

**IB Theory of Knowledge/Government
Summer Reading
2019 – 2020 School Year**

“Knowledge will forever govern ignorance; and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives.”

—James Madison

Theory of Knowledge (TOK) is “a course about critical thinking and inquiring into the process of knowing, rather than learning a specific body of knowledge.... The course examines how we know what we claim to know. It does this by encouraging students to analyze knowledge claims and explore knowledge questions.” (TOK Guide, 2015, p. 8) This course focuses on the Theory of Knowledge course (TOK) but also includes embedded instruction and time on task for the Creativity, Activity, and Service component (CAS) and the Extended Essay (EE).

The Government component of the course provides a nonpartisan introduction to key political concepts, ideas, institutions, policies, interactions, roles, and behaviors that characterize the constitutional system and political culture of the United States. Students will study U.S. foundational documents, Supreme Court decisions, and other texts and visuals to gain an understanding of the relationships and interactions among political institutions, processes, and behavior. They will also engage in disciplinary practices that require them to read and interpret data, make comparisons and applications, and develop evidence-based arguments.

Summer Reading/Listening Assignment

Part I: Theory of Knowledge

Assignment:

- Podcasts offer a wealth of fascinating real-life situations that may lead to fruitful TOK analysis. And, they make you a more interesting and informed human.
- You are to listen one episode of a Podcast of your choice that addresses any concept related to knowledge, learning, how we learn, etc. Below are suggestions based upon your interests, however you may choose a Podcast not on the list.
- As you listen to the Podcast, complete the Podcast Reflection Form. You can find the proper MLA citation for a Podcast at the following website: <http://www.easybib.com/guides/citation-guides/mla-format/podcast/>.
- The Podcast Reflection Form will be due on the first Friday that we have class, August 23rd.

Recommended Podcast List

If you like...	Then you should listen to...	Because...
Politics	FiveThirtyEight Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This podcast provides accurate and accessible commentary to help make sense of campaign events, media stories, and polls. • Nate Silver, famed election predictor and polls analyst, runs FiveThirtyEight and is very TOK. • A Shaker grad, Clare Malone, is one of the podcasters!
Science	RadioLab	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They tell science as a story. Many episodes are about human nature and psychology, but not all. • Noted for having great special effects, this is an easy and fun listen that engages the audience well.
History	Revisionist History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malcolm Gladwell, author of <i>The Tipping Point</i> and <i>Outliers</i> and some interesting articles we will read in TOK, narrates and runs this podcast. • He tells stories from the past that are forgotten or left behind in some way, and re-invigorates them.

Criminal Justice	More Perfect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is RadioLab’s offshoot project all about the Supreme Court! • This show provides helpful history and commentary about the highest court in the land, along with landmark cases.
Psychology	Invisibilia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another project stemming from RadioLab, this podcast seeks to discuss the “invisible forces shaping our lives” like thoughts, beliefs, opinions, and assumptions. • Try out “The Secret History of Thoughts” and you won’t be able to stop listening!
Stories and Literature	The Moth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Moth is a collection of stories told orally to live audiences. Stories range in topic and are grouped thematically by episode. • Anyone can tell a story at the Moth, so long as they don’t use notes and stick to the time limit. It’s also competitive—like a poetry slam, but with stories.
Economics	Freakonomics Radio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosted by the authors of the well-known book, <i>Freakonomics</i>, this podcast applies economic theories and models to relatable every-day situations. • If you’re into psychology and economics, this is the show for you!
People	This American Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This podcast contains a variety of true stories of American life, ranging from journalistic to political and even to human interest stories. • Each episode typically features three stories around a central theme.
Feminism	Stuff Mom Never Told You	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This show allows you to listen in on conversations between two women hoping to inform listeners of a variety of feminist issues, both historical and current. • Sample topics include women in the workplace, homophobia, feminist politicians, and romcoms.
The Brain	Hidden Brain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In only about 30 minutes, each episode of Hidden Brain gives you an insight into human psychology. • This podcast is a must for those interested in how our brains operate.
Journalism	Embedded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This podcast takes stories from the news and “embeds” journalists in those stories to get a closer look at the underlying issues. • The focus of this podcast is an in-depth look at what journalism can do for public awareness.
Technology	Reply All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “A show about the internet,” • Reply All is similar to RadioLab in that the podcasters are amazing storytellers, and they tell technology as a story.
Cultural Debates	Us & Them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This Po interviews people on opposite sides of cultural and political debates, such as what schools should teach and who should marry. • If you want to practice active listening and empathy for those who have different beliefs than your own, this show is for you!
Race and Identity	Code Switch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This podcast examines how race impacts daily life in America. • Sample topics include stereotypes, criminal justice reform, and whiteness.
Notable Individuals	Fresh Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A collection of interviews of celebrities, authors, politicians, and other notable people, Fresh Air offers an insight into many current world events. • The show gives you a personal glimpse into the lives of famous folks.
Anything and Everything	TED Radio Hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each episode of this show centers on a theme. • Not only does the host pull excerpts from relevant TED talks on that theme, but he interviews the speakers for more info!

Name: _____ Period: _____

Podcast Reflection Form

Source of Podcast (use proper MLA citation):

Length:

Target Audience:

Summary:

Key Terms That I Know:

Key Terms That I Do Not
Yet Know:

One Statement/Concept That I Agree With:

One Statement/Concept That I Don't Agree With:

Reflections/Questions/Comments:

Part II: Government

Assignment:

- You are to do a close-read of the underlining foundational document for this part of the course – *The Constitution of the United States*. You can access the document at the following link: <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution>.
- Focus on the topic and content of each of the Articles and the Amendments.
- We will be integrating the Government course throughout the year. Having an understanding of this core foundation document will enhance your ability to participate in the course, as well as prepare you for the End-of-Course Exam in Government.

Questions: If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at owens_k@shaker.org. I look forward to meeting you in August!

-Ms. Owens