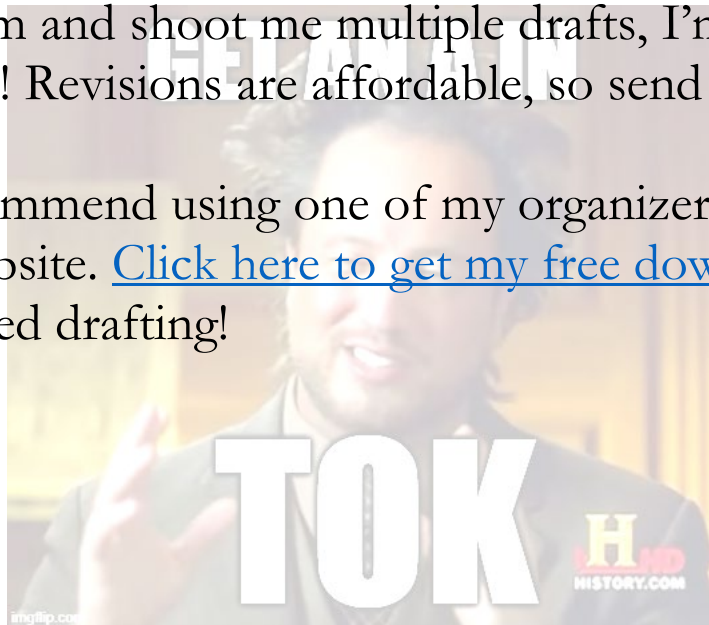


TOK Conclusion Guide & Examples!

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Option 1: Evaluate Your Arguments

Use this option to make it clear which side of the title you are on. This is good because it stands out by not being in the middle – “I agree with the title, but not always.” To use this conclusion, first, state your position towards the title.

After discussing both sides of the argument, it is clear that we do not need custodians of knowledge.

Then, after making this statement (which should agree with your thesis), give the reasons why you believe this by evaluating (not summarizing) your evidence. Tell your reader why the evidence in one side is stronger. Don't summarize. Also, don't summarize.

Title 5: Do we need custodians of knowledge? Discuss with reference to two areas of knowledge.

After discussing both sides of the argument, it is clear that we do not need custodians of knowledge. Though this discussion might not have been relevant for the majority of human history, the technological arguments discussed previously have helped me come to this conclusion. Traditionally, experts have been white, educated, and wealthy members of university staff, at least in academic terms. Though this has provided many benefits, which were discussed above, these experts can get it wrong because they are in their own closed academic bubble. Knowledge can better be disseminated and cared for (two of the key roles for a Knowledge Custodian) by the masses in an open, online environment. As I discussed in my paragraph about XXX, the online community was just as effective at sharing and producing knowledge, but it was done more quickly and in a more equitable way. Knowledge Custodians had to be employed in a specific manner in the past, but this is no longer true. Instead, a democratic, faceless Knowledge Custodian can occur that is not a group of people but rather the internet acting for all. Additionally, Knowledge Custodians were initially conceived to be a small, educated few. When comparing the original definition from the 1960's to what we have available to us now, I would rather trust a global consensus rather than a small number of people. Overall, the advent of the internet, its inherent equitability, and the vast number of perspectives that it produces proves that we do not need custodians of knowledge. (253)

Title 2: How can we reconcile the opposing demands for specialization and generalization in the production of knowledge? Discuss with reference to mathematics and one other area of knowledge.

In looking for a stance to take regarding the opposing demands for specialization and generalization, I offered two different approaches. The first approach, that we do not reconcile the opposing demands, seems like an unrealistic answer. Instead, my second approach, reconciliation through the use of Knowledge Custodians, seems more reasonable. As I researched the titles, I read a document from the 1960's that explored the knowledge custodian. It might have even invented this phrase and inspired Title 5. I believe that using Knowledge Custodians as a way to reconcile the opposing demands for specialization and generalization is the correct approach because it can be seen through my examples that more knowledge is produced this way than by ignoring the opposing demands altogether. Example XXX and YYY ignored the demands and were able to produce some helpful and insightful ideas. They even ZZZ. But when compared to AAA and BBB, which consulted specialized experts in their field, those who ignored the demands were less helpful to

humanity as a whole; their knowledge was not as helpful or groundbreaking. Though the opposing demands may initially seem to be constraining, a simple connection with a Knowledge Custodian by generalists can be a way of collaborating to produce new, amazing, knowledge.



Option 2: Personal Approach

Though top scores rarely write in the first person, I encourage you to do so *in the introduction and conclusion* if you engage in the personal approaches in these paragraphs. There are many ways that you can engage upon this approach, and it may be similar to Option 3: Application & Lesson. What you want to do here is think about a way that the knowledge you have gained in your *research* has helped you grow as a person, change in your thinking, or something like these. Please note, here is what you *don't* want to do:

In conclusion, we are too quick to assume that the most recent evidence is inevitably the strongest. Assuming that things are true too quickly can turn us into simple, one-dimensional people. Instead, we want to be risk-takers and global citizens that evaluate all perspectives in an empathetic and equitable way. When I encounter a new problem, I want to make sure that I am able to change the world and invest in under-served populations. To make sure that my dream comes true, I know that critical thinking skills, such as the ones taught in TOK and other IB courses, are the key to being a well-educated lifelong learner.

This paragraph did nothing but concept-drop things that students *think* examiners want to hear. Instead, try to find a real, authentic, and tangible way that the thinking you did in the essay affected your life.

Title 6: Are we too quick to assume that the most recent evidence is inevitably the strongest? Discuss with reference to the natural sciences and one other area of knowledge.

In conclusion, we are not too quick to assume that the most recent evidence is inevitably the strongest. Though this is a dense and important epistemological concept, the lessons that can be learned can easily be internalized. Previous points identified that simple human bias – preferences against underrepresented nationalities and genders, specifically – are often overlooked when discoveries were made. Though these examples demonstrated that we are often *not* too quick to assume that new evidence is the strongest, it makes me wonder if we should be too quick to assume that recent evidence is the strongest. This reminds me of a time in which a weak student in my class offered an interpretation of Shakespeare that seemed to be far-fetched. Everyone laughed at him, and we collectively moved on to a new point. The only problem was, of course, he was right. His experience as a Catholic helped him understand the imagery and symbolism that was commonly understood by Shakespeare's audience. We quickly assumed that that this new knowledge was not strong, and were wrong because of our biases. Being responsible, yet quick, may be the goal of learners in today's world. We should separate knowledge from the knower, and quickly assume that it is strong, and, potentially, correct. (208)

Title 3: Nothing is more exciting than fresh ideas, so why are areas of knowledge often so slow to adopt them? Discuss with reference to the human sciences and one other area of knowledge.

As I finished this paper, one perspective consistently came to my mind. It helped me come to the understanding that we often ignore fresh ideas because they are too big. And if ideas aren't to big, we often ignore them, or adopt them slowly, because change is challenging. In the examples shared in earlier paragraphs, the fresh ideas also brought the potential for

change, both big and small. This caused me to think about whether or not AOKs are really led by people who want to change. In Physics class I spend all of my time confirming the current paradigm. In English Literature I can lose all of my Criterion A score if I interpret a story in a way that is deemed *too* weird or out there. And in History I am given multiple perspectives of the causes of World War II, yet I am given the same ones as students in other countries. In looking at all of my classes, I don't see a true desire to change. And this is the reason that AOKs are slow to adopt. Is there bias? Sure. Are their outliers, such as XXX that were accepted quickly? Sure. But overall, on a general level, humans desire and appreciate the *status quo* and will slowly adopt new knowledge in order to maintain what we already know. (223)



Option 3: Application & Lesson

Similar to Option 2, the final option seeks to find an application that may be broader and more universal in scope. With that said, still seek to find tangible and specific ways that this lesson is both true and course-changing. While the lesson or application doesn't have to be a wild new approach towards living, show the examiner that the time that you spent writing was well worth it; show them that you actually benefitted from this awful experience called IB and TOK.

Title 4: Do we underestimate the challenges of taking knowledge out of its original context and transferring it to a different context? Discuss with reference to two areas of knowledge.

In closing, when we take knowledge out of its original contexts it is easy and common to underestimate the challenges of applying this knowledge. The effects can often be detrimental to people, communities, and our collective knowledge as a race. As explored earlier, taking knowledge out of one context and applying it to another often relies on summary, generalization, and the ignoring of facts, some of which may be important. All three of these practices, helpful for the transition of knowledge, rely on removing key aspects of knowledge for the sake of application, whether it be for convenience, public policy, or the creation of new art. Ignoring aspects of a concept or theory, just to favor some others parts of the knowledge, should never be done, as it will most likely lead to mistakes and potential harm. Because context-swapping relies on so many compromises, experts and amateurs alike should be wary to transfer knowledge from one context to another. They should overestimate, not underestimate, the challenges. (166)

Title 1: Is subjectivity overly celebrated in the arts but unfairly condemned in history? Discuss with reference to the arts and history.

If this title taught me anything, it's that subjectivity is inevitable. Whether we celebrate it or condemn it, we should acknowledge that it is going to be present in any sort of epistemological endeavor. In looking at the arts, I learned that subjectivity *is* overly celebrated and is unnecessarily assumed to be a core part of the AOK. Though I could research and find an infinite number of artworks that are founded on the concept of "meaning being up to the viewer," I can find an equally infinite number of works that do not require subjectivity at all. Similarly, in history, there is no getting away from subjectivity. Though some recent facts may come with extreme levels of certainty, when we look at events beyond the past few decades, subjectivity is as necessary as it is in some of the most abstract artworks! Subjectivity isn't a bad word, nor is it a good word. And it shouldn't be considered equal to bias or perspective. Rather, subjectivity should be seen as a tool that we use for getting closer to the truth. In XXX, subjectivity was required to understand the deep feelings of the artist. Were those feelings just a part of the work? Of course. But subjectivity was still a tool to be used. In history, there is nearly no endeavor that doesn't require the use of reasoning and logic. Subjectivity is something that will come into play with these ways of knowing that allows for application and understanding. Though subjectivity is overly celebrated in the arts and unfairly condemned in history, we should come to a greater understanding of the tool and find ways to harness it, rather than see it as a hinderance.