Knowledge Questions

Knowledge questions are at the heart of ToK. They’ll be an integral part of your journal entries, your ToK Presentation and your ToK essay. In the most simple explanation, knowledge questions are questions about the nature of knowledge.

**So... how do you put one together?**

1. **start with a real life situation (RLS)**
2. **use a good “starter”:**
   - ‘To what extent…’
   - ‘How far…’
   - ‘How…’
   - ‘What role does…’
   - ‘Under what circumstances…’
3. **add a central ToK concept, associated ToK concept, reference to an AoK or WoK**
   *BUT... the aim is not to add ALL of the components in the second step. You need a good balance*
4. **add a reference to a specific claim**

So... the formulaic version might look like this:

RLS (idea generator) + starter + central ToK element + reference to a claim= KQ

**Central ToK concepts to be explored include:** justification, validity, bias, reliability, certainty, etc.

There is a giant list below :)

**Associated ToK concepts include:** belief, evidence, faith, values, culture, etc.

**Reference to a relevant AoK or WoK:**
- mathematics
- the arts
- history
- natural science
- human science
- religious knowledge systems
- indigenous knowledge systems
- ethics
- sense perception
- language
- memory
- intuition
- faith
- reason
- emotion
- imagination

**Terms and concepts commonly used in the creation of knowledge questions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expert</th>
<th>Faith</th>
<th>Truth</th>
<th>Validity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belief</td>
<td>Generalization</td>
<td>Experience</td>
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<td>Certainty</td>
<td>Authority</td>
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<td>Justification</td>
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<td>culture</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
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<td>Verification</td>
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Good questions starters: ‘to what extent…’, ‘how far…’, ‘how…’, ‘what role does…’, under what circumstances…’

~What role do reason and intuition play in the justification of ethical values or moral codes?
~To what extent can we speak of certainty when it comes to claims made in history?
~To what extent do the oral narratives of indigenous knowledge systems act as a valid means through which human nature can become knowledgeable?
~How far is it possible to remain rational (relating to reason) with regards to faith and beliefs?
~Does the subject nature of evidence in the arts make it any less valid?
~To what extent can imagination be considered a valid source for hypothesis?

Central ToK concepts to be explored include: justification, validity, bias, reliability, certainty, etc.
Associated ToK concepts include: belief, evidence, faith, values, culture, etc.
Reference to relevant AoK or WoK

How much evidence do scientists need before they accept [that] a theory is true?

Good starter for an open-ended question
Reference to an AoK embed-ded within the reference to expert opinion in the specific AoK (natural science).
Central ToK concept of certainty. Note that the concept of certainty is implied her rather than suggested. One needs to be certain before they accept something as the truth.

Associated ToK term that refers to the central ToK concept of certainty relevant in this question. How much evidence do you need to be certain about something?
Let's try it again...

**To what extent do expert opinion and emotion play a role in shaping our perception of what constitutes art?**

- **Question starter that allows for more than one answer.**
- **Reference to emotion as a WoK to consider its role in affecting our opinion on what constitutes art.**
- **Central ToK concept is justification (implied!). What justification do we use to consider something an artistic creation?**

**Associated ToK term that refers to the influence ‘experts’ in art as an AoK have on our opinion on what constitutes art.**