

To: Upcoming Senior TOK Students (class of 2018)

From: Mrs. Webb and Mr. Mandelstam, TOK Instructors

RE: Summer Assignment for TOK

Your first priority for IB this summer is to work on your **Extended Essay** and have a completed first draft to your adviser by the August 1st due date.

Our desire is to encourage you to do an excellent job with this independent research project, so we have decided not to give you any additional reading or blogging assignments as we have with TOK students in the past. Instead, we want you to connect your Extended Essay research to TOK thinking. While you are doing your research, look for the following TOK focus concepts within the work and be prepared to provide a response to any and all of the following on the first day of class in August:

Knowledge Questions

Differing Perspectives

Ways of Knowing

Analysis of Limitations of Knowledge

Knowledge as “accurate and appropriate”

Knowledge Claims

Counterclaims

Your Perspective as a Knower

Bibliography of Sources Use

SECOND SEMESTER (FALL 2017) FOCUS: Theory of Knowledge is the unifying core of the International Baccalaureate Program. During the first semester, we focused on the eight ways of knowing: reason, perception, language, emotion, faith, intuition, memory, and imagination, plus areas of knowing in ethics, indigenous, and religious knowledge systems. You were asked to think critically about knowledge itself. In other words, how do we know what we think we know? How can we prove we know anything? Hopefully, you have learned how to formulate effective knowledge questions and developed a healthy level of skepticism without becoming cynics.

During the second semester, we will apply the ways of knowing to the other subject areas, from the more objective fields of mathematics and the natural (experimental) sciences, to the more relative areas of social (human) sciences and history, to the more subjective areas of ethics and the arts. We will analyze how knowledge is used and valued while continuing to focus on Knowledge Questions.

By the end of the semester, you will complete the two TOK requirements: a TOK essay on a prescribed title (i.e., the external assessment) and a formal TOK presentation (i.e., the internal assessment). However, the class will be made up of a variety of activities including readings, discussion, presentations, and writing.

“The art and science of asking questions is the source of all knowledge” ~ Thomas Berger