

# Tok knowing a friend and swimmin



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

TOK 11 summative assessment quarter 2 Jacqueline Blok 21/11/11 Compare and contrast knowing a friend to knowing how to swim, knowing a scientific theory and knowing a historical period. What conclusions about nature of knowing can you reach? Thinking I knew how to swim I jumped into a pool and nearly drowned. The one friend who was always there for me, who I thought I knew, left me without a goodbye. Thinking that a light year was a measurement of time, until I had a physics class.

I thought Pearl Harbor was just a movie, until we were learning about World War 2 in humanities. With asking these questions, to be certain in the world we live in today might be a challenge. Knowing a friend would require a bond, which is created through experiences with each other, a perception of the feelings of that friend and thoughts that run in a deeper level. One might think he/she knows someone very well, because of a long-term close relationship or similar interests or tastes.

However no one other than himself or herself would understand their own way of thinking, the workings of their own mind, it is impossible to know why certain actions are performed by someone else. Only glimpses and insights may be picked up of the complexities of the mysterious mind and personality of oneself. My best friend dislikes exposing her legs, because she doesn't feel confident enough to show them.

This seems like a reasonable excuse, if she is uncomfortable with her body, it would be her choice to expose it or not, however deeper psychological factors are involved and countless other reasons which I would not be able to think of nor comprehend. The knowledge of another person would be mainly created out of language, perception and emotion. A knower's perception of a

friend's action would be affected by emotions; hence the knowledge of a friend will be affected too.

A perception of a friend may be altered when the emotions of a friend affects their actions in certain situations. Language has complexities too, language can make an attempt at describing feelings, however this doesn't provide a complete understanding of one and another. The best way to communicate feelings would be to let one experience another's events and create their own feelings; an example would be the expression " you can't possibly imagine what I have been through", " Imagine yourself in some one else's shoes".

Considering the history of one, would affect their ways of acting upon situations, all humans think and act differently according to personalities, which have been shaped by all sorts of experiences in their own past. Swimming is an action which requires a structured breathing pattern and a well timed combination of limb motions, allowing you to travel through water, the important key words here that I found through my observations are that knowing " how" is not the same as knowing " of" nor is it close to knowing " that".

Knowing how to swim is quite similar to knowing a friend. Because one cannot possibly learn how to swim by reading instructions, someone could read all the documents and articles available on how to swim, and jump into a pool and drown. For example at one particular time I developed liking in ' parkour' I watched all the youtube videos that I could find on ' how to parkour, read many articles and tips and tricks. So one day I felt I gained

enough knowledge about this acrobatic sport and decided to try it out. And what I learnt was that I could not even jump over a simple bench.

I am able to read and apply concepts that I have gained through reading, however in this case I was not able to apply the information fast enough of “how” to parkour. Even though I had a sophisticated amount of knowledge on how to parkour, I was unable to convert this knowledge and understanding into reality. According to my research these two actions swimming and parkouring require ‘bodily-kinesthetic intelligence’ which is the ability to control to control the movements of a body and skillfully interact with a variety of objects.

Scientific theories have been made through observations of the world, creativity and of course imagination. They can be known through reason, language and perception. A scientist can propose a theory purely upon perception and reasoning and justify this theory with evidence that shows how this particular phenomenon follows the predicted theory. For example in chemistry we did a set of experiments on how different metals when heated in a flame would give out a color. A hypothesis was provided and from that I knew that the flames indeed would change color.

I know for a fact that when Copper Chloride is heated it will give out a green color, I saw this through my own eyes and as the experiment was repeated several times with the same results. Seeing out of my own eyes is proof. Through being taught by my teacher means I am relying on a higher authority’s knowledge. Also the lack of a language can prove a theory, for example every one dies, this is a fact because by using deductive reasoning there is no one here to tell us otherwise.

The problem with knowing a historical period is that it is in the past and we are in the present, the knowledge of a historical period is transferred from the past into the present through language and documentation. If we have not been informed about these periods, the present day people would never had known it existed. The knowing of a historical period is based upon accepting certain events through evidence from the past. It is unfortunate that historians cannot directly “ test” the past whereas a scientific theory and swimming can be tested.

This suggests that testing is thus an important factor in determining the nature of knowledge. The claim of knowing a historical period can be justified by looking at pictures or a documentary, technology over the years has improved significantly the knowledge we know today about the past. Unlike a scientific theory here we can rely on perception, observation and interpretations. To know a historical period we must have either been there or rely on a higher authority to inform us. I however ponder on the possibility of the authority being fooled by perception.

This is where logic and reasoning comes in to decide whether or not something has happened. If something hadn't happened, then why can we see evidence of the consequences, for example when I visited Cambodia the Angkor Wat temples I saw evidence of historical artifacts of the monks, and until the present monks still live among there. With this I can deduce that these temples must have come from somewhere, and it is definitely a sacred place. With this we are knowing “ that” something happened instead of knowing “ of” a friend.

By identifying and considering the four concepts that were provided we can conclude that the main difference in the nature of the four knowledge claims are the way you know them; knowing “ how to” and knowing “ that something is” are completely different. A knower will never be able to know a friend than himself or herself, exact feelings and emotions cannot be communicated directly and as detailed through perception and language. Swimming can only be learnt through perception, this ability is not able to be transferred linguistically, but must be learnt first hand through training.

A historical period in time can be known by a person who has lived through that time and has transferred the knowledge gained through linguistical means, however the knowledge could be misleading due to perception or the facts of the period are incomplete providing only one side of the story. A scientific theory may be discovered and proven through various tests and observations via perceptions and reason. However communication of this particular theory via language does not have the same effect as the perception of it.

Emotions can affect perception language cannot transfer precise meanings and assumptions to generalize from specific points can be found through inception. Due to these ways of knowing being limited, complete knowledge is unable to be attained. Different claims requiring different ways of knowing to justify them, they have all have one thing in common; their nature: they are based on premises that we accept in every day life as being ‘ true’ and therefore deduct that based on these premises, they are equally true. We know something as far as we are willing to accept it into our world.