

Name _____



Apology by Plato

"Apology" is a philosophical dialogue written by the ancient Greek philosopher Plato. It is a dramatic account of the trial and defense of Socrates, another renowned philosopher, who was charged with corrupting the youth of Athens and introducing new deities. The title "Apology" comes from the Greek word "apologia," which means a defense speech.

The dialogue is set in 399 BCE, during a trial in Athens. Socrates, known for his questioning and challenging of conventional wisdom, stands accused of impiety and corrupting the minds of the city's youth. In "Apology," Socrates presents his defense against these charges, delivering a persuasive and thought-provoking argument.

Key elements of the dialogue include:

- **Socratic Method:** Throughout the dialogue, Socrates employs his famous Socratic method—a form of cooperative argumentative dialogue. He engages in a series of questions and answers with his accusers and jurors, aiming to expose inconsistencies in their beliefs and reveal the limitations of their knowledge.
- **Defense of Philosophy:** Socrates defends philosophy as a valuable pursuit that encourages critical thinking and self-examination. He argues that his mission of questioning others was a service to the city, as it exposed ignorance and promoted wisdom.
- **Irony:** Socrates often uses irony in his defense, asserting that he cannot be wise because he acknowledges his own ignorance. This irony highlights the paradox of wisdom and ignorance in the context of philosophy.
- **Unapologetic Stance:** Despite the charges against him, Socrates refuses to apologize for his actions or abandon his philosophical principles. He believes that his commitment to truth and virtue is more important than avoiding punishment.
- **Condemnation and Sentencing:** Despite his defense, Socrates is found guilty by a narrow margin and is sentenced to death by drinking hemlock. He accepts his fate with equanimity, arguing that death is either a dreamless sleep or a journey to the afterlife where he can continue his philosophical inquiries.

"Apology" provides readers with a glimpse into the mind and character of Socrates, a figure revered in the history of philosophy for his commitment to questioning and the pursuit of truth. It raises fundamental questions about the nature of wisdom, the value of philosophy, and the relationship between the individual and society.

