**Theory of Knowledge**

“Man can alter his life by altering his thinking.”

William James (1842-1910)

Description of the Course:

TOK is a course about critical thinking and inquiring into the process of knowing, rather than about learning a specific body of knowledge. It is a core element which all Diploma Programme students undertake and to which all schools are required to devote at least 100 hours of class time. TOK and the Diploma Programme subjects should support each other in the sense that they reference each other and share some common goals. The TOK course examines how we know what we claim to know. It does this by encouraging students to analyze knowledge claims and explore knowledge questions. A knowledge claim is the assertion that “I/we know X” or “I/we know how to Y”, or a statement about knowledge; a knowledge question is an open question about knowledge. A distinction between shared knowledge and personal knowledge is made in the TOK guide. This distinction is intended as a device to help teachers construct their TOK course and to help students explore the nature of knowledge.

The Ways of Knowing (WOK)

While there are arguably many ways of knowing, the TOK course identifies eight specific ways of knowing (WOKs). They are **language, sense perception, emotion, reason, imagination, faith, intuition,** and **memory**. Students must explore a range of ways of knowing, and it is suggested that studying four of these eight in depth would be appropriate.

The WOKs have two roles in TOK:

* they underlie the methodology of the areas of knowledge
* they provide a basis for personal knowledge.

Discussion of WOKs will naturally occur in a TOK course when exploring how areas of knowledge operate. Since they rarely function in isolation, the TOK course should explore how WOKs work, and how they work together, both in the context of different areas of knowledge and in relation to the individual knower. This might be reflected in the way the TOK course is constructed. Teachers should consider the possibility of teaching WOKs in combination or as a natural result of considering the methods of areas of knowledge, rather than as separate units.

The Areas of Knowledge (AOK)

Areas of knowledge are specific branches of knowledge, each of which can be seen to have a distinct nature and different methods of gaining knowledge. TOK distinguishes between eight areas of knowledge. They are **mathematics, the natural sciences, the human sciences, the arts, history, ethics, religious knowledge systems,** and **indigenous knowledge systems**. Students must explore a range of areas of knowledge, and it is suggested that studying six of these eight would be appropriate.

The knowledge framework is a device for exploring the areas of knowledge. It identifies the key characteristics of each area of knowledge by depicting each area as a complex system of five interacting components. This enables students to effectively compare and contrast different areas of knowledge and allows the possibility of a deeper exploration of the relationship between areas of knowledge and ways of knowing.

Aims:

The overall aim of TOK is to encourage students to formulate answers to the question “how do you know?” in a variety of contexts, and to see the value of that question. This allows students to develop an enduring fascination with the richness of knowledge.

Specifically, the aims of the TOK course are for students to:

1. make connections between a critical approach to the construction of knowledge, the academic disciplines and the wider world
2. develop an awareness of how individuals and communities construct knowledge and how this is critically examined
3. develop an interest in the diversity and richness of cultural perspectives and an awareness of personal and ideological assumptions
4. critically reflect on their own beliefs and assumptions, leading to more thoughtful, responsible and purposeful lives
5. understand that knowledge brings responsibility which leads to commitment and action

Assessment Objectives:

It is expected that by the end of the TOK course, students will be able to:

1. identify and analyze the various kinds of justifications used to support knowledge claims
2. formulate, evaluate and attempt to answer knowledge questions
3. examine how academic disciplines/areas of knowledge generate and shape knowledge
4. understand the roles played by ways of knowing in the construction of shared and personal knowledge
5. explore links between knowledge claims, knowledge questions, ways of knowing and areas of knowledge
6. demonstrate an awareness and understanding of different perspectives and be able to relate these to one’s own perspective
7. explore a real-life/contemporary situation from a TOK perspective in the presentation.

IB Assessment Pieces:

**The assessment model in Theory of Knowledge (TOK) comprises two components, both of which should be completed within the 100 hours designated for the course.**

* **Part 1: Essay on a prescribed title (67%)**

One essay on a title chosen from a list of six titles prescribed by the IB for each examination session. The prescribed titles will be issued on the OCC in the September prior to submission for May session schools. The maximum length for the essay is 1,600 words. All essays are externally assessed by the IB.

* **Part 2: The presentation (33%)**

One presentation to the class by an individual or a group (a maximum of three persons in a group). Approximately 10 minutes per student is allowed for the presentation. One written presentation planning document (TK/PPD) for each student.

Note: Although a student may not be taking the class for Diploma requirement purposes, he/she will be expected to participate in any and all activities or assignments that support these two IB requirements.

Materials Needed:

Students will be expected to have the following materials every day when they arrive to class:

* Pens and pencils
* Composition Book
* Chromebook
* An open mind that is excited to learn

Course Expectations:

* Students will be expected to read outside of class.
* Assessments will be both written and oral, depending on the subject matter being tested.
* Complete academic honesty is always expected. Students will adhere to JISD’s policy regarding plagiarism, copying from, or colluding with another student on individual work.
* Each student will be expected to follow the characteristics presented in the IB Learner Profile.
* All materials must be brought to each class period.
* School issued IDs should be worn at all times.
* The use of electronic devices is not allowed during the course of the school day, 8:35-4:15. Parents who need to contact students during school hours should do so through the attendance office.

Attendance:

You should be here, on time, every class period. Students who are habitually absent or tardy will not do well in an IB class. In the event you are ill or are on a school activity, it is your responsibility to know precisely what you missed and what you need in order to be prepared for the next class period. There are a variety of ways to accomplish this, please come to class prepared.

Grading:

* 60% Daily Assignments and Quizzes
* 40% Assessments (tests, projects, etc.)
* From the JISD Secondary Grading and Reporting Handbook:
	+ “Judson ISD offers a variety of advanced courses designed to enhance and challenge a student’s secondary school experience. For those students who choose to enroll in advanced academic courses, the grading policy could be different. There are higher academic and curricular standards set forth by the programs endorsing the courses. These courses include, but are not limited to, Advanced Placement (AP), Pre-AP, International Baccalaureate (IB), Pre-IB, TAG, Dual Credit, and Honors. The course syllabi will outline the established grading policy for the course.”
	+ IB and Pre-DP courses operate on a grading policy of 60% minor and a 40% major with a three-day late policy. Each day that an assignment is late, the student’s assignment will be reduced by 10% of the final grade. After the third day, it will be recorded as a missing grade (M) and calculated as a zero. The student is encouraged to complete the assignment for skills acquisition and feedback purposes.

Late Work:

* Assignments completed outside of class are expected to be turned in on time.
* **As per the recent district mandate, students shall receive 5 days to complete make-up assignments and shall thereafter have deducted from said assignments 10 points down to the grade of 60.**

Retake/Retest:

* Students who wish to retake an assessment or redo an assignment (not all assessment pieces will be offered the opportunity to be retaken) must make arrangements to complete the retake within 5 school days of receiving the grade on the original assessment or assignment.
* Teachers may require students to attend tutoring, retake assessments and/or redo assignments during regularly scheduled tutoring.

Technology:

* **Any student observed using Chromebooks in an unacceptable manner—say, watching movies, cooking show, music videos, or naughty materials of any sort—shall have said Chromebook confiscated forthwith and Mr. Mach shall contact that said students parent(s).**

Grades per week:

* On average, students will receive at least two grades per week. Students will receive feedback for each assignment.

Bi-monthly News Letter for Parents:

* A general course update will be available for parents (and students).

Tutoring:

* Tutoring is available Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 2:30 – 3:30.

Cell Phones:

* **PHONES ARE PERMITTED DURING TRANSTION AND LUNCH, BUT NOT IN CLASSROOMS. THIS INCLUDES CHARGING PHONES IN THE CLASSROOM**
* At the start of class, students will be reminded to turn phones OFF and put them away.
* If a student is observed using a phone, a final verbal reminder will be given.
* **If the phone come out again, the student will be given the opportunity to put the device in a brown bag (which will be stapled closed)—***If student puts their phone in the bag and it remains there for the class period, the incident will be documented as a “classroom intervention” but will NOT than an office referral.*
* If the phone is removed from the bag before the end of class, a referral will be created for insubordination; the student can STILL return the phone to the brown bag, and remain in class.
* If said student refuses step 2 or step 3 he or she will be escorted out of class by a BMT and an additional referral will be created for insubordination.

Dress Code (DC):

* Mr. Mach will address DC issues at the door. (Please see the student hand book for dress code expectations.)
* If the issue cannot be fixed in class, a BMT will escort the student to the media center to change.
* T-shirts showing inappropriate images (sex/drugs) cannot simply be turned inside out.
* **Sorry no hats.** Per school rule. Hey, at least you have hair to begin with and don’t need to shave because you’re hair line is receding. ☺ Hats can be placed on coat/hat rack in Mr. Mach’s class.

Movement/Bathroom:

* No Movement First and Last 15 minutes. None. Like, at all. For real.
* Bathroom is “escort only.”
* Students may use **NO MORE** than **three bathroom passes** per semester and will have to sign in and out using a class bathroom log.

Tardies/Skipping:

* Mr. Mach will take attendance within the first 10 minutes of class. Students who aren’t present at the time should be marked as **A**bsent.
* Late arrivals will complete a sign-in form at the door, noting their name, the date, and time of arrival.
* Mr. Machin will change the student from **A**bsent to **L**ate in PowerSchool.
* Beyond **15 minutes** late, the student will fill out the sign-in sheet at the door. Mr. Mach will create a referral for “Skipping” if they do not have a pass from a counselor or administrator.
* **Consequences for Tardies are as follows:**
* *1st –Warning*
* *2nd – Teacher/Student Contract*
* *3rd – Parent Contact*
* *4th – After School Detention (ASD) with parent contact*
* *5th – ASD with parent conference*
* *6th – Saturday Academy with Intervention Referral to Counselor and parent contact*
* *7th & beyond – Parent Conference with Out of School Suspension*
* **Consequences for Skipping are as follows:**
* *1 – ISS Block*
* *2 – ASD*
* *3 – 2 Blocks ISS*
* *4 – 1 Day ISS with parent conference*
* *5 – 2 Days ISS with referral to intervention*
* *6 – Saturday Academy*
* *7 or more – Beacon Community BMT Support*

Contact Details:

Email: brandon1.machin@cms.k12.nc.us

Judson High School: (704) 615-3315

Website:

Mr. Machin

Please sign and return to acknowledge these policies:

Student’s Name (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian contact email \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian contact phone number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Submitted: