|  | **PERSPECTIVE** |
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| **Understanding the 12 key concepts*** *The 12 key concepts are ones that have been identified as having a particular significant relationship to knowledge.*
* *Understanding, exploring, and using these concepts will help you to understand the way knowledge is produced and used, within the core and optional themes, and the areas of knowledge.*
* *You should also try to use the key concepts as extensively as possible in the two TOK assessment tasks.*
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| **Starting points for perspective*** How many online definitions can you find for ‘perspective’?
* Which one do you think best sums up this concept, and why?
* Which of the quotes below do you think provides us with the best insight into perspective? Are there any you disagree with?
* How would you summarize your perspective when it comes to knowing?
 | **Quotes on perspective*** Science is a way of life. Science is a perspective. Science is the process that takes us from confusion to understanding in a manner that's precise, predictive and reliable - a transformation, for those lucky enough to experience it, that is empowering and emotional. [*Brian Greene*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brian_Greene)
* Truth can be a matter of perspective, but I also think there's a truth that exists, that there are laws to the universe the way Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King believed. [*Tom Shadyac*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Shadyac)
* Each person does see the world in a different way. There is not a single, unifying, objective truth. We're all limited by our perspective. [*Siri Hustvedt*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siri_Hustvedt)
* It's useful to go out of this world and see it from the perspective of another one. [*Terry Pratchett*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terry_Pratchett)
* Academics lack perspective. In a debate on whether the world is round, they would argue, 'No,' because it's an oblate spheroid. They suffer from 'the curse of knowledge': the inability to imagine what it's like not to know something that they know. [*Steven Pinker*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steven_Pinker)
* Perspective is not a science but a hope. [*John Berger*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Berger)
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| **Interlinking the key concepts*** What role does **culture** play in determining our perspective?
* Do different perspectives always lead to different **interpretations**?
* Do our **explanations** depend on our perspective?
* Does **truth** depend on our perspective?
* Can there ever be any **certainty** given that everyone has a different perspective?
 | **Relating perspective to the TOK course*** Which of the areas of knowledge are most and least affected by different perspectives?
* How do our religious and political perspectives shape the way we view the world?
* How different is an indigenous perspective to knowing about the world?
* Do our perspectives determine our language use?
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| **Relating perspective to the TOK exhibition*** IAP-2: Think about whether our perspective shapes the type of knowledge we consider useful
* IAP-9: Think about how a knower’s perspective might shape the way they interpret knowledge
* IAP-12: Think about whether our perspective may make bias inevitable
* IAP-14: Think about whether the knowledge community to which we belong possesses certain knowledge about the world
* IAP-26: Think about how interacting with other knowers and their perspectives affects our knowledge
 | **Relating perspective to the Big Questions** * [**BQ1**](https://theoryofknowledge.net/members/6bq-framework/bq1-foundations/) - What are perspectives?
* [**BQ2**](https://theoryofknowledge.net/members/6bq-framework/bq2-values/) - What is the moral impact of a reluctance to step outside of one’s own perspective as a knower?
* [**BQ3**](https://theoryofknowledge.net/members/6bq-framework/bq3-spin/) - How does our perspective influence the way we communicate knowledge?
* [**BQ4**](https://theoryofknowledge.net/members/6bq-framework/bq4-perspectives/) - Do our perspectives shape the way we understand the world?
* [**BQ5**](https://theoryofknowledge.net/members/6bq-framework/bq5-creativity/) - How do the perspectives of knowers change over time?
* [**BQ6**](https://theoryofknowledge.net/members/6bq-framework/bq6-experts/) - Do expert knowers always manage to transcend their perspectives?
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| **Real-world contexts for perspective**The media sources below explicitly mention perspective, and discuss this key concept in a real-world context. Use the find command (ie Command/Control+F) to locate the term in the article or transcript of the video, and you’ll see where it features. Check back regularly, as we update these media sources every month.  |
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| ***Big Question / knowledge framework***  | ***Description of media source and story and links to the course*** |
| BQ1 */* Nature & scope | A [**Conversation**](https://theconversation.com/us-shootings-norway-and-finland-have-similar-levels-of-gun-ownership-but-far-less-gun-crime-183933) article, which considers the paradox of Norway and Finland having similar levels of gun ownership to the US, but far less gun crime. [*Human sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/)*,* [*Politics*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-politics/)A [**Big Think**](https://bigthink.com/thinking/mcgurk-effect-perception/) article, looking at the McGurk Effect, an auditory illusion which even when we are aware of, still misleads our brains. [*Knowledge & the knower*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/knowledge-and-the-knower/)*,* [*Religion*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-religion/)A [**Big Think**](https://bigthink.com/13-8/last-us-2-great-art) article, looking at how some video games - such as *The Last of Us II* - qualify as great art because they give us a profound insight into the human condition. [*The arts*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/the-arts/)*,* [*technology*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-technology/)Brian Resnick at [**Vox**](https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/2018/3/28/17054848/smartphones-photos-memory-research-psychology-attention) looks at the effect that relying on photographs to help us remember places and events has on our capacity to remember. [*Technology*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-technology/)*,* [*knowledge & the knower*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/knowledge-and-the-knower/)This is a demanding [**Aeon**](https://aeon.co/essays/its-time-for-a-robust-philosophical-defence-of-truth-in-science) essay, but it’s also a brilliant one, looking in a great deal of detail about science, and its relationship with ‘truth’ (whatever that means).[*Natural sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/natural-sciences/)*,* [*human sciences,*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/)[*religion*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-religion/) |
| BQ2 / Values | A [**Guardian**](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/oct/18/pregnancy-weeks-abortion-tissue) article and photo gallery, showing what pregnancy tissue from 5 to 9 weeks actually looks like. [*Natural sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/natural-sciences/)*,* [*Politics*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-politics/)*,* [*Religion*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-religion/)An [**Aeon**](https://aeon.co/essays/real-objectivity-rests-on-identifying-with-others) essay, considering the extent to which we should rely on empathy to achieve objectivity. [*Knowledge & the knower*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/knowledge-and-the-knower/)*,* [*Human sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/)A [**Conversation**](https://theconversation.com/scotland-has-apologised-for-witchcraft-executions-as-a-historian-i-worry-this-was-a-mistake-179355) article, looking at how the Scottish government has apologized for executing witches in the 16th century. [*History*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/history/)*,* [*Human sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/)*,* [*Religion*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-religion/) |
| BQ3 / Methods & tools | A [**BBC**](https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20221103-how-language-warps-the-way-you-perceive-time-and-space) article, exploring the relationship between language and the way we perceive time. [*Language*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-language/)***,*** [*Knowledge & the knower*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/knowledge-and-the-knower/)A [**Smithsonian**](https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-holocaust-comic-that-brought-americans-into-the-nazis-gas-chambers-180980114/) article, looking at a 1945 Holocaust comic that tried to communicate the horrors of the Nazi death camps. [*Language*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-language/)*,* [*History*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/history/)*,* [*The arts*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/the-arts/)*,* [*Knowledge & the knower*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/knowledge-and-the-knower/) |
| BQ4 / Perspectives | A [**Conversation**](https://theconversation.com/most-americans-do-trust-scientists-and-science-based-policy-making-freaking-out-about-the-minority-who-dont-isnt-helpful-193085) article, pointing out that contrary to common media reports, the majority of people in the US trust scientists and science. [*Natural sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/natural-sciences/)*,* [*Human sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/)A [**Conversation**](https://theconversation.com/republicans-and-democrats-see-news-bias-only-in-stories-that-clearly-favor-the-other-party-192282) article, analyzing how people from both sides of the political spectrum only detect bias when it supports the opposing party. [*Politics*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-politics/)*,* [*Knowledge & the knower*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/knowledge-and-the-knower/)*,* [*Human sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/)A [**New Arab**](https://english.alaraby.co.uk/news/cnns-christiane-amanpour-declines-iran-interview-over-hijab) article, looking at the non-appearance of Iran’s President at an interview with a headscarf-less reporter. [*Religion*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-religion/)*,* [*Politics*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-politics/)*,* [*Human sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/)A [**Salon**](https://slate.com/technology/2022/09/feminist-science-not-an-oxymoron.html) article, arguing that the term ‘feminist science’ is not an oxymoron, and offers a powerful set of tools for examining knowledge. [*Natural sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/natural-sciences/)*,* [*Knowledge & the knower*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/knowledge-and-the-knower/)*,* [*Politics*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-politics/)A [**Big Think**](https://bigthink.com/the-well/religion-and-science/) video, in which Francis Collins argues that science and religion are asking very different questions. [*Religion*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-religion/)*,* [*Natural sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/natural-sciences/)*,* [*Knowledge & the knower*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/knowledge-and-the-knower/)A [**Conversation**](https://theconversation.com/what-does-it-mean-to-be-a-person-different-cultures-have-different-answers-186015) article, exploring how different cultures have a different understanding of what constitutes being a person.[*Indigenous societies*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-indigenous-societies/)*,* [*Religion*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-religion/)*,* [*Human sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/)*,* [*Natural sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/natural-sciences/)*,* [*Knowledge & the knower*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/knowledge-and-the-knower/)A [**BBC**](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-60855280?fbclid=IwAR3ryw9xl7QFZrnlM1ziR7NUeyK9yv0Q58NoYGHTx9XZVu0CMdmIlU6NP9g) article and video, looking at the way President Zelensky adapts his language and message according to the audience he is dealing with. [*Language*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-language/)*,* [*Politics*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-politics/)*,* [*Human sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/)A[**History Today**](https://www.historytoday.com/archive/history-matters/ukraine-and-russias-history-wars) article, looking at how the conflict between Russia and Ukraine is as much about the past as it is about the present.[*History*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/history/)*,* [*Politics*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-politics/)An [**Aeon**](https://aeon.co/essays/there-are-six-main-narratives-of-globalisation-all-flawed) essay, looking at six different narratives of the nature and effect of globalization. [*Human sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/)*,* [*History*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/history/)*,* [*Politics*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-politics/)*,* [*Technology*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-technology/)A short [**History Today**](https://www.historytoday.com/archive/making-history/fishing-facts) article, looking at EH Carr’s famous assertion that historians “fish for the truth”. [*History*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/history/)*,* [*Language*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-language/)An [**NBC**](https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/southlake-texas-holocaust-books-schools-rcna2965) article, discussing the implications of laws in the US designed to ‘balance perspectives’, and how this will impact on the teaching of topics such as the Holocaust. [*History*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/history/)*,* [*Human sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/)A [**Conversation**](https://theconversation.com/when-human-life-begins-is-a-question-of-politics-not-biology-165514) article, looking at how our judgement of when life begins is as much a matter of politics as it is about science. [*Politics*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-politics/)*,* [*Natural sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/natural-sciences/)*,* [*Religion*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-religion/)*,* [*Human sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/)A [**Smithsonian**](https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/how-mosquitos-helped-shape-human-history-180972802/) article, which looks at how mosquitoes played a critical role in human history. [*History*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/history/)*,* [*natural sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/natural-sciences/)*,* [*technology*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-technology/)This [**Atlantic**](https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2018/03/a-hidden-problem-at-the-heart-of-psychopathy/555335/) article examines the work of Arielle Baskin-Sommers, a Yale researcher, who spent time investigating prisoners with psychopathic tendencies in a maximum-security prison in Connecticut. Her particular focus was to try to understand how able they are at considering the thoughts of others – known as ‘perspective taking’. [*Human sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/)*,* [*knowledge & the knower*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/knowledge-and-the-knower/) |
| BQ5 / Methods & tools | A [**Conversation**](https://theconversation.com/nudge-theory-doesnt-work-after-all-says-new-evidence-review-but-it-could-still-have-a-future-187635) article, questioning whether ‘nudge theory’ is really as effective as its proponents argue. [*Human sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/)*,* [*Mathematics*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/mathematics/)*,* [*Language*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-course/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-language/)[**Vox**](https://www.vox.com/science-and-health/22710533/nobel-prize-2021-ardem-patapoutian-touch) and [**Conversation**](https://theconversation.com/the-2021-nobel-prize-for-medicine-helps-unravel-mysteries-about-how-the-body-senses-temperature-and-pressure-169229) articles, looking at this year’s winner of the Nobel Prize for biology, and what it reveals about sense perception.[*Natural sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/natural-sciences/)*,* [*Technology*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-technology/)A [**Smithsonian**](https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/new-oregon-trail-game-features-playable-native-american-characters-180977744/) article, looking at the ‘Oregon Trail’ video game, and how it has developed since it was first released back in the 1970s. [*Indigenous societies*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-indigenous-societies/)*,* [*history*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/history/)*,* [*technology*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-technology/)*,* [*the arts*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/the-arts/)An [**Aeon**](https://aeon.co/essays/for-the-wanderers-who-became-the-aztecs-history-was-a-chorus-of-voices) essay, considering how the Aztec people approached history, and how for them, truth was ‘composite’. [*History*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/history/)*,* [*indigenous societies*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-indigenous-societies/)*,* [*language*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-language/)A [**Smithsonian**](https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/alice-lee-statistician-debunked-sexist-myths-skull-size-intelligence-180971241/) story, looking at the way a doctoral student, Alice Lee, debunked the widely accepted theory that cranial capacity determined intelligence in the late 19th century. [*Human sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/)*,* [*indigenous societies*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-indigenous-societies/)*,* [*knowledge & the knower*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/knowledge-and-the-knower/) |
| BQ6 / Methods & tools | A [**Conversation**](https://theconversation.com/how-making-a-film-exploring-indigenous-stories-of-the-night-sky-enriched-my-perspective-as-a-scientist-167529) article, which looks at a film about indigenous stories about the night sky, and how they help us to comprehend the universe. [*Indigenous societies*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-indigenous-societies/)*,* [*Natural sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/natural-sciences/)*,* [*The arts*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/the-arts/)*,* [*Religion*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-religion/)*,* [*Politics*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/tok-optional-themes/knowledge-and-politics/)An [**Aeon**](https://aeon.co/essays/real-experts-know-what-they-dont-know-and-we-should-value-it) essay, looking at the relationship between certainty and expertise about knowledge. [*Knowledge & the knower*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/the-tok-themes/knowledge-and-the-knower/)*,* [*human sciences*](https://theoryofknowledge.net/areas-of-knowledge/human-sciences/) |