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Introduction to Philosophy

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- Questions from Plato's "Innate Knowledge" reading
 1. At the beginning of the reading, Meno accuses Socrates of "torping" him or rather infecting his thoughts or way of thinking with what he has just said. To put it in easier terms to understand, Meno doesn't like the thought processes that Socrates has evoked within him. After hearing this, Socrates accuses Meno of saying this to bait Socrates into likening him to something as well since as he said, all young gentlemen like to have similes made about them. This however, is shown to not be the case as Meno is quick to defend himself and dismiss this claim.
 2. The Learner's paradox that Socrates and Meno talk about on the second page is that all souls are immortal and retain what they learn when they are sent below and brought back to life again. In this, they said that there is nothing that is learned by the first time by anyone but rather, recollection since they had already learned it in their past life. It is also a paradox however, as the pastors and priests that Socrates spoke to had told him that there is no difficulty in learning anything new as it will lead to a recollection of the things they no longer know but at the same time, we should not question the process of learning new things or try to

ponder the reason for it on our own since it leads to idleness. At least, that's what I think it meant. It was a bit foggy to understand in some parts.

3. Socrates theory of Innate truth is that, like I just mentioned in the previous question, all knowledge is simply the recollection of information previously known. It is like a puzzle that once we obtain one piece, we are able to fit together the rest of the pieces to make the knowledge more complete. Socrates attempts to make this known by talking with the servant boy about shapes. I will be honest; I had a hard time following it but what I understood from it was that Socrates gave the servant boy a few mathematical clues with which he could deduce the answer to the question he posed to him afterwards. After having done this, the servant boy is able to make correct deductions that relate to what Socrates just taught him and will lead him to inquire more about it. Thus, Socrates has "torped" him as he had similarly done to Meno at the beginning of the chapter.
- Questions from Aristotle's "demonstrative knowledge"
 1. From the Deductive aspect of Aristotle's theory, we gain knowledge through experience and from those experiences, we can make inductions about other things we are able to experience. A syllogism is a standard pattern of argument that lets one infer information that may not be obviously shown from given information. We can say generals are above corporals and corporals are above lieutenants. Thus, generals are above lieutenant's since they are above the position that is above lieutenant's that is, corporals. A demonstration is a syllogism that has a basis in science but also is done with physical objects. An example of this would be mixing one chemical with another and testing the

reactions of said mixture, then mixing one of the chemicals with other chemicals and exposing it to heat and other climates. From this, a syllogism is made based on the way the chemical reacted to the different climates.

2. The point Aristotle makes about Deduction itself not leading to truth about the world is that we cannot deduce knowledge from a demonstration without knowing all the factors present in the demonstration. One example of this would be showing a peasant from the 18th century a baking soda volcano. Seeing the chemical reaction, they would gain the knowledge that mixing this white powder and this strange smelling substance together makes it foam vigorously. But the peasant will not have any knowledge beyond this as they will not be aware of the names of the chemical or what exactly caused them to behave in the way that they did.
3. Through the senses we can infer information about the world around us. The 5 senses of taste, touch, smell, sight, and sound all together let us gather information from everything we encounter. An example of this would be a child in the kitchen as their mother is cooking. They hear the burner clicking and see the fire come out from the burner. They can also smell the butter in the pan over the fire and see that it has started melting. They then decide to try touching the fire but soon pull their hand away out of an automatic stimulus from their nervous system that tells them this object is hot. They then remember this and keep it in their memory for future reference and this is what is known as an experience.