

**IB-Required Assessments**  
**Guidelines for the TOK Essay & Presentation**  
Written & Compiled by William Collazo

TOK PRESCRIBED TITLE ESSAY (EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT – 40 points)

\* For the essay to be sent to IBO, read carefully and choose ONE essay from among the ten TOK Prescribed Titles designated for *your year of graduation*. IBO publishes these titles a year in advance, so be careful that you are picking from the list titled for May of the year of your graduation. Also, read for detailed explanations of the essay requirements in the most recent TOK Curriculum Guide; what follows are my own suggestions and guidelines based on the information in the guide.

\*\*\*\*\*

PREPARING THE ESSAY---GENERAL TIPS:

- 1) Make your introduction clear; lay out a roadmap of what you plan to take the reader in your argument. Sometimes, restating the title (especially if it is short) in the introduction focuses the reader's thinking, so consider doing this.
- 2) Include a counter-argument in the opening paragraph specifically, and ideally, consider counter-arguments throughout the essay in order to more effectively discuss your argument.
- 3) Use lots of examples that clearly make a link between abstract TOK ideas/concepts learned in class to concrete examples in the real world.
- 4) Use the first person pronoun and try to make connections with things read and discussed in TOK class or your other classes, as you see its relevance to the prompt.
- 5) Your conclusion should bring together the ideas discussed in your argument and suggest broader analysis and implications for future discourse related to the topic.
- 6) Re-read and revise your essay more than twice. Discuss it with your family and friends; they are a great source of ideas. They can also tell you whether or not your essay's arguments are clear and your examples are relevant.

\* Here is one website that takes you through the process that you may find helpful:  
<http://peernet.lbpc.ca/tok/tokassessment/tokessay/02tokessaystp1.html>

A CHECKLIST FOR THE **REVISION PROCESS**:

- 1) Read the introduction. Do the opening sentences make you engage the prompt immediately? Are the primary knowledge issues identified clearly?
- 2) Is there a counter-argument in the introduction? Are there counter-arguments throughout the essay?

- 3) Are knowledge issues & TOK concepts identified and discussed *explicitly* in the body?
- 4) Are the examples clear and relevant to your argument? Are the examples factually accurate and have you cited when necessary? Is any information assumed?
- 5) Are there a lot of examples that relate TOK ideas and subjects on the TOK diagram to concrete, real-world issues related to the prompt?
- 6) Does the conclusion give you a sense of summary? Does it consider the most reasonable angles/perspectives from which to discuss the implications of the prompt?

#### A CHECKLIST FOR THE **EDITING PROCESS**:

- 1) Is the prescribed title exactly stated as given, with its corresponding number?
- 2) Does it have your last name and page numbers on the header of each page except the first one?
- 3) Is the essay double-spaced?
- 4) Does it have a standard font? Is it a 12-14 point size?
- 5) Is it printed in black ink?
- 6) Is the bibliography (if you have one) organized in a standard format?
- 7) Do all less common quotes have parenthetical citation (Last name of author, page number of source)?
- 8) Are all paragraphs indented? Also, there should be no skipped lines in between paragraphs.
- 9) Did you use spell-check? Read over the paper again to catch the mistakes spell-check cannot.
- 10) Did you check for obvious grammar mistakes, especially those that make it difficult to make sense of what you are saying? Beware of run-on sentences and improper capitalization/punctuation as well.

#### AFTER REVISIONS/EDITING & **THE ESSAY IS COMPLETE**:

- 1) Use the format template file I have provided you to be sure you have standardized your essay to meet requirements.
- 2) Submit **ONE PAPER COPY** of your final essay. You will need to complete a coversheet (**TK/CS form**). Fill it out and include with your submission of the essay. If you are a certificate candidate, you do not need this form.

3) Send ONE DIGITAL COPY of your final revised paper as an e-mail attachment to Mr. Collazo at [dbhssensei@gmail.com](mailto:dbhssensei@gmail.com).

\* File Title Protocol is as follows: **LASTNAME\_FIRSTNAME-Title #.doc**

### TOK PRESENTATION (INTERNAL ASSESSMENT – 20 points)

\* Read for detailed explanations of the requirements as well as examples of presentation topics and their approaches in the most recent TOK Curriculum Guide; it will tell you just about everything you need to know. When in doubt, check there first; then ask me. What follows are my own suggestions and guidelines based on the information in the guide.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### **BEFORE & DURING THE PRESENTATION---GENERAL TIPS:**

1) Determine a presentation topic that will allow you to examine a broader question of knowledge/knowledge issue through a concrete, real-world situation/issue. Remember, IBO and I want to know that you know how to apply the abstract ideas that form the basis of TOK in concrete terms. Where do you see knowledge issues (problems of knowledge) in the world? Controversial national and international issues serve as good examples to examine. Carefully peruse the examples provided in the TOK Curriculum Guide.

2) Give yourself plenty of time for collection of research and/or preparation for the presentation. Videos & artwork often take much longer to prepare than what you initially think.

3) Make sure when you are doing your preparation, you are constantly checking with your fellow group members to make sure the information/argument you are making coincides and supports the larger issue you are trying to bring to light as a group. Check the Presentation Criteria for Assessment as a group to make sure you are all on the right track!

4) Make your presentation as interactive as possible. When appropriate, challenge your classmates with a question that makes them think about the issue you will discuss or that demonstrates a point you are making about general belief or knowledge about the issue. But do not rely on your classmates to make your key points about issues and claims in your presentation; that is your task (and your challenge)... to demonstrate your understanding of the issues by both presenting the ideas you pre-prepared and by incorporating the input of your classmates during the presentation.

5) If you need any special equipment on the day of your presentation, be sure to check with me about providing it for you. You may also bring in your equipment, but bring it in a day early to make sure it works. Just in case, have a contingency plan for equipment failure.

6) Dress for success. Dress nicely for the day of your presentation; people generally take you more seriously when you look the part. Although the IB grade is out of 20 points, the presentation grade in my class is 25 points; the extra five points is for professional

dress, overall presentation, and submission of a properly filled out TK/PPD & TK/PMF forms.

7) As you progress through your presentation, be sure to fully address questions brought forth by your classmates and me. Do not leave a question unaddressed, it could very well be the breakthrough question that promotes a better-analyzed knowledge issue in your topic.

### **PRESENTATION FORMS:**

All members of a group are required to complete two forms individually: the Pre-Planning Document (TK/PPD Form) and the Presentation Marking Form (TK/PMF Form).

The **TK/PPD form** is due at least one day before the presentation. Complete the form legibly in *black ink*, and answer the questions as thoroughly as possible.

The **TK/PMF form** is due one day after the presentation. Complete the form legibly in *black ink*. Follow the directions for completing this form by providing an achievement level and comments on each category for assessment. Please be sure to sign the form where student signature is indicated. Then submit this form to me for marking and signature.