

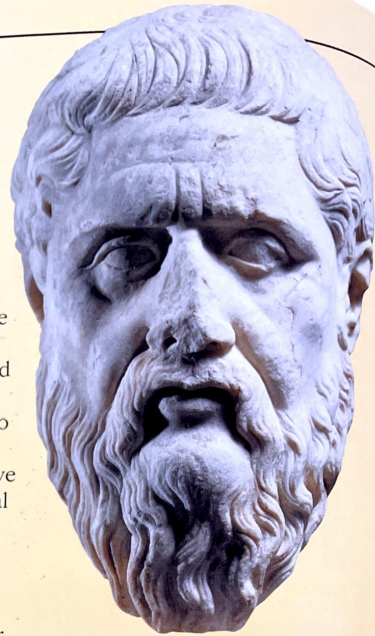
INQUIRING MINDS

The ancient Greeks were responsible for many of the ideas about art, literature, philosophy, science, politics and history that laid the foundations of European civilization. From about the 6th century BC, scholars began to ask questions and make observations about the world around them. The people who did this are known as philosophers, from the Greek word *philosophos*, meaning 'lover of wisdom'.

This drawing shows a model of an early steam machine, designed by Hero, a Greek from Alexandria. Fire boiled the water inside a metal ball. Steam escaped, which made the ball rotate.



This is a carved head of Plato, one of the most famous Athenian philosophers.



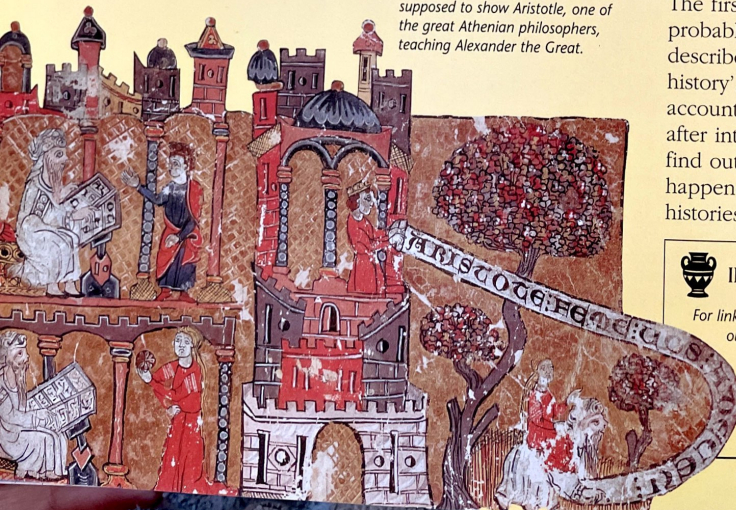
PHILOSOPHY

For the ancient Greeks, philosophy wasn't just the study of ideas about the meaning of life. It covered almost everything - from every branch of science to moral questions, such as how people should behave and what an ideal political system would be.

EVOLUTION

One scholar, Anaximander, concluded that much of the Earth had once been covered in water, and that people had developed from other animals - possibly fish. Another scholar, Xenophanes, discovered that fossils were the remains of plants and animals preserved in rock.

This medieval manuscript is supposed to show Aristotle, one of the great Athenian philosophers, teaching Alexander the Great.



HISTORY

When the Greeks were involved in the Persian Wars, they realized the importance of knowing more about their enemies. They began to keep records of their history, and that of other peoples.

The first real historian was probably Herodotus, often described as the 'father of history'. Herodotus wrote an account of the Persian Wars after interviewing survivors to find out what had actually happened. Most earlier histories were far less accurate.



INTERNET LINK

For links to websites where you can find out about ancient Greek thinkers, inventors and achievements, go to www.usborne-quicklinks.com