

ToK Essay

Sample

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“The process of gaining knowledge is more valuable than reaching an end result.”

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“The process of gaining knowledge is more valuable than reaching an end result.”

Discuss this claim with reference to two areas of knowledge.

In all cultures of the world, knowledge is considered as something that adds value to a person's life. In short, knowledge is power. Knowledge is what makes life worth living. It is what develops a person intellectually so that they can make decisions rationally. The process of gaining knowledge is a very complex one, indeed. Everyone has different ways of gaining knowledge. Some rely on gaining knowledge by way of education, whereas some rely solely on experience. Some even rely on both ways of gaining knowledge.

This essay mainly deals with the end result of knowledge. To work on this essay, I will first shed light on the key terms of this essay. The first key term is the process. Process refers to actions that are taken to achieve a particular result. The second key phrase is ‘end result.’

This is the final result that is achieved at the end of something. This essay talks about how the process of gaining knowledge is indeed more valuable than the end result. The knowledge question that I will be seeking to answer by way of this essay is 'how is the process of gaining knowledge superior to the end goal?' To shed light on this, I will be making use of two areas of knowledge. The first one is religious knowledge systems, and the second one is ethics.

All over the world, there are many different religions that people follow. The major religions of the world are Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Most people follow the religion that they are born into as part of the household that they are with (Olson 1959). But then some are generally more curious and generally like to go into the details of most things. These people then study about religion in great detail to know further if they follow

the right religion. So I believe that no matter what religion a person follows when they are on the quest to finding out about the truth, they tend to study most religions. They go into the depth of things so that they understand what each religion is all about. It is this process of learning that teaches them more than anything. They learn so much that it allows them to work all their lives in a very civil way.

For example, most religions of the world today preach peace. Not religion supports the idea of terrorism or killing. Some people are blindly told to follow a certain path and commit acts that are not right. They are told by their religious leaders to conduct some kind of terrorist activity and do it. It is when they learn about their own religion and research that they become more knowledgeable. They then understand how killing is wrong under all circumstances and is highly discouraged, no matter what a religion a person follows. Through that process of learning, they get to polish themselves as individuals and learn about what they didn't know earlier. So it is through this process of learning that they become much better individuals than they were before. So from here, we can see that it was the process of knowledge that taught them how to be better individuals. If we focus on the end goal, that would mean that we are focusing on the religion they belong to. If we talk about the process, then we are because the process was what made them the individual is able enough to succeed in life by understanding the words of things. This was only possible since they grew through the process of learning and understanding.

A counterclaim to this can be seen in the fact that there are people in the world who are very close-minded. No matter how much they study and learn about things, they still remain the

same people. Many people in the world learn about things, but they continue to do what they used to despite being learning and knowledgeable in many life areas. So this mainly depends on person to person. However, most people who learn through the process are the ones who have key takeaways from it. These are the people who understand things in life and are the ones who evolve and become better people over time. So from here, it can be concluded that the process of gaining knowledge is indeed much superior to the end result of it. The way of knowing that I used to come to this conclusion was reasoning. Through reasoning, I was able to relate to how people change and become better versions of themselves when they study what different religions teach. They become open-minded individuals, and then they tend to have a different take based on their perspectives in life.

I will now be moving on to the other area of knowledge, which is ethics. Most societies and disciplines of the world teach people about how lying is ethically and morally wrong, and that is why no one should indulge in it. However, no one really teaches them why lying is wrong and how lying can cause life problems. When people learn about the various reasons why concealing the truth and lying can cause problems, that is when they tend to become better versions of themselves. Whenever people are told to do something as part of it being an order, most people either tend to do it half-heartedly or do it as a duty without understanding the real essence. When people lie, they have to tell many other lies to hide that one truth. It is like a vicious cycle that leads people to go in and then suffering (Llewellyn and Whittle 2018). Apart from that, there is a lot of guilt that also comes with it. When people learn about why lying is wrong, they tend to believe in it truly and become better individuals on the whole.

I would want to add a personal example here too. As a young kid, I was always taught not to lie. No one ever taught me why lying was bad, and so I blindly refrained from lying. I did not believe in it too much till I understood why lying was wrong. It is only my quest for learning about it more than made me develop as an individual. Even at school, we were always taught in our ethics class that lying was wrong, but no one explained to us why it was wrong, and so we were very confused. It was not until we grew up and started rationalizing things that I understood why and how lying was so discouraged in society. So it can be said that the end result here did not matter as much as my process of learning, which led me to become more knowledgeable in life. The way of knowing that I used to come to this conclusion was memory. This was a childhood memory of mine that stuck to me, and that is how I was able to understand this so well.

A counter claim to this can be seen that sometimes people may argue that it is the end result, which matters more. For example, if people are told to be nice to other people and not hurt them because it is something ethically wrong to do, what matters more is that they don't indulge in something like that. If they do, it could break the other person's heart, and that is why what matters here is that they do not indulge in something like that. Some people would also argue that some things do not need a process to be understood. They are already so clear that they don't need any explanation for them. However, if we look at it from a broader perspective, it can be seen that the process teaches people how they should behave. That is what develops them as individuals.

The most valuable possession that a person has is his education. No matter what happens, a person can never be separated from the knowledge that they have. It is the one thing that helps a person become a better version of them. That is why it can be concluded that it is indeed the process of knowledge that matters the most. When a person goes through a rigorous learning process, they become more knowledgeable people in the process and become better individuals. It is when the character of a person transforms that a person truly wins. The purpose of life is to be able to live a good quality of life. That is only possible when people learn about life more through the process: the end result matters, but not more than the process of learning.

References

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