

Notes to activities

Chapter 4

Activity (page 91)

| | Prescribed title | | Thesis statement |
|---|---|---|--|
| A | There is no such thing as a neutral question. Evaluate this statement with reference to two areas of knowledge. (May 2015) | 3 | While questions in mathematics often rely on certain axiomatic assumptions, they don't necessarily make that knowledge less reliable. How questions are posed in the human sciences, however, do directly relate to the validity of the knowledge gained from the answers. |
| B | 'Knowledge is nothing more than the systematic organization of facts.' Discuss this statement in relation to two areas of knowledge. (May 2014) | 6 | The concept of 'fact' varies among AOKs, which suggests that the methods and scope of the AOK imposes a structure on the raw material of knowledge which may or may not be how the way the world really is. |
| C | In what ways may disagreement aid the pursuit of knowledge in the natural and human sciences? (May 2013) | 5 | In all forms of knowledge, shared knowledge plays an important role, particularly in the form of the methods and the concepts used. However, that role is significantly different in measuring the reliability and importance of that knowledge for the individual. |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| D | ‘Knowledge gives us a sense of who we are.’ To what extent is this true in the human sciences and one other area of knowledge? (November 2013) | 2 | While both the sciences and arts might tell us about our own nature, they use significantly different concepts and methods to do so. Ultimately, the knowledge gained in the arts is far more significant. |
| E | ‘Without the group to verify it, knowledge is not possible.’ Discuss. (November 2015) | 1 | The nature of the evidence and the role of testability of claims means that contrasting views have different effects on the overall reliability of the knowledge produced in the AOKs. |
| F | ‘Some areas of knowledge seek to describe the world, whereas others seek to transform it.’ (November 2014) | 4 | No knowledge is genuinely useful unless it is aimed at solving real-world problems. |

Questions about the *inter-relationships* between knowledge in the AOKs and ethical knowledge:

- How might technology exacerbate or mitigate unequal access, and divide in our access, to knowledge?
- Does religion provide a way to systematize concepts of right and wrong?
- Should terms such as ‘atrocious’ or ‘hero’ be used when writing about history, or should value judgements be avoided?
- Should key events in the historical development of the human sciences always be judged by the standards of their time?
- Is science, or should it be, value-free?
- In what ways have developments in science challenged long-held ethical values?
- How important is the study of literature in our individual ethical development?