

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 know knowledge.

KQ Requirements:

- ◇ Must relate to the methods (and mechanisms) by which we acquire knowledge
- ◇ Must be open-ended questions with many possible answers (there is no "right" answer)
- ◇ They are general questions which are not subject specific

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.

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

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:

▪ Expert	▪ Faith	▪ Truth	▪ Validity
▪ Belief	▪ Generalization	▪ Experience	▪ Reliability
▪ Certainty	▪ Authority	▪ Explanation	▪ Subjectivity
▪ Justification	▪ Bias	▪ Interpretation	▪ Objectivity
▪ Concept	▪ Theory	▪ Intuition	▪ Methods
▪ culture	▪ Evidence	▪ Values	▪ Verification

What? Samples... Sweet!

Below are some more tips, some tricks and some color-coded samples (so you know what's up!)

Good questions starters: 'to what extent...', 'how far...', 'how...', 'what role does...', under what circumstances...'

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

~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?

Here it is, a different way...

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 embedded 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 here 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.