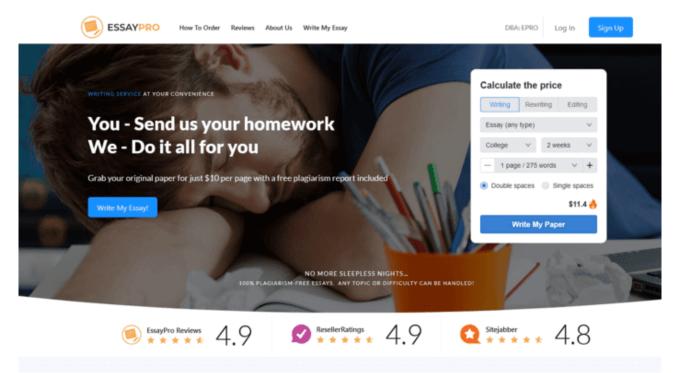
## **Recollection in Plato's Phaedo and Meno**



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Recollection in Plato's Phaedo and Meno

As the earliest philosopher from whom we have written texts, Plato is often misrepresented as merely reproducing Socratic rhetoric. In Meno, one of the first Platonic dialogues, Plato offers his own unique philosophical theory, infused with his <u>mentor</u>'s brilliant sophistry.

Amidst discussing whether or not virtue can be taught, <u>Meno</u> poses a difficult paradox: How can one be <u>virtuous</u>, or seek virtue, when one cannot know what it is? "How will you aim to search for something you do not know at all?" (Plato, Meno, 80d). From this question, Plato purposes a solution, that knowledge must be recollected from the soul. When the soul enters the world of space and time, Plato suggests, it carries some prior knowledge of forms; that is to say, the soul "remembers" its knowledge of unchangeable truths. (Meno, 81c-d).

Thus follows the conclusion that education cannot teach knowledge, but rather aids a student to recall what the soul already knows. Plato notes, however, that although the body is capable of recollecting knowledge (of forms), it is...

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