

# Theory of knowledge

## Specimen Titles

1. **“None of us is as smart as all of us” (Eric Schmidt). Discuss the extent to which you agree with this claim with reference to personal and shared knowledge.**
2. **“A map is only useful if it simplifies things.” To what extent does this apply to knowledge?**
3. **To what extent are areas of knowledge shaped by their past? Consider with reference to two areas of knowledge.**
4. **“All knowledge depends on the recognition of patterns and anomalies.” Consider the extent to which you agree with this claim with reference to two areas of knowledge.**
5. **“The possession of knowledge confers privilege.” To what extent is this an accurate claim?**
6. **To what extent do ways of knowing prevent us from deluding ourselves? Justify your answer with reference to at least one area of knowledge.**

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## Examiner Preparation Notes: Specimen Titles

### Preamble

These notes outline what members of the examining team had in mind when they devised each of the prescribed titles. They indicate approaches candidates might take in responding to the title chosen. Examiners are kindly requested to keep the following points in mind:

1. *While there may be good reasons for examiners to consult these notes **during** the actual marking of essays, it is vital that they resist any temptation to treat the points they contain as if they constituted a “checklist” of what is expected*
2. *It is expected that examiners will read carefully these notes **in advance** of the marking session so as to broaden and deepen their awareness of how responses to the prescribed titles might be developed*
3. *The approaches suggested in these notes are not the only ones possible, and may not even comprise the best ones*
4. *To a large extent they are couched in abstract terms because the intention is that they describe a whole **class** of actual essays – hence the lack of specific examples*
5. *They describe **ideal** answers – there are many points included where the candidate would have to work hard to make the arguments function, and most candidates are unlikely to be entirely successful in this task*
6. *The intention of the marking notes is, on the whole, not to describe flawed approaches or ways in which candidates may fail to respond successfully*

In summary, what is written here is only a framework to help examiners in their assessment. Examiners should be responsive to other valid approaches, but, in each case, examiners should consider **whether the candidate has presented an appropriate and cogent analysis of knowledge questions in discussing the title.**

Consider whether the candidate has:

- a. *understood the title*
- b. *understood the knowledge questions that are explicit and implicit in it, and/or linked the title to knowledge questions that arise naturally from it*
- c. *developed and supported a comprehensive and cogent point of view about the topic and appropriate knowledge questions*