

HFS INTERNATIONAL IBDP 2  
CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO THE  
TOK EXHIBITION

Walk the TOK

Epistémè

2021

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*Multi Purpose Hall, 5th Floor*

How does a subject like *Epistemology* or *Theory of knowledge (TOK)* manifest itself in the world around us?

How can *Theory of Knowledge* be connected with the reality we perceive, and the objects we encounter in our daily lives?

Is it merely theoretical elusiveness or does *Theory of Knowledge* have any relevance or significance in the way we approach knowledge and life?

- These could be some of the meta-questions that students studying the IB curriculum and teachers teaching the IB curriculum are constantly asking themselves.

*Theory of Knowledge or TOK* is an integral core subject of the IBDP program; a subject, from which there is no escape, implying that it is not a choice subject but is at the very heart of the IB philosophy of learning.

*TOK or Theory of knowledge* meanders through the maze of defining knowledge, understanding not what we know, but how do we know what we know, or reflecting on the constructs of reality against the backdrop of the expanse of time and space. It seeks to grapple with the world of philosophical elusiveness where to know that you do not know is actual wisdom. Hence, the challenge of finding a connection, between this world of erudite terminology and the real world around us remains a daunting exercise.

The IB assessment process dealing with the TOK exhibition is one such attempt to engage with this challenge. The exhibition aims to connect one knowledge prompt or knowledge question chosen by the student, with any three objects that the student may have encountered in real life. The connection has to be at a deeper

level as knowledge questions are questions raised on the underlying awareness of how the mind makes sense of the matter around us.

As the IB process constantly reflects and evolves its learning patterns, this is the first year that the IB students the world over will be equal participants in this challenging endeavor.

In a brave attempt to take on this task, the students of HFSI IBDP Grade 12 surpassed all expectations in their first-ever TOK exhibition event called ‘*Epistēmē*’: *Walk the TOK held* in December 2021. The culmination of a two-year-long process of discussions, reflection, and critical thinking resulted in a 3-hour long event comprising a mix of intellect and fun.

‘*Epistēmē*’: *Walk the TOK*, took the junior class and the IB facilitators through the journey of inculcating a TOK mindset. The event began with quizzing on some lighter knowledge terms like ‘Absolute Truth’, ‘Paradigms’, ‘Filters’ and ‘Shared and Personal knowledge’. It was then followed by an attempt to unpack a few of the past year's IB TOK essay titles. These titles are always a mix of ambiguity and intellectual riddling and any attempt to understand them is in itself a work of deep reflection and thought. This not so easy cerebral exercise was charged with fervor and interest as most students attempted to take on titles like; “**Disinterestedness is essential in the pursuit of knowledge**” or “**The production of knowledge requires accepting conclusions that go beyond the evidence for them**” or “**That which can be asserted without evidence can be dismissed without evidence**”. Some which seemed simpler were just as hard; “**When the only tool**

**you have is a hammer, all problems begin to resemble nails” or “The more you know the more you realize you do not know”.**

The fun part for each attempt was the chocolates that came along with no judgment on right and wrong interpretations of the titles.

The core focus of the event was the 12th-grade students presenting their exhibition of the objects connected with their chosen knowledge prompts. This was a well-thought-out and planned exercise. The objects ranged from famous paintings and artworks like ‘The Last supper and the sculptor of ‘Moses with the horns’. Some were objects commonly seen in everyday life like the online shopping ‘Myntra’ logo, newspaper cartoon clips, or a sales price tag: all with an attempt to understand the prompt of **“The challenges raised in the communication and dissemination of knowledge”.**

Personal objects like the ‘Python coding textbook’ or a ‘Rubik cube’ or a ‘Political cartoon’ from an exam question paper or a ‘Ghost Storybook from a Scholastic fare’ and a ‘Hieroglyphic interpretation chart’, were used to explore prompts like **“Are some types of knowledge more useful than others” or “The relationship between personal experience and knowledge”.**

The prompt **“What role does imagination play in producing knowledge about the world”** was explored using objects like ‘Thomson’s atomic model’ and images of ‘Lucifer’ and ‘vampire’ and ‘paranormal scenes’ from movie posters, or statues of deities that are worshipped in personal home temples.

Images of the Nazi ‘Swastika’, a ‘Temple bell’, ‘the advertisement of Sensodyne toothpaste’ and mythic stories from indigenous knowledge systems and their dismissal by the world of science, or the model of the globe, were used as objects for exploring prompts like **“what role do experts play in influencing our acquisition and consumption of knowledge”.**

To sum it up, it was indeed an impressive show and the learning that came out of it was tremendous. As the event sought to create a free non-judgmental space for learning, everyone seemed to participate and enjoy the knowledge games. The event's last item was an interactive workshop where each group tried the connecting exercise for themselves. Different Knowledge prompts were given to each group and they were assigned two 12th grade students as mentors to guide them through the process. Connecting objects to the prompt and justifying them with a TOK rationale seemed to make the *Theory of knowledge* more accessible and not as elusive a subject anymore.

The event culminated with MOD doughnuts and a lot of food for thought.

- Jasmeet Bhasin Ranghar

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