



**XV. GIMNAZIJA**  
**International Baccalaureate Department**  
**Diploma Programme**



**THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE**  
**Year 1 & 2**

**Course description 2019/2020**

**WHAT IS THE COURSE ABOUT?**

Theory of Knowledge (TOK) plays a central role in the Diploma Programme by providing an opportunity for students to reflect on the nature of knowledge. The task of TOK is to emphasize connections between areas of knowledge and link them to the knower in such a way that the knower can become aware of his or her own perspectives and those of the various groups whose knowledge he or she shares. TOK, therefore, explores both the personal and shared aspects of knowledge and investigates the relationships between them. The raw material of TOK is knowledge itself. Students think about how knowledge is arrived at in the various disciplines, what the disciplines have in common and the differences between them. The fundamental question of TOK is “how do we know that?” The answer might depend on the discipline and the purpose to which the knowledge is put. TOK explores methods of inquiry and tries to establish what it is about these methods that makes them effective as knowledge tools. In this sense TOK is concerned with knowing about knowing. The individual knower has to try to make sense of the world and understand his or her relationship to it. He or she has at his or her disposal the resources of the areas of knowledge, for example, the academic disciplines studied in the Diploma Programme. He or she also has access to ways of knowing such as memory, intuition, reason and sense perception that help us navigate our way in a complex world.

**AIMS:**

**The aims of teaching and studying Theory of Knowledge:**

1. Make connections between a critical approach to the construction of knowledge, the academic disciplines and the wider world.
2. Develop an awareness of how individuals and communities construct knowledge and how this is critically examined.
3. Develop an interest in the diversity and richness of cultural perspectives and an awareness of personal and ideological assumptions.
4. Critically reflect on their own beliefs and assumptions, leading to more thoughtful, responsible and purposeful lives.
5. Understand that knowledge brings responsibility which leads to commitment and action.

## **OBJECTIVES:**

1. Identify and analyse the various kinds of justifications used to support knowledge claims
2. Formulate, evaluate and attempt to answer knowledge questions.
3. Examine how academic disciplines/areas of knowledge generate and shape knowledge
4. Understand the roles played by ways of knowing in the construction of shared and personal knowledge.
5. Explore links between knowledge claims, knowledge questions, ways of knowing and areas of knowledge.
6. Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of different perspectives and be able to relate these to one's own perspective.
7. Explore a real-life/contemporary situation from a TOK perspective in the presentation.

## **IMPLEMENTATION:**

DP Year 1: The school offer 2 lessons per week

DP Year 2: The school offers 2 lessons per week

## **ASSESSMENT:**

The assessment model in theory of knowledge (TOK) has two components. Both the essay and the presentation are assessed using global impression marking. The essay contributes 67% of the final mark and the presentation contributes 33% of the final mark.

### **Part 1. The presentation**

One presentation to the class by an individual or a group (a maximum of three persons in a group). Approximately 10 minutes per student is allowed for the presentation. One written presentation planning document (TK/PPD) for each student. The teacher must use the assessment descriptors published in this guide to arrive at a mark for the presentation based on the student's presentation plan (on the TK/PPD) and his/her observation of the presentation itself. The teacher must record his/her observations of the presentation on the TK/PPD. A sample of TK/PPDs is selected and moderated by the IB.

If a student makes more than one presentation, the teacher should choose the best one (or the best group presentation in which the student participated) for the purposes of assessment. Students are not permitted to offer presentations on the same specific subject matter more than once. This refers to either the same knowledge question, or the same real-life situation. It is advised that the presentation should take place towards the end of the course, as otherwise students may not have had the chance to develop skills such as formulating knowledge questions which are key to this task.

The TOK presentation requires students to identify and explore a knowledge question raised by a substantive real-life situation that is of interest to them. The selected real-life situation may arise from a local domain of personal, school, or community relevance, or from a wider one of national, international or global scope. Whatever situation is chosen, it must lead itself naturally to a question about knowledge.

TOK presentation delivers 10 points max.

**GRADING SCALE:**

Irrelevant	The presentation does not reach the standard described by levels 1–5
Elementary 1–2	The presentation describes a real-life situation without reference to any knowledge question, or treats an abstract knowledge question without connecting it to any specific real-life situation.
Basic 3–4	The presentation identifies a knowledge question and a real-life situation, although the connection between them may not be convincing. There is some attempt to explore the knowledge question. There is limited awareness of the significance of the outcomes of the analysis.
Satisfactory 5–6	The presentation identifies a knowledge question that has some connection to a specified real-life situation. The knowledge question is explored in the context of the real-life situation, using some adequate arguments. There is some awareness of the significance of the outcomes of the analysis.
Very good 7–8	The presentation is focused on a knowledge question that is connected to a specified real life situation. The knowledge question is explored in the context of the real-life situation, using clear arguments, with acknowledgment of different perspectives. The outcomes of the analysis are shown to be significant to the real life situation.
Excellent 9–10	The presentation is focused on a well formulated Knowledge question that is clearly connected to a specified real-life situation. The knowledge question is effectively explored in the context of the real-life situation, using convincing arguments, with investigation of different perspective. The outcomes of the analysis are shown to be significant to the chosen real-life situation and to others.

## Part 2. Essay on a prescribed title

One essay on a title chosen from a list of six titles prescribed by the IB for each examination session. The prescribed titles will be issued on the OCC in the September prior to submission for May session schools, and in the March prior to submission for November session schools. The maximum length for the essay is 1,600 words. All essays are externally assessed by the IB.

### TOK essay assessment instrument

Does the student present an appropriate and cogent analysis of knowledge questions in discussing the title?						
Aspect	Level 5 Excellent 9–10	Level 4 Very good 7–8	Level 3 Satisfactory 5–6	Level 2 Basic 3–4	Level 1 Elementary 1–2	Irrelevant 0
Understanding knowledge questions	There is a <i>sustained focus</i> on <b>knowledge questions</b> connected to the prescribed title and are well chosen— <b>developed</b> with <i>investigation of different perspectives</i> and <b>linked effectively</b> to <b>areas of knowledge</b> and/or <b>ways of knowing</b> .	There is a <i>focus</i> on <b>knowledge questions</b> connected to the prescribed title— <b>developed</b> with <i>acknowledgment of different perspectives</i> and <b>linked to areas of knowledge</b> and/or <b>ways of knowing</b> .	There is a <i>focus</i> on <b>some knowledge questions</b> connected to the prescribed title—with <i>some development</i> and <b>linking to areas of knowledge</b> and/or <b>ways of knowing</b> .	<i>Some knowledge questions</i> that are connected to the prescribed title are considered, but the essay is largely <i>descriptive</i> , with <i>superficial or limited links</i> to <b>areas of knowledge</b> and/or <b>ways of knowing</b> .	The essay has only very limited relevance to the prescribed title—relevant points are <i>descriptive</i> .	The essay does not reach a standard described by levels 1–5 or is not a response to one of the prescribed titles on the list for the current session.
Quality of analysis of knowledge questions	<b>Arguments</b> are <i>clear</i> , supported by <b>real-life examples</b> and are <i>effectively evaluated</i> ; <b>counterclaims</b> are extensively explored; <b>implications</b> are drawn.	Arguments are <i>clear</i> , supported by <b>real-life examples</b> and are <i>evaluated</i> ; some <b>counterclaims</b> are identified and explored.	<i>Some arguments</i> are <i>clear</i> and supported by <b>examples</b> ; some <b>counterclaims</b> are identified.	Arguments are offered but are <i>unclear</i> and/or <i>not supported</i> by <b>effective examples</b> .	<b>Assertions</b> are offered but are <i>not supported</i> .	
Some possible characteristics						
	Cogent Accomplished Discerning Individual Lucid Insightful Compelling	Pertinent Relevant Thoughtful Analytical Organized Credible Coherent	Typical Acceptable Mainstream Adequate Competent	Underdeveloped Basic Superficial Derivative Rudimentary Limited	Ineffective Descriptive Incoherent Formless	

### TOK TOPICS:

DP Year 1		
<b>UNIT 1</b>	Knowledge as such, Knowledge claims and Knowledge questions	Knowledge, Answers, Questions, Knowledge claims Individual and shared knowledge, Truth theories
<b>UNIT 2</b>	Perception	Senses, sense data, Common-Sense realism, Perceptual wall, Scientific realism, Functionalism, Correspondence theory of truth
<b>UNIT 3</b>	Emotion	Emotion and feeling, Universal emotions and culturally based emotions, Somatic markers, Emotion an Reason as opposites, Emotional Intelligence

<b>UNIT 4</b>	Language	Language as abstract system, Grammar, Signals and Signs, Communication, Medium - Media, Body language, Animal communication, Areas of knowledge and different languages of knowing
<b>UNIT 5</b>	Reason	Reason, Logic, Socrates Method, Mathematical proof, Modern scientific method, Reasoning in different Areas of Knowledge
<b>UNIT 6</b>	Imagination, faith	Imagination, Day and night system of imagination, Imagination and Language as open-ended Way of Knowing, Dream, Faith
<b>UNIT 7</b>	Intuition, memory	Intuition and Emotions, Decision making, Cognitive bias, Intuition in different Areas of Knowledge, Memory, Memory and Self, Individual and Social Memory
<b>UNIT 8</b>	TOK Presentation	Knowledge question, Real life situation, Argument, Different perspectives, Analysis

<b>DP Year 2</b>		
<b>UNIT 1</b>	Areas of Knowledge: overview, Mathematics.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) TOK method of understanding AOKs: scope, language, methodology, historical development, links to personal knowledge.</li> <li>2) Michele Foucault's episteme development</li> <li>3) Mathematical truth, objectivity, rational proof</li> <li>4) Abstraction, axiom vs theorem</li> <li>5) Links to WOKs and indigenous knowledge systems.</li> <li>6) Mathematics and physical world.</li> </ol>
<b>UNIT 2</b>	Natural sciences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Physical world as unity: division by natural sciences</li> <li>2) Theory and law: explanation and prediction.</li> <li>3) Observation, scientific method</li> <li>4) Problem of induction</li> <li>5) Popper's idea of falsification</li> <li>6) Paradigm, paradigm shift</li> </ol>

<b>UNIT 3</b>	Social/Human sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Production of meaning: natural vs social/human sciences</li> <li>2) Society and individual: measurement of values</li> <li>3) Anthropology</li> <li>4) Quantitative vs qualitative research</li> <li>5) Social/human sciences: condition humana</li> </ul>
<b>UNIT 4</b>	History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Past vs history</li> <li>2) Effect of the observer</li> <li>3) History, social identity and memory</li> <li>4) Historical narratives: theory as narrative concept.</li> <li>5) Personal identity in context of history</li> </ul>
<b>UNIT 5</b>	Ethics, Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ethics vs morality</li> <li>2) Ethical norm: problem of religion and indigenous ethical systems</li> <li>3) Immanuel Kant's categorical imperative</li> <li>4) Science and ethics</li> <li>5) Artistic form and meaning</li> <li>6) Aesthetics</li> <li>7) History of arts vs arts as history resource</li> <li>8) Links with intuition, subjectivity and social norms</li> </ul>
<b>UNIT 6</b>	TOK Essay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge claim,</li> <li>Argument,</li> <li>Counter-argument,</li> <li>Different perspectives,</li> <li>Analysis</li> </ul>
<b>UNIT 7</b>	Religious knowledge systems, Indigenous knowledge systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Religion vs faith</li> <li>2) Religion and purposefulness</li> <li>3) Historical development of religions</li> <li>4) Idea of miracle vs idea of theory and law in natural sciences.</li> <li>5) Oral vs written knowledge</li> <li>6) Myth</li> <li>7) Indigenous conventions and codifications of knowledge.</li> </ul>

**Textbooks:**

1) Alchin N., Henly C.P.: Theory of Knowledge for the IB Diploma, HODDER EDUCATION, London, 2014.