

ToK 11 Fall Paper

The fall paper will combine ToK concepts and skills with what we have discussed regarding information literacy, technology and what we will discuss regarding knowledge and politics in unit three.

On page 40-41 of the IB ToK guide, 35 knowledge questions are listed that are central to the meaning of this course.

Earlier in this unit you looked at a list of 35 questions concerning technology that sought to examine our relationship with technology.

In the next unit we will examine how knowledge of current events is understood through the lens of politics.

This paper will have you conduct an exploration involving an intersection of all three.

Assignment

You will choose a question from the IB list, a question from those regarding technology, a specific technology and an issue of current concern. Your paper will then explore the two questions in the context of the issue and the chosen technology. Care should be taken in the selection of all four components, as you are not being asked to answer a series of questions, but rather to construct a single focused, coherent essay that brings all four elements together.

Details

The essay should be between 1000 and 1200 words in length and should be organized in essay format, with an introduction (which should introduce all four components and contain a clear, unified thesis), several body paragraphs and a conclusion.

Your observations should be supported with relevant, credible evidence and the sources you use should be vetted using the SIFT method discussed in class.

The paper should be formatted according to the THSSSWG.

Grading

You will turn in a draft of the paper. This draft should be complete, meet word count and fulfill all requirements laid out above. If the draft meets these requirements, the draft will receive full credit and will count as 10% of your semester grade. I will read the draft and comment on it. The draft and comments will be returned to you and you will then have a week to revise the essay based on both my individual comments and the general comments made in class. This revision will be submitted as the final draft and will be rigorously graded using the rubric provided in class. The final draft will count for 50% of your semester grade (as per the syllabus).

Due dates

Choice of two questions, technology and a current issue - Due Wednesday, November 10 to Teams

Draft:

Haydock return deadline (when you will get your paper back):

Final:

KQs from IB ToK guide

1. What counts as knowledge?
2. Are some types of knowledge more useful than others?
3. What features of knowledge have an impact on its reliability?
4. On what grounds might we doubt a claim?
5. What counts as good evidence for a claim?
6. How does the way that we organize or classify knowledge affect what we know?
7. What are the implications of having, or not having, knowledge?
8. To what extent is certainty attainable?
9. Are some types of knowledge less open to interpretation than others?
10. What challenges are raised by the dissemination and/or communication of knowledge?
11. Can new knowledge change established values or beliefs?
12. Is bias inevitable in the production of knowledge?
13. How can we know that current knowledge is an improvement upon past knowledge?
14. Does some knowledge belong only to particular communities of knowers?
15. What constraints are there on the pursuit of knowledge?
16. Should some knowledge not be sought on ethical grounds?
17. Why do we seek knowledge?
18. Are some things unknowable?
19. What counts as a good justification for a claim?
20. What is the relationship between personal experience and knowledge?
21. What is the relationship between knowledge and culture?
22. What role do experts play in influencing our consumption or acquisition of knowledge?
23. How important are material tools in the production or acquisition of knowledge?
24. How might the context in which knowledge is presented influence whether it is accepted or rejected?
25. How can we distinguish between knowledge, belief and opinion?
26. Does our knowledge depend on our interactions with other knowers?
27. Does all knowledge impose ethical obligations on those who know it?
28. To what extent is objectivity possible in the production or acquisition of knowledge?
29. Who owns knowledge?
30. What role does imagination play in producing knowledge about the world?
31. How can we judge when evidence is adequate?
32. What makes a good explanation?
33. How is current knowledge shaped by its historical development?
34. In what ways do our values affect our acquisition of knowledge?
35. In what ways do values affect the production of knowledge?

Questions concerning technology

1. What sort of person will the use of this technology make of me?
2. What habits will the use of this technology instill?
3. How will the use of this technology affect my experience of time?
4. How will the use of this technology affect my experience of place?
5. How will the use of this technology affect how I relate to other people?
6. How will the use of this technology affect how I relate to the world around me?
7. What practices will the use of this technology cultivate?
8. What practices will the use of this technology displace?
9. What will the use of this technology encourage me to notice?
10. What will the use of this technology encourage me to ignore?
11. What was required of other human beings so that I might be able to use this technology?
12. What was required of other creatures so that I might be able to use this technology?
13. What was required of the earth so that I might be able to use this technology?
14. Does the use of this technology bring me joy? [N.B. This was years before I even heard of Marie Kondo!]
15. Does the use of this technology arouse anxiety?
16. How does this technology empower me? At whose expense?
17. What feelings does the use of this technology generate in me toward others?
18. Can I imagine living without this technology? Why, or why not?
19. How does this technology encourage me to allocate my time?
20. Could the resources used to acquire and use this technology be better deployed?
21. Does this technology automate or outsource labor or responsibilities that are morally essential?
22. What desires does the use of this technology generate?
23. What desires does the use of this technology dissipate?
24. What possibilities for action does this technology present? Is it good that these actions are now possible?
25. What possibilities for action does this technology foreclose? Is it good that these actions are no longer possible?
26. How does the use of this technology shape my vision of a good life?
27. What limits does the use of this technology impose upon me?
28. What limits does my use of this technology impose upon others?
29. What does my use of this technology require of others who would (or must) interact with me?
30. What assumptions about the world does the use of this technology tacitly encourage?
31. What knowledge has the use of this technology disclosed to me about myself?
32. What knowledge has the use of this technology disclosed to me about others? Is it good to have this knowledge?
33. What are the potential harms to myself, others, or the world that might result from my use of this technology?
34. Upon what systems, technical or human, does my use of this technology depend? Are these systems just?
35. Does my use of this technology encourage me to view others as a means to an end?
36. Does using this technology require me to think more or less?
37. What would the world be like if everyone used this technology exactly as I use it?
38. What risks will my use of this technology entail for others? Have they consented?
39. Can the consequences of my use of this technology be undone? Can I live with those consequences?
40. Does my use of this technology make it easier to live as if I had no responsibilities toward my neighbor?
41. Can I be held responsible for the actions which this technology empowers? Would I feel better if I couldn't?