**Essay Types and ToK related terms**

**Knowledge Issues**

Knowledge issues arises from knowledge claims. We makes knowledge claims every time we claim to know something. There are many types of claims, general or specific, concrete or abstract. You may state that you know where the capital city of a country is, or you may make an implicit knowledge claim by applying for a visa in order to visit that city. An example of a general knowledge claim is “A force of attraction exists between any two material objects” or the debateable claim “Modern art is less meaningful than Renaissance art”.

We search out new knowledge claims. They may be personal (what career would suit me best?) or related to public policy (what policies wold best balance the need for economic development in third world countries and the need to protect the environment?)

ToK is not designed primarily to discover new knowledge claims, but rather with examining knowledge claims and testing their validity. Any issue that arises when we do this is a knowledge issue.

Essay Types

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| Type 1 | Type 2 | Type 3 | Type 4 |
| Focus on a ToK term and apply across AoKs and WoKs. Ex:“When historians, mathematicians and scientists say that they have explained something, are they using the word explain in the same way?Term: explainAoK: math, history, natural science | Focus on AoK and compare/contrast between AoKs or across WoKs. Ex: It is often claimed that scientific results must be replicable. Is this possible or desirable in other areas of knowledge? | Focus on a WoK and require comparison with other Woks or AoKs generally involving a ToK related term. Ex: Some people claim that religious beliefs can be neither justified nor refuted by reason. However, while sometimes this claim is used as a reason for rejecting religious beliefs, at other times it is used to conclude that these beliefs are established by faith. To what extent is faith a legitimate basis for knowledge claims in religion and different areas of knowledge? | Focus on an example, quote or general statement to be explored referencing WoKs, AoKs and ToK related terms. Ex: “There are many different authorities including academics politicians, global organizations and companies who make knowledge claims. As an experienced ToK student, what criteria do you use to distinguish between knowledge, opinion and propaganda?” |

Your answer is likely to be a definite answer but recognize complexities with exceptions, such as “yes in some cases, but not in others”. You should never respond with “who knows?” or “who cares?”

**ToK Related Terms**

Characteristics of Truth Independent, public, eternal

Knowledge Justified (logic, empirical evidence, memory, authority) True (public, independent, eternal) Belief (you must believe in it yourself)

A priori knowledge a proposition that can be known to be true independent of experience

A posteriori knowledge a proposition that is known to be true from experience

Knowledge by Acquaintance Knowledge that MAY be private, subjective, unexpressed, convincing, trustworthy, and passionate; MAY arise from feelings, experience, and intuition; MAY determine behavior; may be "knowing how"

Knowledge by Description Knowledge that MUST be expressed, supported by evidence, believed, stated in propositions, be judged as true or false; MUST be "knowing that"

"Knowing that" Knowledge by Description; "If you can't say it, you don't know it"

"Knowing how" Knowledge by Acquaintance; "I know more than I can say"

Propositional Knowledge Knowledge that can be said to be true or false/that can be asserted or denied

Epistemic Certainty when a belief has the best possible grounds or evidence that could preclude all possible skepticism of the belief

Psychological Certainty The degree of confidence, conviction, belief a person has in some proposition; when the subject who has it is supremely convinced of its truth

Analytic Propositions a proposition that is true by definition

Synthetic Propositions any proposition that is not analytic/true by definition

Justification evidence/proof that a belief is true or reasonable; distinguished as good or bad by reliability

Belief the subjective requirement for knowledge; confidence in the truth or existence of something not immediately susceptible to rigorous proof

Opinion a personal belief or judgment that is not founded on proof or certainty

Determinism and Causality one theory leading to another; the idea that every event (behavior, cognition, action etc.) is determined by direct cause-and-effect; the idea that every event is necessitated by antecedent events and conditions together with the laws of nature

Universals repeatable or recurrent entities that can be instantiated or exemplified by many particular things; shared qualities, relations, or types

Metaphysics The branch of philosophy that examines the nature of reality, including the relationship between mind and matter, substance and attribute, fact and value; A priori speculation upon questions that are unanswerable to scientific observation, analysis, or experiment

Epistemology the study of how we know things; branch of philosophy concerned with the nature and scope (limitations) of knowledge

Philosophy the rational investigation of the truths and principles of being, knowledge, or conduct

Skepticism the disbelief in any claims of ultimate knowledge; doubt about the truth of something

Media (as a source) a source of second-hand knowledge; can be prone to biases and slants; criteria is usually bad news, extraordinary news, and relevant news

Authority (as a source of knowledge) also known as second-hand knowledge or knowledge by testimony; knowledge that is passed from one person to another with the source being cultural tradition, school, the Internet, expert opinions, or the news media; can be limited and fallible

Expert Opinion knowledge that is taken from people who are masters/specialists of a certain field; can be fallible/wrong

Second-hand Knowledge the communal sharing of knowledge for which one of the main sources is other people; allows for knowing more than just what our own experiences and resources allow

Empiricism a school of philosophy that has established that all knowledge is ultimately based on perceptual experience

Rationalism a school of philosophy that has established reason as the most important source of knowledge

Cause the basis or producer of an event, result, or consequence; seen in the fallacy "post hoc ergo propter hoc" in which the assumption is made that just because B follows A, A must be the cause of B when really there may just be a correlation

Levels of Knowledge the level of understanding of a subject, ranging from a superficial grasp to a good understanding to a complete mastery

Information data and facts gained through study, communication, research, instruction, etc. that comprises knowledge (for the most part)

Detail Particulars considered individually and in relation to a whole; small elements of an area of knowledge that can help in gaining a greater understanding

Context needed to gain a deeper understanding of an area of knowledge; the meaning of a word in a language can be partly determined by its relation to other words

Reason the mental powers concerned with forming conclusions, judgments, or inferences; three types are deductive, inductive, and informal--all of which are susceptible to fallacies and show that reasoning is not always reliable

Necessary Needed for a phenomenon to occur, but not, sufficient to guarantee the occurrence.

Sufficient This alone will guarantee the occurrence.

Problems of Knowledge "How do you know what you know" and "How can you be sure of what you know?"

Confirmation Bias a tendency to only notice the information that supports one's belief(s)

Subjective Truth a person's perspective or opinion, particular feelings, beliefs, and desires. It is often used casually to refer to unsubstantiated personal opinions, in contrast to knowledge and fact-based beliefs; personal truths about a person's being

Absolute/Objective Truth concerned with facts like for subject areas; truth independent of opinion; final and static

Relative Truth the belief that truth is dependent on a certain culture or language and not pertained to another. This truth and other truths are all held accountable because unlike absolute truth,one could say, "that's true for you, but not for me, but we are both still right"; relativism

Correspondence if a statement is true, it must correspond to a fact

Coherence if a statement is true, it must fit in with our overall set of beliefs

Pragmatic if a statement is true, it is useful or works in practice

Prima Facie evident without proof or reasoning at first appearance; obvious