

TOK Way of Knowing- Sense Perception

Benefits:

- Senses actively structure reality.
- The way we perceive the world is partly determined by the structure of our sense organs.
- Although perception cannot give us certainty, if it is consistent with what reason and intuition tell us, it can still provide a good foundation for reliable knowledge(i.e seeing is believing).
- Despite skeptical doubts, the existence of the external world is the most reasonable hypothesis to account for the regularity of our experience.

Limitations:

- Senses are selective. What we notice in a given environment is influenced by factors such as intensity, contrast, interest and mood and expectations.
- We may misinterpret what we see
- We may misremember what we see
- We may fail to notice something
- Eye-witness testimony
- Believing is seeing: Our beliefs and expectations can affect the way we perceive the world. How is a sunset seen by a religious figure, a physicist, a painter and a farmer?

Three ways to distinguish appearance from reality:

- 1.) Confirm with another sense
- 2.) Coherence (does it fit in with your overall experience of the world)
- 3.) Testimony of others

Do you think that perception is a more important source of knowledge in some subjects rather than others? Are there any areas of knowledge in which it plays no role?