
What is the TOK Essay?

Aims

- To understand the nature of a TOK essay?
 - To become familiar with the TOK assessment instrument for the essay.
 - To be able to “unpack” a TOK to show clear understanding of what is being asked?
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What is the teacher's job?

Read the Role of the Teacher on page 53.

What is my role?

Write my job description on the whiteboard.

What is a TOK Essay?

“The titles ask **generic** questions about knowledge and are **cross-disciplinary** in nature. They may be answered with reference to any part or parts of the TOK course, to specific disciplines, or with reference to opinions gained about knowledge both inside and outside the classroom.” (TOK Guide pg.52)

A TOK essay is: (pg.52)

- not meant to be treated only in the abstract, or on the basis of external authorities.
 - should express the conclusions reached by students through a sustained consideration of knowledge questions.
 - should contain claims and counterclaims
 - main ideas should be illustrated with varied and effective examples that show the approach consciously taken by the student.
 - should demonstrate the student's ability to link knowledge questions to AOKs and WOKs. (relevant and not forced)
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Nuts and bolts...

- Do not alter the prescribed title in any way.
 - Double spaced and size 12 font.
 - Should not have a title page, name, school, codes
 - Max 1600 words. (Page 64)
 - Over the word count lose 1 point.
 - Bibliography and citations are a must.
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Planning and progress form

- You must have this form complete to help ensure academic honesty.
 - It must be a running record and you must show evidence of your progress.
 - Your final essay has to show it was as a result of this process, not a last minute essay that I have never seen any evidence of.
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Three main official interactions.

1. The first interaction....
2. The second interaction...
3. The thirds interaction....

Nature of other interactions...

The assessment instrument....

The assessment instrument is based on two main criteria:

1. Understanding knowledge questions
2. Quality of analysis of knowledge questions

Detailed description found on page 61 of the guide.

Global impression marking.

Holistic marking based on the two criteria:

9-10 band:

Cogent

Accomplished

Discerning

Individual

Lucid

Insightful

Compelling

Adjectives describing your essay:

Cogent	Clear, logical, well structured, convincing.
Accomplished	Shows depth of understanding of the question as well as TOK.
Discerning	Shows good judgement in selection of content.
Individual	Demonstrates engagement on a personal level not just a summary recount of source material
Lucid	Expressed clearly and easy to understanding.
Insightful	A perceptive understanding of the demands of the PT.
Compelling	Believable and well supported, does not cause the reader to doubt.

Unpacking the prescribed title

Ethical judgements limit the methods available in the production of knowledge in both the arts and the natural sciences. Discuss.

Process:

1. Identify and understand key terms and concepts.
 2. Ensure understanding of the what the PT is asking you to do.
 3. Reword the title (in your mind) to ensure you understand it.
 4. Thinks of natural links to TOK
 5. Relevant examples including personal ones.
 6. Can you respond to the PT effectively?
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Identify key words and concepts.

Ethical judgements limit the methods available in the production of knowledge in both the arts and the natural sciences. Discuss.

Lets 'unpack' the essay...

Examiners are to consider three main things regarding your work:

1. Have you understood the PT.
 2. Have you understood the knowledge issues that are explicit and implicit in it, and/or linked the title to knowledge issues that arise naturally from it
 3. Have you developed and supported a comprehensive and cogent point of view about the topic and appropriate knowledge issues
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Deliberately very large in scope

- A significant part of the process is for you to narrow down potential material from almost infinite potential and develop a clear and concise analytical essay.
 - This is probably the most difficult task for students.
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Identify key words and concepts.

Ethical judgements limit the methods available in the production of knowledge in both the arts and the natural sciences. Discuss.

To unpack an essay you must:

1. Understand the nature of the PT.
 2. Extract potential Knowledge Questions and select a relevant few for your essay.
 3. Determine how you are going to approach the title.
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The Nature of the PT.

- The title requires consideration of the ways in which ethical judgements may have an effect on the production of knowledge by limiting the methods available.
 - The two AoKs must be addressed in a balanced manner.
 - Makes a complex set of demands on the candidates. They have to characterize ethical judgments, they need to examine the methods available in the production of both knowledge in the natural sciences and the arts, and then discuss the possibility that these methods are limited by ethical considerations according to their understanding of ethics.
 - The title affirms that ethical judgements do limit methods in the production of knowledge in both areas, but candidates will be expected to discuss the extent to which they support or reject that claim.
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Knowledge Questions

Your task in small groups.

1. Review what makes a good KQ.
 2. Brainstorm in small what you think are 5 great KQ that you could extract from this PT.
 3. Generate our class list.
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KQs Identified by the IB.

- What counts as an ethical judgment?
 - What counts as a method in the natural sciences and in the arts?
 - On what foundations should ethical judgements about methods in the natural sciences and the arts rest?
 - Is there more agreement in the natural sciences or the arts regarding what is ethical?
 - Is it the practitioners in the natural sciences and the arts or is it the societies in which they operate which exerts a greater influence on what is ethically acceptable in these areas of knowledge?
 - Are there circumstances in which the value of the products of the natural sciences or the arts overrides any concerns as to how these products were arrived at?
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Approaching the title....

Lets see an example

Marking instrument....

You are now an examiner...
