

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Overall grade boundaries

Grade:	E	D	C	B	A
Mark range:	0 – 18	19 - 28	29 - 37	38 - 47	48 - 60

Statistical Summary

	November 2007	November 2008	% change	May 2008	May 2009	% change
English	2492	2998	20%	36070	40739	13%
French	1	0	-100%	453	462	2%
Spanish	1065	1165	9%	2115	2444	16%
German	0	0	0	20	13	-35%
Chinese	0	0	0	72	97	35%
Total Candidates	3558	4163	17%	38730	43755	13%

With such a large candidature, the assessment process is inevitably complex and time-consuming. Thanks are extended to 258 examiners who assessed the essays, and whose individual reports form the basis for this subject report.

Introduction

Experienced examiners have consistently noted, with some regret, that they are encountering the very same issues year after year. In one sense it is perhaps unsurprising; students will tend to encounter the same difficulties. Examiners have often commented, however, that the variation between schools dwarfs that within schools, even allowing for the different natures of schools from around the world and observe that in some schools students appear to have had little or no input from teachers. Some examiners have concluded that some schools do not appear to be preparing or supporting students adequately, and stress that some difficulties can be relatively easily avoided with appropriate teacher guidance and support.

In order to secure success for their students, schools are therefore strongly recommended to ensure that this report and the preceding one (which, as the first report for new assessment criteria, was particularly detailed) are read in detail by all TOK teachers, and the Diploma Programme Coordinator. Teachers are also directed towards the IB Publication Understanding Knowledge Issues which provides clarification of the central term 'Knowledge Issues' and will be available on the OCC.

As in previous years, many examiners expressed how much they learned from marking essays and what an enriching professional development experience it was. One writes that it was “both an interesting and fulfilling exercise and above all a continuous learning experience”; another that “marking the TOK essays has indeed been an enriching and rewarding experience for me. I believe it has added to my confidence and strengthened my skills as a TOK teacher. I know for sure that I will be able to guide my students better in handling their essays from now on” and a third that “being an examiner for the past three years has been the best professional development I've ever received. Marking has done more to improve my work as a TOK instructor than anything else I have done.” Any teacher, therefore, reading this report to better understand how to help their students should seriously consider examining, and see <http://www.ibo.org/informationfor/examiners/> for more information (note that teachers must have two years experience of teaching TOK before examining).

The Essay

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	E	D	C	B	A
Mark range:	0 – 10	11 - 16	17 - 22	23 - 29	30 - 40

Information in this section has been distilled from the experiences of essay examiners and presentation verifiers. It should be read in conjunction with the May 08 Subject Report, which, as the first Subject Report for the new assessment criteria, contained much criterion-specific advice. This report is available on the Online Curriculum Centre.

Feedback on Specific Titles

Some examiners reported that students sometimes paraphrased the Prescribed Title. This sometimes resulted in a lack of focus on Knowledge Issues; teachers are reminded not to allow students to change the Prescribed Title in any way.

As in previous years, some titles attracted much more attention than others, though quantity did not always correlate to quality.

Three examples of Knowledge Issues are given for each of the ten Prescribed Titles. These examples are clearly not meant to be exhaustive or definitive; because each title can be, and usually is, addressed in many different ways, their inclusion here is illustrative. The Knowledge Issues indicated are in some cases rather general, and might well be refined in the course of an essay.

- 1 **"Science is built of facts the way a house is built of bricks; but an accumulation of facts is no more science than a pile of bricks is a house" (Henri Poincaré). Discuss in relation to science and at least one other area of knowledge.**

Three examples of Knowledge Issues that *could* be addressed in this title:

- What is the nature of a scientific 'fact' or a scientific 'theory'?
- In what ways are scientific facts connected and combined to 'build' science?
- How do scientists and the institutions of science cope with 'facts' and 'explanations' that change or are falsified over time?

This was a popular title. The vast majority of students who chose this title agreed with Poincaré, and very few offered counter-claims. The metaphor proved to be a very attractive one, and many students developed it with varying degrees of success. Stronger essays took the metaphor as a starting point for the explorations of two or more areas of knowledge; weaker essays forced metaphorical equivalents to the roof, the walls, the windows, the doors, and other architectural details, often seriously interfering with the treatment of knowledge.

In some cases students neglected to address a second area of knowledge. As well as limiting the breadth of the essay, students who did this denied themselves the chance to make fruitful comparisons and thus illuminate the discussion on science. Some students chose to compare natural sciences with human sciences, but by far the most common choice of a second area was that of history; in these cases students frequently argued that science and history were very alike with respect to the house metaphor.

It was striking that detailed examples were very lacking in the answers to this title.

2 When should we trust our senses to give us truth?

Three examples of Knowledge Issues that *could be* addressed in this title:

- To what extent do our senses give us the truth?
- To what extent do reason, emotion and language (and other factors) affect our sense perception?
- What is the scope, and what are the limits of sensory information in different areas of knowledge?

Examiners commonly remarked that weaker students focused mostly on when one should *not* trust the senses rather than when we should; some choosing to question exclusively *if* we should trust senses. These essays tended to conclude in a fairly narrow and often superficial way that our senses are totally unreliable in the quest for knowledge and that they only present us with a distorted picture of reality. The issue of 'truth' was not always addressed. When it was, weaker candidates started with (in the worst cases, multiple) definitions which were not used beyond the introduction.

Another indicator of superficial understanding took the form of the conflation of sense perception and interpretation, so that examples intended to demonstrate flaws in sense perception (people "seeing" angels or UFOs, optical illusions, magicians) were assumed to be failures of sense perception without justification; potential failures of rational or emotional processes related to interpretation were not considered.

Stronger students structured the essays in one of three ways:

- By looking at how sense perception works in conjunction with other ways of knowing
- By seeing the strengths and weaknesses in contrasting areas of knowledge (science and religion were common here)
- By another narrative thread; in the most sophisticated essays this was something directly related to perception itself; so, for example, facts that were 'true' in relation to the outside world, and those that were 'true' in relation to aspects of the human, inner world. In these cases, the concept of truth was often subject to penetrating analysis.

3 Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of reason as a way of knowing.

Three examples of Knowledge Issues that *could be* addressed in this title:

- To what extent can reason operate in isolation from other ways of knowing?

- What is the relationship between ‘reasoning’ and ‘truth’?
- In what ways and to what extent can reasoning operate in different areas of knowledge?

Many candidates took a straightforward approach to this Prescribed Title looking at the positive and negative aspects of the use of reason as a Way of Knowing. Arguments frequently centred on deduction, induction, logical fallacies, and the absence of emotion. The discussion was, however, usually conducted in the abstract, and candidates would often have been well advised not to address the issue in the abstract, but to examine how reason might function differently in different areas of knowledge.

A particularly common slippage was that between ‘reason’ as a way of knowing and ‘reason’ as a psychological motivation behind an action. Of course, the former *may* in some circumstances be a specific case of the latter, but confusion here was a frequent source of analytic imprecision.

4 **“Seek simplicity, and distrust it” (Alfred North Whitehead). Is this always good advice for a knower?**

Three examples of Knowledge Issues that *could* be addressed in this title:

- What does ‘simplicity’ mean in different areas of knowledge?
- How does the human need for easily graspable and readily understood explanations and certainties manifest itself in different areas of knowledge?
- How do provisionally accepted but distrusted beliefs become ones we are certain are true?

Successful interpretation of the key term ‘simplicity’ in the title was crucial to success in this essay. Strong essays often developed the idea in relation to law-like behavior in various areas of knowledge. Weaker students often, and apparently unconsciously, moved from noun to adjectival form and applied one or more of ‘simple’, ‘easy’, ‘short’, ‘abbreviated’, and ‘ignorant’ to one or more of ‘fact’, ‘knowledge’, ‘knower’, ‘public’, ‘people’. Several meanings were used throughout weaker essays, as if they were all interchangeable.

Some candidates tried to argue why it is important to keep things simple but they could not convincingly then explain why someone should seek it, and then distrust it. Candidates could have moved forward here by, for example, seeing that ‘distrust’ is not necessarily so different from ‘provisionally accept’.

Very few candidates responded with an analysis of precisely when this would or would not be good advice. Those that did frequently used well-chosen and contrasting areas of knowledge to further their analysis.

5 "In expanding the field of knowledge we but increase the horizon of ignorance" (Henry Miller). Is this true?

Three examples of Knowledge Issues that *could* be addressed in this title:

- How do we 'expand the field of knowledge' using reason and sense perception?
- If a historian and a scientist (for example) were to say that they were 'ignorant' about an event, to what extent would they mean the same thing?
- What does it mean to 'expand' knowledge in ethics as opposed to knowledge in art?

This was a popular title. Almost all candidates made the point that new knowledge can lead to a greater awareness of the extent of one's ignorance; weaker students listed many, often hypothetical examples. Most seemed to approach this, sometimes implicitly, in a technological way, so that science was, by default, the only type of knowledge discussed. Stronger students examined the way that different areas of knowledge make progress in the search for knowledge, and the way the terms 'knowledge' and 'ignorance' have different meanings in different areas. One examiner noted a fine essay which argued that new knowledge can allow us to re-conceptualise existing knowledge (history was often cited here) and in these cases it was not clear if the metaphor applied or not.

A few examiners noted that many students quoted Socrates here, and seemed to interpret the title as 'the more we learn, the less we know', without noticing that the title does not claim that ignorance itself increases.

6 Compare and contrast our approach to knowledge about the past with our approach to knowledge about the future.

Three examples of Knowledge Issues that *could* be addressed in this title:

- How do historians look for a convergence of rational and empirical evidence to provide support for knowledge claims?
- What is the role of reasoning in making claims beyond our immediate experience?
- Does our interpretation of knowledge from the past allow us to reliably predict the future?

A key word in this title was 'approach'; this concept cuts across the usual TOK categories and resulted in a wide variety of essays. Many candidates developed their thoughts in relation to history and science, based upon an assumption that we approach our knowledge about the past through history and our thoughts about the future through science. Discussion in these cases centred on the inherent problems with reliability, bias, validity and replication. Stronger discussions looked at the way that

knowledge about the past is an inevitable component about any claim about the future; some also claimed that in some areas knowledge about the past is interpreted with a view the future.

Other students did not use history, but took a much more general approach, rooting their discussion in their everyday experiences (e.g. how we know about events that happened when we were young children, how we can predict what we will be doing in 20 years time). The quality of these essays was very varied; those that referred explicitly to TOK concepts such as reason, authority and evidence were far more successful than those which remained at the general discursive level.

Some students questioned the concept of 'knowledge about the future', but many took it to mean 'knowledge claim about the future' and went on to write good essays.

7 "Moral wisdom seems to be as little connected to knowledge of ethical theory as playing good tennis is to knowledge of physics" (Emrys Westacott). To what extent should our actions be guided by our theories in ethics and elsewhere?

Three examples of Knowledge Issues that *could* be addressed in this title:

- What do we mean by 'ethical theory' as opposed to 'mathematical theory' or 'historical theory'?
- How do we deal with experiences and evidence which contradict or appear to contradict our theories?
- If we compare ethics to, say, mathematics, what, if anything corresponds to 'moral wisdom'?

This was a very unpopular title. Students agreed that knowledge of theories of physics was irrelevant to tennis players, but often got bogged down in their discussion of the issue of the relation between ethical theory and moral wisdom; to the extent that it was hard to understand what they were saying. Weaker essays considered ethical theories in a descriptive manner, rather than looked at the connection between theory and practice. Treatments of ethical theory were often poor and tended to be used as platforms for hypothetical and extreme examples. There was little consideration of what moral wisdom may have entailed, except in the strongest essays where it was sometimes argued that 'wisdom' consisted in knowing when to break with current theory and either tolerate an exception or discard the theory. A comparison between physics and ethics based around this idea was sometimes extremely fruitful.

8 To understand something you need to rely on your own experience and culture. Does this mean that it is impossible to have objective knowledge?

Three examples of Knowledge Issues that *could* be addressed in this title:

- Are there areas where it is not necessary to rely on one's experience and culture to understand something?
- To what extent can we understand knowledge claims from a different culture?
- Does 'objective knowledge' mean different things in, say, the Social Sciences and the Natural Sciences?

This was a very popular title. Almost without exception, students took the first part of the title as too obviously true to question and did not, for example, attempt to make distinctions between 'experience' and 'culture'. The few that did tended to produce interesting analyses.

The word 'objective' often proved to be a stumbling block. Some did not attempt to clarify its meaning; others used dictionaries to little effect. Even some of those who did explore the idea in different contexts sometimes took a very narrow view which took 'objective' to mean "that which comes straight to a person's mind without passing through any sensibility, including the person's own." This approach almost makes the answer to the question a matter of definition and sometimes led to sterile essays which avoided detailed discussion.

A number of candidates insisted that objective knowledge is impossible because we all have unique experiences and there is too much cultural diversity, or that knowledge is always changing. These essays tended to assert rather than argue, and contained many non sequiturs. Some students structured their answers by considering either different ways of knowing or areas of knowledge. Either approach rooted what could have been a general discussion firmly in TOK concepts and helped weaker students maintain relevance and focus.

9 "The knowledge that we value the most is the knowledge for which we can provide the strongest justifications." To what extent would you agree with this claim?

Three examples of Knowledge Issues that *could* be addressed in this title:

- What does it mean to say that a belief is justified in different areas of knowledge?
- What constitutes a *strong* justification in any given area?
- What makes a knowledge claim valuable?

This was a popular title. Issues to do with 'justification' gave candidates trouble. Students took 'a justification for X' to mean anything from 'giving an invalid self-serving excuse for X' to 'providing a rigorous proof for X'. While many interpretations can work, weaker students failed to clarify their meaning, and sometimes appeared to slide from one meaning to another during the course of the essay, or indeed in some cases, within a single paragraph.

Several examiners commented that students also sometimes dichotomized the problem into "knowledge without justification" and "knowledge with justification", ignoring the hint given by 'strong' to take a more nuanced approach. For the 'knowledge without justification', many candidates used religion, assuming that believers have no justification whatsoever for their beliefs. While religious beliefs are clearly intellectually controversial, analysis of this aspect of human life was often weak and based on straw men; to the extent that one examiner wrote 'it would be great if non-believers stopped insulting believers.'

Stronger candidates frequently considered different methods of justification, either in different areas of knowledge, or by using different (but not always distinct) ways of knowing. A few students were able to argue for the view that while strong justification is valuable, there are examples of knowledge whose justification may be problematic, but we can value it all the same. Very few students considered the possibility that traditions, biases, and emotions could be seen as very strong justifications.

10 "There can be no knowledge without emotion... until we have felt the force of knowledge, it is not ours" (adapted from Arnold Bennett). Discuss this vision of the relationship between knowledge and emotion.

Three examples of Knowledge Issues that *could* be addressed in this title:

- To what extent does emotion permeate all types of knowledge?
- What is the difference between saying that we feel 'the force of knowledge' and saying that we are certain about our beliefs?
- What are the different ways in which emotion can inform, enhance, weaken, motivate or otherwise influence knowledge?

A common problem with this title was an unwillingness to address this topic within different areas of knowledge; there was an unacknowledged presumption that emotion works the same way in all situations. Students seemed to only consider obvious and most dramatic emotions: love, hate, anger, fear, and grief, and these were often addressed hypothetically ('suppose your child was dying of an incurable illness...'). These extreme examples led to the lack of nuanced thinking and left students relying on sweeping generalizations. Students would have been well advised to draw on their everyday experience, perhaps considering a range of more subtle emotions - curiosity, puzzlement, contentment, satisfaction, and so on.

Stronger candidates did not focus solely on confirming or refuting Bennett's claim, but took the quote as a starting point for an exploration of the relationship between knowledge and emotion.

Other Issues

Administrative and Clerical Procedures

Several concerns were consistently noted by examiners and verifiers, most of which are recurring issues. Schools are therefore requested to observe the following requests.

- Ensure that candidates use a spacing of at least 1.5.
- Use the *current* TK/CS cover sheet
- Include a completed attendance sheet.
- Use no binding; simply staple essays, with the staple not so low as to obscure the text.
- Write the prescribed title at the start of the essay.

Recommendations for IBCA procedures, instructions and forms.

While comments ranged from “All perfect” to “very confusing”, most examiners were satisfied with procedures and with IBIS. Some suggestions for improvements, however, were gratefully received and these comments have been noted.

Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

What follows is to some extent focused on weaknesses and areas for improvement, but it is also important to stress how impressed examiners were with students and schools where TOK was clearly embraced and taught well. One examiner writes: ‘In these cases students were often brave and articulate in defending their beliefs, but there were many other ways in which their TOK essays embodied the key principles of the IB Learner Profile’. TOK should be at the heart of schools’ Diploma Programmes, as well as at the centre of the Hexagon, and we congratulate both the teachers and students in these schools, and applaud the excellent work that is taking place around the world.

In terms of high scoring essays, one examiner writes that the best drew from a ‘combination of personal experiences, whether inside or outside the classroom, ideas discussed in subject area courses (as well as TOK), original thought and in some cases, further research (properly documented)’. In the best cases, the students used ‘an avalanche of personal examples’ and ‘made specific references to themselves as ‘knowers’ using ‘detailed, substantive evidence to back up their claims’. In these cases, ‘their analysis was thoughtful and original’. Another noted that ‘this examiner often had to think very hard himself in response to essays, but the best were a delight in offering insights and lines of thought new to the reader, such as a taxonomy of different forms of ignorance’.

A persistent theme of examiners' reports is the variation of quality of work from different schools – far more than can be explained by any variation in student population. There are two potential problems here;

- **Schools giving students too much guidance.**

Schools should not provide students with templates for essays. This is antithetical to the aims of the Diploma Programme and the spirit of the TOK course. It is unlikely to be productive in terms of allowing students to develop their own original ideas, and several examiners, upon reading a batch of very similar essays, lowered the marks awarded for Criterion B. Interestingly, the marks awarded for other criteria were often low in these cases too (though not adjusted in the same way as those for Criterion B), perhaps because the use of a common template had offered little opportunity for students to engage with the ideas in any depth.

- **Schools not giving students enough, or indeed in some cases, it would appear any, guidance.** As mentioned in the pre-amble to this report, there is strong evidence that in some cases students are not being guided in an appropriate way. While much of this may be due to individual student issues, the variation from school to school would suggest that some schools need to adopt a more rigorous and serious approach to the subject and its assessment. Errors have been related to:

- administration (some students wrote on the Prescribed Titles for the previous session, some on those set for next year);
- content (some students, who can write well and who seem generally able, wrote essays with almost no TOK relevance);
- style (some are full of spelling and grammar errors);
- referencing (many students have no references despite mentioning several sources).

The following examiner comment reflects the spirit of many others: “Many of the most basic and glaring errors in thinking and writing, that show up again and again on the pages of these essays, could have been, and in my opinion should have been, easily picked up at the draft stage by the classroom teacher. How some of this thinking is getting past the teacher needs to be explained.” It should be stressed that while the essay must of course be the work of the student, teachers should discuss (‘unpack’) the prescribed titles with students, and may also look at and comment on a draft essay.

The Presentation

Component grade boundaries

Grade:	E	D	C	B	A
Mark range:	0 – 8	9 - 12	13 - 15	16 - 18	19 - 20

In keeping with the thrust of this report as a whole, the comments below place a particular emphasis on:

- the role of the teacher in facilitating successful presentations, and
- the importance of being able to recognize knowledge issues and formulate them in an effective manner.

Changes to forms starting from May 2010 session

There are several changes to the presentation forms TK/PPD and TK/PMF, and the new versions of these forms are to be found in the new Handbook of Procedures (2009/10). **New forms are for use in the May 2010 session onwards.**

Form TK/PPD requires candidates to identify the following aspects of their presentation:

- The title of the presentation – **this is a new requirement**
- The real-life situation to which the presentation refers
- The knowledge issue that has been identified as arising from the real-life situation, expressed as a question – **this is a new requirement**
- A plan of the presentation as intended

Form TK/PMF requires the following:

- The title of the presentation – **this is a new requirement**
- The duration of the presentation in minutes – **this is a new requirement**
- The self-assessment of the individual candidate
- Authentication of the presentation by the candidate – name and signature required
- The assessment by the teacher
- Authentication of the presentation by the teacher – name and signature required

The rationale behind these changes is explained later in this report.

Intentions of the TOK Presentation

Teachers are reminded of the dual role of presentations in TOK. While the presentation is a formal assessment requirement for TOK, it is also intended as an opportunity for students to contribute a meaningful lesson to the TOK course in which they are participating. This second reason provides a further impetus to the need for effective planning – so that other students will benefit from the presentation.

Planning of the TOK Presentation

It is clear from many of the presentations viewed by the verification team that, in some schools, the intended nature of the TOK presentation has not been effectively communicated to students. This may be due to either insufficient or inappropriate guidance from teachers. It is crucial that teachers use the opportunity provided by the requirement for students to fill out the TK/PPD form to guide the planning process in a direction that is consistent with these intentions. It is very strongly recommended that teachers discuss presentation topics and the extraction of Knowledge Issues with students in a structured way by using a draft TK/PPD form. In accordance with the Subject Guide, a final TK/PPD form is to be submitted at the start of the presentation – possibly modified from the original form as a result of the preliminary discussion.

Nature of the TOK Presentation

In some schools, there seems to be a deep misunderstanding about the nature of the presentation task. This misunderstanding is the reason why in many cases verifiers have found it unavoidable to deduct marks (in some cases, many marks) from the assessments made by teachers of their own students. In these schools, it seems that the instructions given to candidates amounts to saying: “Identify, research and report on a controversial topic’. With such instructions, it is not surprising that many students decide to present something on topics such as abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment or the existence of God (these presentations often took a descriptive form such as: arguments for a position; arguments against the position; in the end it’s your individual choice). While such topics could in principle form an effective platform for a TOK presentation, the above scenario is NOT an appropriate or effective approach and is contrary in spirit to the intended TOK approach. Verifiers are deeply concerned about viewing so many presentations in which students clearly invest much time and effort, but do so to little effect, as the outcomes are almost entirely descriptive and lacking in analysis. We cannot stress strongly enough; **the TOK presentation is not a descriptive research project**. The central flaw with such projects is that they rarely address Knowledge Issues and it is therefore very hard to award marks for most of the assessment criteria (criteria A and B are almost certain to score zero for research projects, and a very low mark for D is very likely).

The identification and extraction of Knowledge Issues from real-life situation is, therefore, central to presentation success. The following real-life situations were used in presentations this session and in each case a Knowledge Issue which is likely to support high levels of achievement is shown:

Real life situation: The bombing of Coventry in the United Kingdom in WW 2

Knowledge Issue: To what extent can we use reason to evaluate two competing ethical systems?

Real life situation: The connection between being a smoker and one's parents being smokers

Knowledge Issue: How does a scientific explanation distinguish between correlation and causation?

Real life situation: The death of Bogon – the last speaker of the Kasabe language in Cameroon

Knowledge Issue: In what ways does language affect how we interpret the world?

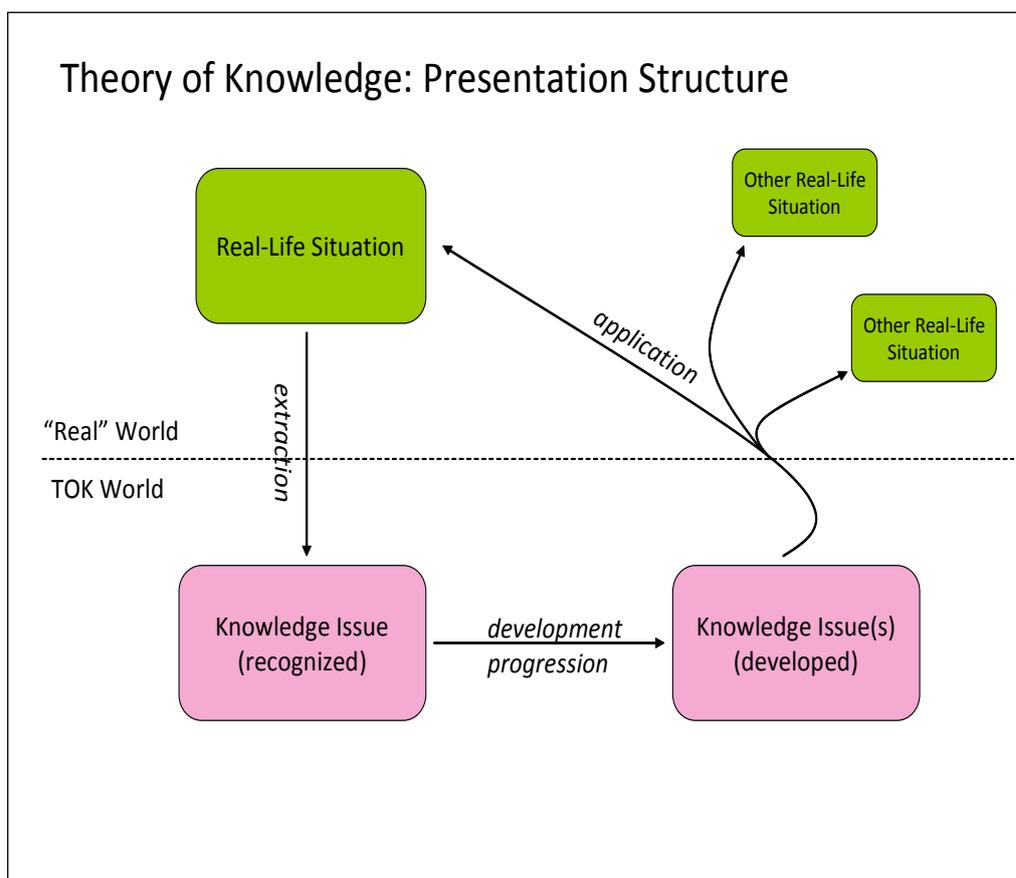
Real life situation: The inauguration of the Large Hadron Collider in Switzerland

Knowledge Issue: What is the scope of the scientific method in attempting to establish truths?

Real life situation: President Ahmadinejad of Iran calls for a conference to establish whether the Jewish Holocaust really happened

Knowledge Issue: How can we draw a clear line between fact and interpretation in history?

What follows here is further explication of the form of the presentation. The core intention of the TOK presentation essentially takes the form of an analytical dialogue between two levels of discourse. This is illustrated by the following diagram:



The two levels represent the students' experiences in the TOK course (lower level) and in the world beyond it (upper level), and the connection between the levels demonstrates the relevance of TOK to life beyond the TOK classroom.

At the "real world" level, we have the real-life situation from which a knowledge issue (note that "knowledge issue" here is singular, corresponding to criterion A) must be **extracted**. This knowledge issue, residing in the "TOK world", must be **developed** using ideas and concepts from the TOK course, and in this **progression** it is likely that other related knowledge issues will be identified (note that "knowledge issues" here is plural, corresponding to criterion B) and will play a part in taking the argument forward. The product of this reflection can then be **applied** back to the real-life situation at the "real world" level. In addition, the presentation should be able to show how the process of application extends beyond the original situation to others, thus demonstrating why the presentation is important and relevant in a wider sense.

In order to assist students and teachers in understanding this structure, the TK/PPD form has been modified (as indicated earlier in this report) to enforce the written documentation of both the real-life situation **and** the knowledge issue that is extracted from it. The TK/PPD form also requests a title for the presentation – this is intended as a useful summary label that can perhaps be used in a published schedule of presentations for

internal school use, but could also be displayed on the DVDs and thus would also assist verifiers in identifying each piece of work.

In addition, it is strongly recommended that the construction by the students of a diagram like the one above, adapted to the individual nature of the planned presentation, be made a part of the planning process. A structured diagram of this sort would ideally be drawn on the reverse side of the TK/PPD form, and would encourage an analytic exploration of Knowledge Issues which would likely result in the award of high marks.

The TOK presentation is part of the TOK course in order to provide students with the freedom to choose a situation of interest to themselves and others and use it as an entry point to TOK activity. It is fervently hoped that this report (and the previous one for N07/M08) clarify the ways in which this freedom can be exploited in a positive and appropriate manner.

Delivery of TOK Presentation

It is perhaps appropriate to mention a number of miscellaneous aspects of the TOK presentation here in the interests of clarity and further guidance:

- The presentation must not be delivered from a script – while flashcards and other prompts are likely to be helpful, these must be subordinated to the primary nature of the TOK presentation as an oral exercise. Similarly, a presenter turning his/her back on the audience in order to read large quantities of text from a projector is not delivering material in a manner consistent with the intentions of the task
- While interactions with the audience are permitted during the presentation, they must be well-planned and not act as a substitute for clear thinking on the part of the presenters. Discussion after the end of the presentation is not considered a part of the presentation and should not influence assessment judgements
- The use of movie and YouTube clips must similarly be subordinated to the overall aims of the presentation and not be used as substitutes for thinking and analysis
- The duration of the presentation should be recorded and entered onto the TK/PMF form – timings should be compatible with the recommendations given in the Subject Guide on page 47
- While the instructions in the Subject Guide allow for group presentations up to a group size of 5 candidates, the size of the group is likely to affect the structural logistics of the presentation itself. Presentations involving large groups are necessarily long, thus struggle to maintain high levels of interest among members of the audience, and tend to fragment as individual students are assigned particular tasks that are not re-integrated into the whole. On the other hand, presentations by individuals are necessarily very time-limited and candidates need to consider how much they can achieve within this allocation

- Just as good writing enhances the clarity and persuasiveness of an essay, good speaking skills, while not part of the formal assessment, can enhance a presentation. Material that cannot be heard clearly cannot attract credit and cannot contribute to understanding
- The principles of academic honesty must be observed and the need for acknowledgement recognized even in the oral context of the presentation

APPENDIX: Mandatory requirements for schools selected for verification of presentations.

Selected schools are required to submit (by 15th September for November sessions, and 15th March for May sessions) materials for 5 candidates (or all candidates if the school is registering less than 5 in total). These materials comprise:

- recordings of the presentations in which these candidates were involved, and
- the TK/PPD and TK/PMF forms for those candidates

To clarify further:

- a TK/PMF must be included in the documentation for each candidate in the sample, and for sampled candidates ONLY
- a TK/PPD must be included in the documentation for each presentation that forms part of the sample (there is no need for more than one TK/PPD for candidates involved in the same presentation)

The selection of the 5 candidates is at the discretion of the school, but should as far as possible reflect the diversity of assessment scores awarded for presentations. For this reason, schools should try to avoid the inclusion in the sample of candidates from the same presentation unless a small overall number of candidates make this inevitable. It is recognized that scores cannot be known in advance of the presentations themselves, and so it may be necessary to record more presentations than will actually be sent to the verifier in order to be sure of capturing evidence for the range of scores required. Many teachers have found that the recording of all presentations in any case has contributed to good practice for subsequent sessions, as these recordings can be helpful during the process of presentation preparation.

Nature of recordings

Please note: Schools are required to send recordings in standard DVD format (PAL/NTSC) suitable for viewing on a multi-region DVD player only. Other formats such as VHS and camera cassette tapes are no longer acceptable. DVDs should be sent clearly labelled (examination session, candidate numbers where

known, titles of presentations in correct order) and packaged such as to avoid damage in transit (bubble-wrap, etc.).

Particularly important is the quality of sound on the recording, and teachers are strongly advised to check this before commencing the actual recordings of the presentations. If visual projections form an important part of the presentation, it should be ensured that they are readable on the recording.

As the verification of presentation assessment is on the basis of individual candidates, even if they participated in group presentations, it is vital that verifiers can identify the candidates being sampled. Candidates should announce clearly and slowly their identity on the recording at the start, including names (and candidate numbers if known at the time the presentation is given). School may consider asking students to hold up cards with this information at the start of the recording in order to facilitate this. Teachers should also ensure that recordings start well in advance of the first words spoken.

Other issues

Administrative and Clerical Procedures

Description of verification procedure

In accordance with the Subject Guide, 5% of the schools entering candidates in these sessions (N08 and M09) were asked to record some or all of the TOK presentations given by the students for the purposes of confirming the scores awarded by teachers for this internally assessed component of the programme. Some of these schools were selected at random; others were selected on the basis of major inconsistencies in past sessions between performance in the essay and the presentation.

Procedure for notification of schools

Schools selected for any given examination session are notified via the DP Coordinator by IBCA at the start of the diploma cycle that culminates in that session. For example:

- schools selected for the May 2010 session will have been notified by August 2008
- schools selected for the November 2010 session will have been notified by February 2009

Schools that have been asked to provide presentations for verification must observe the requirements outlined in the Appendix to this report. Failure to do so may make it difficult for verifiers to award appropriate marks and may make the verification process less reliable.