

IB Theory of Knowledge

What is TOK?

(Adapted from IBO.org)

Theory of knowledge (TOK) plays a special role in the International Baccalaureate® (IB) Diploma Programme (DP), by providing an opportunity for students to reflect on the nature of knowledge, and on how we know what we claim to know.

It is one of the components of the DP core and is mandatory for all students. The TOK requirement is central to the educational philosophy of the DP.

TOK aims to make students aware of the interpretative nature of knowledge, including personal ideological biases – whether these biases are retained, revised or rejected.

It offers students and their teachers the opportunity to:

- reflect critically on diverse ways of knowing and on areas of knowledge
- consider the role and nature of knowledge in their own culture, in the cultures of others and in the wider world.

In addition, TOK prompts students to:

- be aware of themselves as thinkers, encouraging them to become more acquainted with the complexity of knowledge
- recognize the need to act responsibly in an increasingly interconnected but uncertain world.

TOK also provides coherence for the student, by linking academic subject areas as well as transcending them. It therefore demonstrates the ways in which the student can apply their knowledge with greater awareness and credibility.

*11th
Grade*



MANAGEBAC INSTRUCTIONS

In this class we will use ManageBac to track your progress through the IB program.

ManageBac Login:

URL: Wolfson.Managebac.com

Username: Your provided email address

Password: Wolfson1 (unless you created your own).

You are expected to use Managebac to turn in IAs, to log your CAS hours, and to communicate with your IB teachers throughout the duration of the IB program.

The Nature of TOK

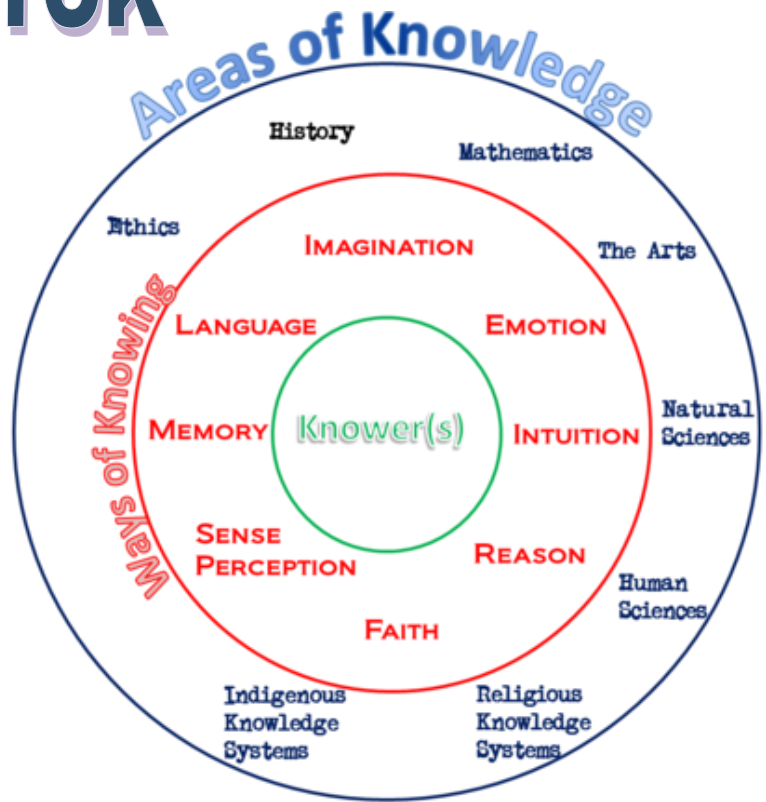
The theory of knowledge course explores knowledge from different perspective. The course is organized around the different Areas of Knowledge and Ways of Knowing, as designated by the International Baccalaureate Programme.

The Areas of Knowledge include:

- Ethics
- Natural Science
- Human Science
- Mathematics
- History
- Art
- Indigenous Knowledge Systems
- Religious Knowledge Systems

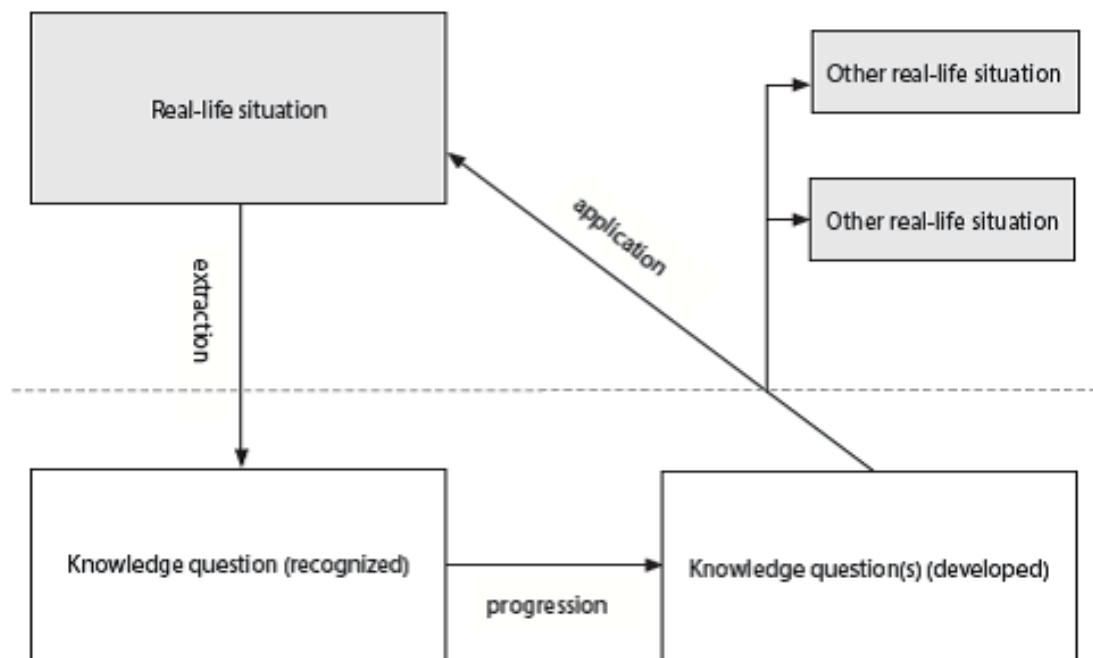
The Ways of Knowing Include:

- Language
- Sense Perception
- Emotion
- Reason
- Memory
- Intuition
- Faith
- Imagination



Developing Knowledge Issues and Questions

The TOK course depends on the development of strong knowledge questions to explore knowledge issues. The following diagram is used to facilitate knowledge issue progressions:



Course Outline:

Please note that this is merely the anticipated outline, and that this outline is subject to change. Please defer to in-class instructions regarding all assignments.

Quarter 1

Introduction to the IB Core: TOK, CAS, and the Extended Essay
 Planning CAS hours
 The Extended Essay Proposal Project (Summer Assignment Review)
 Introduction to Knowledge Issues
 How to identify and analyze real life situations
 Analysis through text: *Sophie's World*

Quarter 2

Completion of *Sophie's World*
 Introduction to the AOKs
 Ethics
 History
 Starting the Extended Essay
 CAS check-in

Quarter 3

Human Science
 Natural Science
 Mathematics
 Indigenous Knowledge Systems

Quarter 4

Art
 Religious Knowledge Systems
 The TOK Presentation

Grading Scale:

30%	Journals	Includes completion of daily warm-ups and all classwork assignments completed in independent journals. Journals are graded once per 9 week period and are based on completion. It is your responsibility to maintain your journal throughout the Quarter.
25%	Formal Writing	This includes completion of extended essay components, as well as prescribed title responses and any other formal writing assignment assigned. Please note guidelines regarding formal writing requirements.
25%	Classwork / Homework	Including any assignment done in class that is not completed in your independent journal, as well as any presentation or other assigned homework task.
20%	Participation	Participation is a mandatory component of the TOK course, and attendance is necessary for full participation credit.

Late Work Policy: To be successful in this course it is imperative that you keep up with course assignments. Assignments are designed to be completed in a specified order, and are spaced out intentionally. Falling behind on one assignment can lead to difficulty with future units.

For this reason, late work is unacceptable. However, as each assignment is designed to help you gain understanding and practice essential rhetorical skills, you are encouraged to complete assignments and assignments will be accepted until the final quarterly deadline.

All late work is subject to a 20% grade deduction and must be accompanied by a make-up assignment.

Quarterly Late Work Deadlines:

October 6, 2017

December 15, 2017

March 9, 2018

May 25, 2018

****NOTE****

These deadlines are firm, regardless of A/B day schedule.

Make Up Assignments

You must complete a make-up assignment as described below and turn it in with your missing work to receive credit for any late assignments.

ALL MAKE UP ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE HAND-WRITTEN!

(NO TYPED OR ELECTRONIC ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED)

Framework with Analysis

Using one of the mediums below to identify a real life situation, complete a knowledge framework and then write a point-counterpoint response to your identified knowledge issue.

You may find your RLS from one of the following sources:

- Podcast
- Newspaper article (preferably op-ed)
- Ted talk
- Historical document or speech

Your sources must be cited with your response.

I may provide additional make-up work assignments and will provide details regarding those assignments in class.

Plagiarism Policy: Plagiarism is using another person's thoughts and accomplishments without proper acknowledgment or documentation. It is an unconscionable offense and a serious breach of the honor code. In keeping with the policy, students will receive a zero for the plagiarized work.

Writing Assignment Guidelines: Planning and revision are integral components to the writing process. For this reason, ALL formal writing assignments must be turned in with evident planning. An outline, a hand-written rough draft, and a typed final copy must be turned in for full credit on all FORMAL writing assignments. In-class / timed writing assignments will be noted as such and will not be subject to this requirement.

Understanding TOK: The Theory of Knowledge course is a unique course in epistemology undertaking the reasoning and logic behind why and how we learn, as well as the nature of what we consider to be knowledge. Much of the information discussed in this class is subjective, and therefore entirely dependent upon sound argument. As a result, this class is heavily reliant on discussion and the ongoing evolution of ideas. Participation in class discussions is expected and mandatory.

Course Objectives:

1. Analyze critically knowledge claims, their underlying assumptions and their implications
2. Generate questions, explanations, conjectures, hypotheses, alternative ideas and possible solutions in response to knowledge issues concerning areas of knowledge, ways of knowing and students' own experience as learners
3. Demonstrate an understanding of different perspectives on knowledge issues
4. Draw links and make effective comparisons between different approaches to knowledge issues that derive from areas of knowledge, ways of knowing, theoretical positions and cultural values
5. Demonstrate an ability to give a personal, self-aware response to a knowledge issue
6. Formulate and communicate ideas clearly with due regard for accuracy and academic honesty

Assessment and Grading Criteria: The Theory of Knowledge course has two primary components, a presentation on a knowledge issue of choice (internal assessment), and an argumentative written response to a prescribed title, provided by IB during your senior year (external assessment).

All TOK assessments are graded based on the following criteria:

A Pertinent knowledge issues are explored thoroughly and linked effectively to areas of knowledge and/ or ways of knowing. There is strong evidence of a personal exploration of knowledge issues, including consideration of different perspectives. Arguments are clearly developed and well supported by effective concrete examples; counterclaims and implications are explored.

B Pertinent knowledge issues are explained and linked to areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing. There is some evidence of a personal exploration of knowledge issues, including consideration of different perspectives. Arguments are partially developed and supported by effective concrete examples; counterclaims are explored and some implications identified.

C Some pertinent knowledge issues are described and linked to areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing. There is limited evidence of a personal exploration of knowledge issues; some different perspectives are described but not explored. Arguments are developed to a limited extent and supported by examples; counterclaims are identified.

D Some pertinent knowledge issues are identified with only superficial links to areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing. There is simplistic personal exploration of knowledge issues and minimal reference to different perspectives. Arguments are not developed and not supported by effective examples.

E Demonstrates little or no evidence of knowledge issues

Please note, all class assignments will be graded in line with the above grade descriptors, unless otherwise noted. Presentations and prescribed title responses will be graded in line with the rubrics on the following page.

TOK Assessment Instruments

TOK presentation assessment instrument

Do(es) the presenter(s) succeed in showing how TOK concepts can have practical application?					
Level 5 Excellent 9–10	Level 4 Very good 7–8	Level 3 Satisfactory 5–6	Level 2 Basic 3–4	Level 1 Elementary 1–2	Irrelevant 0
The presentation is focused on a <i>well-formulated knowledge question</i> that is <i>clearly connected</i> to a <i>specified real-life situation</i> . The knowledge question is <i>effectively explored</i> in the context of the real-life situation, using <i>convincing arguments</i> , with <i>investigation of different perspectives</i> . The <i>outcomes of the analysis</i> are shown to be <i>significant to the chosen real-life situation and to others</i> .	The presentation is focused on a <i>knowledge question</i> that is <i>connected to a specified real-life situation</i> . The knowledge question is <i>explored</i> in the context of the real-life situation, using <i>clear arguments</i> , with <i>acknowledgment of different perspectives</i> . The <i>outcomes of the analysis</i> are shown to be <i>significant to the real-life situation</i> .	The presentation identifies a <i>knowledge question</i> that has <i>some connection</i> to a <i>specified real-life situation</i> . The knowledge question is <i>explored</i> in the context of the real-life situation, using <i>some adequate arguments</i> . There is <i>some awareness of the significance of the outcomes of the analysis</i> .	The presentation identifies a <i>knowledge question</i> and a <i>real-life situation</i> , although the <i>connection between them may not be convincing</i> . There is <i>some attempt to explore the knowledge question</i> . There is <i>limited awareness of the significance of the outcomes of the analysis</i> .	The presentation describes a <i>real-life situation without reference to any knowledge question</i> , or treats an abstract knowledge question <i>without connecting it to any specific real-life situation</i> .	The presentation does not reach the standard described by levels 1–5.
Some possible characteristics					
Sophisticated Discerning Insightful Compelling Lucid	Credible Analytical Organized Pertinent Coherent	Relevant Adequate Acceptable Predictable	Underdeveloped Basic Unbalanced Superficial Derivative Rudimentary	Ineffective Unconnected Incoherent Formless	

TOK essay assessment instrument

Does the student present an appropriate and cogent analysis of knowledge questions in discussing the title?						
Aspect	Level 5 Excellent 9–10	Level 4 Very good 7–8	Level 3 Satisfactory 5–6	Level 2 Basic 3–4	Level 1 Elementary 1–2	Irrelevant 0
Understanding knowledge questions	There is a <i>sustained focus on knowledge questions</i> connected to the prescribed title and are well chosen— <i>developed</i> with <i>investigation of different perspectives</i> and <i>linked effectively to areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing</i> .	There is a <i>focus on knowledge questions</i> connected to the prescribed title— <i>developed</i> with <i>acknowledgment of different perspectives</i> and <i>linked to areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing</i> .	There is a <i>focus on some knowledge questions</i> connected to the prescribed title—with <i>some development and linking to areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing</i> .	<i>Some knowledge questions</i> that are <i>connected</i> to the prescribed title are considered, but the essay is largely <i>descriptive</i> , with <i>superficial or limited links to areas of knowledge and/or ways of knowing</i> .	The essay has only very limited relevance to the prescribed title—relevant points are <i>descriptive</i> .	The essay does not reach a standard described by levels 1–5 or is not a response to one of the prescribed titles on the list for the current session.
Quality of analysis of knowledge questions	<i>Arguments</i> are <i>clear</i> , supported by <i>real-life examples</i> and are <i>effectively evaluated</i> ; <i>counterclaims</i> are extensively <i>explored</i> ; <i>implications</i> are <i>drawn</i> .	<i>Arguments</i> are <i>clear</i> , supported by <i>real-life examples</i> and are <i>evaluated</i> ; some <i>counterclaims</i> are identified and <i>explored</i> .	<i>Some arguments</i> are <i>clear</i> and supported by <i>examples</i> ; some <i>counterclaims</i> are <i>identified</i> .	<i>Arguments</i> are offered but are <i>unclear and/or not supported by effective examples</i> .	<i>Assertions</i> are offered but are <i>not supported</i> .	
Some possible characteristics						
	Cogent Accomplished Discerning Individual Lucid Insightful Compelling	Pertinent Relevant Thoughtful Analytical Organized Credible Coherent	Typical Acceptable Mainstream Adequate Competent	Underdeveloped Basic Superficial Derivative Rudimentary Limited	Ineffective Descriptive Incoherent Formless	

IB EXTENDED ESSAY

During your 11th grade year, you will also be expected to begin your IB extended essay, an independent research project of a maximum of 4,000 words. The EE writing process will be facilitated during your Theory of Knowledge class. However, the EE is not a component of the TOK course, and so only minimal class time will be appointed to the EE project.

You are expected to work with your mentor and to keep up with the required pace as you complete your extended essay.

The extended essay is submitted to IB during March of your 12th grade year.

Extended Essay Grade Descriptors:

A Demonstrates sharp focus and good contextualization of the topic through very good knowledge and understanding; a high level of organization and an effective ability to assemble evidence/data/information in an intelligent and academic way facilitating analysis and evaluation, supported throughout by excellent communication, using language appropriate to the subject; clear insight and understanding leading to evidence of independent thinking; consistent, persuasive and effective argument.

B Demonstrates focus and contextualization of the topic through good knowledge and understanding; clear organization and structure and an ability to assemble evidence/data/information in an intelligent and academic way facilitating analysis and evaluation, supported throughout by good communication using language appropriate to the subject; some evidence of independent thought; some persuasive and effective argument.

C Demonstrates a satisfactory focus and partial contextualization of the topic through satisfactory knowledge and understanding; some degree of organization and structure and some ability to assemble relevant evidence/data/information, supported throughout by satisfactory communication, generally using language appropriate to the subject; work that is largely descriptive and with limited argument/analysis/evaluation.

D Demonstrates limited focus and contextualization of the topic which shows limited knowledge and understanding; limited organization and structure and a limited ability to assemble evidence/data/information, hindered by unsatisfactory communication which generally does not use language appropriate to the subject; work that is largely descriptive with little evidence of argument.

E Demonstrates a lack of focus and lack of contextualization of the topic which shows minimal knowledge and understanding; minimal organization and structure and an inability to assemble appropriate evidence/data/information, hindered by unclear communication which does not use language appropriate to the subject; work that is ineffectively descriptive or irrelevant to the topic; no evidence of argument.

Successful completion of the IB Theory of Knowledge class together with the IB Extended Essay will provide you with additional points towards earning the IB diploma. You will earn those points based on the following scoring matrix:

		Theory of knowledge					
		Excellent A	Good B	Satisfactory C	Mediocre D	Elementary E	Not submitted
Extended essay	Excellent A	3	3	2	2	1 + Failing condition*	N
	Good B	3	2	1	1	Failing condition*	N
	Satisfactory C	2	1	1	0	Failing condition*	N
	Mediocre D	2	1	0	0	Failing condition*	N
	Elementary E	1 + Failing condition*	Failing condition*	Failing condition*	Failing condition*	Failing condition*	N
	Not submitted	N	N	N	N	N	N

The CAS Program

Creativity * Activity * Service

The three strands of CAS, which are often interwoven with particular activities, are characterized as follows:

Creativity – arts, and other experiences that involve creative thinking.

Activity – physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle, complementing academic work elsewhere in the DP.

Service – an unpaid and voluntary exchange that has a learning benefit for the student. The rights, dignity and autonomy of all those involved are respected.

In order to demonstrate these concepts, students are required to undertake a CAS Project. The project challenges students to:

- show initiative
- demonstrate perseverance
- develop skills such as collaboration, problem solving and decision making.

CAS hours are logged through ManageBac. You are responsible for 150 CAS hours, including one CAS project. You are expected to engage in CAS activities from August of your Junior year to May of your Senior year. CAS is a compulsory requirement of the IB program.