TEACHERS ON AI

No, AI won't replace great teaching; AI *might* support great teaching.
Here are some ideas based on interviews with classroom teachers around the country on how they have been adapting to the arrival of generative AI technologies (GenAI), such as ChatGPT, in learning environments.

TEACHING SYSTEMS LAB

LISTEN CLOSELY TO STUDENTS

Ask your students how they are using AI, and how teachers and schools can best support them. Consider creating a *Student AI Advisory Board* to inform school policy or instructional changes.

One school district in New York invited a panel of students to be interviewed during a professional development day; teachers reported gaining new insights into how and why students use GenAI in their classes.

PLAY! EMBRACE THE WEIRD

Exploring GenAI's capacity to generate wonderfully strange content instantly is fun, and a great way to start building knowledge about AI's strengths and weaknesses.

To spark student interest, Mr. Kieffer in Illinois uses ChatGPT to generate math word problems that include his own classroom jokes or a specific set of student interests.

Ms. Nakis in California leverages GenAI's weaknesses to reach her learning goals. She's noticed the Photo Math app sometimes makes mistakes, and plans to encourage students to analyze the error in the bot's "thinking."

Mr. Bernstein in Hawaii shows students how to use GenAI as an iterative "thought partner" to brainstorm titles for their capstone project.

TEACH STUDENTS TO USE IT FOR PARTS, NOT WHOLES

Students are tempted to use GenAI to write whole answers or entire essays. Show them how it can help with specific parts of their work without compromising on the wider learning goals you've set for them.

Mr. Hunt in Washington D.C. shows students how to prompt a GenAI tool to rewrite the abstract of an academic paper at a 9th-grade level so that his students can understand the gist of the paper's findings as they search for potential sources for a research project.

Remember!
New tools will come and go, but the awareness and self-discipline required to know when and when not to use a new piece of technology is a transferrable skill we can teach students.

ENGAGE STUDENTS WITH THE BIGGER ISSUES

AI raises a range of issues beyond the concerns about academic integrity, from environmental costs to intellectual property rights to the spread of misinformation. Use debates, Socratic seminars, or other discussion formats to get students thinking and talking about the many issues related to technology and society raised by the development of GenAI.

Powering AI tools like ChatGPT demands a tremendous amount of energy and water. How might we deal with the environmental costs of this technology?

Should we consider content created by GenAI *original* work? Does art need to be created by a human to be considered *authentic*?

Bots learn from humans and humans are flawed. How do we address the challenge of GenAI regurgitating falsehoods and harmful language circulating online?

GIFT STUDENTS WITH OFFLINE SPACES

Calls for flipped classrooms, process-focused assessments, and a return to handwriting aren't new. Neither is the initial shake-up caused by the arrival of a new technology, be it a calculator or a smartphone. What might be different this time? Most K-12 students do not know what a world without internet access in their pocket is like. Consider how important an intentionally created offline space in the classroom might be. Teach students to disconnect from screens and reconnect to their surroundings by providing a literal space and time in their otherwise hyper-connected day to speak, handwrite, and look and listen to each other's human faces.

A NOTE FOR ADMINISTRATORS

Include teachers in decision-making about policies and technology access or subscriptions. If any new rules or policies are put in place, be mindful of providing corresponding resources and support. AI-powered tools aren't a substitute for investing in high quality curriculum, instructional materials, and especially time for teachers to learn and plan!

Remember! This technology and the best teaching practices associated with it are shifting all the time. What makes sense today might not make sense tomorrow. Be compassionate with yourself as you adapt! We invite you to share your thoughts with us at **tsl.mit.edu/ai**