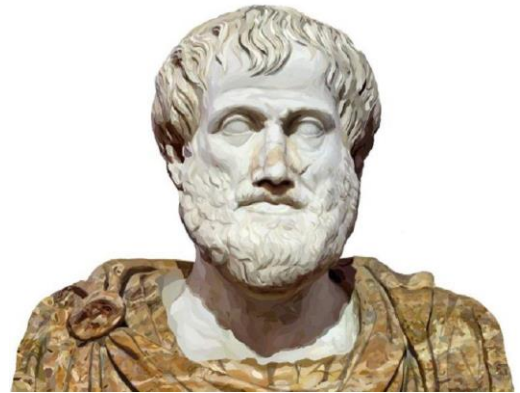


From Aristotle's *Politics*, Book III Written 350 B.C.E.

Who is Aristotle?

Aristotle was an Athenian philosopher, whose work remains foundational to the Western philosophical tradition. Aristotle lived from 384 BCE to 322 BCE, and in his lifetime, he explored philosophy, literature, mathematics, and the natural sciences, among seemingly endless other topics. He taught at the Lyceum in Athens, and his institution came to be known as the Peripatetic school, as Aristotle would walk while he lectured to his pupils. *Politics* is Aristotle's most complete surviving treatise on political philosophy.



What is a Citizen?

We may say, first, that a citizen is not a citizen just because he lives in a certain place, for resident aliens and slaves share in the place; nor is he a citizen who has no legal right except that of suing and being sued; for this right may be enjoyed by anyone under the provisions of a treaty. The citizens whom we are seeking to define is a citizen in the strictest sense, against whom no such exception can be taken, and his special characteristic is that he shares in the administration of justice, and in offices. He who has the power to take part in the deliberative or judicial administration of any state is said by us to be citizens of that state; and, speaking generally, a state is a body of citizens sufficing for the purposes of life.

What are the Virtues of a Good Citizen?

There is a point nearly allied to the preceding: Whether the virtue of a good man and a good citizen is the same or not. But, before entering on this discussion, we must certainly first obtain some general notion of the virtue of the citizen. Like the sailor, the citizen is a member of a community. Now, sailors have different functions, for one of them is a rower, another a pilot, and a third a look-out man, a fourth is described by some similar terms; and while the precise definition of each individual's virtue applies exclusively to him, there is, at the same time, a common definition applicable to them all. For they have all of them a common object, which is safety in navigation. Similarly, one citizen differs from another, but the salvation of the community is the common business of them all. This community is the constitution; the virtue of the citizen must therefore be relative to the constitution of which he is a member.

