Audio1

The School of Athens depicts the top mathematicians, philosophers, and scientists of ancient times coming together to exchange ideas and learn from each other. Despite living in different eras, they convene under one roof in this painting. Raphael paints the School of Athens in the Signing Room in Vatican Palace between 1509-11 for Pope Julius II. In this wall painting he identifies many of the most famous philosophers in Ancient Greece and in 16th-century Rome.

Audio2

Their eyes face each other and seem to challenge each other. Plato’s finger pointing to the sky, referring to the theory of one of his dialogues of a higher reality. We can see the palm of Aristotle’s palm facing down towards the ground, to show a grounded reality. To emphasize the contrast, Raphael dressed them in reversed colors. Plato wears a blue tunic and a red cloak, while Aristotle is in a red robe and blue drape. But in the end, and in spite of an antagonistic approach, each one seeks the same thing: the truth of existence.

Audio3

While Alexander visited Athens, many philosophers came to meet him, offering congratulations on his election. However, Diogenes of Sinope, residing in Corinth at the time, showed little regard for Alexander. Instead of paying respects, he remained in the suburb of Cranium, basking in the sunlight.

Observing the crowd around him, Diogenes reluctantly acknowledged Alexander's presence. When asked if he needed anything, Diogenes replied, "Yes, I would like you to move, you're blocking the sun."