Wisdom can be defined as the knowledge of what is right and true. The ancient Greeks discussed, debated, and studied wisdom. This is called philosophy. The word philosophy comes from a Greek term meaning "the love of wisdom."

The Greeks believed they could become wise by using reason. Reason is the ability to think clearly. Greek philosophers developed logic, a step-by-step method of using reason to think through a problem. A philosopher named Socrates challenged the leaders of Athens by asking his students to use reason and logic instead of following the directions of the leaders of Athens.

Socrates was a retired stonecutter. As a young man he fought in the Peloponnesian War and served in the boule, but he devoted the last years of his life to philosophy. Socrates believed that we all could find truth by thinking logically and trusting our inner voices. Socrates told his students that "wisdom begins in wonder."

Socrates did not teach in a school. The old philosopher drifted around Athens, engaging his students in arguments about justice, bravery, and ethics. Socrates taught by asking questions that forced his students to use logic. When teachers ask questions that encourage students to draw conclusions, they are using the "Socratic method" of teaching. A priest called the Oracle of Delphi pronounced Socrates the wisest man in Greece. Socrates concluded that while others professed knowledge they did not have, Socrates knew how little he knew. Socrates asked many questions, but he gave few answers. He often denied knowing the answers to the questions he asked.

Socrates did not write any books because he believed in the superiority of rhetoric over writing. Rhetoric is speech that is used to persuade someone. What we know about Socrates comes mostly from his student, Plato. Plato wrote down his teacher's ideas in a series of dialogues. A dialogue is a conversation between two people.

Athens had recently lost the Peloponnesian War to Sparta, and the humiliated leaders of the polis did not want a critic like Socrates challenging their authority. Socrates called himself a "gadfly." A gadfly is a pest that bites livestock. Socrates tried to use his criticism of Athens to "sting" the polis into recovering the Golden Age that existed before the long war.

The Athenian leaders threatened to bring Socrates to trial on two charges. Socrates refused to honor the gods. He was also charged with corrupting the youth of Athens by teaching the young people to trust their own judgment instead of following the rules of the city leaders. Most Athenians expected the seventy-year-old Socrates to leave Athens before his arrest, but the old philosopher remained in Athens, stood trial, and was found guilty.

Socrates refused to participate in a plan to escape from prison. The philosopher calmly accepted his death by drinking from a cup of poison hemlock, the customary practice of execution of his time. Socrates believed that he must obey the law, even if he disagreed with it.

**Answer in complete sentences**

1. What is philosophy? What does the term philosophy mean?  

2. What is reason? What is logic?

*This is a higher order learning question. You must answer the question to the best of your ability, but any reasonable answer will be graded as correct.*
Fill in the Blanks

The study of wisdom is called **p__i__o__o__hy**. Wisdom is the k__o__l__d__e of what is __i__ht and true. The ancient Greeks believed they could attain wisdom by using r__a__on. Reason is the ability to t__i__k clearly. The Greeks developed a step-by-step method of using reason they called l__g__c.

Socrates was a p__i__o__o__h__r who taught his students to think l__g__c__l__y and to t__u__t their i__n__r voices because “w__s__om begins in w__n__er.” Socrates and his students drifted through A__h__ns discussing j__s__i__e, bravery and piety. The old p__i__o__o__h__r taught by asking q__e__t__o__s that e__c__u__a__t__e his s__u__e__ts to use l__g__c. We call this method of teaching the “S__c__a__ic method.”

The l__a__e__s of Athens threatened to bring S__c__a__es to trial for *t__a__h__ng his students to t__u__t their own j__d__m__nt. Athens had recently lost the P__l__p__i__n War to S__a__ta and did not want a “g__d__ly” challenging their a__t__o__i__y. The leaders expected S__c__a__es to leave A__h__ns, but the 70-year-old p__i__o__o__h__r stood t__i__l and was found g__i__ty. Socrates accepted his d__a__h by calmly drinking from a cup of poison h__m__o__k.

**Answer in complete sentences**

3. What is logic?

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4. What did Socrates mean when he said, “wisdom begin in wonder”? 

__________________________________________________________

5. The text states that “Socrates knew how little he knew.” What does that phrase mean?

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6. Write a message to a parent, teacher, or friend where using your rhetorical skills. (You do not have to be concerned about a topic sentence or a conclusion.)

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7. Name a person from today or the recent past who challenged society by asking uncomfortable questions. (You may need to ask your parent for help with this question.)

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