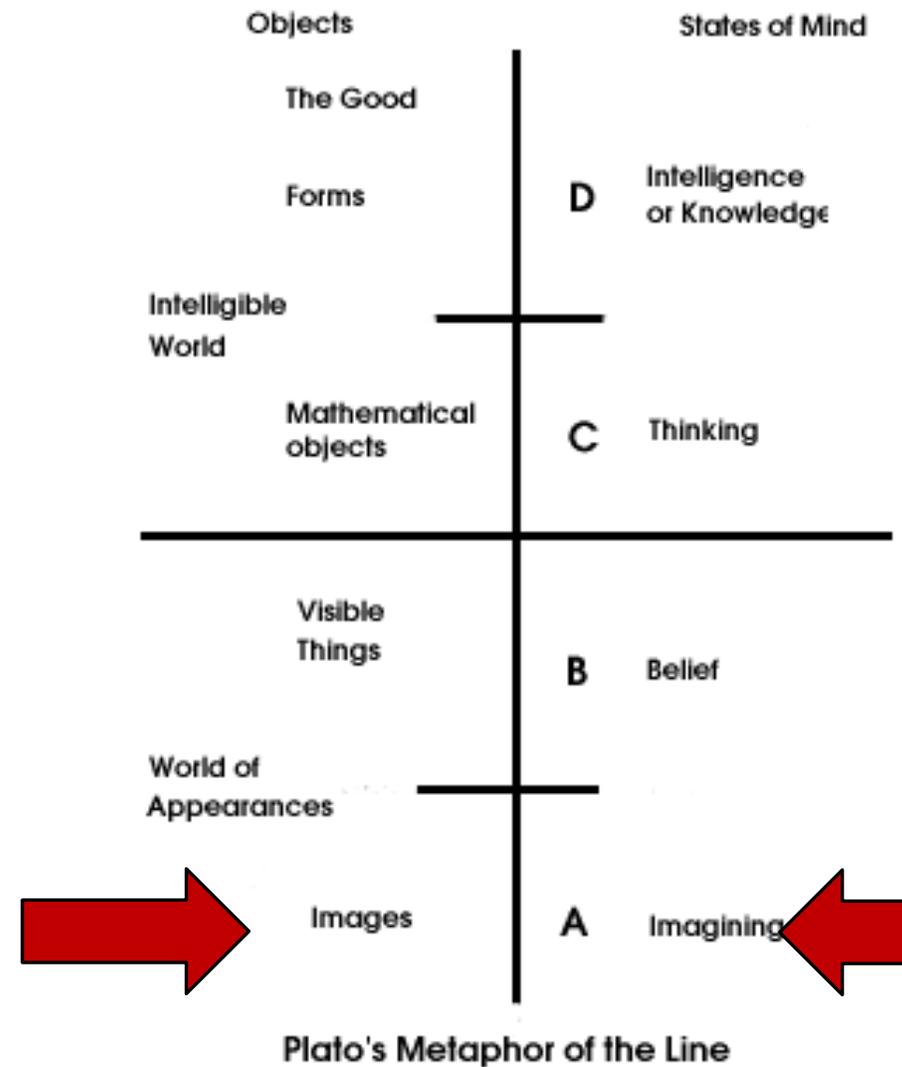
Divided Line

- It is important to remember that in Plato's metaphysics, there are **degrees to reality**. Some things are less real than others.
- There are also various **degrees (or levels) of knowledge** that correspond with each metaphysical realm.



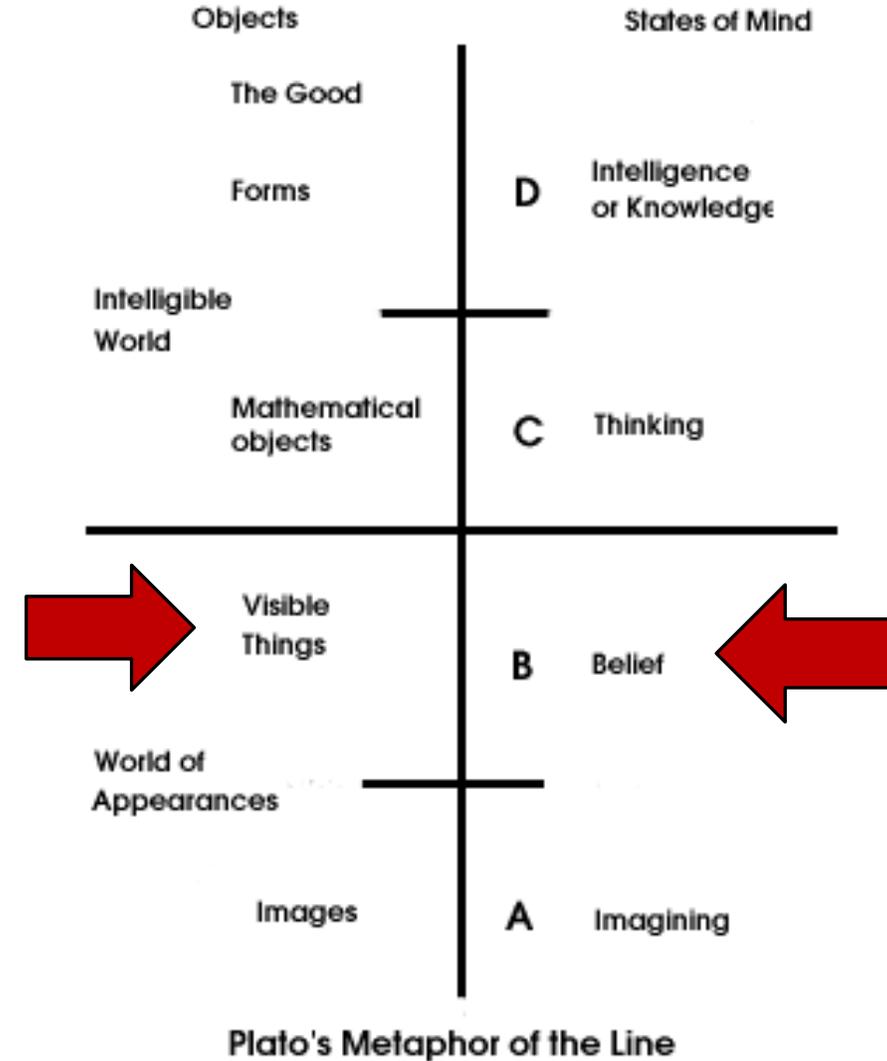
So how does this relate to the *Allegory of the Cave*?

- Images are the lowest realm of reality. **Metaphysically**, this is represented by the shadows on the wall of the cave. The prisoners knew of nothing but the shadows, so they naturally thought that the shadows were real in the deepest sense.
- **Epistemologically**, “knowing” the shadows is the equivalent of merely having an opinion (or imagining). This is not considered true knowledge. This level of “knowledge” is based on the senses and what the senses have perceived in the physical world.



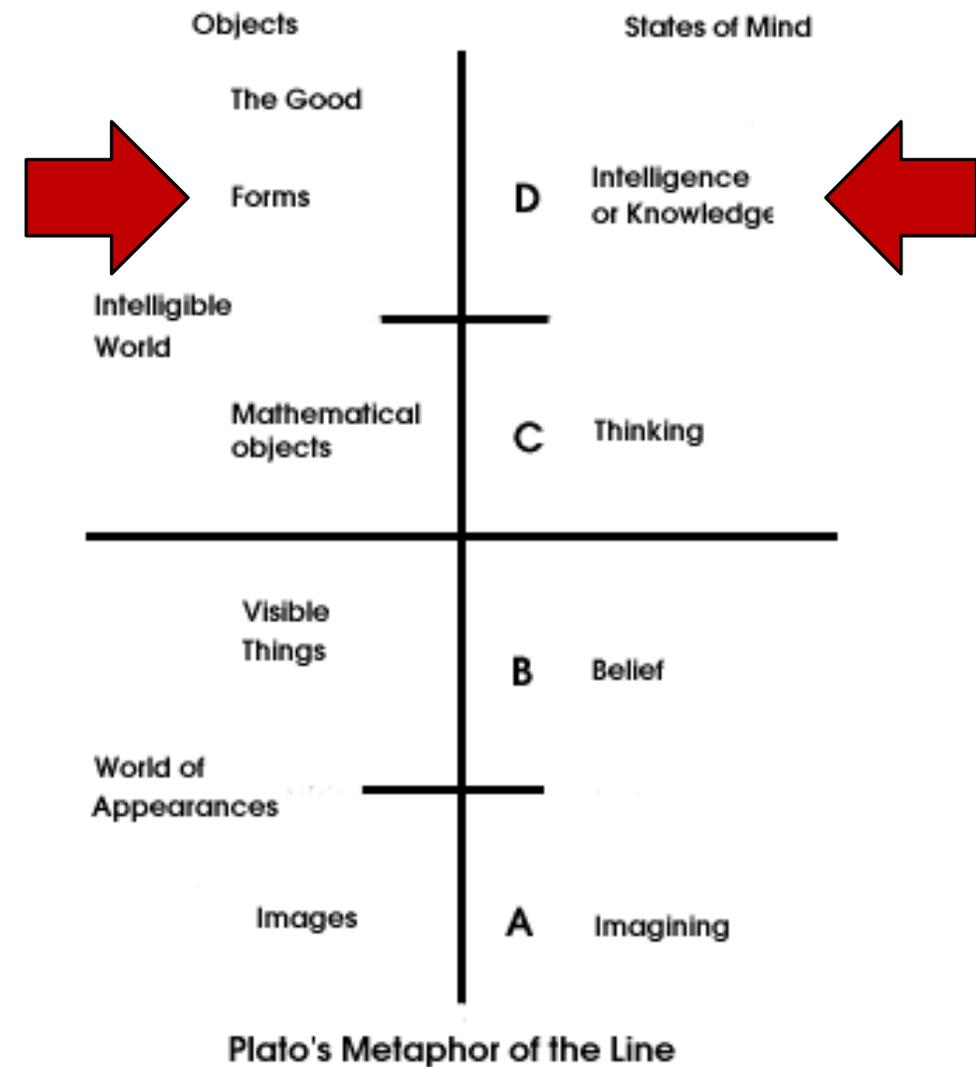
So how does this relate to the *Allegory of the Cave*?

- Visible things are the more real than images/shadows but still less real than the actual forms. **Metaphysically**, this is represented by the puppets in the Allegory that are used to project shadows on the wall of the cave.
- **Epistemologically**, “knowing” visible things is the equivalent of having a belief. In Plato’s epistemology, a belief ranks higher than a mere opinion, but is still not considered knowledge. This level of “knowledge” is still based on the senses and what the senses have perceived in the physical world.



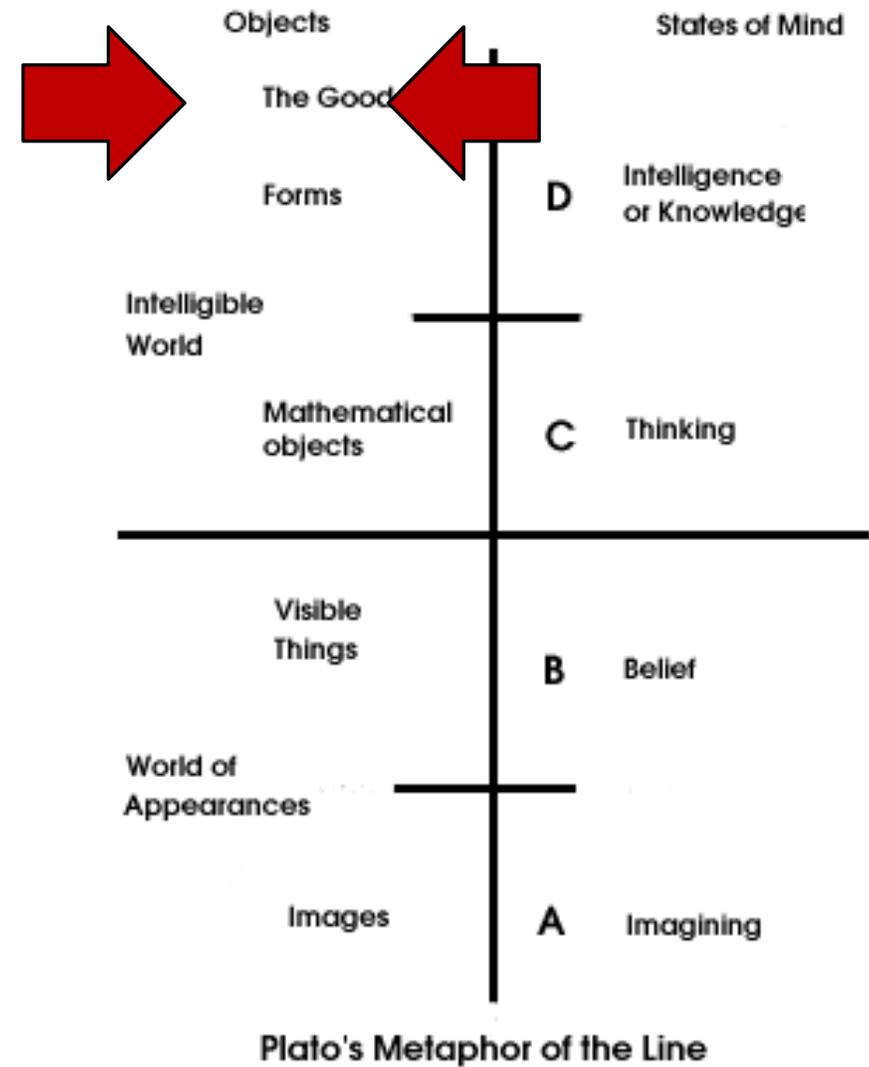
So how does this relate to the *Allegory of the Cave*?

- **Metaphysically**, the Forms represent true reality. They are what gives reality to all that we encounter in the imperfect world. In the *Allegory of the Cave*, the forms are represented by the actual things (a thing-in-itself) that a person encounters outside of the cave.
- **Epistemologically**, one beholds the forms through rational contemplation (i.e. philosophy). This alone represents true knowledge. A person who beholds the Forms and their true essence no longer has an opinion or belief; they now have knowledge, a knowledge that is not based on any data provided by the senses.
- For this reason, Plato is truly a **rationalist** as opposed to an **empiricist**.



So how does this relate to the *Allegory of the Cave*?

- **Metaphysically**, the ultimate Form is *The Good*. It is that which gives rise to all other Forms which in turn give rise (through participation) to all that we encounter in the World of Appearance.
- In the *Allegory of the Cave*, the ultimate Form of the Good is represented by **the sun**. The sun outside the cave is ultimately responsible for all else. In this sense, the sun in the Allegory fulfills a somewhat similar role as God in a Judeo-Christian worldview.
- This idea will later find its way into the spiritual philosophy of the **Neo-Platonists** which **Augustine** employs in presenting part of his Christian theology/philosophy.



Theme of Enlightenment

- Essentially, Plato is arguing that **education** is key to the enlightenment and the subsequent improvement of both individuals and society at large. This is evident in Socrates' opening line:

“And now, I said, let me show in a figure how far our nature is enlightened or unenlightened...”

Theme of Enlightenment

- The path from the bondage of ignorance to true knowledge is treacherous at first.

“And now look again, and see what will naturally follow if the prisoners are released and disabused of their error. At first, when any of them is liberated and compelled suddenly to stand up and turn his neck round and walk and look towards the light, he will suffer sharp pains; the glare will distress him, and he will be unable to see the realities of which in his former state he had seen the shadows...And if he is compelled to look straight at the light, will he not have a pain in his eyes...And suppose once more, that he is reluctantly dragged up a steep and rugged ascent, and held fast until he 's forced into the presence of the sun himself, is he not likely to be pained and irritated? When he approaches the light his eyes will be dazzled, and he will not be able to see anything at all of what are now called realities.”

The Descent

- Implicit in the last statement is Plato's view that once a person has exited the cave of bondage and gained true knowledge, they now have a responsibility to their fellow citizens to return to the cave (enter civil and political life) and help lead others into true knowledge as well.
- He admits, as will be shown in the next slide, that this can be a painful process and even lead to death as was the case with Socrates. People will mock the enlightened individual, judging his new state of being and knowledge from within the old, bondage-laden paradigm. Basically, they will not understand him/her and assume that something has gone wrong, not right, with the individual.