

November 2014

Theory of knowledge prescribed titles

Instructions to candidates

Your theory of knowledge essay for examination must be submitted to your teacher for authentication. It must be written on one of the six titles (questions) provided below. You may choose any title, but are recommended to consult with your teacher. Your essay will be marked according to the assessment criteria published in the *Theory of Knowledge* guide. The focus of your essays should be on knowledge issues. Where appropriate, refer to other parts of your IB programme and to your experiences as a knower. Always justify your statements and provide relevant examples to illustrate your arguments. Pay attention to the implications of your arguments, and remember to consider what can be said against them. If you use external sources, cite them according to a recognized convention.

Note that statements in quotations in these titles are not necessarily authentic: they present a real point of view but may not be direct quotes. It is appropriate to analyse them but it is unnecessary, even unwise, to spend time on researching a context for them.

Examiners mark essays against the title as set. Respond to the title exactly as given; do not alter it in any way.

Your essay must be between 1200 and 1600 words in length, double spaced and typed in size 12 font.

1. “Some areas of knowledge seek to describe the world, whereas others seek to transform it.” Explore this claim with reference to two areas of knowledge.
2. “Knowledge takes the form of a combination of stories and facts.” How accurate is this claim in two areas of knowledge?

3. "In the production of knowledge, it is only because emotion works so well that reason can work at all." To what extent would you agree with this claim in two areas of knowledge?
4. "To gain an understanding of the world we need to make use of stereotypes." With reference to two areas of knowledge, to what extent do you agree with this statement?
5. "The task of history is the discovering of the constant and universal principles of human nature." To what extent are history and one other area of knowledge successful in this task?
6. "We may agree about general standards in the arts but disagree as to whether a particular work has artistic merit. In ethics the situation is reversed: we may disagree about ethical theories but we all know an unethical action when we see one." Discuss.