THREE MINUTE PHILOSOPHY is an animated web series designed to explain ideas in a way that even your Mum can understand them. Each video will explore the ideas of one of the famous philosophers who made a huge impact on the tradition of thought in approximately three minutes. We're working chronologically, starting with the Presocratics and then moving on to Plato, Aristotle, and the Hellenistic philosophers.

THE PRESOCRATICS

These guys tried to figure out how the world worked back in the really old days before Socrates came along.

HERACLITUS AND PARMENIDES

Two guys who butted heads in really ancient Greece about the nature of time and change. Heraclitus thought that everything was fluid and in constant flux while Parmenides believed in the unchanging nature of reality. They didn't know it yet but they were laying the groundwork for a much later argument about something called determinism.

CLASSICAL AND HELLENISTIC PHILOSOPHY

Greece during and after Socrates, and before the Romans pushed in and ruined everything. Plato and Aristotle laid the foundation for literally all the philosophy that would happen for the next thousand and a half years or so.

PLATO

Pretty much the most influential philosopher of all time. Best friends with Socrates, he revamped the Socratic method, wrote the Republic, and developed the theory of forms with which he posited that we were all living in a metaphorical world of forms. His philosophy was unknown to us because we were all too fat and lazy to turn around. Also, he had some objectional political beliefs.

EMPEDOCLES

Certifiable nutcase, wannabe cult leader, and unknowingly the precursor to the cult of personality. Empedocles may have thought that he was actually a god, and that his butt for attention, but oddly enough he formulated a somewhat workable, if not entirely convincing, theory of the universe. Spoiler alert: he died in a volcano.

EPICURUS AND ZENO

Epicurus and Zeno were the competing leaders of the two most influential moral philosophies: Epicureanism and Stoicism. While Epicurus preached that you should try to be...
minimum you need to survive, the Stoics allowed for a little more wiggle room by harboring unrealistic expectations. Neither lives up to the Charlie Sheen recipe if lived with what they had at the time.