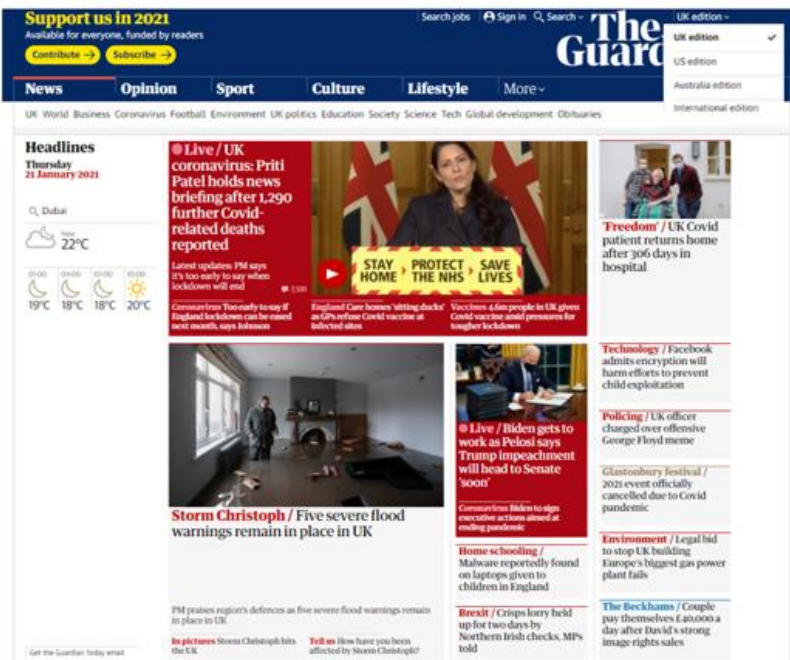


## TOK Exhibition Prompt 6 - How does the way that we organize or classify knowledge affect what we know?

This TOK prompt examines the core theme 'Knowledge and the Knower' and specifically how the way public knowledge, a common good, is conveyed affects the likelihood of this knowledge to be known by the intended audience. Although knowers have access to abundant information, the organization and presentation of knowledge are significant determinants that contribute to knowledge acquisition.

**Object 1:** The Guardian Newspaper ("News, Sport and Opinion from the Guardian's Global Edition.")



This is a UK edition of the Guardian Newspaper, which also offers an Australian, US and International edition. A newspaper is fundamental to publishing public knowledge and interestingly this particular newspaper has 4 different editions which portray that media prioritizes knowledge based on placement and origin. This reinforces the focus of

the prompt that because the information is classified based on the priorities of the respective country, each knower is more attentive towards a different knowledge relative to their counterpart in a different country which encourages individuals to develop concern and interest in their domestic affairs.

Traditionally, news is prioritized based on value, timeliness, and proximity. This newspaper focuses on the proximity of the event and therefore classifies it into a particular edition, for instance, the news about the UK flood, and coronavirus conditions are enlarged and highlighted for emphasis as opposed to US news about the senate which is placed lower and smaller. This conforms to the idea that organization of knowledge iterates its importance and draws the reader's attention allowing the reader to concentrate on a particular knowledge which aids memory and synthesis of knowledge. This organization of knowledge based on geographical dimension not only reflects cognitive proximity but also anchors patriotic perceptions (influencing emotions) and affiliation with civic involvement.

In a real-world context, journalism provides news based on personal preferences, placement of a country and origin and these factors affect how news is filtered by computer systems to cater for our taste and judgements. Essentially the news provided is not raw but rather manipulated and filtered, which limits our knowledge because we view a filtered search and make our judgements based on that. Substantiating the prompt, this object highlights the importance of classification of knowledge and how filtering knowledge based on proximity can limit the scope and acquisition of knowledge.

**Object 2:** A Tesla Magazine Advertisement (“Magazine Ad.”)



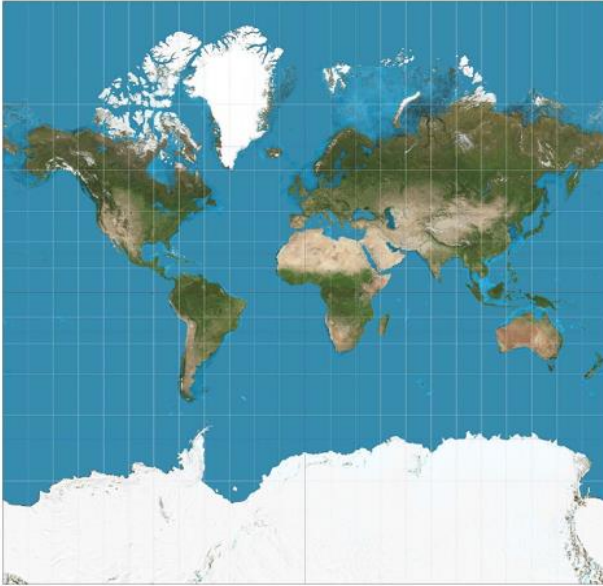
The object chosen above is a magazine article published for merchandising Tesla’s Electric car, which underpins the prompt’s focus because examining this from a literary aspect, the organization of text and graphics have a strong impact on the audience and make it more appealing to the audience and as a result, increase the overall marketing and knowledge within the consumers about this commodity.

This placement and enlargement of particular slogans (e.g. “Step INTO electric all-wheel drive”) and subtitles (e.g. “0 tailpipe emission”) over others put emphasis and value that give bigger meaning to verbal and visual learners. This magnification and compactness of text and other typographical factors (e.g. font style and colour) can contribute to easier information retrieval and memory. Furthermore, enlargement of text enhances reading speed and accuracy, therefore, aiding dyslexic community members to have an awareness about this car advertisement. Organization and placement of

contrasting colours (e.g. yellow and red) words, logos and graphics of the interior designing of the car can cue to a better recall of information and therefore improving the acquisition of knowledge and the effectiveness of Tesla's advertisements. This agglomeration of visual and textual information can affect how it is retrieved by an individual's motor and sensory systems and develop a want for a consumer to purchase this car. This advertisement serves a role to convey marketing knowledge and alter perceptions and consumer perspectives to switch brands and promote customer loyalty. This placement helps the customer categorize the uniqueness and value of a product/commodity over its drawbacks and competing substitutes.

In the real-world context, effective advertising can leave a long-lasting impact if used with the correct colour-combination, efficacious enlargement of graphics and typographical elements to establish an impression that makes it more attractive for the consumers to remember and as a result affects what they know. This supports the prompt that the organization of knowledge inside a medium is detrimental to raising awareness amongst a community of knowers.

**Object 3:** Mercator World Map (“Mercator Projection.”)



The third object is an image of a Mercator projection of the world. Within a huge library of maps, cartographers have organized and classified maps into the type of knowledge they communicate by preserving and distorting certain features. Classified into categories of purpose and reference, maps are of particular interest because their organization can affect the accuracy and our knowledge.

This Mercator map is designed for navigational purposes and is renowned for preserving directions and shapes of countries by varying the distances between the latitude lines which reflects the importance of organization and spatial orientation in providing navigational knowledge. However, these features are preserved at the expense of sacrificing the accuracy of sizes of locations. For example, Africa appears to be of the same size as Greenland, whereas, Greenland, in reality, is 14 times smaller.

The organization of maps reflect history and biases towards a country. In this projection, countries near the equator approximate to the correct scale; however, countries near

the poles are enlarged which reflects the imperialist frames of mind of European countries in colonizing the Southern counterpart. Making developing countries (like Malaysia) appear minuscule unconsciously imbues a conception of inferiority when adolescents are first introduced to these maps, impacting the interpretation of maps and acquisition of knowledge.

The prime meridian is always centred around Great Britain intentionally because most maps were held by the British navigators, and locations were standardized to make collaboration easier reflecting the impact and extent of the British colonization.

Organization is key because distorted shapes, lines, and colours of maps communicate different knowledge, affecting our visualization of the world.

**Word Count:** 950

## Works Cited

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