



Katedralskolan Skara IB Diploma Programme



Theory of Knowledge (TOK) – Course Outline Version 2014-10-16

General course description

TOK is a course about critical thinking and inquiring into the process of knowing. It is a core element for all Diploma Programme students with 100 hours of class time. The TOK course examines how we know what we claim to know, by analysing **knowledge claims** and exploring **knowledge questions**. A knowledge claim is the assertion that we know something, or a statement about knowledge. A knowledge question is an open question about knowledge. A distinction is also made between **shared knowledge** and **personal knowledge**.

The TOK course identifies eight specific ways of knowing (WOKs). They are **language, sense perception, emotion, reason, imagination, faith, intuition, and memory**. The WOKs underlie the methodology of the areas of knowledge (AOKs), and provide a basis for personal knowledge.

Areas of knowledge (AOKs) are the specific branches of knowledge, with its distinct nature and different methods of gaining knowledge. TOK distinguishes between eight areas of knowledge: **mathematics, the natural sciences, the human sciences, the arts, history, ethics, religious knowledge systems, and indigenous knowledge systems**.

The **knowledge framework** is a device for exploring the areas of knowledge. It identifies the key characteristics of each area of knowledge by depicting each area as a complex system of interacting components.

There are two assessment tasks in the course: an **essay** and a **presentation**. The essay is externally assessed by the IB, is written on one of six prescribed titles, and has a maximum word limit in 1,600 words. The presentation is done individually or in a group, with a maximum group size of three. The presentation is assessed internally by the TOK teacher(s).



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Topics/options

- The Nature of Knowledge
 - Recognising Perspectives
 - The Nature of Knowledge
 - Kinds of Knowledge
- Ways of Knowing
 - Language
 - Sense perception
 - Emotion
 - Reason
 - Imagination
 - Faith
 - Intuition
 - Memory
- Areas of Knowing
 - Mathematics
 - The Natural Sciences
 - The Human Sciences
 - The Arts
 - History
 - Ethics
 - Religious Knowledge Systems
 - Indigenous Knowledge Systems



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Methods

The ideas and concepts in The Theory of Knowledge course are taught using a range of activities designed to encourage a secure and creative learning atmosphere. Discussion and the dissection of theories and opinions are common methods in use in almost every lesson. The appreciation of other opinions and beliefs, through constructive debate, is at the very core of the course. These skills are to be applied by the student, both collectively to general views, and on a personal level to their own beliefs. Challenging questions and situations are given, as group work, to explore the possible avenues that arise. Presentations are an active way of demonstrating these abilities and several are performed as the course progresses.

Assessment

Internal

The Theory of Knowledge presentation is assessed internally unless specified by the IBO. The presentation should demonstrate the ability to link real life situations to Theory of knowledge ideas and analysis.

External:

The Theory of Knowledge essay is assessed externally. The essay is limited to a maximum of 1600 words. Essay titles are set by the IBO and are designed to allow students to show their application of knowledge questions using theory of knowledge thinking.

Course material/Textbook

Theory of Knowledge for the IB Diploma, by Richard van de Lagemaat.

Teacher and email

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Further information

[Link to Diploma Programme Curriculum briefs](#)