

ToK Group Activity

Group Members: _____

Human Sciences/History Areas of Knowledge

1. Form groups of 4-5 members.
2. Referring to the ToK Guide, pick one question from any two of the four sections of the Human Sciences and History areas of knowledge. Each group member will take the lead in answering the question in writing using the course textbooks as sources of information. Each group member will report their finding to their group and seek feedback to help them complete tasks 4 and 5 below.
3. If your group has five members, the fifth member should also select a question from any of the four sections in either the Human Sciences or History areas of knowledge.
4. Responses should be word-processed and handed in at the end of class on Monday, December 19. Each response should be 1-2 double-spaced pages in length and should contain references to our three texts as well as outside resources where appropriate
5. Next week, each student should be prepared to give a 5-minute report on their paper.
6. Following that, groups will continue to work together on other aspects of human sciences and history.

Human Science/History Comparison

We have defined knowledge as *justified true belief that is undefeated by counter-evidence*.

We have also discussed three theories of truth to help us understand the meaning of the term “*true*” in our definition. These three theories are:

Theory 1: The Correspondence Theory of Truth

If we let x represent some belief, then

- 1) x is true if and only if (iff) x corresponds to some fact;
- 2) x is false iff x does not correspond to any fact.

Theory 2: The Coherence Theory of Truth

If we let x represent some belief, then

- 1) x is true iff x is consistent with some set of beliefs;
- 2) x is false iff x is not consistent with any set of beliefs.

Theory 3: The Pragmatic Theory of Truth

If we let x represent some belief, then

- 1) x is true iff x is useful to some person or persons who believes x ;
- 2) x is false iff x is not useful to some person or persons who does not believe x .

There are four ways of knowing central to the ToK curriculum. These are **Reason, Perception, Emotion, and Language**. One way to think of these ways of knowing is in terms of the extent to which each enables us to justify our beliefs and thus establish knowledge claims as true.

Using the answers that your group has come up with for the areas of Human Sciences and History, prepare a report that compares and contrasts these two areas in terms of the extent to which each relies upon the four ways of knowing to establish knowledge claims. Be sure to incorporate illustrative examples of knowledge claims in your written report. Contemporary examples and personal examples would be particularly welcome. Each group will be given approximately ten minutes to report to the class.