

Aristotle was born in 384 BCE in Stagira, a small town in northern Greece. His father was a physician to the king of Macedon, which exposed Aristotle to medicine and the natural sciences at a young age. This early influence shaped his lifelong interest in biology and observation.

At the age of 17, Aristotle went to Athens to study at Plato's Academy, where he remained for about 20 years. Although he respected Plato, he disagreed with his teacher on several key ideas, especially Plato's Theory of Forms. Aristotle was more concerned with studying the physical world.

After leaving the Academy, Aristotle traveled and became a tutor to Alexander the Great, one of history's greatest conquerors. This gave him influence over a future world leader, though Aristotle himself remained focused on philosophy and science.

In 335 BCE, he returned to Athens and founded his own school, the Lyceum. Unlike Plato's Academy, which focused heavily on abstract philosophy, the Lyceum emphasized observation, classification, and practical studies of the natural world.

One of Aristotle's most famous ideas is the concept of the Golden Mean — the belief that virtue lies between extremes. For example, courage is the balance between cowardice and recklessness. This idea shaped his entire approach to ethics.

Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* is one of his most influential works. In it, he argues that the ultimate goal of life is *eudaimonia*, often translated as "happiness" or "flourishing." He believed people achieve this through virtue, reason, and purposeful living.

Another of his famous quotes is: "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all." For Aristotle, education was not just about logic or facts, but about forming moral character and guiding emotions toward virtue.

Aristotle also made major contributions to science. He studied animals, plants, and the human body, attempting to classify them. While not all of his scientific conclusions were correct, his method of careful observation was groundbreaking.

In logic, Aristotle created the syllogism, a system of deductive reasoning. For example: "All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore, Socrates is mortal." This structured way of reasoning influenced philosophy and science for centuries.

He also wrote on politics, arguing that humans are political animals by nature. He believed the purpose of the state was to help citizens live virtuous lives. Education, therefore, was not just personal but also civic, preparing people for responsible citizenship.

One of his practical insights was that habits shape character. He believed people become virtuous by practicing virtue repeatedly, just as musicians become skilled through practice. This made education a lifelong process of shaping both mind and character.

Aristotle's influence is enormous. His works shaped medieval Islamic, Christian, and Jewish philosophy. He was considered "The Philosopher" for centuries, and his ideas about ethics, politics, science, and education continue to shape how we think about knowledge and human purpose today.