IB Theory of Knowledge (TOK)
Summer Assignments, 2019-2020 Academic Year

This year's summer assignments consist of two parts: WRITING and VIEWING. You may undertake the parts in whatever order you'd like; just make sure that you are adhering to the expectations and deadlines set forth for each part.

Part 1: Writing
Attached are 2 lists of questions--General Paper I and General Paper II.

1. Choose 1 question from each list to respond to. That's 1 General Paper I question, and 1 General Paper II question. Your questions should not come from the same list.

2. Write an 800-1000 word response to EACH of the 2 questions. Again, that's 800-1000 words each--NOT 800-1000 words TOTAL between the 2. You may use outside sources (and should cite them properly in MLA format, with a Works Cited at the end) if you so desire, but this is not required.


Boring (yet necessary) parameters/expectations:
- All responses should be in 12-pt Times New Roman font and double-spaced.
- Please indicate the word count at the end of each response (Works Cited do not count toward the word count total).
- Please make sure to indicate the list and question to which you are responding, for each response. Example: “General Paper I, 12”
- This assignment is due in the following 2 ways: electronically, to turnitin.com, by 10:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 14; physically, as a hard copy, at the start of 9th bell on Thursday, August 15. Failure to do so will result in a 50% deduction for late submission within 24 hours of the stated times; thereafter, NO CREDIT will be given.

Part 2: Viewing
At some point during the summer, you will need to obtain the 2004 film *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* and watch it. Maybe watch it more than once. Maybe watch it with friends, and then talk about it afterward. Maybe watch it with friends, and all of you be Those Obnoxious People and talk about it while you watch it. Your call. It is currently available to view on Netflix.

Either way, watch the darn movie and expect to be assessed over it, in some capacity, during the first few days back at school.

If you have questions, as always: email me at klampe@vikingmail.org. Also, please be sure to join the ToK Google Classroom page (join using 6o5v7nq).
GENERAL PAPER I

Candidates should answer ONE question.

1. Is ignorance bliss?
2. Why spend money on public art?
3. Defend tweeting.
4. When is charity wrong?
5. Are there too many books?
6. Does Google know us better than we do?
7. Are Old Masters overrated?
8. What is a gift?
9. Can a literary competition be fair?
10. Are consumers in search of bargains complicit in modern slavery?
11. Would you rather be a vampire or a zombie?
12. Do we value our security too highly?
13. Is it possible to imagine a society without law?
14. What is the point of voting?
15. When, if ever, should one prioritise form over function?
16. Are emotions irrational?
17. Does it matter if we are alone in the universe?
18. Are there topics one should not joke about?
19. Compare a contemporary political leader to a character in mythology.
20. Are male and female outdated conceptions?
21. Should there be a University Church?
22. How should we close the gender pay gap?
23. ‘Music came to a full stop with Brahms’ (WITGENSTEIN). Discuss.
24. Should we even try to understand how the brain works?
25. 'Richest 1% on target to own two-thirds of all wealth by 2030' (THE OBSERVER). Does this matter?

26. What, if any, are the advantages of binge-watching?

27. Is the dominance of English in Western popular music regrettable?

28. What sort of equality ought to exist in a family?

29. 'We write to taste life twice, in the moment, and in retrospection' (ANAIS NIN). Discuss.
GENERAL PAPER II

Candidates should answer question

1. Is Shakespeare too good for actors?
2. Should signatory States withdraw from the European Convention on Human Rights?
3. Is the internet beyond effective regulation?
4. How important are market forces in the development of the arts?
5. Is globalization in retreat?
6. Is it time to give up on the Nobel Peace Prize?
7. 'In a well-functioning democracy, people do not live in echo chambers (CASS SUNSTEIN). Do you agree?'
8. 'Much more exhilaration and gusto can be got out of literature if one takes a more devious way in' (DON FOWLER). Discuss.
9. Is tourism a necessary evil?
10. Can we teach machines to be good?
11. How useful is the concept of decline to a historian?
12. 'Television is a form of entertainment which permits millions of people to listen to the same joke at the same time, and yet remain lonesome' (T. S. ELIOT). Are social media any better?
13. Should 'no-fault divorce' be recognized?
14. Is literature inherently international?
15. What will be the next disruptive innovation?
16. 'The good thing about science is that it's true whether or not you believe in it' (NEIL DEGRASSE TYSON). Discuss.
17. Did the Enlightenment happen?
18. Is the centre-left doomed to extinction?
19. Does time heal historic injustice?
20. Should there be a right to financial security?

[OVER]
21. ‘Microhistory: the ultimate example of historians being captured by their evidence.’
   Discuss.

22. What can fiction do that other forms of artistic expression cannot?

23. Is Classics racist?

24. Does it matter whether we have free will?

25. ‘Disaster is rarely as pervasive as it seems from recorded accounts’ (BARBARA
    TUCHMAN). Discuss.

26. Is it permissible to use animals in scientific research and, if so, in what
    circumstances?

27. Should sugar be taxed?

28. Is it ever justified to use force in breach of international laws?

29. ‘The age of utopias is over.’ Do you agree?

30. ‘Writing saved me from the sin and inconvenience of violence’ (ALICE WALKER).
    Discuss.