

**Plato, *Republic I***

Student Activities**Activity 1: Text summary**

- Create a section-by-section summary of the set text (including sections to be read in English). The first two have been done for you.
- This is designed to help you remember the overall sense and shape of the argument and the narrative in preparation for the essay question.
- The first part has been divided up for you into sections, until Cephalus' departure, and the first two sections summarised.
- Part of the value of this exercise is for students to work out for themselves where natural divisions between different part of the argument and narrative fall; sometimes this will be obvious, but at other times there will be multiple 'right' answers.
- The number of rows is completely arbitrary – students should feel free to add as many more as they like or delete unnecessary ones!

Chapter	Summary
327-328a	Socrates is at the festival of Bendis at the port of Piraeus; he is bullied (in a friendly way!) by Polemarchus and company into coming to Cephalus' house.
328b-d	Socrates is welcomed by Cephalus
328e-329d	
329e-330a	
330b-c	
330d-331b	
331c-d	



Activity 2: Key Characters

Fill out the following table; some characters are obviously more important than others!

Name	Character	Historical Notes	Involvement/Argument
Cephalus	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Old- Wealthy- Kind/ benevolent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Birth: ???- Death: c. 421/415- Metic (resident foreigner)- Family suffers terribly under the Thirty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Host of the discussion- Wealth is useful for paying one's debts to man and god- Justice is giving to each what they are owed.
Adeimantus			
Glaucon			
Cleitophon			



Lysias			
Polemarchus			
Thrasymachus			

Activity 3: Book I in the *Republic*.

Listen to the BBC Radio 4 ‘In Our Time’ episode on Plato’s *Republic*

(<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b08vwn6h>) and answer the following questions:

- What surprises you about the *Republic*?
- How does Book I fit into the *Republic* as a whole?
- How important is Book I in framing the issues of the *Republic* as a whole?

**Activity 4: A different Socrates?**

Read Xenophon's *Symposium* (free online translation available here:

<https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0212%3Atext%3DSym>).

Use the following questions as the basis for class discussion:

- How different a character is Xenophon's Socrates to the character you have met in the *Republic*?
- In each presentation, what are the key features of Socrates personality and philosophy?
- How important is it to have an understanding of the historical Socrates, as opposed to a literary creation?

Activity 5: Class debate.

'Justice has nothing to do with happiness'

Divide the class into two groups to prepare opposing sides of this debate; use the arguments from *Republic* I as a starting point, but do not be constrained by them. Use modern arguments and examples as well as ancient ones.