

AoK's, WoKs & Evidence (TOK Essay 2.1)

Post 5/15



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Welcome to Module 2!

In this module we're going to focus on AoK's, WoK's, Evidence and getting into the planning of your essays.

I've got quite a lot of good stuff to share with you in this module, so let's get into it!

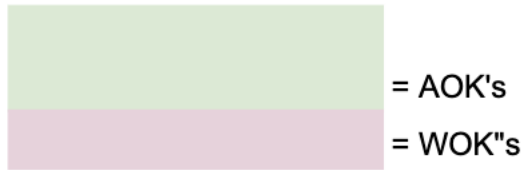
AoK's and WoK's.

Find the "AOK/WOK" audio download link in the downloads section, on the right.

Of course you already know that the Theory of Knowledge course is all about the **Areas of Knowledge** (AoK's) and the **Ways of Knowing** (WoK's). I'm sure you also know what these are and you mostly understand how they work, but here is the link to my notes if you need them.

It's interesting (and useful, in your essays) to consider how the AoK's and WoK's relate to each other. Below is a screen shot from an activity I do with my students. I randomly assign them to consider 5 of the boxes below --5 intersections between AoK's and WoK's and answer the 2 Key Questions below.

Basically the idea here is that we are looking for evidence that can fit in the box. E1 for example is about how Emotion works (but has limitations) when trying to achieve new insights in the Arts.



...To gain knowledge/understanding/insights

	Emotion	Faith	Imagination	Intuition	Language	Memory	Reason
The arts	E1	F1	Im1	In1	L1	M1	R1
Ethics	E2	F2	Im2	In2	L2	M2	R2
History	E3	F3	Im3	In3	L3	M3	R3
The human sciences	E4	F4	Im4	In4	L4	M4	R4
Indigenous knowledge	E5	F5	Im5	In5	L5	M5	R5

WoK/AOK Linkages Activity

An optional activity, if you're interested (if you think it will help you prepare for your essay) would be to do this activity (or something like it) and share your thoughts in the facebook group. **Some of these are obvious/easy, but some of them are really hard.** This activity will prime you to be able to see these kinds of links in your essays.)

That activity can help you to make sure that you know all of the links between the AoK's and WoK's.

Try to think of where the really tricky links are. If you can explain the link and think of several examples you probably have a good handle on it. It's often by focusing on these linkages where the marks are. Markers especially love it when students tackle the complicated ones and try to make the harder cases. Things like, "the role of logic in religion" or "emotion in maths."

Questions to go deeper:

- Can you think of an area of knowledge where emotion would never play a role?
- Does History depend on all of the WoK's?

Evidence

Find the "Essay Evidence" audio download link in the downloads section, on the right.

The final thing I want to talk to you in this lesson is evidence.

ToK is all about Evidence. For example, certain types of evidence are more convincing to us in certain domains (i.e. Art), but **that same type of evidence wouldn't be convincing in another domain** (i.e. Natural Science).

In your essay you are going to need to include a huge amount of different types of evidence to show that you know how the ToK course uses evidence. Also, using different evidence types makes you convincing as well. Just like in a legal trial (or [in a college application](#)), evidence (and using it well) is powerful. It shows you know your stuff.

However **nowhere in the ToK Guides does it explain what we consider good evidence**. So I want to explain this to you. Here are the types of things ToK considers good evidence:

- **Stories from research.** Stories that you've picked up from the course or from your own research into the AoK or WoK. For example, stories of real scientific experiments or quotes, facts or how society responded to a certain piece of art.
- **Personal stories.** Specific and realistic examples from your own life experiences are highly valued in this course. So you might tell us about how you found a wallet on the street and your ethics compelled you to turn it in, or about an experiment you did in IB Chemistry class --when you made a mistake and your results weren't what they should have been.

Whenever you use evidence it should be helping you to justify (or convince the reader about) your claims and counterclaims. As you write you should be asking yourself if your evidence is really supporting your Claims and Counterclaims or not. This is a major point of weakness in a lot of essays. The evidence is there, it just does not relate to the thing the student was just writing about in the sentence before.

Being careful

We try to reward students for being very careful in their explanations about the evidence so try to be really precise about what you see going on. For example if you're explaining how emotion works in the arts, try to be very specific about how it works well, but also the limits of how well it work and also about the limits of how sure we can be. For example, perhaps you have an example of a way that emotion seemed to be working well, but it may have actually not been working well in terms of reliable knowledge production. If that doesn't make a lot of sense right now don't worry. We'll come back to this later when we work on elevating your writing. Bottom line: talking about the weaknesses in your own arguments (i.e. the extent to which you cannot be certain) are great ways to sound like you've really thought through what you're saying.

Say something interesting...

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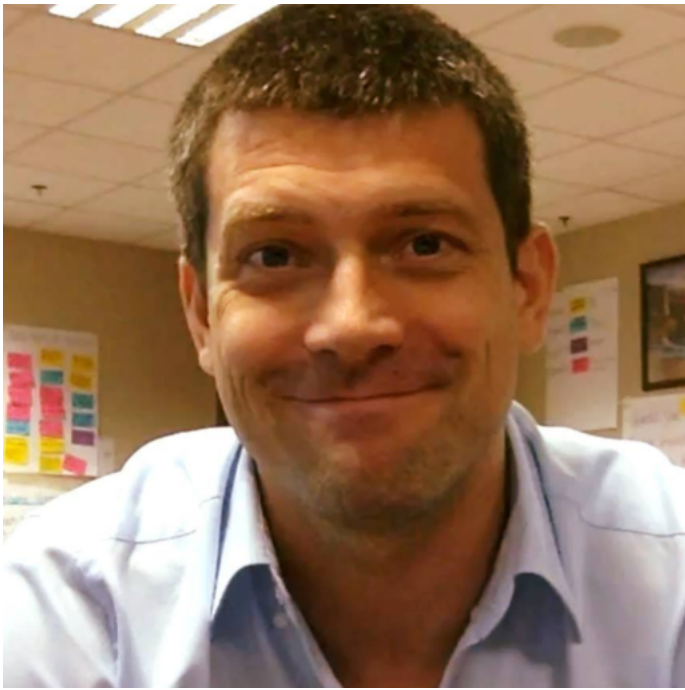
Coming Up

Essay Planning (TOK Essay 2.2)

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