**Writing a TOK Essay**

It is important that you examine what the question is asking of you to do this you must understand each part of the question Thus one of the first stages of writing a TOK essay is to “unpack the title.”

Complete the table below regarding your essay question:

***Unpacking the Essay Title:***

Question title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| **Essay Type**: What is the essay asking you to do? |  |
| **Key words and phrases:** |  |
| **Contestable concepts:** |  |
| **Ambiguous terms:** |  |
| **Action terms:** |  |
| **Assumptions in the title:** |  |
| **Rephrase the title in your words to check your understanding**: |  |
| **Identify the knowledge issue:** |  |
| **Which AoK and/or WoK and/or facts about knower(s) will you consider?** |  |
| **How will you examine the implications of the knowledge issue(s) and challenge the assumptions in the question?** |  |
| **Analyse and argue: provide effective counterclaims, counter-arguments and counter-examples to support them. What different perspectives will you consider?** |  |
| **What conclusion does all the above mean you come to?** |  |

**Examining the Assessment Criteria**

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| **Assessment Criterion** | **Ideas to address this criterion**  (Examine page 18-20 of TOK: approach your assessment the IB way to assist you). |
| **Criterion A**: assesses to what extent your essay shows that **you understand the knowledge issue(s)** directly related to the essay title. |  |
| **Criterion B:** is all about your **knower’s perspective,** which is central to your whole understanding of TOK and certainly important in your essay. |  |
| **Criterion C:** looks at the quality of your analysis of knowledge issues. Analysis goes beyond merely stating or describing the knowledge issues. You need to explore them with a high degree of depth, detail and insight. |  |
| **Criterion D:** assess the organization of ideas in your essay. Ensure that your ideas connect together, are well supported and that you reference correctly. |  |

**Suggested TOK Essay Format**

**Introduction**

Use the introduction to provide an overview of your essay and to provide clarity regarding the central knowledge issues as well as an indication of your response to the knowledge issues.

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**Body**

Introduce each new section of your essay with a paragraph that clearly sets out and addresses the knowledge issues and relate TOK concepts such as WoK’s or AoK’s.

Provide authentic examples that you are able to analyse in detail, revealing how it throws light on the knowledge issue.

Develop breadth of understanding in your discussion of knowledge issues by making comparisons between WoK’s and AoK’s.

Examine all of the implications of the knowledge issue.

Arguments are strengthened by considering claims and counterclaim in relation to an example: always look for the possibility of a counterclaim to any claim or example given regarding knowledge issues.

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**Conclusion**

The conclusion refers back to the knowledge issue expressed in the title. The main argument and conclusions are summarized, accompanied by evaluation of the central argument and provides an opportunity for you to briefly reflect and evaluate the manner in which you have approached the knowledge issue.

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**Bibliography**

Ensure that you have in-texted referenced where appropriate in your essay and you provide a bibliography in the correct format.