



Theory of Knowledge

Nature of the Subject

Theory of knowledge (TOK) explores questions about knowledge and the process of knowing. TOK emphasizes comparisons and connections between areas of knowledge and encourages students to become more aware of their own perspectives and the perspectives of others.

Syllabus outline

The TOK curriculum is made up of three deeply interconnected parts.

- The core theme—Knowledge and the knower: This theme encourages students to reflect on themselves as knowers and thinkers, and to consider the different communities of knowers to which we belong.
- Optional themes: This element provides an opportunity to take a more in-depth look at two themes of particular interest to teachers and students. Teachers select two optional themes from a choice of five: knowledge and technology; knowledge and language; knowledge and politics; knowledge and religion; and knowledge and indigenous societies.
- Areas of knowledge: The areas of knowledge (AOK) are specific branches of knowledge, each of which can be seen to have a distinct nature and sometimes use different methods of gaining knowledge. In TOK, students explore five compulsory areas of knowledge: history; the human sciences; the natural sciences; mathematics; and the arts.



Prior Learning

No prior learning is required for this course, as the students can use their prior academic and experiential knowledge to access the concepts discussed in class.

Assessment Objectives

Having followed the Diploma Programme course in ToK, students will be expected to:

- demonstrate TOK thinking through the critical examination of knowledge questions
- identify and explore links between knowledge questions and the world around us
- identify and explore links between knowledge questions and areas of knowledge
- develop relevant, clear and coherent arguments
- use examples and evidence effectively to support a discussion
- demonstrate awareness and evaluation of different points of view
- consider the implications of arguments and conclusions.

Teaching Approach

The TOK curriculum centers around an inquiry-based exploration of knowledge questions. Knowledge questions are crucial to effective TOK discussions as they help to make sure that students are focusing on questions about knowledge itself and about how we know things. The students are invited to bring their real world interests and academic inquiries of both local and global importance in the classroom, and to use these as the springboard for discussions around the chosen Themes and Areas, in order to build their conceptual understanding. Discussion,



debate, group work and impromptu research/presentation are some of the daily class practices used to navigate the content.

Why students might choose this subject

Theory of Knowledge (ToK) is part of the DP Core subjects, which means that it is mandatory for all full IBDP students. The core strives to make a difference to the lives of students. It should provide opportunities for students to think about their own values and actions, to deepen their understanding of their place in the world and to sensitively consider the contexts and views of others.

Course Assessment

The assessment of the students throughout the academic year is based on tasks that scaffold their skills and understanding of the formal assessment requirements (see below).

The **final Diploma grade** in the subject is determined by two assessment components:

1. Internal assessment: Theory of knowledge **Exhibition** (10 marks).

For this component, students are required to create an exhibition that explores how TOK manifests in the world around us. This component is internally assessed by the teacher and externally moderated by the IB at the end of the course.

2. External assessment: Theory of knowledge **Essay** on a prescribed title (10 marks).

For this component, students are required to write an essay in response to one of the six prescribed titles that are issued by the IB for each examination session. As an external assessment component, it is marked by IB examiners.