**TOK Essay Practice**

**award plus or minus (no check marks!) for these introductions**

**Should key events in the historical development of areas of knowledge always be judged by the standards of their time?**

Different perspectives help us to understand why historical events happened the way they did. We can objectively look back at historical developments and create our own views, which is important in order to understand not only the politics and the psychology of historical developments from the past, but also what is going on in the world right now. In my opinion, the act of ‘judging something by certain standards’ is something very personal. Therefore, opinions concerning this matter can of course vary from person to person due to the fact that different people have different values. Concerning my approach to the question, I would say that it always depends on the historical development we are dealing with. Be it art, science or historic events, it all depends on the way you a re looking at the subject of interest. Sometimes historical developments should indeed be judged by the standards of their time and sometimes they should not. It all depends on who you are, where you came from and what your values are.

Is the introduction “satisfying” to read? What is your “belly-feeling”? Or does it cause more confusion?

O Satisfying O Not satisfying

Does the first line of the introduction answer the title question?

O Yes O No

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| Readability, understandability (vs. unclear points). | Answers title question (vs. reformulates the question). | Gives a balanced answer, counter arguments (vs. one-sided answer or no answer). | Defines terms in the context of AOK / WOKs. (vs. dictionary definition, or not applied). |

After having given the points, do you now think that this is a good or bad introduction? good bad

**“Humans are pattern - seeking animals and we are adept at finding patterns whether they exist or not” (adapt from Michael Shermer) Discuss knowledge questions raised by this idea in two areas of knowledge.**

Humans are pattern-seeking animals, whether they exist or not. A pattern may be defined as a repeated form of fulfilling a certain task in everyday life for humans. These patterns are either taught in the process of growing up or are later established for oneself. In this essay, several knowledge issues will be discussed in relation to the areas of knowledge Arts and Mathematics, linked to the ways of knowing memory, intuition, reason and imagination. One of the knowledge questions is concerned with the fact that patterns have either positive or negative effects on the acquisition of knowledge. In the arts, patterns are linked to personally established methods, which are unconsciously applied to one’s a rtistic work. Similarly, patterns in mathematics are formed through prior knowledge about the way mathematical problems should be solved. Achievements through patterns in the mathematics might be of social importance and have evoked the knowledge issue, which is asking whether patterns form a foundation for becoming more knowledgeable in the areas of knowledge Arts and Math.

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**“It is only knowledge produced with difficulty that we truly value”. To what extent do you agree with this statement?**

To what extent do emotion and reason make people truly value knowledge produced with difficulty? In this knowledge question, knowledge is described as facts and skills that are learned or gained through experiments or situations. value is when individuals cares for certain knowledge and is important to those individuals. Knowledge produced with difficulty is the knowledge that is not obtained easily. In natural science and arts, which are areas of knowledge , emotion and reason can make people truly value knowledge produced with difficulty. Through emotion and reason, which are ways of knowing, people may value the knowledge that is gained through hardships.

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**Given access to the same facts, how is it possible that there can be disagreement between experts in a discipline? Develop your answer with reference to two areas of knowledge.**

Very often it occurs, that two experts of the same discipline are given the same facts. This can be imagined as information on a sheet of paper, that has been given to them and which illustrate the exact identical facts. However after processing the information that had been presented to them, in the end they come to different conclusions. This situation poses the question how it is possible that there is a disagreement, even though they are experts of the same discipline and had access to the same facts?

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**Given access to the same facts, how is it possible that there can be disagreement between experts in a discipline? Develop your answer with reference to two areas of knowledge**

This essay will analyze the question “To what extent do reason, intuition and faith as ways of knowing influence the way we produce knowledge in human sciences and arts? ”. When looking at the two areas of knowledge, human sciences and arts, we see that knowledge is acquired differently in these fields. Although reason seems to be a reliable source for producing knowledge in human sciences, since facts are needed in order to prove something true or false; intuition may be important in connecting the pre - existing knowledge to structure a hypothesis.

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**Given access to the same facts, how is it possible that there can be disagreement between experts in a discipline? Develop your answer with reference to two areas of knowledge.**

Using history and the natural sciences it will be shown that given access to the same facts it is possible to have disagreement between experts in a discipline, because different experts possess different prior knowledge which not only affects how they interpret facts, but also influences what facts they select to make knowledge claims in their discipline. This makes it possible for experts to reach different conclusions and hence cause disagreement among them. However, there are also limitations to this claim and i t will be shown that depending on the definition of experts, prior knowledge does not always account for disagreement between experts in a discipline.

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**Given access to the same facts, how is it possible that there can be disagreements between experts in a discipline? Develop your answer with reference to two areas of knowledge**

Experts in the natural sciences and history can have disagreements, despite their access to the same facts. On the one hand, it is due to different interpretation of facts, on the other hand, it can be distinct selection of facts that can create disagreements. Both potential sources of disagreement are tightly connected to the influence of bias. In the following paragraphs this statement will be discussed with reference to the ways of knowing (WOK ) sense perception, emotion, intuition and reason. A fact is a proven event or statement constituting reality and can be different in distinct areas of knowledge (AOK) as well as within themselves. These different sorts of facts can certainly also cause incomprehension among experts. The way that people interpret facts about the past, as well as the selection of facts might always be different, as history itself ch anges with time. When examining the natural sciences, it is important to consider its very nature of being a framework of knowledge based on subjective prior observations that affect reason and intuition, which either allow agreements or cause disagreements among scientists. However, this essay also shows how experts in the natural sciences and history can agree given access to the same as well as different facts. This should potentially enable a wider scope of understanding. Dealing with this topic triggers awareness of potential implications that co nflicting conclusions can be used to one’s advantage in the case of acquiring knowledge and in the process of getting knowledgeable about the world’s mysteries.

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