



<i>Thought and Language</i>	Vygotsky
<i>Emotional Intelligence</i>	Goleman
<i>The Story of Philosophy</i>	Durant
<i>Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance</i>	Pirsig
<i>The Power of Myth</i>	Campbell
<i>The Language Police</i>	Ravitch

Teaching Time: This unit will take approximately five weeks to complete.

Ways of Knowing:

1. What is the nature of knowing?
2. By what means do we come to know and believe?
3. Differentiate between belief, data, faith, information, knowledge, opinion, and wisdom.
5. How important is one's personal experience in acquiring knowledge and in making knowledge claims?
6. To what extent does personal or ideological bias influence our
7. knowledge claims?
8. Is knowledge innate or external?

Knowers and Knowing:

1. In the TOK diagram, the center is represented as both an individual and as a group. How does individual and group knowing differ?
2. What is the difference between "I am certain" and "It is certain"? Is conviction sufficient for a knowledge claim to be validated? What are the implications of accepting passion, personal belief as knowledge?
3. Who do you think you are, and how do you know?
4. Do knowledge claims differ between cultures?
5. How are knowledge claims justified?
6. How do private justifications of knowledge claims differ from public justifications of knowledge claims?
7. What are the responsibilities attached to making a knowledge claim?

Areas of Knowing - Perception:

1. How do assumptions, beliefs, and expectations affect perceptions? Should knowers ignore or reject personal or societal bias when perceiving? Do knowers have a moral obligation to examine their own biases in relation to perception?
2. How do language and culture affect perception?
3. To what extent has modern technology changed the way(s) we perceive? Are these changes for the better or worse?

4. What is the role of perception in the Areas of Knowledge? Do perceptions differ according to each area?
5. How does each person's unique perception influence his or her ability to learn from the various Areas of Knowledge?

Areas of Knowing - Language:

1. How does language influence or affect thinking? Can one think without language?
2. How does one acquire language? Is such acquisition innate or environmental?
3. In what ways does language reflect societal or cultural values or biases? To what extent should a factual document or presentation be examined and scrutinized due to its language?
4. What different functions does language perform? Which are most relevant in creating and communicating knowledge?
5. Should all languages be preserved? What of the so-called "dead languages"?
6. What is the plausibility or even the necessity of a universal language commonly shared by the world?
7. What is the role of language in creating and reinforcing distinctions in social level, ethnicity, and gender?
8. How do different languages influence their speakers' concepts of themselves and their world?
9. If people are multilingual, is what they know different in each language? Does translation alter or affect what can be known?
10. How might "to know" differ depending on one's language?
11. How is the meaning of what is said affected by silences, omissions, pace, tone of voice, and bodily movement? To what extent might these reflect cultural or societal behaviors also influence language?
12. Does fluency in a given language guarantee the transference of knowledge when making a knowledge claim? Is such influence equal in value for each Area of Knowledge?
13. Is ambiguity in a language necessarily a flaw or weakness? How might ambiguity be both helpful and harmful in the different Areas of Knowledge?

Areas of Knowing - Reason:

1. How does one define "good" or "valid" reason? What is the value of learning to distinguish between valid and invalid arguments?
2. How accurate is the definition of logic as the study of form in argument, irrespective of subject matter?
3. In what ways does culture influence reason?

4. Does knowledge require some kind of rational basis? If knowledge claims cannot be rationally defended, or are proven irrational, should they be renounced?
5. Differentiate between the formal and informal fallacies. Why are informal fallacies believable?
6. How do beliefs affect one's capacity to reason logically and recognize valid arguments? How do they affect the ability to recognize fallacies and rationalization?
7. In what ways can the person presenting an argument and the context in which it is made influence its acceptance or rejection?
8. What role does formal logic play in arriving at and justifying knowledge? How does the role of formal logic influence the different Areas of Knowledge?

Areas of Knowing - Emotion:

1. Can feelings have a rational basis? Should emotions be justified? Are emotions and feelings essential?
2. Are emotions dictated by the influences of society or culture?
3. Can one experience an emotion that cannot be expressed in language? To what extent are emotions shaped by language, if at all?
4. Can emotions be classified as "good", "bad", "appropriate", and "inappropriate"?
5. What part does emotion play in the acquisition of knowledge? Should emotion play a role in the evaluation of knowledge claims?
6. Is faith purely emotional, or is it possible to provide a rational justification for religious belief?

Linking Questions:

1. Is knowledge limited to human beings? Other living organisms? Inanimate objects?
2. How do the TOK Areas of Knowledge differ in types of knowledge and knowledge claims?
3. Is emotion useful in all or perhaps some of the Areas of Knowledge? Should it even play a role in these areas?
4. In the various cultures and subcultures within these cultures, is it correct to think that "good reason" will be different in each culture? What about when disputes arise between these cultures?
5. Can language be compared with other human forms of symbolic representation, such as gestures, sign language, the visual and musical arts, or mathematics? How might it be different from these other forms?

## II. THE ARTS

Reference Text: *The Relevance of the Beautiful* Gadamer

Supplemental Texts: *Learning to Bow: Inside the Heart of Japan* (excerpts) Fieler  
1984 Orwell  
*What Painting Is* Elkins  
“If Black English Isn’t a Language,  
Then Tell Me, What Is It?” Baldwin  
excerpts from: *The Red Violin* (film)  
*Pollock* (film)  
*The Girl with the Pearl Earring* (film)  
*Immortal Beloved* (film)  
*Mona Lisa Smile* (film)  
*Dead Poets’ Society* (film)

Teaching Time: This unit will take approximately four weeks to complete.

### Knowers and Knowing:

1. How does one define the term “art”?
2. To what degree are aesthetics relative to the individual, to cultures, and to the world as a whole?
3. Are there common aspects found in all art forms?

### Ways of Knowing:

1. What is/are the role(s) of art? Is art a reflection of reality meant to instruct or inspire, to celebrate beauty, to elicit emotional response, to preserve societal, cultural, or spiritual values?
2. To what extent are arts unrealistic?
3. Concerning creativity, is originality an integral component of the arts?
4. Do the arts have specific goals as do the other Areas of Knowledge?
5. Can art or should art tell the truth? How are the truth claims of art different from or similar to the truth claims of the other Areas of Knowledge?

### Areas of Knowledge - Arts and Values:

1. How are value judgment in the arts justified? What determines “good art”?
2. Do artists have moral and ethical obligations and responsibilities? Is morality a valid standard of judgment regarding art?

3. Should there be qualifications, such as relevant education, for one to judge or appreciate art? Is the general public's assessment of a work of art any less valid than a professional's assessment?
4. What role does or should art play in politics or ideologies? Should governments, corporations, advertisers, and ideologically based groups concern themselves with the arts?

Areas of Knowledge - Arts and Perspectives:

1. What knowledge of art can be gained by focusing attention on the artist? Are the artist's intentions relevant to assessing the work of art? Might the artist's intentions be accidental or coincidental?
2. Is the manner in which an artist creates significant relative to the final product?
3. Should a work of art be judged solely on its technical merits? To what extent are technical aspects of an art form relevant to its creative aspects? Are the two exclusive of one another? Is the form of the work itself the true meaning of the work?
4. What knowledge of art can be gained by focusing on the reader's or audience's response? Can the merits of a work of art be legitimized through its popular appeal, monetary value, or longevity? Does the critic have a role in legitimizing the aesthetic value of art?
5. What knowledge of art can be gained by focusing attention on its social, cultural, or historical context? Is art a product of a particular place and time in terms of its subject matter and forms of expression? Should art be considered a legitimate documentation or a particular culture, society, or ideology? What, if anything, determines longevity or obsolescence in art?

Linking Questions:

1. In several languages, the word for poet, maker, seer, painter, and prophet all mean the same thing. What does that imply about the arts across culture?
2. What role does art play in people's lives? Are those roles unique to the arts?
3. Are the arts ways of knowing, or areas of knowledge?
4. Can art tell the truth? If so, how is artistic truth different from truth in the context of natural sciences, human sciences, or history?

III. ETHICS

Reference Text:        *Ethics for a New Millennium*                      The Dalai Lama

Supplemental Texts: *Cases in Bioethics*                                      Crigger  
                                  *The Hero with a Thousand*

<i>Faces</i>	Campbell
<i>The Virtue of Selfishness</i>	Rand
<i>Love is a Fallacy</i>	Shulman
“The Ones who Walk Away from Omelas” (short story)	LeGuin
<i>Whale Talk</i>	Crutcher
<i>Gentlehands</i>	Kerr
“What’s the Matter Here” (song)	10,000 Maniacs
excerpts from <i>Huck Finn</i> (film)	
<i>Ghandi</i> (film)	
<i>Wag the Dog</i> (film)	
<i>Agnes of God</i> (film)	
<i>Les Miserables</i> (film)	
<i>Lord of the Rings</i> (film)	

Teaching Time: This unit will take approximately five weeks to complete.

Knowers and Knowing:

1. How, if at all, is it possible to know who is right in judging ethical issues? If moral decisions are not clear, or if moral issues are controversial, does it follow that there is no such justifiable concept as right or wrong?
2. What knowledge of morality may be gained by focusing attention on the **individual** making moral judgments? Is freedom of choice a necessary condition for making moral judgments? Should the person’s intentions be the criterion for deciding whether an action is right or wrong? Are people always aware of their real intentions or motives?

Ways of Knowing:

1. What is the difference between “morality” and “ethics”? Is ethics concerned primarily with **what is** or **what ought to be**?
2. What are the justifications for, and implications of, claiming that there are absolute standards for morality, or that the standards of morality can be set only by society, or that the standards of morality can only be set by the individual? Are the three positions mutually exclusive?

Areas of Knowledge - Ethics and Values:

1. Does living a moral life matter – whether humans are by nature good, evil, or amoral?
2. How significant are ethics relative to the other Areas of Knowledge?

Areas of Knowledge - Ethics and Technology:

1. What is the purpose of the Ethical and Fair Use policies related to the Internet that are commonly adopted by schools and other institutions?
2. What ethical issues are raised by highly skilled Internet users breaking into private and public computer systems?

Areas of Knowledge - Ethics and Knowledge Perspectives:

1. What knowledge of morality may be gained by focusing attention on the features of the moral **judgment** or **act** itself? Are some thoughts or actions intrinsically “right” or “wrong”, independent of circumstances? Is it possible to establish firm principles to determine moral action? If so, on what basis? Based on reason? Divine revelation? Is it possible to rank principles in order of importance? What are “human rights” and on what basis do they rest?
2. What knowledge of morality may be gained by focusing attention on the **consequences** of the thoughts or actions? Is an effect on others a necessary condition for a judgment to be a moral judgment? To what extent can consequences be predicted and judged as to which consequences are better and which are worse? Can consequences be quantified or weighed scientifically? Which matters more, the consequences for individuals or the consequences for the group? Are there spiritual consequences to be taken into account?

Areas of Knowledge - Ethics and Politics:

1. To what extent are political systems such as autocracy, democracy, theocracy, and communism, in their ideal forms, allied with ethical ideas of the right way for people to live in a society? To what extent might each system embody different concepts of justice and social responsibility?
2. Does politics affect the ethics of a society?

Linking Questions:

1. What knowledge of morality may be gained by focusing attention on the social, cultural, or historical context of the moral judgment? Is a shared moral code a necessity for a harmonious society? To what extent can acceptance of dissent be a feature of a shared moral code? To what extent do moral values differ depending on the society or the historical time? For example, can a practice such as slavery be right in one era or region and wrong in another? Can the practices of one society be judged with any validity by applying the values of another generation or another culture? Do some values seem to be universal, or nearly so?

#### IV. MATHEMATICS

Reference Text: *The Universe and the Teacup:*  
*The Mathematics of Truth and Beauty* Cole

Supplemental Texts: Sonnets (metric poetry)  
Excerpts from *Amadeus* (film)  
*Pi* (film)  
*A Beautiful Mind* (film)  
*Good Will Hunting* (film)

Teaching Time: This unit will take approximately five weeks to complete.

Knowers and Knowing:

1. What is the foundation upon which mathematics rests? Is it discovered or invented?

Ways of Knowing:

1. Is math a language? How does math differ from conventional spoken or written language? How are they similar?
2. Do mathematical symbols have meaning in the same sense as words have meaning?

Areas of Knowledge: Mathematics and Reality:

1. Is it reasonable to claim that mathematics is effective in accounting for the workings of the physical world?
2. How does the formal school of thought, which regards mathematics as similar to an activity governed by rules, limited only by rules of logic and the mathematician's creativity, differ from the realist school of thought, which regards mathematics as referring to the way the world actually works?

Areas of Knowledge – Mathematics and Knowledge Claims:

1. What is the significance of proof in mathematical thought? Is a mathematical statement true only if it has been proved? To what extent, is at all, does the meaning of a mathematical knowledge claim depend upon its proof? Are there unprovable truths in mathematics?
2. What impacts have major mathematical discoveries (or inventions) had on conceptions or perceptions of the world?
3. How has technology influenced mathematical knowledge claims? Is this technological influence more than just a faster processing of data?

Linking Questions:

1. Does math exhibit aesthetic qualities or value as does a work of art? Is math a form of art?
2. What relationships exist between mathematics and the visual and musical art forms? Besides the possibilities of aesthetics, are there concepts that are common to both mathematics and art?
3. Do culture, politics, religion, or ideology influence mathematical knowledge?
4. If mathematics did not exist, what difference would it make?

**Junior Year School-based Assessments:**

**10 minute presentations (midterm)**

**First draft of TOK Paper: Due by the end of the semester**

**TOK II: Senior Year**

**Topics:**

V. NATURAL SCIENCES

Reference texts:	<i>The Structure of Scientific Revolution</i>	Kuhn
	<i>First You Build a Cloud: And Other Reflections on Physics as a Way of Life</i>	Cole
	<i>The Universe in a Nutshell</i>	Hawking
Supplemental texts:	<i>Angels and Demons</i>	Brown
	<i>The Hot Zone</i>	Preston
	<i>Supersize Me</i>	
	<i>The Starry Messenger</i>	Galileo
	<i>Fast Food Nation</i>	Schlosser
	<i>Silent Spring</i>	Carson

Teaching Time: This unit will take approximately five weeks to complete.

Knowers and Knowing:

1. What does science mean to different people and different cultures?
2. What is the role of creativity in the sciences? To what extent is the creation of a hypothesis or a research method comparable to the creation of a work of art?
3. What is the role of the historian? Does the historian record history, or create it?





### Knowers and Knowing:

1. What is history? Is it the study of the past or the study of records of the past?
2. What might George Orwell have meant when he wrote that, “Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past.”?
3. Is all knowledge, in a sense, historical knowledge?
4. What is the role of the historian? Does the historian record history, or create it? Can the historian be free of bias in the selection and interpretation of material? Could it be reasonably argued that the personal understandings of historians, despite their possible bias, is necessary or even desirable in the interpretation and recording of history? Is the power of persuasion a characteristic of a good historian?
5. Why study history? Is it possible to know who we are without knowledge of the past?
6. About whom is history written? Why do selected past events appear in books as historically important while others are ignored?

### Ways of Knowing:

1. How far can we speak with certainty about anything in the past?
2. In what ways has technology affected the study of history?
3. Can history provide a guide to understanding contemporary affairs? Can it provide a guide to the future? What might be the lessons of history for future generations?
4. Is truth difficult to prove in history? Does it follow that all versions are equally acceptable?

### Areas of Knowledge:

1. About whom is history written? Are the lives of some groups of people more historically significant than the lives of others? Why are histories found in texts selective? To what extent is history a reflection or about those in power as opposed to the common individual?
2. To what extent can distinctions be made between factual report, biased interpretation, and calculated distortion? How is history a propaganda tool?
3. Can history ever be objective?

## **Assessment:**

### **Part 1 – External Assessment (40 points)**

#### **“Essay on a Prescribed Title”**

Students will write one essay on a title chosen from a list of ten IBO-prescribed titles. The essay will range from 1200-1600 words in length and be clearly focused on the chosen topic. Quality essays will include a coherent development of ideas with “reference to any... parts of the TOK programme, to specific disciplines, or with reference to opinions gained about knowledge both inside and outside the classroom.”

Consistent referencing is expected to acknowledge the use of outside sources and, when appropriate, a bibliography should be submitted. The TOK teachers will serve to encourage and support the student as they engage in the process of writing the TOK essay. The writing, however, is the sole responsibility of the student. Authenticity will be ensured through close monitoring.

The TOK essay will be completed during the first semester of the student’s 12<sup>th</sup> grade year – no later than the end of November. Essays will then be archived by the IB Coordinator for external assessment submission the following semester.

### **Part 2 – Internal Assessment (20 points)**

#### **“The Presentation”**

Students will make at least one oral presentation to the class during the TOK course and complete a self-evaluation report as prescribed in the *Vade Mecum*. Students will select their topics for the presentation and be guided by teacher conferencing if necessary. Presentations will require approximately 10 minutes of class time with ample opportunity for class discussion and questions to follow. Students will be given the self-evaluation form from the *Vade Mecum* before preparing their presentations.