

TOK Essay Planning Form

Name _____

Essay Title _____

Introduction

Personal understanding of what the question is asking

(you may or may not need this in the introduction but it will help you to focus on what the question is really asking)

Personal Understanding of the Question

Overall summary of answer

(Give me a brief outline of your overall answer and the 3-5 points you are going to make to try and prove it. Try to ensure that your answer is realistic, balanced and sensible and remember, the best essays will not usually be black or white / yes or no. Instead they will usually point out that the answer may vary depending on the WOK or AOK you are talking about or the perspective you are approaching the question from and then go on to explore those variations.)

Main Body

Point / Claim 1 *This is one of the sub-points you need to make in order to support your overall answer. Think of it as one of the foundations on which your overall answer rests so if you can't prove this then your answer won't stand up. Your point should be a complete sentence (not just one word) and it should offer a clear answer to the question by using key words from the title.*

Evidence for *This should be an example that proves the point above. You will need to explain exactly how the evidence you have given proves the Point above. Some of your examples should be from research while some should be from your own personal experience as an IB student / citizen of Hong Kong ... etc. Try to make your examples as original as possible.*

Development *This is an opportunity to develop your ideas further, you can do this by:*
Considering the counterclaims (CCs) that might be raised against the point and responding to them. Remember:

- Your response doesn't have to be a straight-forward argument back against the CC, better essays will often acknowledge that the CC is valid and try to find a compromise between the CC and original point*
- Different cultural, historical or intellectual perspectives can be a good source of CCs and responses*

Exploring the implications raised by the point you have made – i.e. the consequences that follow from that point
Exploring the assumptions which the point you have made is based upon – are those assumptions valid
Introducing and exploring 'Sub Knowledge Question' –

- Remember, answering this SubKQ should help you answer the overall question asked in the essay title*

Summing up *Each point, especially after the 'Development' should end with a summary of the point you have made and the mini-conclusions you have reached so far. In good essays this summing up will usually show some development or increased subtlety from the position outlined at the start of the point.*

Repeat this structure for the rest of the main body of the essay. You should aim to make 3 – 5 points so copy and paste the template below the right number of times for your essay. Remember that you can do multiple things in your development, you don't have to explore just one CC, one response, one Sub KQ or one implication ... a good development might explore a number of these ideas and then weave them together into one complex and subtle point.

Main Body

Point / Claim 2

Evidence For

Development

Summing Up

Point / Claim 3

Evidence For

Development

Summing Up

Conclusion

Your conclusion should sum up your overall position and make it clear to the reader how you think you have proven the answer you introduced at the start. In addition, especially if you have not done this earlier in the essay, you should think about the implications (or consequences) that your overall answer has and any assumptions on which it is based.

Conclusion

Implications

Assumptions
