

A DIVISION OF THE MENO

70A Meno proposes a question: whether virtue can be taught

70B-100B Three conversations or discussions following question

70B-80D Conversation on a question before Meno's: what is virtue?

80D-86C Conversation on how it is possible to investigate the unknown

86D-110B Conversation on Meno's original question whether virtue can be taught

First Conversation on What is Virtue (70B-80D)

70B-71D Necessity of knowing what virtue is before

70B-71B Socrates admits that he does not know the answer to Meno's question or to the question that is before

71C-D Socrates says he has met no one who knows while Meno thinks he knows

71E-79D Socrates examines Meno's claim to know what virtue is

71E-74A Meno twice gives examples of virtue rather than defining it.

74B-76E Socrates shows the difference between giving examples of a thing and defining it

74B-75A Difference between giving examples of a thing and defining distinctly what that thing is which is common to the many examples.

75B-76A Socrates exemplifies with the definition of figure

75B-C A weak definition of figure

75C-D Difference between dialectic and contention

75E-76A A stronger definition of figure

76A-E Socrates gives Meno a definition of color in the style to which Meno is accustomed while pointing out that the plain definition is better.

77A-79D Meno attempts to define virtue without examples

77A Socrates urges him to do so

77B Meno's definition: virtue is the desire for good things and the ability to achieve them

77C-79D Socrates examines this definition

77C-78B First part does not separate virtue from vice

78C-78D Defect of second part of definition

78D-79D Failure of attempt to mend second part (examples again)

79E-80D Afterword: Meno is ignorant as well as Socrates so Socrates proposes a joint inquiry into what virtue is.

Second Conversation on How it is Possible to Investigate the Unknown (80D-86C)

80D-E Meno's sophistical objection against the possibility of investigating what is unknown to you

81A-86C Socrates attempts to solve Meno's objection

81A-E Socrates proposes a solution: learning or discovery is recalling

81E-85E Explanation of the solution

81E-82A Meno asks Socrates to explain

82B-85E Socrates exemplifies the solution with Meno's slave

82B-84C Socrates examines the way the slave-boy thinks that a square should be doubled in size.

82B-83E The examination and refutation of the slave-boy's thinking that the side should be doubled.

82B-E The slave boy thinks that the way to double a square is to double the side

83A-C The slave-boy's answer refuted by the contradiction to which it leads

83C-E A second guess likewise refuted

84A-C Socrates speaks to Meno of the good effect which the refutation has had upon the reason and desire of the slave-boy.

84D-85B Socrates helps the slave-boy recall or learn how to double a square

85C-E Socrates concludes that the slave-boy is recalling geometry

86A-C Corollaries and conclusions

86A-B Socrates concludes to pre-existence of the soul.

86B-C We should take heart and begin to investigate.

Third Conversation on Meno's Original Question (86D-100B) Whether Virtue can be Taught

86D-87B Foreword

86D Meno asks his original question again which Socrates says is out of order before one knows what virtue is

86D-87B Socrates agrees to consider by hypothetical syllogism

87B-96C Dialectical discussion whether virtue can be taught

87B-89C Hypothetical (if-then) syllogism that virtue can be taught

87B-C First premiss (if-then statement) of hypothetical syllogism

87D-89A Second premiss (simple statement) of hyp. syllogism.

87D-E Virtue is useful or beneficial

87E-88E Nothing of man is beneficial without wisdom or knowledge

89A Concluding to second premiss of main hyp. syllogism.

89A-B Corollary: men become good, not by nature, but by learning

89C Drawing conclusion that virtue can be taught

89C-96C Hypothetical (if-then) syllogism that virtue cannot be taught

89C-D Doubt whether virtue is knowledge and therefore teachable

89D-96C Hypothetical syllogism that virtue cannot be taught

89D-E First premiss (if-then statement) of hyp. syllogism

89E-96C Second premiss (simple statement) of hyp. syllogism

89E-95A Conversation with Anytus

89E-90B Anytus invited to join the conversation

90B-94E Conversation with Anytus

90B-92C Conversation on the sophists as teachers

92D-94E Conversation on good men as teachers.

95A Anytus' anger and Socrates' comment thereon

95B-96C Conversation with Meno: neither sophists nor good men
can teach virtue.

96C Conclusion that virtue cannot be taught

96D-99D Socrates gives a solution of the question or problem

96D-98B The defect in the argument for the second premiss of the first hypothetical syllogism

96D-97B Right opinion can be as useful for action as knowledge is.

97C-98B Difference between right opinion and knowledge

97D Meno asks about their difference

97D-98A Socrates makes know their difference (98A"until someone ties these down by consideration of the cause")

98B Socrates says that he knows and does not guess that knowledge and right opinion are different.

98C-D Socrates reasons by disjunctive or either-or syllogism that virtue is not by nature.

98D-99B Socrates reasons by disjunctive syllogism that good men direct by right opinion

98D-99B The argument

98D-E Second premiss

99A First premiss (either-or statement)

99A-B Conclusion drawn

99B Corollary: why good men cannot teach

99C-d Right opinion is inspired by the gods.

99E-100B Epilogue or afterword

99E Restatement of probable conclusion to the question

100A But if someone could teach virtue, he would be pre-eminent

100B We will not be sure of these things until after we know what virtue is.

100B Socrates asks Meno to calm Anytus for the good of Athens

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