

The TOK Oral Packet

Part 2: The presentation

General instructions

Students must make one or more individual and/or small group presentations to the class during the course. Presentations must be delivered in a language accessible to all members of the class (if the school has been notified to submit presentation recordings, those presentations must be given in the language for which the students have been, or will be, registered).

The maximum group size is **three**. If a student makes more than one presentation, the teacher should choose the best one (or the best group presentation in which the student participated) for the purposes of assessment. **Students are not permitted to offer presentations on the same specific subject matter more than once.** This refers to either the same knowledge question, or the same real-life situation. It is advised that the presentation should take place towards the end of the course, as otherwise students may not have had the chance to develop skills such as formulating knowledge questions which are key to this task.

The TOK presentation requires students to identify and explore a knowledge question raised by a substantive real-life situation that is of interest to them. The selected real-life situation may arise from a local domain of personal, school, or community relevance, or from a wider one of national, international or global scope. Whatever situation is chosen, it must lend itself naturally to a question about knowledge.

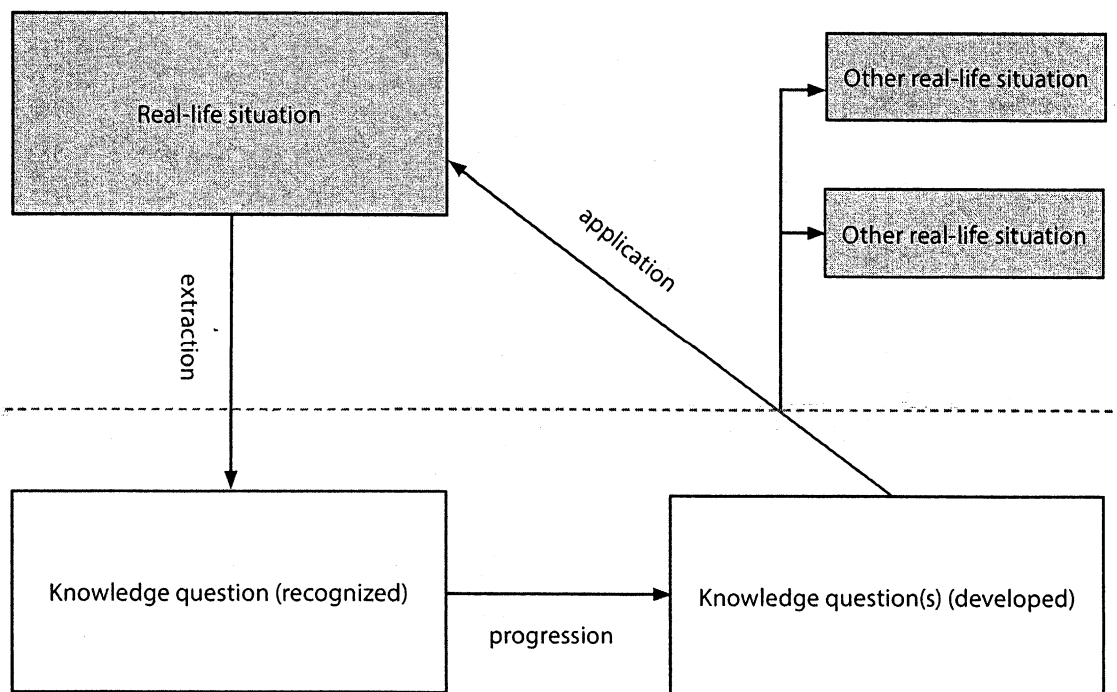


Figure 19

The student is required to extract and explore a knowledge question from a substantive real-life situation. For this reason, it is wise that students avoid real-life situations that need a great deal of explanation from outside sources before the extracted knowledge question can be understood in context.

The diagram indicates that a successful presentation will have several dimensions.

- The two levels in the diagram represent the students' experiences in the TOK course (lower level) and in the world beyond it (upper level). The connections between the levels demonstrate the relevance of TOK to life beyond the TOK classroom.
- At the "real-world" level, there is the real-life situation from which a knowledge question must be **extracted**.
- This knowledge question, residing in the "TOK world", must be **developed** using ideas and concepts from the TOK course, and in this **progression** it is likely that other related knowledge questions will be identified and will play a part in taking the argument forward.
- The product of this reflection can be **applied** back (during and/or after the development) to the real-life situation at the "real-world" level.
- In addition, the presentation should ideally aim to show how the process of application extends beyond the original situation to other real-life situations, thus demonstrating why the presentation is important and relevant in a wider sense.

Presentations may take many forms, such as lectures, interviews or debates. Students may use multimedia, costumes, or props to support their presentations. However, under **no circumstances** should the presentation be simply an essay read aloud to the class. While pre-recorded inserts **within** a presentation are permissible, the presentation itself must be a live experience and not a recording **of** the presentation.

If students incorporate the thoughts and ideas of others into the presentation, this **must** be acknowledged.

Before the presentation, the individual or group must give the teacher a copy of the **presentation planning document**. This is part of the assessment procedure (see below). The document is not to be handed out to the audience.

The role of the teacher

In relation to the presentation, the teacher has three principal responsibilities:

- to encourage and support the student(s) in the preparation of the presentation
- to provide guidance on presentation skills
- to assess the presentation using the presentation assessment instrument.

These responsibilities should be met through the following interactions.

- The student(s) should bring to an **initial meeting** with the teacher ideas for the selection of a real-life situation and the formulation of a knowledge question. The teacher should advise, but the final decisions belong with the student(s). The eventual success of this process will depend on a consideration of how the presentation will develop, so **a second planning meeting is permitted, if required**. Often a variety of appropriate knowledge questions can be identified in the kind of real-life situations most students will want to discuss. Teachers should help them concentrate their efforts on a clearly formulated one.
- A **final meeting** between student(s) and teacher can take place several days before the presentation, in which the final structure of the presentation can be discussed. The presentation is intended as a positive learning experience for the audience, and therefore it is important that the quality of the product is monitored at this stage.

Each real-life situation and knowledge question should be treated **only once** in a particular teaching group.

In summary, the teacher should give the presenter(s) every opportunity to construct a presentation that will advance the aims of the TOK course for the class as a whole. The teacher may support students by guiding them towards suitable approaches but should not do their work for them.

The date when each presentation is to take place should be given to students well in advance, to allow sufficient time for preparation of material.

Presentation duration

Approximately 10 minutes per presenter should be allowed, up to a maximum of approximately 30 minutes per group. Presentations should be scheduled to allow time for class discussion afterwards.

Interaction and audience participation are allowed during the presentation, not just in follow-up discussion, but there must be an identifiable substantial input from the presenter(s) that is assessable.

Internal assessment documentation

Presentation planning document (TK/PPD)

Each student must complete and submit a presentation planning and marking document (TK/PPD).

The procedure is as follows.

- The student will complete the student sections of the TK/PPD form.
- The student will provide a hard copy to the teacher for reference during the presentation.
- The student will subsequently give the presentation.
- The teacher will authenticate each student's form and add comments on the presentation.

The section to be completed by the student requires responses to the following.

Describe your real-life situation.

State your central knowledge question.

Explain the connection between your real-life situation and your knowledge question.

Outline how you intend to develop your presentation, with respect to perspectives, subsidiary knowledge questions and arguments.

Show how your conclusions have significance for your real-life situation and beyond.

This should be presented in skeleton or bullet point form, typed in standard 12 font and not exceed 500 words. It is acceptable to include diagrams, as long as they are clearly related to the text. It is not permitted to exceed the two sides of the TK/PPD form.

Participants in a group presentation must be given the same marks. In a group presentation, not every student need speak for the same amount of time, but it is the presenters' responsibility to ensure that all members of the group participate actively and make comparable contributions.

Moderation of internal assessment

The procedure for uploading the TK/PPD form can be found in the *Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme*.

Real-life situation/contemporary problem: Reliability of media reporting of science

- Knowledge issues: "What constitutes responsible journalism? How can we know whether scientific conclusions are justified?"
- Format: Summary and analysis of a newspaper article reporting on a new scientific study showing that a diet that contains no fat can lead to more weight gain than a similar diet that contains some fat (the original stimulus). Discussion of the quality of the newspaper article (what information ought it to contain, so that we can make a good judgment about the reliability of the claims made?) and of the scientific study it describes (how can we tell whether the evidence cited in the scientific study justifies its conclusions?).
- Knower's (student's) point of view: It is easy to tell that some newspapers are more concerned with entertainment than with truth. How easy is it to tell how much credibility to give to more serious stories?

Real-life situation/contemporary problem: What makes a work of art?

- Knowledge issues: "What is it that distinguishes an ordinary bag of rubbish from a major work of art that just looks like a bag of rubbish? Can anything be art—and, if so, what makes it into art?"
- Format: Skit of a TV talk show discussion about an incident when an artwork in an exhibition, consisting of a plastic bag full of rubbish, was mistakenly thrown out by a cleaner. Students role-play the host of the show, the artist of the work in question, a visual arts critic and a gallery owner, all of whom offer other examples of contentious contemporary art and their ideas about what distinguishes these artworks from non-art.
- Knower's (student's) point of view: Why are people prepared to dismiss contemporary art without understanding much about it, while often blindly believing scientific claims, however outlandish and improbable?

Real-life situation/contemporary problem: Demonstrations in China against the issue of a new history textbook in Japan

- Knowledge issues: Who should decide, and on what grounds, what history should be taught in schools? What part does the notion of historical truth play here?
- Format: Arguments for and against the Chinese attempt to tell the Japanese what they should teach about the actions of the Japanese army in China during the second world war. Should other countries be able to have a say in what the Chinese teach their children? What, in general terms, should determine a history curriculum?
- Knower's (student's) point of view: Is history too important to be left to historians?

Real-life situation/contemporary problem: What evidence is there about how dinosaurs looked and behaved?

- Knowledge issues: Are the methods of paleontology more like a science such as physics, or more like history?
- Format: Showing and discussion of a clip from the TV documentary *Walking with Dinosaurs* on how dinosaurs lived, showing a detailed scene from the life of a particular dinosaur, with a commentary presented as if this were a real scene.
- Knower's (student's) point of view: How far is it legitimate for TV programmes to go, to make their subject matter entertaining?

TOK Presentations on a Contemporary Knowledge Issue PACKET

NOTE: Knowledge issues are questions that directly refer to our understanding of the world, ourselves and others, in connection with the acquisition, search for, production, shaping and acceptance of knowledge. These issues are intended to open to inquiry and exploration not only problems but also strengths of knowledge. Students sometimes overlook the positive value of different kinds of knowledge, and the discriminatory power of methods used to search for knowledge, to question it, and to establish its validity. Knowledge issues can reveal how knowledge can be a benefit, a gift, a pleasure and a basis for further thought and action, just as they can uncover the possible uncertainties, biases, limitations, etc.

Nine Tips on Good Theory of Knowledge presentations

- 1 **Familiarise yourself with the assessment criteria;** notice, for example that whatever your topic, the focus must be on *knowledge* issues and that you should choose a contemporary issue.
- 2 **Choose a concrete topic which interests you and find the TOK in it.** TOK can be found almost anywhere, so use the opportunity to do something which you will enjoy doing. Some of the most effective presentations start with an everyday story and go on to draw out the TOK aspects – check the TOK website.
- 3 **You should be exploring an issue; this means that you should present different points of view - even if they contradict each other and even if you disagree with them.** You can try to reconcile different points of view or explain precisely why they are incompatible. You do not have to choose one point of view as 'correct', but you should avoid the rather vacuous 'so there are different points of view all of which are equally valid' approach. Do not be afraid of giving your own opinion; you can point out that there are problems with your opinion, but be honest and say what you really think!
- 4 **Try to cover the facts quickly and get on to the abstract TOK *principles*.** If you have chosen a topic where there are important facts that the audience needs to know then you should get through these quickly - there are no marks for dissemination of information. The focus of the presentation must be *analysis*, not *description*. If you can't summarise the facts in a couple of minutes then you should give a summary to read beforehand.
- 5 **Once you have drawn out the abstract TOK principles you should try to see what the implications of these principles are, and perhaps use these implications to reflect on the validity of the principles.**
- 6 **Consider carefully how you communicate the structure your presentation.** It may be clear in your mind, but the audience may not find it so easy. It can help to have one or two overheads with the main points in bullet form, using a large font – or PPT or use the Elmo as long as it doesn't slow down presentation flow.
- 7 **Try to state explicitly the problems of knowledge that you are looking at.** This will help you retain clarity and make it easier for an examiner to give you high marks in criterion A. If you use an overhead then this is an obvious place to list the problems.
- 8 **If appropriate use a film clip, slides, photos, newspaper cutting or any other prop.** Your presentation will probably be far more interesting if you can use something other than your voice!
- 9 **In your conclusion try to summarise (very briefly – one or two sentences) what you have said, and try to end with a forward-looking view.** This might be a summary of the main principles you have identified or some issues which have arisen and which have not been answered. Do not just reiterate your arguments.

You are choosing key issues in the TOK course to present. The expectations are:

- a. You should familiarize yourself with the issues raised by the topic you have chosen. Both research and thought are required.
- b. You should work co-operatively with the members of your group in exchanging ideas and planning presentation.
- c. You should be ready on time with a thoughtful, well-organized, and (hopefully) entertaining presentation. (clarity, critical thought, content!!) You will have a full 50 minute class period if you have 3 group members, and must plan to use only that time.
- d. Your presentation may take whatever form your group decides (using, just for example, lecture, skit, simulation games, dramatized readings, interviews, debate) and may use any supporting material in any of a variety of forms (for instance, overhead projections, posters, information or questionnaire sheets photocopied in advance, cassettes of songs, costumes, props. Use your powers of critical thinking – and your imagination. Enjoy the project!

TOK Presentation Subject Report Comments & Tips

- ✓ Weaknesses would be presentations that have nothing to do with knowledge issues and/or are totally descriptive in nature.
- ✓ Presentations are made in two stages: including an explicit identification of one or more knowledge issues in the context of a specific real-life example.
- ✓ Students should choose manageable topics.
- ✓ Factual information should be kept to a minimum so that the bulk of the presentation can analyze the knowledge issues rather than merely describe them.
- ✓ All teachers would do well to advise their students that the time and effort given to the discussion and analysis of knowledge issues should be far greater than that given to the mere presentation of information about the situation or phenomenon under consideration
- ✓ Candidates are forbidden to simply read out an essay. (05)
- ✓ The array of styles and formats would suggest that the Presentation has been adequately adapted to suit the diversity of individual, school and cultural contexts. Students should choose appropriate and realistic presentation topics, that is, topics that are clearly well-suited to a discussion that is centered on TOK and knowledge issues. If the topic is too wide – as would seem to be the case with the weaker presentations, for example on euthanasia, sexuality, the relation between the United Nations and North Korea – the presentation loses its "TOK-ness" and becomes a kind of oral research report. In weaker presentations too much time and energy is spent on delivering factual information and too little on discussing and analyzing TOK issues embedded in the topic. Teachers might ask students to think of their topics in terms of a particular

question, for example, "Can we know whether it is moral (or immoral) to practice euthanasia?" or ask in advance something about the time distribution. Both of these measures are suggested in order to ensure that knowledge issues remain in the foreground of all students' TOK presentations, a necessary condition for any success at this task. (04)

- ✓ the most important presentational skill is active engagement w/ the audience (deliver the presentation your class not teacher)
- ✓ It is not sufficient to take an unreflective sceptical or relativist position—what might be called "lazy scepticism" or "easy relativism". A knowledge issue that clearly relates to a real-life situation is one that demands to be resolved in some way, however difficult this may be. At the end of the presentation we should be further advanced in our thinking than at the start, even if it is not possible to come to specific or definitive conclusions.
- ✓ Once you have a topic, don't just ask "what do we know about this topic?" but (more importantly) ask "how do we know it?" / how you can justify claims made
- ✓ Cover a few issues/puzzles/problems about knowledge in depth, rather than trying to do a lot, shallowly.
- ✓ Look for counterarguments – what would someone who doesn't agree say – and what reasons would they give?

Starting points:

What is the relationship between mathematics and the arts? What is the relationship between natural sciences and social responsibility? How has science benefited or hurt society? Who decides what research will be done? Choose a single recent scientific and/or technological development as a focus and consider its ethical implications. Choose any single historical incident and use it to explore the complexities of historical "truth". How do we know whether we are acting in a "good" or "moral" way? Choose an example of a particular belief (like creation of the world, etc) and consider it from the point of view of atheism, and at least two major religions, presenting in each case the justifications and limitations of each belief set. Identify an issue of interest in your local area which introduces a conflict of concepts and values (is beach restoration a waste of time?). Do the same with an issue of global significance (political refugees, torture as a means of obtaining truth, issues involving the bottom one billion economically). Select one new development in knowledge and consider its effect on the discipline within which it has developed and its effects/challenges to other AOKs. Can purposely misleading the public be justified, as sometimes occurs in politics and advertising (consider intentional misinformation). Identify a contemporary problem involving the interactions of groups (for example, ethnic, socioeconomic or religious groups) and consider the knowledge given by AOKs

Places to consider drawing examples from:

Personal opinion in argument OR Argument and examples from personal culture or history
Examples drawn from personal reflection or discussion
Examples drawn from the students own IB courses / personal awareness of social issues / sense of humor (cartoons, Colbert...)

Topic beginnings (more so try to be original and personal and contemporary in your choice):

The ethics of 9/11 victims compensation funds (vs Katrina, etc; how to \$ quantify for a tragedy); The Army Corps of Engineers project and the Everglades; the rise of C sections and decline of midwives; the regulation of cheap regional airlines; embedded journalists in war; EULA (end user license agreements); corporate naming rights at public HS; the use of RPIs in March Madness selections; Can a computer effectively grade FCAT essays?; long line fishing; The implications of the music genome project/Pandora (is man reducible to an algorithm?); Walmart selling organic food – good or bad?; the ethics of cutting weight (UFC, HS weightlifters); the implications of digital (pdf) IB exam grading; DRM (digital rights management); Teacher tenure programs – should they exist?; Rose Bay restoration/beach replenishment; Boomerangers (moving back in w/ parents after college); the 21 yr old drinking age; the digitizing of medical records; MPAA ratings; how the law should view underage sext messages; Youtube/twitter and 3rd world revolutions (Burma, Iran, etc); Tanning beds and teens; The Rooney Rule in the NFL; is text message philanthropy (send \$10 to Haiti) a sign of moral progress; US Senators twittering; the implications of Tata Nano car for 2K; open source hardware hacking; Iphone apps; the impact/effects of Amazon Kindle; the costs of the death of local newspapers; the impact of Safari Montage; the issue of accessibility with DARPA; ownership issues with use generated content; University level grade inflation; 23andme.com and ownership issues of your genetic information; the problems of the teacher tenure system on education; Ethics of geoengineering; RFID tags; the problem of exotic species (Nile perch in Lake Victoria); HGH/performance enhancers; GMOs; should environmental refugees exist to further a country's energy needs (Three Gorges Dam in China); the implications of pharmaceutical ads on TV; the BCS formula; the issue of the immigration to USA of foreign intellectuals/Iraqi war informants; the ethics of using size zero models in fashion; the value of superstitions; whether psychological benefits of yoga can be validly measured; whether "make my day" laws are moral; Ewaste in China; the use of Autotune in pop music; problems with computer modeling of climate change; limits of stem cell research; claims made for increasing arts education; use of language in political campaigns; the attitudes towards democracy shown by the use of superdelegates; Is democracy more or less compatible with socialism or capitalism?; Should newspapers be endorsing political candidates?; Should we believe that near death experiences are evidence for religious claims?; What constitutes responsible journalism?; Is web culture/blogs ruining or aiding creativity?; Web identity – What problems arise when a gap forms b/w who you are and who you present yourself as on the internet? Will the new paradigm require individual transparency/honesty or not?; What constitutes good evidence (in the courtroom or elsewhere)?; The benefits/consequences of teaching "new math"; Should the Loop in Ormond be saved?; Should the Volusia school closings happen to those smaller communities (Samsula, Bonner)?; Same sex schools; The consequences of FL state university system quality and low tuition cost given the economic need to fund Bright Futures. Is Bright Futures the best way to create a quality university system in FL?; MP3 file format (quality) – consider the medium by which art is consumed; Photoshop – has it altered our perception of beauty/truth/good art; Does art need to be ethical?; Female genital mutilation: must all cultural practices be respected or can societal rituals be wrong in absolute terms?; BGH and hormones in the food supply – has it helped feed a hungry planet or has it increased corporate profits and degraded food quality and increased health risks; Can free markets be trusted without regulation?; The morality of cosmetic vs reconstructive surgery; Are moral issues/public good overwhelmed by corporate interests in the FDA drug approval process; The slang of different generations; Can a 7-year-old be considered an "artist"?; Is "fair trade" possible? The benefits and challenges of outsourcing?; Are corn or sugar subsidies appropriate?; Should the memorization of dates be a significant part of a current history class?; Is cremation the most effective (enviro, spiritually, space concerns, emotion considerations, nostalgia) way to treat a dead body?; Is Esperanto a good idea?; Are you smartest or dumbest generation ever and how could that be measured? The idea of local currencies (like BerkShares created for the entire Berkshire Hills region in Massachusetts)

TOK presentation assessment instrument

Do(es) the presenter(s) succeed in showing how TOK concepts can have practical application?

Level 5 Excellent 9-10	Level 4 Very good 7-8	Level 3 Satisfactory 5-6	Level 2 Basic 3-4	Level 1 Elementary 1-2	Irrelevant 0
The presentation is focused on a well-formulated knowledge question that is clearly connected to a specified real-life situation . The knowledge question is effectively explored in the context of the real-life situation, using convincing arguments, with investigation of different perspectives . The outcomes of the analysis are shown to be significant to the chosen real-life situation and to others .	The presentation is focused on a knowledge question that is connected to a specified real-life situation . The knowledge question is explored in the context of the real-life situation, using clear arguments, with acknowledgment of different perspectives . The outcomes of the analysis are shown to be significant to the real-life situation .	The presentation identifies a knowledge question that has some connection to a specified real-life situation . The knowledge question is explored in the context of the real-life situation, using some adequate arguments . There is some awareness of the significance of the outcomes of the analysis .	The presentation identifies a knowledge question and a real-life situation , although the connection between them may not be convincing . There is some attempt to explore the knowledge question . There is limited awareness of the significance of the outcomes of the analysis .	The presentation describes a real-life situation without reference to any knowledge question , or treats an abstract knowledge question without connecting it to any specific real-life situation .	The presentation does not reach the standard described by levels 1-5
Some possible characteristics					
Sophisticated Discerning Insightful Compelling Lucid	Credible Analytical Organized Pertinent Coherent	Relevant Adequate Acceptable Predictable	Underdeveloped Basic Unbalanced Superficial Derivative Rudimentary	Ineffective Unconnected Incoherent Formless	

Part 2: Presentation

The following diagram shows the question underpinning a global impression judgment of the TOK presentation.

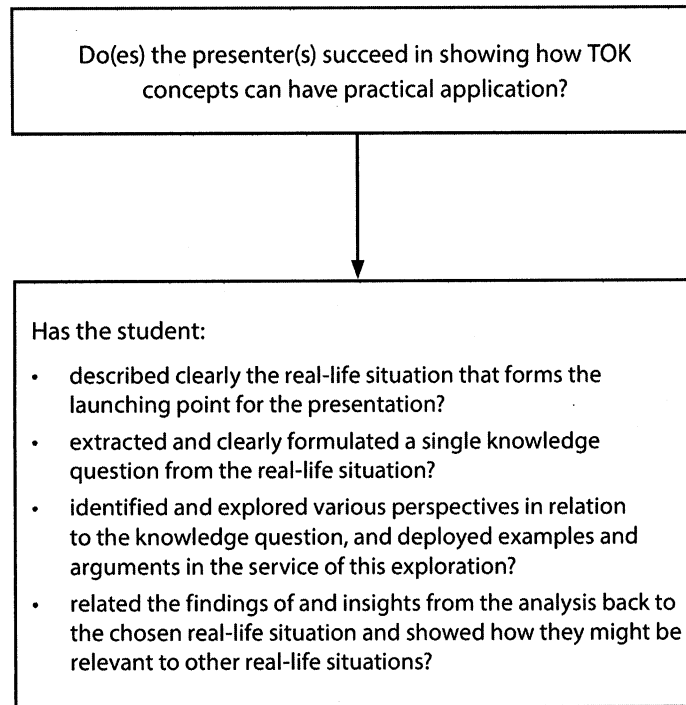
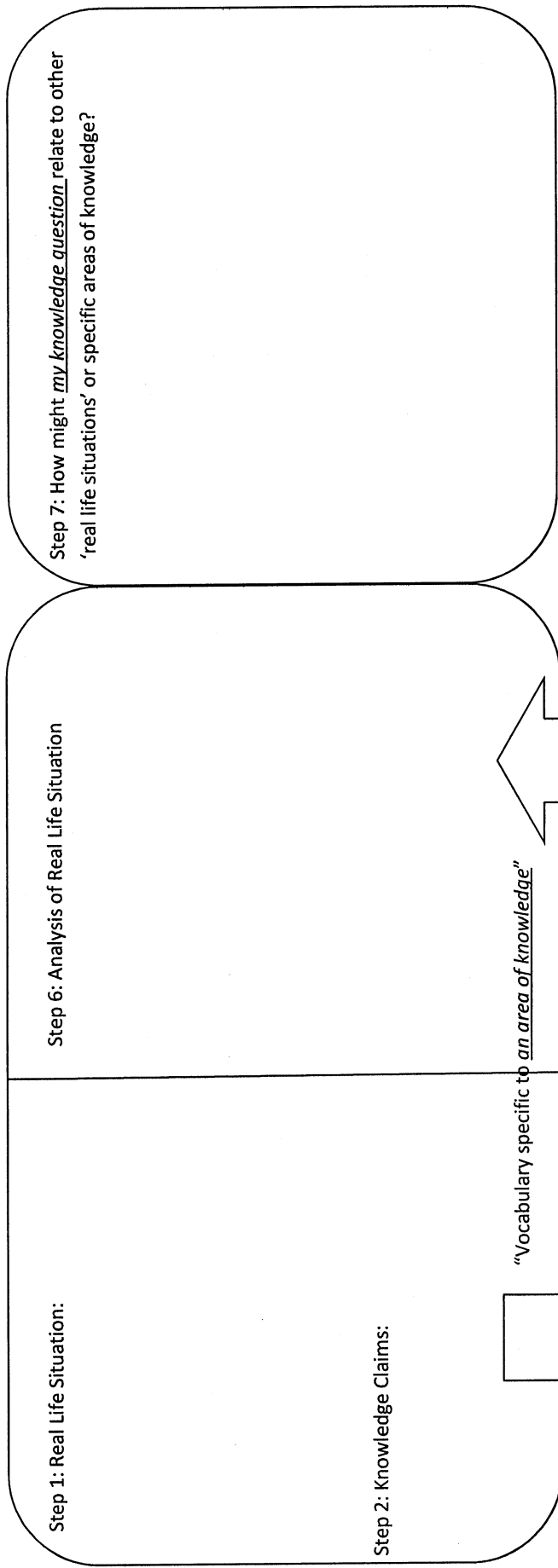


Figure 21



"Vocabulary specific to an area of knowledge"

"Vocabulary specific to Theory of Knowledge"

- About knowledge
- Open ended
- general

Step 4: Different Perspectives related to my knowledge question	
Step 5: Examples and Arguments related to my knowledge question	

Step 7: How might my knowledge question relate to other 'real life situations' or specific areas of knowledge?

Name(s):

I. TOPIC – Write out your presentation title:

Does your chosen topic enable you to apply T.O.K. thinking skills to a *contemporary issue*?

- What makes it an *issue*? An issue worthy of TOK-style examination? An issue that will keep class interest?
- Describe/state the knowledge concerns / knowledge issues you will directly address.

II. KNOWLEDGE ISSUES

What problems of knowledge/knowledge issues do you identify?

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| <i>PROBLEM</i> | <i>ELABORATE</i> |
|----------------|------------------|
- Possible uncertainties
 - Possible biases in approach/argument
 - Limitations (what can never be “known”)
 - Method of verification or proof / ethical systems used
 - Justification (remember knowledge = JTB)
 - Benefits of the knowledge (why do you care / why does it matter)

III. DIVERGENT POINTS OF VIEW

- What claims do you make? How do you evaluate them? (min 3)
- What counterclaims do you make? How do you evaluate them? (min 2)
- To what disciplines / areas of knowledge do you link the topic or does your topic touch upon? (AOKs)
- With which ways of knowing (and how) did you explore your topic? (WOKs)
- How do you make your own values explicit? How do you acknowledge the values of others?
- How do you demonstrate an awareness of the implications of various POVs/divergent cultures/paradigms?

6) Significance: **Why do you (personally) care about this knowledge issue?** What personal examples demonstrate this significance to you? Why should your audience care about this knowledge issue? Why should knowers spend time thinking about this issue' worth (what relationship do you want with your audience or what relationship do you want them to have with your real-world issue and KI)?

7) Connections: What are the greater logical "implications" of your argument for two other knowledge fields? If you extend your view to other AoKs or to other fields - how does your logical answer apply in these other fields? What is "different"/similar about these other fields? *(use TOK diagram somewhat)

8) Personal Examples You Will Use: Which personal examples you will use to flesh out the various sides for this knowledge issue (KI) - as well as any other knowledge issues or "connections" you explore?

9) Clarity of Organization: What specifically will you do in the first two minutes of your presentation to let us know where your argument is going and what your "KI" is?

10) Your conclusion: What new idea will you leave us with to think about? You should neither restate your points - nor should you conclude that "we cannot know the answer" / "all views are equally valid." Such "soft" responses to knowledge indicate that you should select a different knowledge issue. Some sort of opinion or thoughtful discussion of what issues have not yet been answered is appropriate. If you have not yet done so, in the conclusion you should reveal your personal perspective(s) to the main knowledge issue presented. (Try for a branching structure that grows/expands outwards and opens new doors near the end or one that coalesces and crystalizes the divergent strands of the performance to this point).

NOTE that the basic structural template is likely:

Real World: Your real-life situation:

TOK World: Your point of view in the KI:

TOK World: Alternative point of view in the KI:

Other real world contexts/examples (do this 3-4 times) developing your Knowledge Issue:

Real World: First implication:

Real World: Second implication: and/or Additional Ideas to Consider: