

CRITICAL AI LITERACY
WORKSHOP

AI in College Writing



Part 1: Defining Generative AI



What is Generative AI?

-  **Writing Assistants:** AI tools like ChatGPT, Grammarly, Gemini, and Quillbot are designed to actively assist at multiple stages of the writing process.
-  **Capabilities:** AI has the power to dynamically generate new paragraphs, edit existing copy, and continuously refine textual content.
-  **Classroom Discussion:** What real-world experiences or tools have you already integrated into your own writing workflow?



How It Works & Its Core Flaws

MECHANISM

Statistical Prediction

Generative AI tools produce human-like text by analyzing enormous datasets and predicting common linguistic patterns. They guess the next logical word based on probabilities, not intelligence.

CRITICAL FLAWS

Two Fatal Limitations

-  **No Direct Sourcing:** They cannot intrinsically link their outputs to specific, verifiable real-world sources.
-  **Zero Accuracy Guarantees:** Because answers are statistical guesses rather than verified facts, they remain inherently unreliable.

Generative AI vs. Search Engines

Generative AI

- Creates entirely new assets by guessing sequences
- Functions similarly to an advanced autocomplete
- Drafts complete essays, summaries, or explanations
- May hallucinate and introduce major factual errors

Search Engines

- Retrieve pre-existing web documents and facts
- Provide transparent lists of direct hyperlinked sources
- Help you locate raw data, academic journals, and articles
- Deliver information traceable to registered authors

i Key Distinction: Search engines locate and find existing information; generative AI synthesizes and predicts.

Part 2: Evaluation & Ethics

Evaluating AI-Generated Content

Accuracy

Always manually fact-check AI-generated text. Never accept information as truth without cross-referencing high-quality third-party research.



Bias & Hallucination

AI reflects systemic biases embedded within its vast training datasets. It is also prone to confident fabrications known as hallucinations.



Attribution

Textual citations provided by AI are routinely made-up. AI fails to properly attribute, track, or verify where its claims originate.

Who Makes the Rules for AI?



-  **Privacy & Copyright:** Do all AI corporations have mechanisms to fully safeguard individual privacy, intellectual property, and copyright?
-  **Erroneous Information:** Have you personally encountered AI-generated outputs that state false or highly misleading claims?
-  **Accountability:** If AI-generated mistakes harm a person's life or career, who should be held legally and ethically responsible?

Ethical Use of AI in Writing

-  **Plagiarism Prevention:** AI-generated text should never replace original, student-produced writing. Pushing generated copy as your own constitutes academic dishonesty.
-  **The Over-Reliance Trap:** When does AI cross the line from a supportive grammar tool to a cognitive bypass that erodes your critical development?
-  **Course Policies:** Every course defines unique limits on AI usage. Reading, understanding, and respecting the syllabus expectations is essential.

AI & Critical Thinking

Active Evaluation

Do not accept AI suggestions passively. You must evaluate every recommendation with a critical eye, checking for tone, structural flow, and logical rigor. Remember: AI notoriously struggles with deep rhetorical analysis, stylistic nuance, and persuasive argumentation.



The Big Question

**Can artificial intelligence ever replace
human critical thinking?**



Part 3: Practical Writing Strategies

AI as a Tool, Not a Shortcut



AI Writes Everything

Fast but Dangerous: Output is easily detectable, often feels robotic, and significantly damages your professional reputation.



AI for Ideas/Rephrasing

Easier starting point: Helpful to bypass blank-page anxiety, but severely weakens your baseline originality and structural critical thinking.



AI as a 'Workout Partner'

The Ideal Approach: Treats writing as a process. Assists in outlining and brainstorming, preserving all learning benefits.

 **You are in charge:** Do not let AI take over your writing tasks. You call the shots, and you must protect your own space in the learning journey.

Three Key Classroom Exercises



Exercise 1: AI vs. Human

Compare a generated paragraph directly with a student's paragraph. Discuss which text holds more credibility and why.



Exercise 2: Identify Text

Read an anonymous passage and determine if it is purely AI-generated, human-written, or blended. Reflect on why it matters.



Exercise 3: Critique Arguments

Analyze an AI-generated argument structure.
Locate logical fallacies, expose missing evidence, and evaluate the lack of nuance.

AI Exercises: Brainstorm & Revision

1. AI Brainstorming

Method: Ask AI to suggest 3 themes, potential essay angles, or quote integrations for a class text. Draft your responses alongside the AI's.

Reflection Focus:

Determine which generated suggestions were genuinely helpful versus which were generic or irrelevant.

2. AI Revision

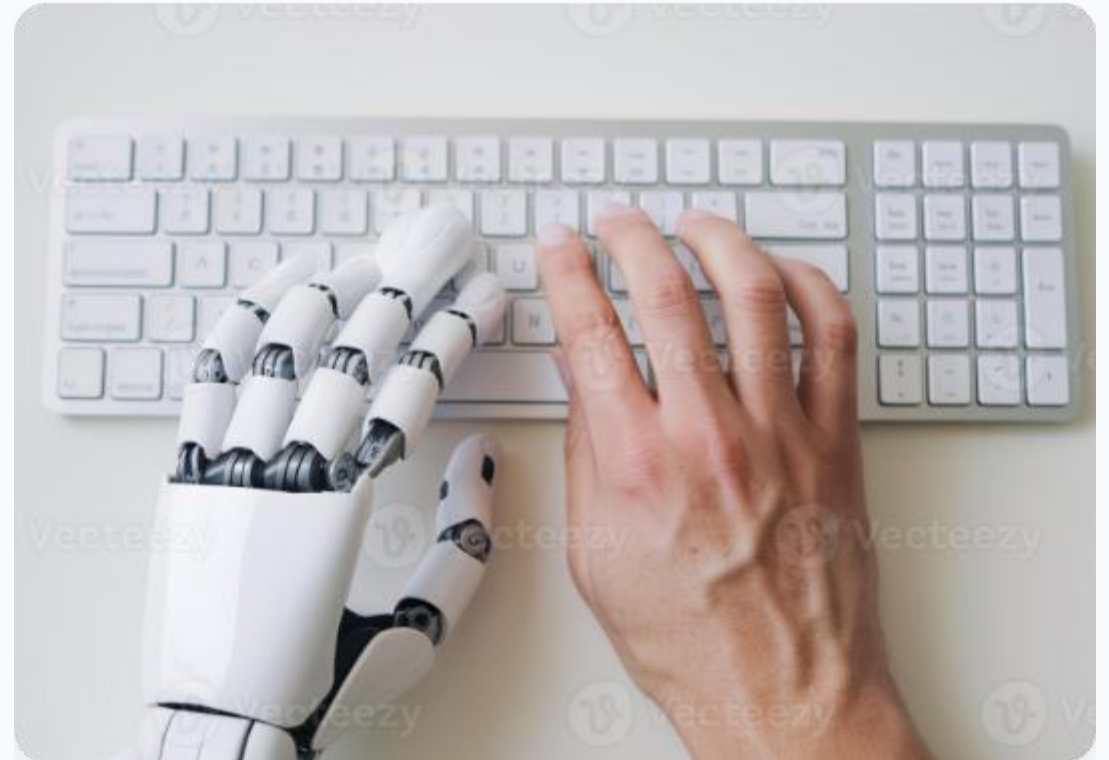
Method: Input one of your draft paragraphs. Prompt the AI to suggest improvements for grammar, syntactic styling, or flow.

Reflection Focus:

Did the feedback strengthen your prose? Did any revision unintentionally change or alter your original meaning?

You vs. the Machine: Experiment

-  **8-Minute Freewrite:** Draft an honest personal story of tension between individual goals and community expectations.
-  **AI Alternative:** Prompt an LLM to answer the same writeup. Copy the results side-by-side.
-  **The Contrast:** Highlight specific details in your work, and notice where the AI defaults to generic, hollow statements.



The AI Factory Question

"Imagine college becomes a massive AI factory where students do nothing except copy prompt templates, paste outputs, and pay crippling tuition debt to copy-paste. Does this contain a single shred of value to humanity?"

| The Power of Choice

"We teachers can't force you to do your own writing and thinking anymore. AI has given you a choice. What will you choose? What will you base your choice on? How much thought will you put into it? All we can do is ask the questions. You have to answer for yourself."

— THE FACULTY PERSPECTIVE

Wrap-Up & Reflection

Let's establish responsible, empowered relationships with technology.

Closing Discussion

How will you adjust or refine your personal generative AI policies moving forward? Open Q&A session.

Image Sources



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