

Book VI Study Questions

Republic

1. Name three characteristics of the future rulers (or Philosopher-Kings) of this ideal city. What is their approach to learning (487a)? What do they think of money? What kind of soul do they possess (486b)?

2. Briefly describe Socrates' analogy between the city and a ship (488a-489c). Why do you think he chose a ship for this analogy? What types of problems arise on this ship? How does Socrates propose that these problems could be eliminated?

3. What does Socrates think qualifies the future rulers (or Philosopher-Kings) to rule this ideal city?

4. What do you think Socrates *means* when he says that "Neither city nor regime will ever become perfect, nor yet will a man become perfect in the same way either, before some necessity chances to constrain those few philosophers who aren't vicious, those now called useless, to take charge of a city, whether they want to or not, and the city to obey or a true erotic passion for true philosophy flows from some divine inspiration into the sons of those who hold power or the office of king, or into the fathers themselves." (499b-499c) Moreover, why were philosophers called "useless" by many members of the city?

