

# The Socratic Method

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## Vocabulary

*Repeat each vocabulary word and definition after the teacher.*

- **Philosophy** The study of problems concerning subjects such as knowledge, values, reasoning, ethics and language
- **Philosopher** Someone who practices philosophy, especially as their academic subject
- **Method of inquiry** A student-centered method of education focused on asking questions
- **Examination** A detailed study of something (not to be confused with the noun form, which means a test)
- **Moral concepts** Ideas that examine what societies think are right and wrong
- **Distill** To purify; to take out the most important parts over time
- **Validity** Truthfulness, correctness
- **Influence** The ability to have an effect on something
- **Hypothesis** An educated guess that's a starting point for testing, often used in science for experimentation
- **Enduring** Lasting for a long time
- **Izz'iz** "Is his" (pronounced quickly)
- **In'da** "In the" (pronounced quickly)

## Passage

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Read the passage with the teacher, asking questions about content, and then answer the questions on the next page.

Socrates was a classical Greek **philosopher** credited as one of the founders of Western **philosophy**. Perhaps his most important contribution to Western thought is his famous **method of inquiry**, known as **the Socratic Method**, which he largely applied to the **examination** of key **moral concepts** such as the Good and Justice. To solve a problem, it would be broken down into a series of questions, the answers to which gradually **distill** the answer a person would seek. It was designed to force one to examine one's own beliefs and the **validity** of such beliefs. The **influence** of this approach in today's world is most strongly felt today **in the use of** the scientific method, in which **hypothesis** is the first stage. The development and practice of this method is one of Socrates' most **enduring** contributions, and has a lasting **influence** on all the central themes in Western **philosophy**. **The Socratic Method** has often been considered as a defining element of American legal education.

Courtesy of Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/Socrates>

## Checking Understanding

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1. Who was a classical Greek philosopher credited as one of the founders of Western philosophy?
2. What was his most important contribution to Western thought?
3. How did the Socratic Method solve a problem?
4. What was the Socratic Method designed to do?
5. What's the strongest influence of the Socratic Method in today's world?
6. What's the first stage of the scientific method?
7. How to pronounce "Is his" quickly?
8. How to pronounce "In the" quickly?

## Conversation Questions

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*Take turns asking the questions with your teacher, and if there's any time left over you can free chat*

- What comes to mind when you hear the word “philosophy”?
- Do you like philosophy?
- What's your philosophy on life?
- Is philosophy important?
- Do you think that modern philosophy is different from ancient philosophy?
- Have you ever used the scientific method?
- What are some differences between Western philosophy and Eastern philosophy?
- Do you think you'd ever study philosophy in a course?
- Do you get philosophical when you drink?
- Is truth just a matter of opinion?
- Do you believe in fate or in destiny?
- Do you believe you make real choices in life? Or is it all fate?
- What do you think are some relationships between philosophy and religion?