

IB and ToK

ToK, the Prescribed Essay and the diploma

ToK and the IB Diploma

CASS

+

ToK

+

EE

+

6 tests/including 3 HL
24 total points.

Any score below 3
on an HL test must
be made up on
another HL test

		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 Prescribed Essay

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- The title must not be modified - students must write to the topic provided.
- Word count maximum - 1600 words excluding references and tables
- For credibility, the minimum word count is 1400 words
- While this is not a research project, it is expected that sources are used as examples to support your claims. Please think about the readings we have done in class as potential sources of examples
- Use a consistent format (the THSSSWG is great)

TOK essay assessment instrument

The TOK essay is an opportunity for students to engage in a formal, sustained piece of writing in response to a prescribed title focused on the areas of knowledge. The assessment of this task is underpinned by the following single driving question.

Does the student provide a clear, coherent and critical exploration of the essay title?

The assessment instrument provided describes five levels of performance in response to this driving question. These levels are to be seen as holistic descriptors rather than as a checklist of characteristics.

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Does the student provide a clear, coherent and critical exploration of the essay title?					
Excellent 9-10	Good 7-8	Satisfactory 5-6	Basic 3-4	Rudimentary 1-2	0
The discussion has a sustained focus on the title and is linked effectively to areas of knowledge. Arguments are clear, coherent and effectively supported by specific examples. The implications of arguments are considered. There is clear awareness and evaluation of different points of view.	The discussion is focused on the title and is linked effectively to areas of knowledge. Arguments are clear, coherent and supported by examples. There is awareness and some evaluation of different points of view.	The discussion is focused on the title and is developed with some links to areas of knowledge. Arguments are offered and are supported by examples. There is some awareness of different points of view.	The discussion is connected to the title and makes superficial or limited links to areas of knowledge. The discussion is largely descriptive. Limited arguments are offered but they are unclear and are not supported by effective examples.	The discussion is weakly connected to the title. While there may be links to the areas of knowledge, any relevant points are descriptive or consist only of unsupported assertions.	The discussion does not reach the standard described by the other levels or is not a response to one of the prescribed titles for the correct examination session.
Possible characteristics					
Insightful Convincing Accomplished Lucid	Pertinent Relevant Analytical Organized	Acceptable Mainstream Adequate Competent	Underdeveloped Basic Superficial Limited	Ineffective Descriptive Incoherent Formless	

1

Can there be knowledge that is independent of culture? Discuss with reference to mathematics and one other area of knowledge.

2

To what extent do you agree with the claim that “there’s a world of difference between truth and facts” (Maya Angelou)? Answer with reference to two areas of knowledge.

3

Is there solid justification for regarding knowledge in the natural sciences more highly than knowledge in another area of knowledge? Discuss with reference to the natural sciences and one other area of knowledge.

4

How do historians and human scientists give knowledge meaning through the telling of stories? Discuss with reference to history and the human sciences.

5

How can we distinguish between good and bad interpretations? Discuss with reference to the arts and one other area of knowledge.

6

If we conclude that there is some knowledge we should not pursue on ethical grounds, how can we determine the boundaries of acceptable investigation within an area of knowledge? Discuss with reference to two areas of knowledge.