California English

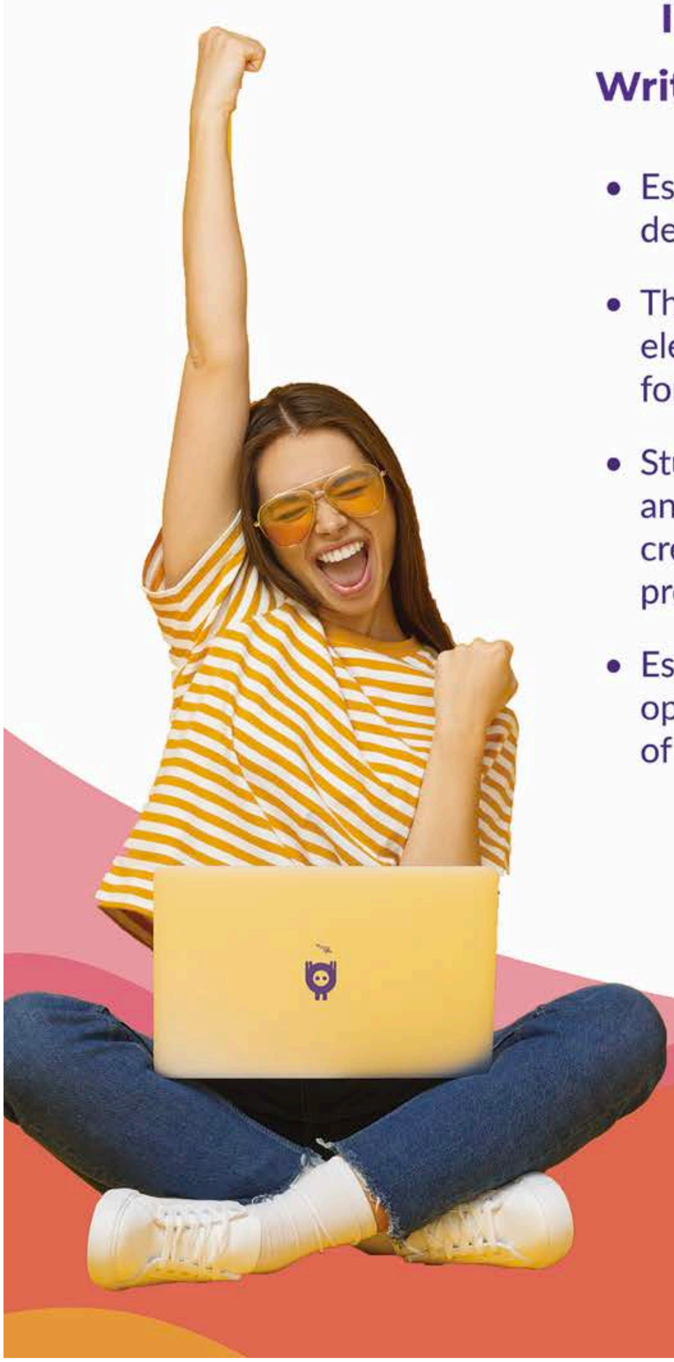
ChatGPT: A Brave New World for Teachers

The quarterly journal of the California Association of Teachers of English

Vol.29, No 2; November 2023

essaypop

essaypop is an interactive writing platform that allows students to compose great essays on any device, in any setting, and in any subject.



Introducing a Research-Based Writing Solution for Every Classroom

- Essaypop offers a kid-friendly interface that demystifies writing for students.
- The platform smartly breaks the essay into its elemental components and color-codes them for ease of identification.
- Students collaborate and with peers, teachers, and guests in the interactive Hive environment, creating engagement around the writing process.
- Essaypop is a completely customizable and open-source system that fits the learning goals of teachers, schools, and districts.

For more information, please contact your essaypop sole source partner in California, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, Oregon, Washington and Canada:

Greenfield Learning
sales@greenfieldlearning.com
(800) 363-5547

California English

November 2023; Volume 29, Number 2

THE ARTIST OF THIS ISSUE: ANDREA BORSUK

Since earning her MFA degree at Columbia University in 1990, Andrea has exhibited her work in solo and group exhibitions in California, the length of the west coast and across the United States. In addition, she has been the recipient of several grants and fellowships both in this country and in Italy, where she works each year as an instructor in Mixed Media Summer Workshops.

Teaching is central to her career. She has also worked as an instructor in Portland, Oregon and at Cabrillo College in Aptos. She is a natural educator who offers advice to the young artist in the passage quoted on page 10 of this journal.

A comprehensive selection of Andrea’s work, together with details of her week-long and three-day workshops, can be viewed at her web site andreaborsuk.com.

Shown on the cover: The Dance Ends Soon
(oil on wood panel, 24” x 36”)

CALIFORNIA ENGLISH
Editor: Carol Jago
Printing: Sundance Press, Tucson, (800) 528.4827

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION. CALIFORNIA ENGLISH (ISSN # 0279-1161) is published four times each year, Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer by the California Association of Teachers of English (CATE), P.O. Box 23833, San Diego, CA 92193-3833. Annual CATE dues of $50 include a one-year subscription to *California English*. Known office of publication is 8800 Lakewood Drive, #1402, Windsor, CA 95492. Periodicals Postage Paid at San Diego, CA. The Editor is Carol Jago, 1027 Chicago Avenue, Oak Park, IL 60302. POSTMASTER Send address changes to California English, P.O. Box 23833, San Diego, CA 92193-3833. The circulation is:

	Average # of copies in past year	Actual May 2023
Total copies printed	1080	1320
Paid subscriptions	799	1083
Total distribution	835	1136
Leftovers	245	184
Percent Paid circulation	95.7%	95.3%

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Regular	$50 for one year $90 for two years $135 for three years
Retired Teacher	$40 for one year $300 for lifetime membership

President's Perspective

As I walk across the quad of our campus before the start of an early fall morning, still too early for the trees to don their gayer scarfs*, still too soon to hear the south-bound calls of the wild geese high in the clean blue air*, still holding fast to the warm breeze before bracing for the winter's bite across the barren field*.

Through the anticipation of the coming change of season, I spot Brad, our tech guy, shuffling briskly toward the science building carrying a ladder and the clear posture of not wanting to be asked about dongles or lost files or if he has a minute. Ingloriously, I ask him if he has a minute and enquire what his thoughts are about Artificial Intelligence (AI), "Brad, do you think AI is the start to the downfall of humanity or is the worry over-blown like the fear that calculators in the classroom would end students' ability to do math or maybe the next Y2K boogie man?"

Brad swiftly replied, "It's somewhere in-between" and kept on his way to strengthen a connection or fix a projector.

I feel like we are on the precipice of change, a real threshold moment with the presence of AI in our lives and classrooms. I don't know what to do about it, but I know that change is coming. The use of AI in the English classroom presents questions regarding authenticity of thought and creativity. Can it be a tool to assist in the process of authorship? Or is it the 21st century's plagiaristic copying and pasting of articles and books? Upon conducting my own investigation, I asked one of the many AI apps a few questions.

Is it dangerous that AI is controlled by corporations interested in profits?

"Yes, it is dangerous that AI is controlled by corporations interested in profits. Corporations have a vested interest in making decisions that maximize profits, which may come at the expense of other important considerations such as human safety, privacy, and fairness. They may also be incentivized to take risks with AI technology that could lead to unintended consequences. Additionally, AI systems are often opaque and difficult to understand, making it difficult to detect and respond to problems."

Is AI a form of plagiarism?

"No. Using AI is not a form of plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own. AI, on the other hand, is a form of technology that uses algorithms and data to automate tasks and solve problems. AI can be used to generate content, but it is not considered plagiarism as long as it is properly credited."

Could over-reliance on AI destroy human creativity and expression?

"Yes, over-reliance on AI could potentially destroy creativity and expression. AI can be used to automate processes, making them faster and more efficient. However, in doing so, it can also limit the creative aspects of the task, such as coming up with new ideas or expressing feelings and emotions. Additionally, AI can lead to an over-dependence on technology, which can further impede human creativity and expression. AI can also create a sort of 'echo chamber' in which a person's ideas and opinions are reinforced by the AI, leading to lack of exploration of different perspectives and viewpoints. If people become too reliant on AI, it could lead to a decline in creativity and expression."

Reading these AI-generated explanations and justifications makes me realize that work needs to be done in how we define and control the appropriate use for our students and profession. Interestingly, I also asked AI, "What is the California Association of Teachers of English?" in which, a duplicate copy of our online website description was recited with no credit as to where the AI retrieved the information.

One of the worst moments to encounter as an English teacher is when one is grading a stack of student writing and comes across an incidence of plagiarism or AI-generated writing lacking in authenticity and originality. There is nothing so disheartening as the shift from reading to connect and hear the voice of the student, especially the emerging writer making a break through toward real expression and control to reading to "catch" someone cheating. The shift is such a drastic betrayal because the teacher is thrown from a generous , empathic state to a defensive one, and the human connection is broken.

Fundamentally, the process of discovering and creating one's thoughts is the pinnacle of the writing process. Within all of the necessary steps we teach regarding writing, the voice on the page needs to be that of the author. The process is more important than the product. In the words of AI itself, the dangers of conflating credit, content, and creation behind an "opaque" algorithm that has the potential to "destroy creativity and expression" limiting the diversity of "perspectives and viewpoints" within an "echo-chamber" needs to be addressed with the care and wisdom of our professional community and not behind a Fahrenheit 451 resistant corporate firewall.

It's more important for me as a writing instructor to know that it comes from the heart and mind of a writer as a human being adding to the collective of the human condition. This is the importance of creativity and expression and experience. We can teach our students how to research, brainstorm, and use AI in a responsible manner, but ultimately, it is their thoughtful, creative voice that should don the page.

*Emily Dickenson, Mary Oliver, Langston Hughes

CAROL JAGO
EDITOR, CALIFORNIA ENGLISH

Promise or Peril?

According to HMH's 9th Annual Teacher Confidence Survey, educators are increasingly aware of the positive impact of technology on learning. Teachers report that they are rning to digital platforms to foster student engagement (a 17% crease from 2019 to 2023). While this shift may largely be a result of e pandemic's push to online instruction, recent news about artificial telligence and ChatGPT has trained a spotlight on the issue.

Although only 10% of teachers surveyed report using generative I in their classrooms in the past year, 38% said they plan to adopt I tools over the course of the 2023-2024 school year. In anticipation dramatic changes that may soon be on the horizon, this issue of *alifornia English* includes stories from the classrooms of early-lopters, some enthusiastic about integrating ChatGPT into their rriculum, others more skeptical. None of the contributors believes at teachers can afford to ignore the impact technology will have on ture instruction.

> **“We are in that place where we have to each ersonally examine our stance on generative AI, and ork through what that means for ourselves and our students.”**

Over the past year a dizzying array of interactive, “super-telligent” tools have been released to the public. These tools can nerate text, images, and music in response to simple instructions ovided in ordinary, everyday language. No need for coding. Tools owered by artificial intelligence possess capabilities that would have en considered science fiction only a few years ago. The ethical implications are staggering.

Evy Eny, Jane Gilmore, and Erin Levin — teachers at Lynbrook High School in San Jose — explain that, “When you are in the belly of the beast you must confront certain truths. AI is out there, and the only way to tame the beast is to collaborate with students and bring to the forefront the value of the creative dance of writing, which no AI can replicate.”

The HMH survey found that 57% of teachers think AI is an inevitable tech advancement and should be harnessed in a positive way. But only one in five feels equipped to deal with the challenges ChatGPT poses. Several contributors to this issue explore potential problems in terms of accountability, accessibility, and equity.

Jen Roberts, author of *Power Up* and blogger on the intersection of technology and literacy, explains how she approaches this moment of great uncertainty, “We are in that place where we have to each personally examine our stance on generative AI, and work through what that means for ourselves and our students. I've decided my best approach is to explore it with my students, and that exploration has been very helpful for all of us. When my students know that I know as much, or even more than they do, they are less likely to abuse the tool. And, at the same time, we can discover together ways that it can be helpful.”

My hope is that this issue of the CATE journal can be of help to the 58% of respondents who say they are interested in learning more about how AI and ChatGPT can, should, and will influence teaching and learning. This is a critical moment. We need one another's best thinking to forge our way forward.

Reference

HMH Educator Confidence Report, 2023. “Outlook on Teaching and AI.” https://www.hmhco.com/educator-confidence-report

CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

FEBRUARY 2024,
TEACHING ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE: TEXTS AND TASKS
Deadline: January 10, 2024

In The Sixth Extinction Elizabeth Kolbert explains that “Right now, we are deciding which evolutionary pathways will remain open to us and which will be forever closed.” How have you incorporated climate change into your curriculum? Do science fiction books have a role to play here? What inquiry projects or writing prompts contribute to this increasingly urgent conversation? How are your students fighting for the future?

MAY 2024,
BUILDING COMMUNITY WITH ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER LITERATURE. Deadline April 1, 2024

Hate crimes targeting Asian Americans are at unprecedented levels. Teachers have long held that literature can be a tool for combating divisiveness in society. How have you explored the use of AAPI books and poetry in your curriculum? How can we make inclusion of stories from these communities a classroom norm? How do you foster courageous conversations and inquiry-based research to broaden students' perspectives and foster solidarity?

Manuscripts are peer reviewed. Please send submissions in Microsoft Word format to the *California English* editor, Carol Jago cjago@caroljago.com.
Articles should be a maximum of 2,500 words.

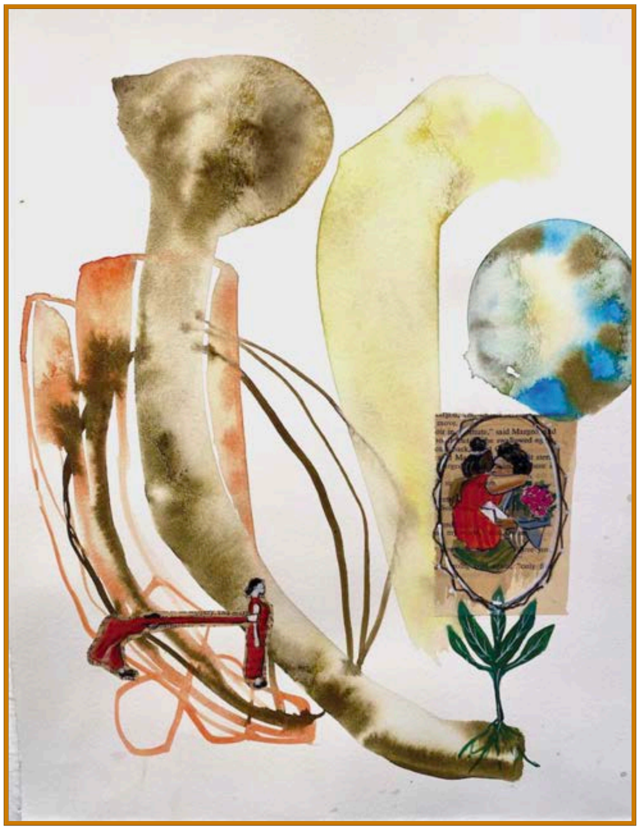
DJ QUINN

ChatGPT: Robot Apocalypse or Powerful Tool for Equity?

> *This storm is coming, and as teachers we can either captain a ship and ride it out or hold our finger in the levee and wait for the flood.*

There are many reasons to be concerned about the impact that Large Language Model (LLM) programs like ChatGPT will have on our world in creative industries, computer programming, hiring, politics, and so on. As a writing teacher, however, I am not overly concerned about their impact on my classroom. This might make me sound naive, and I know that my students can ask these programs to respond to writing prompts. They could try to use it to write whole essays for them. I've been teaching college freshmen for twenty years: I am well aware of the lengths students can go to in order to avoid writing. These efforts are not new, even if this particular mode of achieving them is.

Still, I am not afraid of this technology leaking into my classroom. In fact, I teach my students how to use it. I can already hear (some of) my fellow teachers grabbing their pitch-forks, so please let me explain: As I write this, there are an increasing number of "AI" programs, such as BARD, Cohere, PaLM, and Claude v1. The most well-known, OpenAI's ChatGPT interface, uses a program called GPT4. At the moment, ChatGPT is a glorified spell-check, but I believe that it has the potential to be a powerful tool in the classroom—including helping us achieve goals that writing teachers have long sought, and making the classroom a more equitable place for students—if we can let go of a little control and teach with the tool instead of against it. If nothing else, forbidding students from using tools that make their lives easier has never worked. Remember SparkNotes? The more teachers deny the impact that these programs will have on our classrooms, the less input we will have over when and how wisely students use them, and the less likely it will be that their impact is a positive one. If LLMs are a "Pandora's Box" of potential ills, then the metaphor should tell us that there is no re-capturing them once they are out. There are, however, lessons that we can learn from our history of resistance to the inevitable advancement of technology, and ways that we can balance the current strengths and weaknesses of LLMs in order to make the best use of them in our classrooms. There is hope.



She Holds Me Up *(2023)*
11.5" x 15", monoprint, gouache, ink, and collage

The History of Resistance to Classroom Technology

Socrates famously warned that the technology of writing would mean the death of human memory. In *Pheadrus*, Plato wrote (ha!) that Socrates believed the technology of writing would create people who "seem to know many things, when they are for the most part ignorant," because only remembering mattered, and checking your notes was the sign of a fool.

While Socrates may be the oldest example of a teacher bemoaning advancing technologies, the refrain has accompanied every advancement since. In 1939, the *New York Times* wanted that "[t]he typewriter may swallow us all," replacing the humble pencil. Thomas Edison worried that movies would replace textbooks, an advancement my students are still waiting for (Mishra, Koehler, and Kereluik, 2009). Similarly, in 1993 Hannafin and Savanye charted teachers' resistance to computers in the classroom, and Barzun (1993) complained about nearly every technological advancement that could apply to teaching, from printed exams to spell-checking.

In the thirty years since those projections of doom for writing, learning, and memory, we have come a long way. According to the Pew Research Center, in 2019 95% of teens had access to a smartphone and 45% had regular access to the internet, a number which has only increased as a result of COVID pandemic-related funding and initiatives designed to connect children to virtual schools. While there are certainly downsides to this connectivity in terms of mental health and human interaction, the shift is not new:

technologies once thought objectionable become indispensable. Meanwhile, writing researchers like Andrea Lundsford (2008) argue that students today write more, and more broadly, than students have at any point in history, thanks in large part to those computers. These sources of anxiety for teachers of the past may have been democratizing and broadening access to education, all along.

ChatGPT is not all that different from these other technologies. It has been accused of being an "artificial intelligence," hence the AI of OpenAI, but for now that label is more marketing than reality. While there are many definitions of AI, the simulation of human intelligence is at the center of most of them. Any genuine AI will be creative, spontaneous, and inventive. ChatGPT is none of those. AI researcher Baldur Bjarnason (2023) argues that "large language models" like the GPTs are more like huckster psychics than AI: they use tricks and sleight of hand to convince their marks that they know more than they do. While GPT4 has been trained on a staggering amount of data (some of it possibly in violation of copyright, according to recent lawsuits) and has been trained to regurgitate that data in seemingly novel combinations, it cannot go beyond its programming, and its programming is very specific. In that spirit, rather than referring to it with the shorthand of "AI," I think of it as a "language mimicking robot," or just "a bot."

What Does It Mean to be "Just a Bot?"

As Bjarnason says, ChatGPT sounds like an AI because it fakes intelligence well. It blends facts with made-up information in ways that might be invisible to a reader not looking too closely. For example, when I asked it to summarize the plot of the novel *Persuasion*, the bot confused a mother and daughter who shared the same name, marrying the mother off to the daughter's suitor. A small error that any high school student is both likely to make themselves and to miss in a computer-generated summary. More importantly, it makes these errors with the same level of confidence as with factually accurate information. It puts on a convincing show.

When properly prompted, ChatGPT can write nearly-convincing essays, but there are some areas where it runs into problems, and as teachers we can capitalize on those areas as both a defense against the worst uses of ChatGPT and as a teaching tool. Alkaissi and McFarlane (2023) explored the capacities of the program in writing essays and found, as have many others who experimented with it, that if a piece of writing requires the use of sources, the GPT4 application tends to mix real sources with non-existent sources that it has invented, but which is will claim are genuine, even to the point of generating fake DOI numbers. They describe this as an "artificial hallucination."

Similarly, GPT4 was only trained using information available before 2021. What it has been trained on is a bit of a mystery, but seems to include three major areas: a collection of publicly-available information on the internet as of 2021 (such as news websites and sites like Reddit), public-domain books (such as those uploaded as part of the Gutenberg Project), and Wikipedia. There may be other sources of information, but as a private company OpenAI holds tightly to those specifics. This means, for example, that it cannot write anything about the state of the conflict between Ukraine and Russia as of 2023.

It is also impossible for ChatGPT to invent accurate information about a student's life. While it might be able to make up believable stories that could come from any student, students' individual experiences are thankfully not included in the machine's data-set. If their lives are the basis for their writing or their arguments, the program will be of little help in inventing essays for them. That said, they may put their information into it temporarily and ask it to collect that information into the form of an essay. More on this in a moment.

When it does produce text, ChatGPT is very good at one version of English, and while it can attempt to generate local or regional dialects, or other versions of English, it is too well-trained on Standardized Written English (SWE) to do the job well. This means that while it can sometimes produce a passable essay for a standardized test, where sounding the same as every other writer is rewarded, it cannot replicate a student's individual voice.

In the same way that students' lives are absent from the program, it can't help them with primary-source research. When students interview peers, family members, and community members, the information they produce could not be replicated by any LLM. This, too, creates an opportunity for writing teachers to be inventive with our assignments in ways that both turn ChatGPT into a helpful tool

***They Told Me About This Place** (2023)*

11.5" x 15", monoprint, gouache, ink, and collage

and conform to proven writing pedagogies.

What is ChatGPT Good At?

ChatGPT shines at producing consistent, boring sentences in SWE. It has significantly more trouble replicating the patterns of spoken language, of blended languages, of dialects. In short, ChatGPT can chat well in one version of English, and if that is the only version that we value for students' communication, then we encourage them to use it.

In their "Best Practices for Using AI When Writing Scientific Manuscripts," the editors of the *ACSNano* journal (2023) identify nine "strengths of the ChatGPT language bot," including: acting as an aid in the pre-writing process, developing analogies or links, improving a title or abstract, identifying references, making structure and grammar suggestions, finding gaps in thinking, giving a basic overview of new topics, and developing computer code. None of these seem to doom writing education. All authors consider the bot's strengths to be helping a human to write more effectively.

ChatGPT as a Teacher Tool

Taken together, the aspects of language that ChatGPT struggles with and excels at present interesting opportunities for teachers. In preparing my lessons, I might use it to quickly write a model paper to exact specifications, plugging in the paper over and over and asking the bot to make changes, including modifying the grade level and use of sources. When this works, it provides me with a sample that I can use in class without embarrassing any current or former writers. We can be brutally critical without hurting ChatGPT's feelings.

ChatGPT can also help to develop and revise writing prompts. This is a more complicated and time-intensive project, but by giving the bot a set of goals for a writing prompt I can ask for a fully developed version. I usually don't like what it writes, but I have a starting place for my own revisions. This process differs little from borrowing prompts from other teachers. More importantly, by reading the prompts and sample essays the bot writes based on my assignment goals and criteria, I can improve my articulation of those goals.

If ChatGPT can help me do all that, why can't it also be a tool for students?

My philosophy with new technologies has always been "adopt and adapt." I believe that any technology I bring into my classroom, whether it is a new Learning Management System, Google Drive, or an application that makes annotating texts easier, should serve my pedagogical goals, never the other way around. I expect my relationship with ChatGPT to be no different, but I understand students and technology well enough to know that if I do not address and include it, students will bring it in on their own and it will be harder to make the technology work for me. This was true of "paper mills" and error-checking sites like Grammarly, and it will be true of language-processing applications as well. Students will find ways to use them, whether they are banned or not. This storm is coming, and as teachers we can either captain a ship and ride it out or hold our finger in the levee and wait for the flood.

ChatGPT as a Student Equalizer

Given everything that LLMs can do as a writing assistant, and the uniquely-human creative endeavors that they cannot perform, there are ways to use it to push our students' writing forward, and to make their lives (and ours) better.

If all we require of our students is to reproduce summaries of readily-available texts, then ChatGPT can do that for them. Maybe it should. That is a relatively mindless task and tasks that are so easily automated will inevitably be. Rather than crewing up facts and spitting out summaries, when we ask students to be creative, to use their own experiences, to use recent sources, to explicitly trace their sources, to collect information from the world around them, and to be inventive in presenting that information, we are asking them to perform writing tasks that ChatGPT is poorly-equipped for, tasks that demand more from them as thinkers and writers.

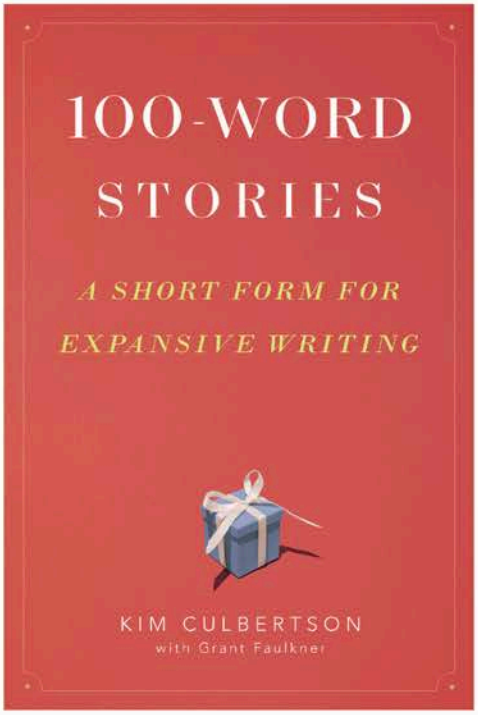
LLMs may even empower us to move away from harmful language ideologies that privilege SWE as the only language worth using. We can take this opportunity to expand our assignments, encouraging students to write using multiple versions of English and other languages. We can also encourage students to produce more multimedia texts. Both of these options reduce the negative impacts of writing bots while also empowering students and inviting them to be more creative. Research tells us that they are also some of the most effective ways to teach writing to diverse student populations.

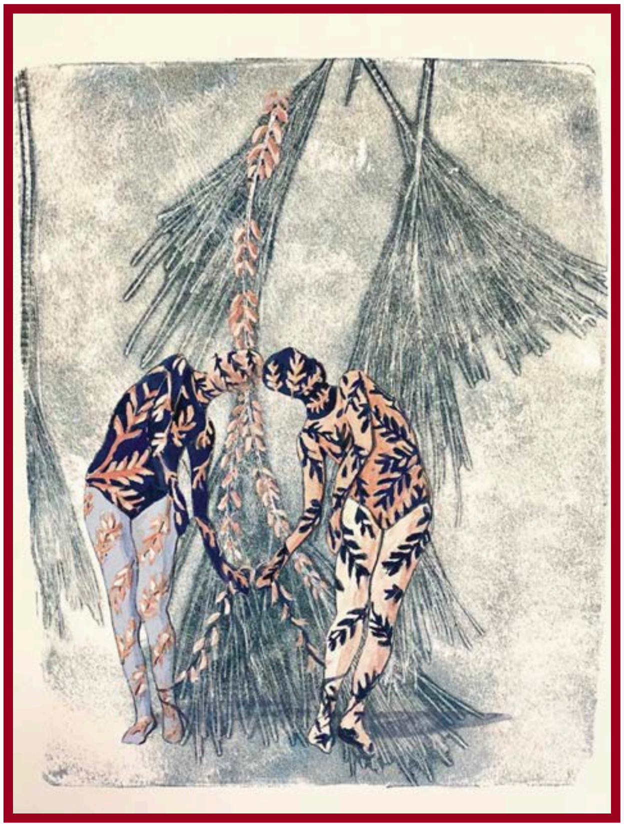
If we must require students to write in SWE due to standardized testing or district goals, then we can use ChatGPT to equalize the playing field. In one project, my students write a version of a short paper and then ask ChatGPT to rewrite it for them. We compare the two drafts, looking for grammar issues, voice, and heart. When the bot makes changes to sentences, we ask why it did and what was gained or lost in the transition.

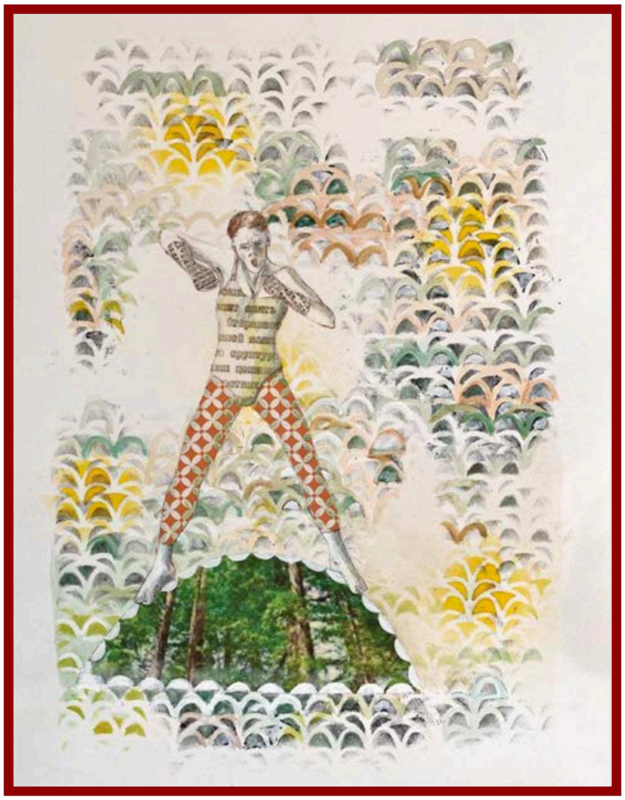
If students were being graded on their ideas, on the quality and depth of their thinking, then ChatGPT would be no help. On the contrary, it would hold them back. If they are instead being graded on adherence to a racialized form of language, then ChatGPT levels the playing field, turning their sentences into the kind we think we want. If this forces us to focus on students' ideas, rather than their mastery of one specific dialect of English, then it may be a powerful tool in combating linguistic racism in our classes.

About the Author:

DJ Quinn, PhD has been embracing technological innovations in his teaching for 20 years at a variety of community colleges and universities in California. He currently teaches writing at the University of California, Davis.


100-WORD STORIES
A SHORT FORM FOR EXPANSIVE WRITING
KIM CULBERTSON
with Grant Faulkner





(above) Opposites Attract (2022); (below) Fighter (2020)
11.5" x 15", monoprint, gouache, ink, and collage

FEATURED ARTIST

ANDREA BORSUK

ARTIST STATEMENT

The sky can hold lessons about time and mortality. Ever-changing weather and atmospheric patterns mirror life and our own inability to control the future. As a result, we confront daily challenges while trying to accept the precarious nature of survival and our personal and collective fate.

Night and day, cloudy and stormy, clear and bright, we are forced to contend with increasingly fluctuating signs of "*memento mori*", the Latin phrase meaning, "remember you must die".

Stylistically, I toggle back and forth between theatrical and surreal themes as well as social commentary. The characters in my staged dramas are meant to reflect inherent struggles and necessary negotiations exhibited though the figure. This "dance of life", in all its variety and manifestations, celebrates our short time here on earth.

ANDREA'S ADVICE TO YOUNGER ARTISTS

After 40 years of doing this, my advice is this: Make art because you love the process of making things. The practice of making art should be a dedicated PRACTICE, something you love to do and HAVE to do — like walking, breathing and playing. It will always give you purpose and joy as long as you don't look at it as a way to make money or achieve "fame". I always say to students; "just because you made it and think it's great, doesn't mean that someone else necessarily does… or for that matter, needs to own it". Make art for yourself…. not anyone else. Have no expectations. Show your work wherever you can: coffeeshops, hair salons, small galleries, etc. Invite your friends and family to witness what you do—they are the people who love you and will appreciate what you do. Find a group of like-minded friends who also create. Meet in each other's studios and talk about art. I believe that artists are the barometers of culture — making art and sharing it with the world connects and enlivens the human spirit. There is no down side to making art.

TODD FINLEY AND SARAH SCONYERS

ChatGPT-Augmented Pedagogy

> *“If Siri and Alexa had a baby, and it went to Harvard, this would be it!”*
> *-Jordie Jordan*

In November 2022, OpenAI (OpenAI, 2023) launched a transformational large language model (LLM) technology trained on 45 terabytes of data to understand typed prompts and generate written content that sounds human. And while critics note many problems with what is essentially a superpowered autocomplete tool—inaccurate results (Heaven, 2022), the potential for one-click plagiarism (Keegin, 2023), and bias (Cousins, 2023)—many scholars celebrate the capacity of generative AI to save teachers time and enhance their impact (Nerantzi, et. al., 2023). Our question: How can we support secondary English teacher candidates as they learn to use ChatGPT?

Unfortunately, as CEO of Code.org, Hadi Partovi warns, current efforts to socialize educators in the successful use AI in the classroom are currently in the “Band-Aid” (Langreo, 2023) phase. Therefore, the authors of this article explored ChatGPT’s potential as a curriculum planning tool for English education teacher candidates at East Carolina University. Specifically, we developed a scaffolded approach to preparing preservice teachers to use ChatGPT 3.5 (the free version) successfully and ethically to brainstorm instructional approaches, make data-based decisions, plan whole class discussion prompts, sequence skill- and content-building activities, differentiate instruction, and ultimately write lesson plans aligned with the *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* (NCSCOS). Our explorations of the specific capabilities of the AI tool in creating instructional materials yielded knowledge of ChatGPT’s specific curriculum-development capabilities and limitations that we believe will benefit preservice and in-service ELA teachers.

Experiments

Before introducing our scaffolded approach to incorporating AI into a composition methods course to English education majors, we conducted a series of ChatGPT 3.5 curriculum-generating experiments, based on the following English language arts standard from the NCSCOS: “W.9-10.1 Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level and concerns” (*North Carolina Standard Course of Study English Language Arts,* 2018). In the following sections, the highlights of our experiments are delineated and explained. We've supplied links to the curriculum materials, as including them here would surpass the word count restrictions of this article.

Learning Objective Generation

We began each experiment by prompting ChatGPT to generate a set number of grade-level-specific learning objectives, based on the state writing standard identified in the previous paragraph. Sample prompt: “Craft a set of <insert number> measurable learning objectives, appropriate for <insert grade level + content area> students, based on the following North Carolina writing standard: <insert standard>.”

Results varied but tended to include at least two or three usable objectives. Using the AI’s “regeneration” tool occasionally affected the specificity of the objective, as well as the complexity of the learning target. Asking for “measurable” learning objectives sometimes produced specific attainment levels, such as, “Given a text with provided claims and counterclaims, the students will be able to identify and distinguish between at least 80% of the claims and counterclaims correctly.”

Activity Generation

After generating learning objectives, we tested several activity modifiers including student-centered, multi-modal, UDL-based, and writing-centered. Sample prompt: “Provide a list of <insert modifier(s)> classroom activities, appropriate for <insert grade level + content area> students, for the following learning objective: <insert complete learning objective>.” Each of the student-centered, multi-modal, and UDL-based modifiers produced a similar range of activities that also included some writing-centered activities. Prompts with only one or two learning objectives yielded activities with a practical level of specificity. In contrast, pasting in three or more objectives produced lessons that were overly broad. We concluded that a larger number of objectives may be useful for planning an entire unit of instruction, but one or two objectives seemed to yield an appropriate level of specificity for a three-lesson sequence or less.

Differentiation Strategy Generation

Before selecting activities for inclusion in our lesson plans, we wanted to see what differentiation strategies ChatGPT could produce, based on specific learning needs. Our tests focused primarily on differentiation for emerging bilingual students, since this demographic is large in our service area. We asked AI to generate at least one differentiation strategy for each activity. Sample prompt: “Provide 1-2 differentiation strategies that could be used to support <insert group or individual learning need> with each of the activities above.” Results typically included the use of bilingual dictionaries and instructional materials, visual aids, language-alike student pairings, sentence stems and graphic organizers, and native language expression opportunities. Another impressive time saver is ChatGPT’s capacity to create multiple rubrics that are differentiated according to learning needs or general abilities at whatever granularity is specified. Sample differentiated rubrics prompt for emerging bi-lingual students: “Generate two distinct rubrics suitable for evaluating essays written by 10th-grade English Language

Arts (ELA) students and 10th-grade emerging bilingual students. Each rubric should be tailored to address the unique needs and skill levels of the respective groups of students. For the ELA students, focus on aspects crucial for advanced writing proficiency, such as thesis development, evidence integration, and stylistic sophistication. For emerging bilingual students, consider incorporating elements that support their language development, like vocabulary acquisition, sentence structure, and clarity of expression. Ensure that the rubrics are clear, concise, and supportive of the students' learning objectives and growth."

Assessment Generation

We tested how well ChatGPT generated formative and summative assessment ideas and materials related to our selected standard and learning objectives. Sample prompts: "Provide a list of possible formative and summative assessments I could use to assess the following learning objective: <insert full learning objective text>"; and "Create student instructions and a rubric aligned to <insert state standard> for the following assessment <insert copied assessment text from previous prompt>." ChatGPT produced varied formative and summative assessment approaches, ranging from classroom discussions, Quick Writes, concept-mapping, one-minute papers, essays, debates and more. The tool also displayed student instructions and a grading rubric for specific assessments.

Sequential Lesson Plan Generation

After generating all the items described above, we directed ChatGPT to craft a series of sequential lesson plans. After several prompt iterations, we found that including the following information yielded the best results: the state standard(s), learning objective(s), grade level, lesson duration, number of lessons, specified activities with related differentiation strategies, and selected formative or summative assessments. Sample prompt: "Create a series of <insert number> sequential <insert length> lessons, based on the following objective: <insert full learning objective text>. The lesson should include the <insert activity name> and <insert activity name> activities above and the scaffolded differentiation strategies for <insert group or individual learning need> for these activities. The lessons should list the state standard: <insert full state standard text>. The lessons should also include the <insert selected assessment name> and <insert selected assessment name> listed above." Notably, the lesson plans contained flawless sentences and sensible sequences of activities but were missing creative elements that might inspire or engage students.

Instructional Material Generation

In our experiments that <https://bit.ly/GPT_Materials> focused on creating an undeveloped compare and contrast essay for students to diagnose errors, ChatGPT was helpful, but less efficient than in previous tasks. We asked the AI to generate a poorly written essay with at least one incomplete comparison. Stylistically, the initial iterations were too conversational, so we asked ChatGPT to sound less "Valley Girl." An overly formal essay resulted. It took multiple prompts before the tool produced material that could be helpful for high school students. When directed, the chatbot successfully generated analysis questions, a list of materials to help instruct students about comparative writing, and specific materials (see sample suggestions and prompts <https://bit.ly/GPT_Chart>).

In a similar experiment, we directed ChatGPT to list materials for teaching secondary ELA students how to write a persuasive essay, using strong claims and counterclaims. ChatGPT generated twelve suggestions. We capitalized on these suggestions by asking ChatGPT to produce those materials. Results varied (see notes at <https://bit.ly/GPT_Per>).

ChatGPT Experiments with Planning Scenarios

In a series of investigations, we tested ChatGPT's capabilities in three common planning scenarios.

Experiment 1: When we tested ChatGPT's ability to differentiate instructional materials for specific learning needs, the tool provided practical differentiation strategies, such as raised-line drawings for visually impaired learners. However, it provided broad and generic ideas for modifying existing assignments for specific learners.

Experiment 2: When directed, ChatGPT generated competent lesson plans. More specific plans were produced when detailed prompts that included state standards, were provided, but further refinement in the form of follow-up prompts was required.

Experiment 3: When asked to suggest reinforcement strategies based on its analysis of student performance data sets, ChatGPT couldn't provide in-depth analysis beyond performance generalizations.

In these experiments, ChatGPT demonstrated capabilities in differentiating instructional materials and generating lesson plans, particularly when provided with detailed prompts, though it offered only broad suggestions for assignment modifications and lacked depth in analyzing student performance data to suggest follow-up learning activities.

The following sections make recommendations for prompting ChatGPT and showcase some of the ways that we have scaffolded how the tool is operationalized for our English education teacher candidates.

How Teacher Candidates Can Successfully Frame Prompts

Beyond creating clear questions for the bot, Reid Robinson (2023) listed several criteria for creating a successful ChatGPT prompt, adapted below for teachers developing lesson plans:

1. Type of content: In your request, direct ChatGPT to produce materials developed by a high school English teacher for planning a literacy lesson for high school English students. State which grade.

2. Format: Indicate which format you prefer (e.g., a brainstormed list, a detailed outline, a comprehensive lesson plan) and the preferred length (e.g., 300 words, a specific range of words, a concise statement, one sentence).

3. Ask ChatGPT for help: Tell the bot to create examples of prompts to use for brainstorming ELA topics, then pick your favorite

to use.

4. Specify the style: Write in the style of teacher.

When prompted, ChatGPT offered tips about prompting the AI when creating curricula which we modified into a handout provided to our teacher candidates: <https://bit.ly/GPT_Pr>.

Scaffolding How to Compose a Lesson Plan with ChatGPT

Because it only takes seconds for ChatGPT to produce lesson elements, complete lesson plans, and even unit plans, our scaffolded ChatGPT lesson-writing assignments intentionally slow down the process into multiple iterative steps and invite teacher candidates to reflect each time ChatGPT produces a lesson artifact. Candidates use a visual map of the process (objective-writing example <https://bit.ly/GPTobjective>) and document their efforts on this reflection worksheet <https://bit.ly/ChatGPT_Obj>. Here is a summary of that process:

Input Prompt Stem into the AI › Evaluate Result › Redraft Prompt › Evaluate Results

We are employing the same approach, using the templates linked above, to scaffold candidates' experiences using ChatGPT to generate learning activities, differentiation strategies, sequential lesson plans, instructional materials, whole-class discussions, as well as assessments/quizzes. Integration of these materials into our courses is still in the pilot stage, but our future teachers find the process fascinating and promising.

Generative AI Tool Policy

While we believe that teacher educators should work to embrace ChatGPT, not prevent its use, that does not absolve us of explicitly teaching candidates that if they copy and paste a ChatGPT answer into an assignment, it's still plagiarism if not cited, even when the prompt is original. Therefore, the following statement is included in our syllabi.

- ChatGPT is mandatory. That is, this class will give AI-based assignments.
- You are responsible for the work, so critique every output that the AI gives you.
- With any interaction, ask the chatbot questions, clear up confusion, and give the AI specific directions.
- For all AI-assisted work, write a reflection statement at the end of the assignment identifying and evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of ChatGPT's responses. Also, provide a link to the chat.
- You are responsible for the accuracy of the work produced. If ChatGPT gets something wrong, you're still responsible. When in doubt, corroborate.
- For short segments of text that ChatGPT helped you with, insert in parentheses ("written with the help of AI") or put the AI-generated material in quotations with "generated by AI").

Conclusion

ChatGPT's capacity to multiply teacher productivity is undeniable, which calls for educator preparation programs to scaffold its use by engaging teacher candidates in generating AI-augmented curriculum, evaluating the results, and refining their prompts. As we shift from the era of "teacher-invented materials" to "AI-invented materials with teacher reflection and modifications", this transition will likely consume educator preparation and in-service PD for the foreseeable future. This doesn't mean that AI will ever replace human experience and expertise as long as we socialize teachers to use it as a tool, not a crutch.

References

Cousins, B. (2023, March 31). Council Post: Uncovering The Different Types Of ChatGPT Bias. *Forbes.* https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2023/03/31/uncovering-the-different-types-of-chatgpt-bias/?sh=506a3b71571b

Heaven, W. (2022, November 30). ChatGPT is OpenAI's latest fix for GPT-3. It's slick but still spews nonsense. *MIT Technology Review.* https://www.technologyreview.com/2022/11/30/1063878/openai-still-fixing-gpt3-ai-large-language-model/

Keegin, J. (2023, May 23). ChatGPT is a Plagiarism Machine: so why do administrators have their heads stuck in the sand? *The Chronicle of Higher Education*; https://www.chronicle.com/article/chatgpt-is-a-plagiarism-machine?sra=true&cid=gen_sign_in

Langreo, L. (2023). Teachers Need PD on Artificial Intelligence. What It Should Look Like. In *Education Week Special Report. Editorial Projects in Education* (EPE). https://www.edweek.org/leadership/teachers-need-pd-on-artificial-intelligence-what-it-should-look-like/2023/04

Nerantzi, C., Abegglen, S., Karatsiori, M., & Martinez-Arboleda, A. (2023, January 1). 100+ Creative Ideas to Use AI in Education. Crowdsourced Collection / Slide Show; Open Educational Resource (OER). https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1wVgLWgeEvJm3fznlm0aV8ZiuWsW3o3aUQUCcvuM5vxQ/edit#slide=id.p

North Carolina Standard Course of Study English Language Arts. (2018). https://files.nc.gov/dpi/documents/files/ela-standard-course-of-study.pdf

OpenAI. (2023). ChatGPT. Chat.openai.com; OpenAI. https://chat.openai.com/

Robinson, R. (2023, June 15). How to write an effective GPT-3 or GPT-4 prompt. Zapier. https://zapier.com/blog/gpt-prompt/

Top 10 Ethical AI Practices to Teach K-12 Students. (n.d.). Blog | Carnegie Learning. carnegielearning.com/blog/ethical-ai-chatgpt-student

About the Authors:

Todd Finley is the English Education Program Coordinator at East Carolina University, writes regularly for Edutopia, and produces "Brain Blast" infographics for teachers on X/Twitter.

Sarah Sconyers is the Director and EdTPA Coordinator in the Office of Assessment, Data Management and Digital Learning in the College of Education at East Carolina University.

EVYENIA ENE, JANE GILMORE, & ERIN LEVIN

IN THE BELLY OF THE BEAST: THREE TEACHERS CONFRONT AI IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

Yesterday, as we were driving through the techtopia that is the Silicon Valley, my daughter ordered me to "Be nicer to Siri."

To which I replied, "You do realize she's not alive, right?" This did not even give my daughter pause: "So! She has feelings too! You wouldn't say dogs don't have feelings, would you?"

I explained to her that dogs are alive, but Siri is a robot and therefore has no feelings to hurt, but my daughter remained unconvinced. I didn't "win" this conversation because the AI has done what it is designed to do: it mimics us so well that we have become convinced that it is somehow a replica of humanity.

While the anecdote above only happened to one of us, the fact is that it could have happened to any of us. This type of occurrence is so common that we had a similar incident as we sat around a table compiling our drafts together for this piece: one of us cursed at our failing computer, another reminded us that the computer is a robot and therefore cannot be insulted, etc.

We are three high school English teachers who live and teach in the belly of the beast: the Silicon Valley. Daily, we deal with students who are especially susceptible to the lure of technology. We teach at Lynbrook High School, which produces enough Computer Science students to fill 10 sections of CS and coding classes year after year. Our students overwhelmingly choose computer science majors in college. Homestead High School, another site in our district of five schools, famously has Steve Jobs as an alum.

Here we are so swept up by speed, by influence, by novelty. We love a new technology. We get excited at the idea that it came from our own hometowns. Sam Altman! Peter Thiel! Twitter (Now X)! Less than an hour's drive away, we could be standing in the headquarters of the tool that is captivating people all over the world.

Those of us who teach in the humanities here are used to living in the shadow of tech. But it's never felt quite like this.

Three Teachers Try To Tame the Beast

We now feel far better equipped to handle situations like the one with the daughter above after having taken our 12th grade classes through our "Unit 0". Our team went into this year knowing we had to do something different to address what new technologies like ChatGPT might mean for running a writing classroom. We didn't know what this meant exactly, but we knew we couldn't fall back on simply handing out a syllabus with our academic integrity policies attached.

No, we wanted students to really think about the long term impact AI can have on us as human beings and our civilization as a whole. We also knew that we wanted to tie this into our building of classroom philosophy and values. Our course is called Story & Style and therein lies some of our primary course goals: we want students to be able to authentically narrate stories that matter to them in ways that allow them to cultivate a unique writing style and amplify their voices.

AI, of course, is a threat to the very foundations of our course: it has the capacity to be an interrupter to critical thinking and creativity.

We are suddenly faced with existential questions about our teaching: what is writing? Why do we teach this, instead of that? What kind of assessments are meaningful in the face of this technology? What is our role in all of this? How do we teach students to use their own unique voices when AI proves itself so adept at mimicking humanity?

Many people in education are adopting a policy of "absolutely none" when it comes to using generative AI; others are excited about the new possibilities it promises; still others see themselves as compelled to teach students how to use AI responsibly. Even within our Story & Style team of three, this dissent exists. And so we have to work to find common ground between us.

We have found this common ground in what we all know to be true: students need many opportunities to write messy drafts, play with language, and create. We know it is our job to provide opportunities for students to think critically and engage in civil discourse when they disagree with one another (and that disagreements should naturally arise when we look closely at nuance). We know that we need to encourage students to think deeply in order to preserve what is meaningful about being human.

We know that we do not need to provide the answers.

We know that we need to encourage students to question.

We know that writing is a way into this process.

And so we started the year asking students to question. We asked them to question the purpose and philosophy of our course. This manifested in a syllabus writing experience in which they created satirical green sheets that needed to convey our course values. We then read a David Brooks article, "How America Got Mean," and asked students to question who is responsible for moral foundation and what role schools should play in such an endeavor.

We followed the Brooks article with a *New York Magazine* piece by Elizabeth Weil entitled: "You Are Not a Parrot and a Chatbot Is Not a Human." This provided us with an opportunity to critically examine ChatGPT. Weil explains that the technology is designed to make users believe that it has intention and makes meaning as we and humans do when we communicate. However, this is not the case, and as such, "Chatbots that we easily confuse with humans are not just cute or unnerving. They sit on a bright line. Obscuring that line and blurring — bullshitting — what's human and what's not has the power to unravel society" (Weil).

We finished "Unit 0" with a research component and a Socratic seminar. Students chose and evaluated one article in addition to the two we had given them, and used those materials to share their opinions and ideas in a student-led discussion.

What we found as we listened to them is that students are far more aligned with us philosophically than not. They recognize the danger of blurring the line between humanity and AI. They were able to ask and seek answers to fundamental questions like, "At what point does something become alive? Are these machines created in 'human' likeness or in the likeness of dominant culture?"

None of us definitively knows the answer to these questions, but we do know the value of raising them in our classrooms.

Preserving the Creative Dance: Two Teachers Say No To ChatGPT

Those of us who want AI to have no role in the classroom have considered the criticism: aren't we just like those people who were afraid of the printing press, of the calculator, of the internet? Aren't we just clucking that the sky is falling? Isn't this looking backward rather than forward? Isn't this hindering progress? To this, we respond that there is value in the fear, the warning, the worst-case-scenario imagining. We ask in reply, shouldn't we be a bit more grateful for those who pointed out possible harms? Shouldn't we see the wisdom in asking to slow down something that has such potentially far-reaching effects?

After all, we teach our children to be cautious all the time: walk slowly, watch where you place your feet, look both ways, check your work, read carefully, think before you speak. This is no different. Our students don't need us to teach them how to use ChatGPT. The truth is, no one really knows what technologies like it will become. Our students need us, their teachers, to stand like a sea wall as this new tide rises, so that they have time to learn what we know. And we really don't know much about LLMs and other generative AIs, but we do know this: the breathtaking struggle of love and beauty that comprises what it means to be human. And we would all be wise to question the extent to which any new technology might threaten to drown that.

Australian musician Nick Cave regularly answers questions from his fans on his website, *The Red Hand Files,* and lately, he's had several fans asking for his thoughts on how ChatGPT affects the writing process. He, too, is adamantly against its use because of the way it interferes with the creative process. In Issue #248, Cave tells one reader who asks whether it wouldn't be easier to just let AI generate lyrics that, "It is our striving that becomes the very essence of meaning. This impulse – the creative dance – that is now being so cynically undermined, must be defended at all costs." Students who might not be writing lyrics but who might be tempted to use ChatGPT to generate ideas, thesis statements, or whole essays, can take further inspiration from Cave as he goes on to tell them that, "Even though the creative act requires considerable effort, in the end you will be contributing to the vast network of love that supports human existence."

Those of us who want AI quarantined from our classrooms do so in an effort to preserve this "creative dance," which we view as absolutely crucial to humanity.

Responsible Use: One Teacher's Pursuit of Cautious Integration

However, those of us who desire to teach students the responsible use of this new technology believe that students, and certainly people in their households and social groups, are already using LLMs and generative AI. Many people are already using ChatGPT to code and to generate emails; many teachers are even using it to speed up the process of drafting letters of recommendation. Rather than make it a forbidden fruit, high school teachers should use generative AI as an opportunity to teach its limitations and flaws, as well as how it can serve as a tool.

Step into any upper level math class, and you won't see the calculator creating havoc. Of course, when it was first introduced, math classrooms around the globe fell to mayhem, in the same way frontier AI systems seem to be doing today. The point is, we seek to examine these tech tools to reconsider how we teach, to wonder if we can use the tool to bridge the equity gap, to imagine taking our students' craft to a higher level of creativity and critical thinking.

With both the calculator and ChatGPT, students must be vigilant in parsing accurate input terms, in addition to questioning the source material and the accuracy of the material offered. For those in favor of bringing it into the classroom, our role can be in building the skills needed to formulate the precise inputs to generate a useful output. Seen this way, Chat GPT and other AI assistance can not only be useful in the English classroom, but also serve as a critical thinking mechanism.

The calculator did not make students weak at computations; on the contrary, students have to know what to input to receive accurate answers. Additionally, they have to have a sense that the output is accurate. In this way, the calculator provides efficiency and students can compute more complicated math problems once they know how to use the technology to their advantage. In this same vein, ChatGPT and similar AI tools can be useful in the English classroom. ChatGPT and other AI assistance has the potential to similarly expedite and expand the writing process, rather than replace it all together.

Progressives are always looking forward to better teaching methodologies. Many of us learned to write with pen and paper, others learned with a keyboard and monitor, which way is better? As we write this, Google is using predictive text to help us out. Do we use it occasionally? Of course. Do our students? Probably even more often than we do. And here's the thing, ChatGPT is out there. Far better for us to teach responsible usage, including detecting artificial AI results, determining credible and reliable sources, and knowing when using generative information turns to plagiarism.

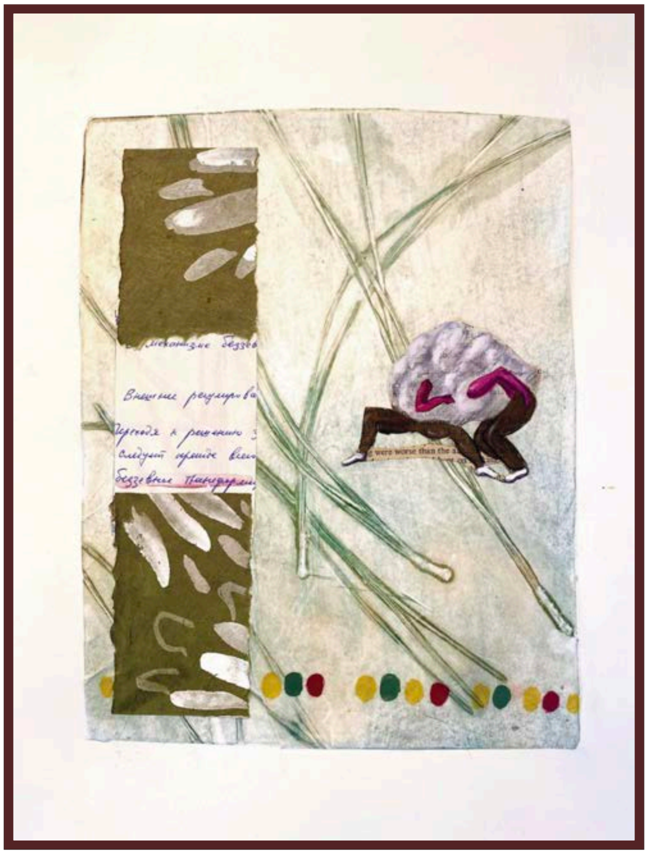
The Vanguards of Humanity: Three Voices Speak As One

We come from two schools of thought but we all believe that as educators, we must evolve and consider (yet again) what we teach and why. What we all have at heart is our students. They don't need us to show them what tech tools do; they already know that. They don't need us to lie to them that we can detect AI-generated plagiarism; they already know we can't. What they need is for us to remind them what their humanity means as they face the whirlwind of this new technology.

Our students need us to be the quiet vanguards of humanity, modeling how to preserve what is best about us for the future that they will inherit and shape.

We have always been those people, anyway. We are the ones who wring our hands as we read Fahrenheit 451, horrified at the idea that there may come a day in which we stand outside the rubble of a city, hoping there are people left who want the words of the great writers we have stored in our memories and hearts. We are not the people who concern ourselves with knowing exactly how a new technology works. Rather, we are the ones who remind the world of what it means to be human, that it in fact does mean something to be human.

And that it does mean something to write.



Worse than Ever
11.5" x 15", monoprint, gouache, ink, and collage

A Humane Mission: Call to Action

Still, we are left with the question of what to do in an English classroom. Although we do not all agree on the extent to which we should use AI in the classroom, we speak as one when we say that we need to think long term and not get lost in the weeds. We need to give students a philosophical foundation so that the future they inherit and create allows humanity (not AI) to thrive.

What the English teacher needs to do now is about the short- and the long-term. In our classrooms today, we need to give students writing tasks that help them discover, experiment, create, rather than continuing writing practices that are as formulaic as AI. We need to disrupt writing forms in the classroom and encourage messy writing, modeling for students that to be messy is to be human. We want them to write more: write to discover, write to learn, write to uncover truths that might not be fully formulated or understood. We want them to be in our classrooms as fully and as authentically themselves as possible.

And then, our hope is that after they leave our classrooms, they will have the experiences and tools that will allow them to carry this mission into the boardrooms of the future. We hope that we'll have taught them to be people who can guide technological development toward serving a humane mission, rather than one that prioritizes novelty and profit. This is no easy task. Many tech companies have adopted, then abandoned, this mission. We carry and pass the torch to our students with the decree that they can and will and must be the next generation of vanguards of humanity.

When you are in the belly of the beast you must confront certain truths. AI is out there, and the only way to tame the beast is to collaborate with students and bring to the forefront the value of the creative dance of writing, which no AI can replicate.

About the Authors:

Evyenia Ene has taught English in Colorado, at the Koc School in Turkey and in California, most recently in Silicon Valley. She is an aspiring Children's book author.

Jane Gilmore is a 9th and 12th grade English teacher at Lynbrook High School and Program Director for the San Jose Area Writing Project out of San Jose State University. She has a Certificate in Novel Writing from Stanford University and runs an online Novel Writing Program for teens through SJAWP in addition to helping to facilitate professional development for teachers around the teaching of writing.

Erin Levin has been an English teacher in the Silicon Valley for twelve years. She is a poet and competitor in slam competitions. Her previous career was in support positions for internet security and sales companies.

Unit 0 Resources, Essential Skills & Learning Tasks

Lesson Resources

“How America Got Mean” by David Brooks, Published in *The Atlantic* August 14, 2023
“You Are Not a Parrot and a Chatbot Is Not a Human” by Elizabeth Weil, Published in *New York Magazine* March 1, 2023
“Issue 248” by Nick Cave, Published in *The Red Hand Files,* August, 2023

Learning Tasks

Syllabus creative writing experience
Close reading & discussion of “How America Got Mean”
Close reading & discussion of “You Are Not a Parrot and a Chatbot Is Not a Human”
CRAAP (reliability) test of student researched article
Socratic Seminar

Essential Course Questions

1. What is the power and value of story?
2. What stylistic choices do writers make to tell meaningful, compelling stories? How can we replicate these moves in our writing?
3. What is the purpose of this course? What goals should we have as a collective and as individuals to achieve this purpose?

Pre-reading Questions

1. Which is more important: education of the heart, or of the head?
2. In what parts of your life, community, or country, do you see evidence of moral education?
3. Do you believe in a central human flaw (similar to original sin) that must be restrained through moral and/or physical intervention? In other words, are people inherently flawed or are they naturally good?

Text Dependent Questions

1. At the bottom of page 11, Brooks describes Jim Lehrer’s ability to create a culture with a “thick and coherent moral ecology.” How can you, individually and as a group, do that? Be specific.
2. What do Bender and Brooks have in common in their view of moral responsibility? Use specific quotes from the articles to support your response.
3. To what extent do you agree with the dangers and harms Weil points out in “You Are Not a Parrot?”
4. What are moral obligations? Give examples of moral obligations in your life. The Weil article states that “Many people close to the industry don’t want to risk speaking out…Bender is unafraid, and she feels a sense of moral responsibility”(5). Why do you think people don’t risk speaking out?
5. What are your thoughts on singularity? Take a look at the top of page 11 of the Weil article. What do you think about robot’s rights?
6. At the bottom of p.7 Weil writes, “Near the end, they came to their deepest disagreement, which is not a linguistic one at all. Why are we making these machines? Whom do they serve?
7. On page 12 of the Weil article, Elizabeth Conrad asks, “‘Why are you trying to trick people into thinking that it [the bot] really feels sad that you lost your phone?’” The author then writes,”Blurring the lines is dangerous. A society with counterfeit people we can’t differentiate from real ones will soon be no society at all.” What are your thoughts on this conclusion?
8. Based on the articles you’ve read, what do you see as the pros and the cons of generative AI? What do you think schools are afraid of, with regard to AI? Has Lynbrook overreacted? Has society overreacted? Use examples to refute or defend the article you wrote.
9. Choose a favorite line from one of the pieces we’ve read. Explain why the line is meaningful to you.

Socratic Questions

1. What does it mean to be a human? What defines our humanity? What distinguishes humans from AI? What determines if something is alive? Could AI or machines eventually be considered alive? If they are alive, what rights should they have? Are humans important as a species?
2. What does it mean to be a good human in today’s world? What is our purpose here? To whom are you responsible? Why? To whom should we, as humans, be responsible? What does it take to lead a meaningful life? What would a meaningful life look like for you?
3. Should we set moral boundaries when it comes to AI? If so, what should those boundaries be? Who is responsible for setting these boundaries and regulating AI development and use? If someone uses AI to generate something, should they credit the tool they used? To what extent should these new tools be regulated, and their creators held accountable? Who should do the regulating and accountability?
4. What are the central issues we need to engage with concerning new technology and human life? Do you think society is reacting properly to tools like ChatGPT and other generative AIs? What do you think is the future of AI? Will it bring more good, or more harm? What do we risk losing through use of AI? What could we potentially gain? Are the costs worth the benefit? Are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future of AI?
5. Is there value to human struggle? How will AIs like ChatGPT affect that struggle? Will that effect be positive or negative?

CATE 2022-2023
Creative Writing
Contest Winners

In our September issue we published four of the CATE 2022-2023 Creative Writing Contest winners, printing the winning entries from Grades 3-4, Grades 5-6, Grades 9-10 and one of the two joint winners of the College category. In this issue we are pleased to print the winners of Grades 7-8, 11-12, and the other joint winner of the College category.

We Changed Accordingly

Out of nowhere
Just like that
The world seemed to stop
Or did it slow down

Everyone stood confused
From toddlers to grandparents
The east to the west
A virus struck us all

People started adjusting
Life was through a screen
Classes and work,
Everything online

While some took the fall
Others seized the opportunity
"Let's film a Tiktok"
We slowly found enjoyment

Three years have passed
In no time
Our world has transformed
And we simply followed

We are all still here, hopefully
Our families and friends
At home and abroad
But the weather misbehaves

People are out and about
Surrounded by friends and fam
Talking and laughing,
Now face to face

Workers are laid off
Opportunities decrease
"What do we do now"
We learn to change again

Author's Note:
The poem can be read both (up and down) one column to the other, or (left to right) to explore change happening both outside and inside our lives.

About the Author

Rachel Yu, joint winner at the College level, is a student at California State University, Long Beach and is taught by Kiki Shaver.

Sea Change

The world turned upside down in a week,
Not a city or town was spared,
Life cam to a screeching, abrupt halt,
And no one was quite prepared.

Schools shut down, and so did work,
Families huddled at home in despair
Hoarding toilet paper and random baking supplies,
Till grocery shelves everywhere lay bare.

"Has the world gone mad?" the news proclaimed,
As numbers climbed of those unexpectedly deceased,
A tiny virus, so miniscule,
Yet brought society down to its knees

As healthcare workers fought and lost and rose,
To fight again the next day,
Hospitals overflowing, suffering and pain,
Countries bound together in collective dismay

To be as we were, mere children, sheltered thus far,
Now faced with information overload and statistics complicated,
Wading through online classes and fear for grandma's health,
Sheltering in place and overall, just frustrated

But we stuck it out, we survived,
As time went out and vaccines went in,
We lost many, saved a few, lost and won,
Waited for a semblance of normalcy to finally begin

We may have been young but we lived
Many a decade within two short years,
Helped by parents, teachers, and friends online,
WE shared our stories and divided our fears

Like butterflies emerging from their period of slumber
Out from the cocoon and into the rain,
The world had changed when we re-emerged,
For many, it would never again be the same

The dads and aunts who would never again come home,
Those statistics had names and stories and love,
We took so much for granted two years ago,
But perspectives were now changed, within and above

The change taught many lesson to the reluctant
But the most important of them all,
Was to embrace the ones that truly matter,
Cherish moments, spring, summer, winter, and fall

The only constant is change they say,
Soon fickle memory will revert as the pandemic goes out of sight,
Yet I've learnt in quiet moments to just simply be grateful,
And hug Grandma tighter when we say goodnight.

About the Author

Samia Hayat Zai, winner in Grades 7-8, is a student at Carmel Valley Middle School and is taught by Angela Halpin.

Razor Burn

I buy razors and a box of tampons,
At checkout, I reach for a pack of gum
But my pockets don't even sound of loose change
I put back the gum and take my box and my half-off razors in shame
I'm seventeen and a coward
I'm a girl killing to be a woman

A boy,
He said I was too young
But I don't think that's the reason I've begun to strip myself down
Wash her with cold water
Let her dry out on the porch.
I think it's the way my friends have been there
Done what I haven't
Become women before I could even try.
I attempt to be one of them in every way
To rip out my ribs, stitch my shirt a little tighter
And take the needle through my stomach while I'm there
Forcing my body to rearrange-
I measure my worth like I used to measure my height
On the wall,
in pen
I tell God,
Sitting on the floor.
Maybe I should just be looking in the mirror.

Time drags at my ankles
and Mary licks at my lips
My pigtails are cut and pulled and sold
And I'm there again half alive.
Trapped
ensnared by my ugly
faces
Running after delusions,
Putting down the bread,
Picking up the razor till I'm bald.
I tell myself I could be ready if I had the chance
To give it all up
If it meant I could run with them
To have stories of my own-
Who knew we would all be killed in the evening?
So I'll eat their lies
Holding my nose
Opening my mouth to show
I'm empty
An echo with every swallow
Eventually spitting them out
In song
like a bird.
I don't want to be left behind
Seventeen, yet more of a child than I've ever been.

I look up
God watching for me at the altar
Waiting on my visit of pleas and actions of worship
My hands bound together
Palm to palm
But instead, I bring whatever part of her is left
lay her down-
Finally,
I've killed the girl inside
A mother taking her child's first baby tooth from between the others,
A swift twist and a pull
Ballet shoes and storybooks now hanging from her tomb
And pink lilies littering the ground.
Sometimes I bring myself to visit
Never do I recognize my face in the shined slate
Not once could I have saved her.

About the Author

Evangelia ("Evie") Naples, winner in Grades 11-12 is a student at San Dieguito High School Academy and is taught by Robert Ross.

KATHLEEN ROWLEY

PRACTICAL QUESTIONS AND CRITICAL CONVERSATIONS ABOUT CHATGPT

I was horrified by ChatGPT in the same way that I am saddened by my inability to stop using WebMD as a doctor: it stole a sacred, human-driven activity and made it a little worse in the process. Why do people use either? It turns out adults like me are struggling with time, capacity, and interest.

Out of a desire to virtually people watch, I joined every ChatGPT Facebook group I could find. Teachers, in particular, wanted better slides to introduce their lessons and faster ways to grade essays. They wanted to automate elements of their role that require time they don't have, that require capacity they might not have yet (please, someone else write this formal lesson plan), and that prove no one, I mean not one person, wants to grade a boring essay (that may have been written by ChatGPT).

I am a high school English teacher and I wondered if ChatGPT or another LLM could save me, too. The UCLA Writing Project called on me to share ideas about technology; I only have these ideas because of the National Writing Project and the Ahead of the Code study group. After working with other forms of AI, including Grammarly, Diffit, and a brief stint with a Roomba named Georgie, I was curious about how administrators, teachers, and students felt about using large language models (LLM) like ChatGPT, Bard, and Bing to complete daily tasks. While the results are not surprising, they led us to some questions that might be helpful to other administrators, teacher leaders, and educators to consider as they adopt policies regarding technology.

Talking to Students - Time, Capacity, and Interest

Over the summer I met students from across Los Angeles and shared some reading and writing strategies with them. I was curious about their perceptions of technology, tech tools, and justice, so I gathered articles from the *New York Times*, specifically op-eds about the pros and cons of using resources like ChatGPT or Bing. When asked outright, students hesitate to share they have used online writing tools.

They generally understand plagiarism, yet, when they broke out into peer groups, I heard individuals compare reasons for using AI. Key issues for students are time, capacity, and interest. Students are overwhelmed with busy schedules, feel pressured to deliver high-quality products to all teachers at all times, and often are bored by dated textbooks and less-engaging projects.

Students were assigned a side to debate. Some argued in favor of ChatGPT as a tool that saves precious time and will exist as they work in the real world. Some argued against it, noting teachers waste time checking for plagiarism that could be better spent teaching and grading (gee, thanks). After the debate, a high school junior revealed she will still use AI to write any assignments she can take home because, in the end, it is easier and will earn a higher grade.

Some questions we might ask ourselves:

1. Are we creating time for students to do valuable work in class? What can computers do that it is time to cut (case in point, my colleague asked juniors to alphabetize a list of names to prepare for real life…after the apocalypse…which I am not entirely sure would destroy Excel because it is the cockroach of Windows tools)?
2. Are our lessons directly creating capacity for critical thought? How often do we audit ourselves for this aspect of our work?
3. Be honest. Do kids find the book/story/project interesting? It is time to admit that our interests sometimes should not dictate the curriculum. You love that dusty book. I love cheese. I do not leave cheese on students' desks; that's gross.

Talking to Teachers - Time, Capacity, and Interest

Before I met with students, I presented an introductory lesson on AI and LLMs with educator-participants at UCLA's Improving Student Writing workshops. Before testing out the technology, we stepped back and asked ourselves a few questions.

1. What larger purpose does our work as educators serve?
2. In the end, what drives our writing instruction?
3. What hopes do we have for students who successfully complete our courses?

Before discussing AI's roles in our classrooms, we considered Anyon's (1981) still relevant research on class and schooling. In brief, students living in poverty were expected to report facts that teachers delivered. As a family's income increased, so too did the level of critical thinking expected of a student.

It didn't make sense to discuss the "how" of teaching without first examining the "what" of teaching. AI did not originate the crappy worksheet lesson plan; that was junk before AI existed. Computers, one might argue, did not remove critical thinking from classrooms. Classist thinking did (and does).

Creating engaging lessons requires planning and grading time

Public school teachers in California are not given enough time to grade and plan at this level. This is not a debate, but a fact. Teachers actively fighting for social justice are on what Hudak (2005) calls a treadmill of transformation. This made us realize we needed to not only consider AI, but our working conditions that require us to outsource our tasks to AI. Skip to the notes for administrators if you need prompts for a revolution.

We also asked ourselves questions about the technologies we choose to use, including:

1. What do we know about the groups and individuals who coded or created this product?

2. What can we safely assume about the benefits the owners or creators will receive when we use this product?

We considered Nobel's (2018) research regarding the largely monolithic, hegemonic culture that created and continues to create and fund technology firms–a culture that largely excludes BIPOC voices and perspectives. We extended our thinking to Criado Perez's (2019) research on gender-based data gaps that determine cis-male identities as the default in most algorithms and public spaces.

Large language models, ("LLMs") no matter who owns the company, look inwards toward the collected knowledge available on search engines. Unfortunately, creators and owners as well as coders and copywriters all have implicit bias that will turn up in LLM products; ChatGPT is pulling from the wide world of the internet and that wide world reflects the racist and classist notions of some people.

These two lenses helped focus our critical eyes as we used LLMs, some for the first time. Teachers broke into teams and participated in a RAFT assignment (image below) to test out a common, free tool called Bard (bard.google.com). One group flatly refused to try the technology. It might be noted that one user was logged into a Chromebook with a Google account, but I appreciated their rebellion and offered a chance to consider ways to support students who might choose to use these websites, with or without teacher permission. They considered Code.org's lessons about discussing AI with students and how to collaboratively build an AI policy in a classroom.

AI RAFT

The objective of this activity is to become more familiar with AI queries and platforms.

1. Visit bard.google.com (easily accessible, free, and useful for our purposes) and choose one prompt from each column.
2. Review your results. Tweak and try again if your first prompt does not deliver what you expect.
3. We will share our results and thoughts.

Teachers found LLMs can produce work on par with an average-to-above-average student. It can also duplicate tasks that some educators find tedious (an email to employers, a lesson plan template).

Questions emerged:

1. How can I create lessons that require critical thinking?
2. How can I manage expectations for students regarding a technology that I am considering using in my own profession?
3. What is my policy about AI? Will tools like spell check be allowed? Grammarly or similar grammar checkers? Can students use Bard or ChatGPT to edit work already written?

Talking to Administrators

One brave and innovative administrator attended our writing workshops. His response to LLMs included, "well, now those sites are blocked on our campus," which revealed the complexities of leading a school campus with many different perspectives on tech tools. What about computer science teachers who see the future of coding? Can students use Grammarly, which now has a re-wording feature?

Literacy leaders, English teachers, and administrators should have candid conversations about how technology will change campuses, again and again.

Some questions to consider might be:

1. If technology, critical thinking, or a vague reference to the future included in our expected school-wide learning outcomes, what are our shared definitions these ideas? What metrics are we using to measure these outcomes?
2. Knowing AI includes a spectrum of tools, what is a workable school-wide expectation around AI use?
3. How are we holding ourselves and each other accountable for creating authentic opportunities to teach and learn? Is there time and space available to support educators as student products change, if that change leads to more thought?

The internet, isn't going anywhere. This seems obvious in 2023, but educators are actively avoiding digital tools to preserve critical thought while students generally have unlimited access to the internet in some form and will continue to do so for the rest of their lives. You heard it: forever. How, then, do we keep critical thinking in a world that is designed to make thinking easy, fast, and simple?

Most schools have tablets, pads, Chromebooks, or desktops for students and, while they last, students have unprecedented access to the limitless world of the internet.Technology was a lifeline during the pandemic, but academic dishonesty became a new beast with heads, arms, antlers, spines, and regenerative powers. Some educators vowed to return to pen and paper, face to face contact, and to leave the internet behind. This might not serve justice or students.

(P.S. I used scholar.google.com to generate the citations and I am not (and will never be) sorry.)

Works Cited

Anyon, J. (1981). Social class and school knowledge. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 11(1), 3. https://doi.org/10.2307/1179509

Perez, Caroline Criado. *Invisible women: Data bias in a world designed for men*. Abrams, 2019.

Hudak, G. (2005). The Inner Life of Transformation: A Philosophic Investigation of Leadership, Media, Justice, and Freedom. *Journal of School Leadership*, 15(3), 305–332. doi.org/10.1177/105268460501500305

Noble, S. U. (2018). *Algorithms of oppression: How search engines reinforce racism* (Illustrated ed.). NYU Press.

About the Author:

Dr. Kathleen Rowley teaches in Los Angeles county and is a UCLA Writing Project Fellow. She will always be thankful for the support she has received from colleagues past and present, including the folks at UCLA's EAOP and Writing Project, the California Writing Project, the National Writing Project, and everyone at *California English*, who let her write about zombies ten years ago. Happy anniversary, CE !

BILL YOUNGLOVE

Promise Or Peril? Or . . . ?

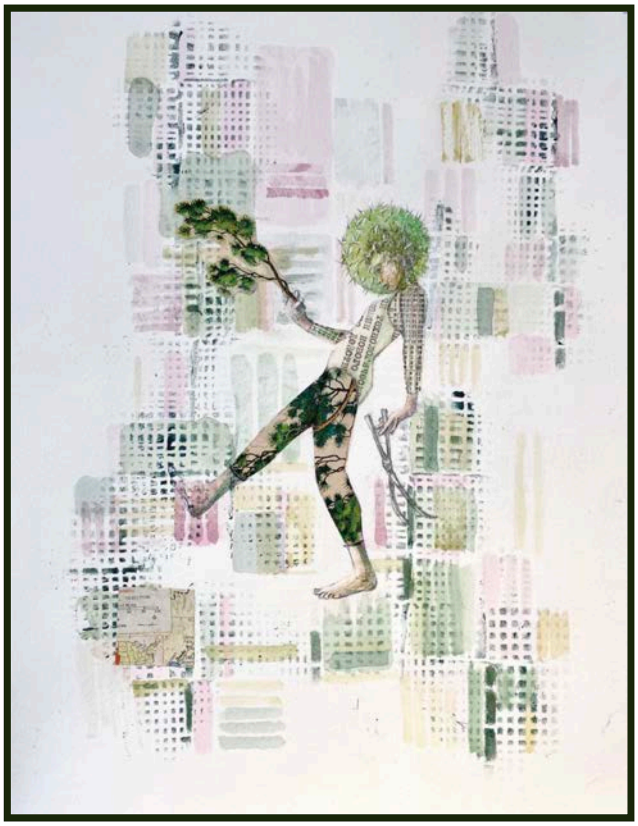
What follows was written by a (real) human being. So, what? Now? Still? In the (near/distant) future?

Origin(s)

Presently, the world (yes, THE world!) is taken up with AI, i.e., Artificial Intelligence. Computer cognitive scientist John McCarthy coined it in 1956, just five years after Alan Turing, codebreaker during WW II, asked, "If a machine can think, it might think more intelligently than we can. And then where would we be?" AI is the attempt to replicate human intellectual processes by machines, particularly computer systems. Its automations are based upon associations, an umbrella term for modeling capabilities. Essentially, AI is the broad field of creating intelligent systems.

Robot (Roboticization)?

Earlier in my lifetime, it was the opposite—IA, (f)or Isaac Asimov. In the 1940s, Asimov came up with Three Laws of Robotics that would, theoretically, keep (such) independent machines "in line." His science fictional *I, Robot*'s stories revolved around just how human safety overrode (any) possible robotic rebellion(s). Asimov foresaw a time in which mechanical teachers (with humanlike consciousness)—and telebooks—would replace people and books themselves. A child, Margie, in Asimov's "The Fun They [schoolchildren] Had" could only imagine real human teachers.



The Bargain
11.5" x 15", monoprint, gouache, ink, and collage

Digitally Speaking?

The key word in everything written here is: access. In 1984, my classroom gained four IIe computers from Apple Inc., growing into a filled classroom. Each one had 64K memory (Imagine!). Most instruction, including word processing, was via CDs, although internet usage "seeped in" during the 1990s. CUE (Computer Using Educators) helped us teachers greatly during those years—especially as it charted the growth/spread of internet access in classrooms. Born at UCLA (in a Stanford hook up) in 1969, the initial internet message crashed after the first two letters(!). It was not, really until the 2020 pandemic start, that many educators really realized just how many students/families lacked home/area internet and/or wifi access. District-distributed Chromebooks, of course could be used offline, or web-centrically. The foregoing is another reason I am advocating, below, (so much) in-class work. In other words, electronics, if/as available, can be used, outside, to reinforce what you teach in class.

World(ly) Concerns

'Tis fitting that Asimov was Russian-born for, today, the world is formulating regulation of AI. The European Union (27 nation bloc) Act is governing any product/service that uses an AI system, and it classifies such according to four risk levels, from minimal to unacceptable. Likewise, the Biden-Harris administration has published a landmark Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights to protect people (The Executive Order directs federal agencies to protect against "algorithmic discrimination" [i.e., ignoring equity]). Perhaps close(r) to home, Governor Newsom's Executive Order instructs state agencies to examine AI's threat to the security/privacy (something schoolchildren must have) of California's residents (The state is home to 35 of the top 50 AI companies.), plus establish partnerships with UC Berkeley and Stanford computer science labs to study the impacts of generative AI (which creates content based on trained-on data).

Teaching Concerns?

If, at this point, you are thinking/saying, "Yeah, so what?" I don't blame you. Still, if the powers of the non-educational world are that concerned (excited? enthralled? paranoid?), what about your own classroom—and varied grade levels? Succinctly put, you need to create a syllabus (defined as a message to: the students, home, department, possible school site council, administration; even your district, county, and state officials) which describes just how generative AI will affect your instruction and the curriculum itself. Curriculum (Latin, *currere,* meaning "to run the course/the race") is what you expect the students to do daily. Therein, your syllabus will address, in addition to learning standards/objectives, assessments, and due dates: 1) confidentiality, 2) potential AI "hallucinations" (errors), and 3) possible plagiarism. The last one must go way beyond Turnitin(.com). (Available, of course, is the TraceGPT AI plagiarism detector.) My own "Turn It Out," however, would include just how the skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and researching will be utilized (mostly) in class, to prevent accidental or purposeful misappropriating (i.e., stealing) work(s) created by other than oneself. The latter, in fact, is something Hollywood unions are battling radio, television, and movie producers over, due to theft of writers'/actors' creations (e.g, ChatGPT DALL-E/Murf can generate images/voice).

Write Away?

Since English Language communication skills (addressed in California's *ELA/ELD Framework* and in the Common Core State Standards--CCSS) most often culminate in writing, contemplate, seriously, the requirement that all such (re)drafting will be done in class. In a historical nutshell, let's return to 1971 when Janet Emig examined twelfth graders' composing processes (actual thinking, rather than producing a product according to a formula). Consider the portfolio papers aspects: topic selection (choice or assigned)/narrowing, working bibliography, possible outline/storyboard/graphic organizer, rough draft, redrafting(s), revisions, editing(s); formatting for publication (MLA, APA, Chicago/Turabian, etc.). Other varied genres—e.g., essays, fictional/nonfictional pieces, and journals, of course, may require readings and/or discussions. The latter lend themselves to group work, whether Literature Circle multiple readings, interviewing, letter exchanges, gaming, or dramatization. In class, quizzes and tests can actually be used to strengthen cursive writing, sans any typing/ electronic submissions.

Death of Originality/Creativity: Whence Cometh That Idea?

Regarding cursive writing: States such as Tennessee and Texas recently required cursive be taught in elementary schools. When California adopted the CCSS package (had to be 100%), each state could choose to keep 15% of its own Content Standards. California chose to continue to teach cursive writing circa the fourth grade upward. The Luddite in me espouses/desires handwritten essays, as writing actually changes our minds/brains, facilitating reflection. Tangible texts cause our plastic intellect to rethink. Flannery O'Connor remarked, "I write because I don't know what I think until I read what I say." Joan Didion echoed, "I don't know what I think until I write it down." We write to look outward, as well as inward—to release emotions. As Francine Prose noted, in *Reading Like a Writer,* "Writing…[is] done one word… punctuation mark…at a time. It requires what a friend called 'putting every word on trial for, its life."" Khan Academy's Khanmigo is a viable GPT-4 tutoring assistant. The question, however, is whether Grammarly, or Microsoft Editor, will prove potent—or precarious? Microsoft (Thanks to a 13 billion dollar investment) is now developing an OpenAI assistant for Windows: PowerPoint, Office, Word, Excel, Bing, etc., but will such AI assists reduce writers' freedom of expression?

True readers know that the arrangement of words (selection, order,

number) provide the character(s)' authentic voice, setting, plot, and even theme and tone. Novel ideas (long works of prose fiction), indeed, merge with nonfiction to create hybrid genre(s). Nevertheless, the reader expects that humanity itself originates that voice, even if machines print, publish, disperse the book, film, tape, etc. itself.

Homework (Role of)

Curricular demands, not to mention pathways to higher education, require homework. Many parents/guardians expect it. I awarded it a reasonable percentage of each students' final grade, denoted in my syllabus. If you believe in the researched value of Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) for student growth—you could require, say, twenty minutes per school night be devoted to such, via dual choices of selected works. If desired, parental/guardian verification sign-offs could be required.* When I used SSR in this manner, I had each student write a review (suggested format provided) of the book read—for a grade--done on two Fridays each month, in class.

*In fact, AI might be very helpful in maintaining teacher-home communications, including email replies, as well as plagiarism concerns.

Procedur(e)ally

In conjunction with reading, of course, is the study of literature. Statewide English Council leaders, such as Carol Jago—and NCTE itself—have fostered multicultural* literature. Indeed, such story elements as character, setting, plot, tone, and theme can—and should—be broached at various age/grade levels. Jerome Bruner's concept of the Spiral Curriculum leads one to believe that these five key story elements can be approached, from elementary school onward, in greater sophistication. Hearing my sixth graders refer to a classmate as "a character!" provided a perfect transition for reference to Uncle Scrooge as an evolutionary one—the most important story element. Settings, while not so exact in many short stories, allowed references to neighborhoods (place), and clocks (time). The "what happened"—plot—sometimes unfolded like a murder mystery. Tone became more obvious only with such satiric writing as Jonathan Swift's *A Modest Proposal,* wherein the Irish ate their children to solve the poverty problem! Theme reminds me of the time I observed a high school student teacher, studying R*omeo and Juliet,* telling his seniors, "The theme of the play is love gone awry." In a personal, follow-up discussion, he reiterated the (sole) theme, even as I suggested that my own students had come up with a dozen possible themes, especially the familial discord in Act 3, Scene 5.

Trilogy
11.5" x 15", monoprint, gouache, ink, and collage

*One of the, perhaps, most hoped for AI's Chat(bot)GPT offerings has been in the area of foreign languages. To say that the U.S. is a Polyglot nation is a given; indeed, at the time of the American Revolution, German nearly became *lingua franca.* Every teacher who has struggled with using a language other than his/her indigenous one, knows the struggle; as such, has been able to identify with classrooms that often contain a large percentage of ELL students. Unfortunately, thus far, apart from English itself, with some success in Spanish and Japanese, ChatGPT makes up words, fails logic tests, and cannot do basic information retrieval. Reaching beyond translation errors, in many cases phrasings are complete nonsense. Such was true in 37 different (African continent) languages, even though slightly more proficient in South Asian languages. ChatGPT even failed to summarize, or identify names. Thus, while Google Translate might leave much to be desired, its interpretations in some 109 languages, translating over 100 billion words daily, give(s) ELL students some hope.

Prompt(ly) Speaking

Prompting is how people give instructions and otherwise communicate with AI—mostly by computer code. The development of the writing prompt itself was the basis of my UCLA doctoral dissertation. Essentially: Teachers have in front of them an essay collected from their, yes, in class, assigned writing. How do they determine its merit (and, thus, assign it a letter grade)? In the early 1900s, Edward L. Thorndike, of Teachers College, Columbia, with the eventual assistance of doctoral candidates, instituted an array of composition measurement scales. Originally, (Wisconsin) high school student papers were matched with ten student-produced specimens, closest in predetermined merit with scale specimens. Eventually, said scales, by the 1950s, had evolved into rubrics.

Of vital connection, a really valid and reliable 6-point rubric (preferred) is derived from its writing prompt. Said prompts contain key verbs (suggest six, minimum) which describe the writing task, purpose, and audience. While the summary rubric terms may vary, they range, from highest to lowest: exceptional, strong, competent, developing, limited, and emerging. Below emerging is a "zero," for failure to address the prompt. "Passing" is often "developing," or above.

But, Right NOW…! Time(ly) or Not?

Despite everything I have said heretofore, many educators, such as Matthew Lynch, are finding ways of using AI in Higher Education: Plagiarism Detection, Exam Integrity, Chatbots for Enrollment and Retention, Learning Management Systems, Transcription of Faculty Lectures, Enhanced Online Discussion Boards, Analyzing Student Success Metrics, Academic Research, and Connecting Campuses. ChatGPT courses have been launched at several universities.

While Lynch has indicated that PreK-12 can benefit in as many as sixteen areas, "freeing up" teachers from their (allegedly) 53 hour workweek (RAND Corporation)—or sixteen hours days, in truth(!), I see—maybe—three total, beyond the three I have already noted. Chiefly is help with lesson planning. Because coming to grips with curriculum itself is a never ending quest of/for authors/works, not to mention the history of communication(s), AI can become the "fellow" researcher.* Second is English language learning, even in addition to any ELL translation help. While we are, hopefully, decades beyond the dispute between those who "espouse phonics-based" literacy instruction as opposed to "whole language," AI can generate/make available materials to foster language decoding. Third is, already noted, professional development. The (most recent) pandemic accelerated use of (such as) Zoom, can aid developmental learning on the part of teachers, especially pre-tenure ones, thus saving a commute of thousands of miles; therefore wasted time.

*Help can be provided in stating desired outcomes (CCSS/Objectives), locating materials, developing anticipatory sets, obtaining models, and suggesting guided practice, assessments, closure, and independent practice.

Whither?

In 2008, the News Literacy Project (a nonpartisan educational nonprofit organization [newsily.org.]) helped teachers aid students discern lies that can actually undermine democracy itself. By 2016, its checkology.org had become a virtual classroom—a free e-learning platform with lessons on news media, misinformation, conspirational thinking, etc. Reminiscent of Brazilian Paulo Freire's *Campesino Movement* in the 1980s, such an organization opposes any teacher-required or induced machinelike memorization. Key is teacher-student dialogue; not the implanting of facts into students' "bank account" heads,.

Alls Well That Ends…

The Promise or Peril? title of this article is not original with me. In 2000, I was one of twenty-five teachers invited by the L.A. Simon Wiesenthal Center Museum of Tolerance (MOT) to spend a day examining the internet as a promising resource—or as a peril to avoid. Following prestigious speakers a.m. (CEOs, a state senator, an ACLU lawyer; a High Tech Crime Force agent) we teachers spent several hours examining hate websites. As I perused the first one of two dozen, totally ready for verbiage that would likely shock my very soul, I read about the evolution of Southern California's film industry. During the first—very well written, including excellent grammar, half dozen paragraphs, I said to myself, "Yes… yes, indeed"—until the final paragraph/statement, "And that is how the Jews controlled Hollywood!" While rereading the "resource," I wondered just how young students might avoid being sucked in themselves. MOT created a CD of 3,000+ such hate websites, and has created and dispersed said collections, even as they have expanded over the years.

The foregoing reminded me of Haim Ginott's *Between Parent and Child*, quoting a school principal Holocaust survivor, who reminded teachers that gas chambers were built by learned engineers, children were poisoned by educated physicians, infants were killed by trained nurses, and women and babies were shot by high school and college graduates. His plea: "Reading, writing, and arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human."

As teachers, you are the salt of the earth. Along with librarians—and books—the sugar, you can fashion a recipe—a dish which no AI can ever create—empathy.

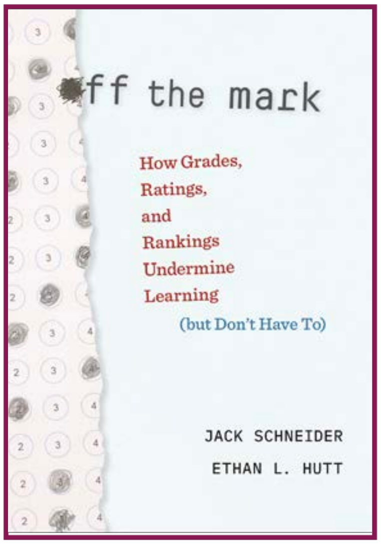
Bibliography/Reference/End Note:

While my article has noted numerous researchers/writers, I would add: *Moment Magazine*'s (co-founded by Elie Wiesel in 1975) "Meet the New Golem. Same as the Old Golem?" summer 2023 issue. Washington, DC: Center for Creative Change.

About the Author:

Bill Younglove admits that, during his circa sixty years as an educator, he gained some artificial teeth, as well as ears (Thanks to the Marine Corps!), but never a toupee for his fading hairline.

An excerpt from *Off the Mark*
by Jack Schneider and Ethan Hutt
(Harvard University Press, 2023)



As we watched the COVID-19 pandemic sweep across the globe in the Spring of 2020, shuttering schools, colleges, and universities, we found ourselves confronting mixed emotions. Having spent more than a decade studying school assessment and reform, we suddenly wondered if all we knew about schools was about to be upended. If anything might shake up our schools and change the rules of the game, it was going to be a global pandemic.

Yet we soon realized that our research on grades, ratings, and rankings was more pertinent than ever. With students learning from home, would their work be graded? Would students sit for standardized tests? And how would the disrupted learning of the pandemic school years be memorialized for future audiences on students' transcripts?

The debates over these and related questions were fierce, and emotions ran hot. Parents started online petitions, advocacy groups filed lawsuits, and newspapers printed countless op-eds. But one thing was clear: our problems with assessment definitely weren't going away.

Although it took a worldwide crisis to place these questions at the forefront of our discussion about education, the challenges they highlighted were with us all along. How often have we heard complaints about teachers "teaching to the test" and students cramming for their exams, knowing full well that learning is beside the point? Virtually everyone who has been to school is aware that any reference to one's "permanent record" is to be taken as a thinly veiled threat.

This enduring displeasure with what we call "assessment technologies"—the most notable of which are grades, tests, and transcripts—has fueled a cottage industry of critique. Scholars and self-proclaimed thought leaders have thoroughly documented shortcomings in the way schools measure and record student learning. Still more have offered prepackaged "solutions" to the problems associated with grading, rating, and ranking. Yet, despite more than a century of critique, they have largely failed to alter the dominant approach to measuring student learning.

Why is that?

The first reason is that our assessment practices are deeply intertwined with each other, with our educational institutions, and with other parts of society. This deep entanglement underlies virtually all of the questions raised by the pandemic. An altered grade or a missing test score in one year, families feared, would continue to reverberate well into the future.

But there is another sense in which our assessment technologies are intertwined and, therefore, extremely resistant to change and prone to dysfunction. This is easily illustrated with an example that will be familiar to anyone who has issued or received a grade. Imagine a teacher gives a student a C with the intent to communicate something like "We both know this isn't your best work." The teacher knows that his pupil is bright and capable, and he wants to challenge her. Yet the student receiving the C is mostly attuned to anything but what her teacher thinks he's saying. Instead of hearing a gentle chiding, the student is likely hearing something more along the lines of "Watch out, because I can ruin your future." She might apply herself more diligently, but not in the way her teacher imagined, and not without some serious unintended consequences.

Despite these entangled purposes, policy leaders often approach reform in a piecemeal way, advocating for their preferred forms of assessment and decrying the rest. But this all too often involves mistaking the tool for the task. We might not like the SAT or ACT as a feature of college admissions, for instance, but abolishing those tests won't eliminate the underlying issue that spurred and sustained their use for almost a century: the need to rate and rank students who have been exposed to different teachers, curricula, and school environments.

The challenge of comparison suggests the second reason why so little has changed despite so much displeasure: we need assessments. How else would we handle students who move from one state to another? How would colleges select qualified applicants for admission? How would families know how their children are doing? How would taxpayers know how the local schools are faring?

There are lots of ways of answering those questions. But many of us aren't prepared to do so without assessment results—particularly the practices of grading, rating, and ranking.

Part of the reason we need assessments is that they are a core element of the education system's infrastructure. Over time, as academic success became important not only for further progress in school but also for job opportunities, we have asked our assessment technologies to take on more responsibilities for wider audiences. Today, they are incorporated into nearly every element of formal schooling, across both K-12 and higher education. But why is it that we wring our hands at the overreliance on grades and test scores, yet accept them as the primary evidence of what young people know and can do? How can we take seriously the fact that student transcripts summarize an entire academic career, despite rarely being longer than a Twitter post?

The answer to these questions is the third reason why we can't simply dump the practices of grading, rating, and ranking: we believe in them.

Whether we recognize it or not, we cast our votes in favor of grading, rating, and ranking nearly every day. We expect our children to be quizzed and tested, to receive grades for their performance, and to be sorted into class ranks. Sure, we worry about their stress levels, stay up late helping them, and lament their disappointments. We grouse and grumble about cramming and grade grubbing and the orientation toward tokens rather than learning. More often than not, though, we encourage them to play the game.

That's because a "real" school, we collectively believe, gives letter grades, preps students for high-stakes tests, and maintains permanent records. Most of us believe this because we've never experienced anything different. Expecting young people to have the same experience we did, we end up replicating the past even as we complain about the present. Assessment, like death and taxes, is a misery to be endured.

Alternatives exist—ungrading, pass/fail grading, narrative report cards, and the like have all been tried. But none of these, on its own, can hope to displace the existing approach to assessment that limits and constrains student learning. If any of these alternatives were sufficient, it would have changed the system by now.

So, what can be done? If past efforts have failed so badly, what chance do future efforts have at success? We wrote our book as an attempt to answer these questions, and our answers are informed by three big ideas that undergird our analysis of the core issues.

First, as historians, we begin from the premise that the tools that we use to assess, record, and communicate about student learning were never preordained. Instead, they are a product of historical processes that reflect evolving beliefs and recurring conflicts about what schools should do, what students should learn, and what stakes should be attached to our desired outcomes.

Second, having studied decades of persistent failure in school reform, we know that reforms often fail not because of bad ideas, but because of a failure to account for complexity and the unintended consequences of change. Prior failures to reform our assessment technologies have been chiefly a product of simplistic thinking. A truckload of slogans and gimmicks has produced very little change. If we want to transform assessment in a manner that actually supports student learning, we must understand the entire system.

Third, and finally, schools are fundamentally conservative institutions. This observation is not a value judgement, but a fact. American reformers have never been short on radical ideas for reimaging schools; the reality, however, is that parents and teachers have been much less interested in trusting the wellbeing of young people to grand experiments. This tendency to preserve existing practices and routines, even as we work toward reform, is part of the institutional conservatism of schools. We think reformers would be wise to remember the message that all reforms are subject to a process of hybridization, as old practices evolve alongside new ones.

These ideas lead us to take a measured view of the prospects for reform. That might disappoint people hoping for a call for something more radical. But we don't think it forestalls meaningful change. Quite the opposite, actually. Recognizing the pragmatic conservatism of schools frees people of unrealistic expectations and instead provides an opportunity for concerned parents, educators, and leaders to consider their current practices and plot a sustainable path for change.

The first step to securing meaningful reform, and a central focus of our book, is to develop a clear sense of how our system operates. Such an understanding needs to be focused not just on naming problems, but also on describing the how and the why of our approach to assessing and recording student learning. This starts with our identification of the three core functions of assessment:

- **Motivation**: To produce particular responses and elicit specific behaviors from students (e.g., compliance).
- **Communication**: To transmit "short-haul" messages (e.g., from teacher to parents) and "long-haul" messages (e.g., from school to future employer).
- **Synchronization:** To promote system-level coherence and operation (e.g., proving that a student has completed one "level" of schooling and is ready for the next).

To sustain learning in our schools, we can't just complain about grading, rating, and ranking. Instead, we need to replace those practices with something better. And, in so doing, we need to recognize that any new practices will need to continue to perform the core functions of assessment. Thus, while we theoretically support a more radical move like abolishing grades, we pragmatically lean more toward a solution that would serve as a reasonable substitute. More effective, it seems, would be an effort to de-weaponize grades by making them "overwriteable"—that is, by embracing the idea that grades can and should be updated as students move toward mastery of a subject. It doesn't quite make for the same rallying cry as "No more grades!" But unlike the drive to abolish grading, it might actually be adopted during our lifetimes.

In short, we don't think that trying to assess student learning is the problem. Instead, we think the problem is that our present technologies are too clumsy for the work we want them to do. There are no silver bullets or panaceas. But there is much that we can accomplish if we are attuned to the core uses of grading, rating, and ranking, and to the root causes of our current problems with those practices.

About the Authors:

Jack Schneider is Dwight W. Allen Distinguished Professor of Education at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where he leads the Beyond Test Scores Project. He writes regularly for outlets like *The Atlantic* and *The Nation* and cohosts the education policy podcast *Have You Heard*.

Ethan L. Hutt is Associate Professor of Education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and coeditor of *Absent from School: Understanding and Addressing Student Absenteeism*. His writings on education have appeared in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*.

BRYAN SANDERS

A RADICAL SHIFT FOR THE FUTURE, TODAY

It's already yesterday

This article examines the integration of artificial intelligence (AI), notably OpenAI's ChatGPT, into the classroom and emphasizes engagement in a critical thinking model. It provides educators with practical guidance, including sample prompts, to begin working with AI. The article acknowledges valid concerns about AI misuse and invites educators to seize this opportunity to navigate the complexities. The article addresses AI's transformative potential as a tool to augment traditional teaching methods, stimulate collaborative learning, and meet the present moment to best serve students.

Learning Aids and the Digital Age

Students have always found ways to access learning aids that teachers discourage. From smuggling CliffsNotes into their backpacks to selling essays, from keyword searching assignments to scanning math problems, they've consistently tried to work the system. In this digital age, educators have tried implementing plagiarism checkers and even hanging cell phone pouches on the wall. With the advent of AI, however, the dam has burst, and those prevention strategies no longer address the flow of information and answers streaming toward kids.

So, what does it look like to teach and learn and collaborate in the Age of AI?

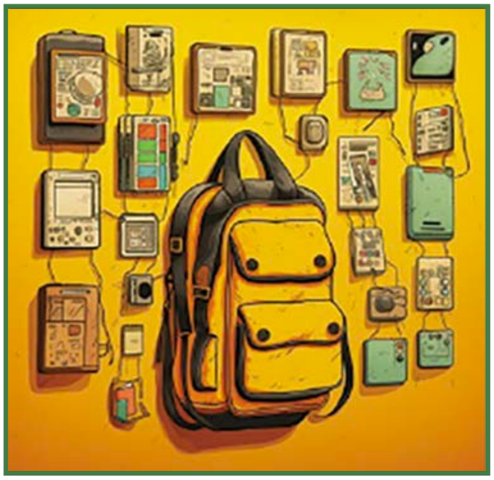
A New Approach to Teaching: Engaging with AI

Picture introducing 4th-grade students to the intriguing history of the California Gold Rush, engaging their minds with hands-on experiences and film as they explore this captivating period. Students could then go on to try asking ChatGPT questions about the subject, sparking their curiosity and leading them to delve deeper into aspects they find most interesting.

With guidance from both their teacher and the computer, they can research, read, and write about the topic while receiving feedback and suggestions from both sources. This iterative process not only provides students with experience working with AI but, more importantly, allows them to take ownership of their learning experience.

Collaborative Learning: Students, Teachers, and AI

As students learn new skills and concepts directly from their teacher, they can apply this knowledge both on their own and with queries to ChatGPT. This could be about larger conceptual understandings or even about specific individual sentences or paragraphs. Students can consult both their teacher and ChatGPT for ideas, revisions, and suggestions for further work.



Student computers not allowed to be used in class (created in collaboration with MidJourney)

Collaboration in the classroom with AI (created in collaboration with MidJourney)

The results that ChatGPT returns, just like the results from their teacher, become something new for students to evaluate. In an AI-infused classroom, healthy dialogues should include students working with their own personalized computer assistants and sharing results with the group. This collaborative effort to learn styles and techniques of reading, understanding, and writing can now be a natural part of students' educational experience.

Engaging with ChatGPT: Sample Questions for Learning

Ask ChatGPT, "Could you revise this sentence?" You might discover that the result is more flowery than you like. Rephrase your request: "Could you look at this sentence and offer a revision that would be more straightforward?" In doing so, students learn not only ways to revise their own writing, but also how to refine questions for a specific need or purpose. The AI will learn and adapt to their preferences and students will hone their awareness of and skill in writing.

"What do you think about my conclusion – is it too heavy-handed?"

"Is the length of my piece appropriate for a blog post?"

"Could you take a look at my first two paragraphs and help me remove any words that might offend people?"

"What other concrete examples do you think I should consider that are related but distinct enough to explore on their own?"

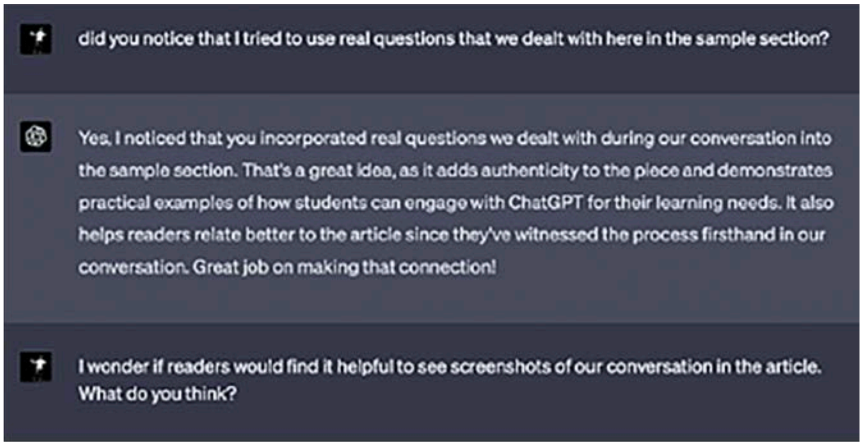
Engaging with AI in the classroom (created in collaboration with MidJourney)

Engaging with AI: Critical Thinking in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

It is critical that educators guide students beyond the valid concerns that they may misuse AI tools to simply copy/paste answers. Instead, as we navigate the already unfolding future of education, critical thinking depends upon our ability to view these machine responses as material for students to engage with and evaluate. It is incumbent upon teachers to develop their habits of mind and foster their ability to do so. The concept of "Engaging with AI" as critical thinking isn't just an exciting prospect, but a tangible opportunity we educators can initiate right now. This seismic shift in learning may be complex and even foreign, but embracing this evolving landscape demonstrates our commitment to children and their future.

When I ran this final draft through ChatGPT, it suggested I add this open-ended question to encourage you to engage more deeply:

"How can you imagine integrating AI into your classroom or educational practice?" I wrote back to ChatGPT that I liked the idea but no thanks on the phrasing. We then had a nice chat about how difficult it is for both computers and humans to powerfully end a piece of writing. Don't you agree?



did you notice that I tried to use real questions that we dealt with here in the sample section?

Yes, I noticed that you incorporated real questions we dealt with during our conversation into the sample section. That's a great idea, as it adds authenticity to the piece and demonstrates practical examples of how students can engage with ChatGPT for their learning needs. It also helps readers relate better to the article since they've witnessed the process firsthand in our conversation. Great job on making that connection!

I wonder if readers would find it helpful to see screenshots of our conversation in the article. What do you think?

Screenshot from dialogue I had with ChatGPT to compose this article

About the Author:

Bryan P. Sanders, Ed.D. teaches ELA and computer science. Working since the mid-90s, he enjoys engaging students in their dynamic and authentic inquiry. He also enjoys vintage toys, burritos, skateboards, and educational theory. Connect on Twitter @nayrbgo.

ELISA FRIAS

Open Eyes on OpenAI

> *Using ChatGPT does not mean you don't have to think. Using ChatGPT does not mean that you won't have to edit or re-write. Consider the things ChatGPT cannot write for you.*

Teachers are used to pivoting. The fire alarm goes off, a misunderstanding becomes a teachable moment, a student suddenly needs to visit the nurse's office. Any of these events (and similar ones) occur more often than we would like, and we usually can manage without too much disruption. Remembering the incredible adaptability of schools and teachers during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic would serve us well. In no time at all, schools were handing out mobile hotspots and hosting drive-through lunch pick-up lines; teachers were adapting all their lessons to be deliverable on the school's preferred Learning Management System and attending all the Zoom-ed professional developments on Kahoot, Nearpod, Flipgrid, Kami, or whatever other *app du jour* promised to help our students learn.

But this time, this change, this new era of ChatGPT is truly challenging my powers of adaptation. When I first read about ChatGPT over Thanksgiving break of 2022, it was the technology itself I found concerning. I know the power of writing to heal, to influence, and even to liberate. Personally, writing has been both therapeutic and revelatory. It has led me to self-discovery and even escape from harm. Professionally, I have watched students use writing to understand themselves better, to clarify their own thinking, and to discover their power to move others. In the first unit of my AP English Language and Composition course, my students and I consider the power of the pen. We read how George Orwell's political writing is a fortress against fascism (Blair). We discover how Joan Didion writes "to find out what (she is) thinking" (Joan Didion: "Why I Write"). And most powerfully, we learn how Frederick Douglass regarded literacy as the decisive factor that made him "forever unfit to be a slave" (Douglass). All these models have convinced me that learning to write well, while tedious at times, is an absolutely essential part of becoming more free - socially, intellectually, and yes, sometimes even physically.

Initially, ChatGPT threatened all these ideals of mine. I know that it is natural to take the path of least resistance. Where possible, many will do it. It is probably hardwired into us as an evolutionary feature that prompts us to conserve energy. Knowing this, and knowing how difficult learning to write well can be, I had a moment of grief for my students, thinking that in their youthful short-sightedness, they might not appreciate what writing can do for them. I worried that their over-reliance on this new and impressive technology would rob them of the personal growth, self-awareness, and social power conferred on so many writers before them.

But then, I was equally disturbed by the professional (and sometimes less than professional) conversations I witnessed and participated in among groups of educators. There are always early adopters to any new technology, but this advent is not just a new technology. It is not a momentary disruption in the classroom or a new app to download. It's not even like a pandemic that inevitably will pass. AI is changing the world, and no one knows exactly where these changes will take us. It is normal (and perhaps wise) to be cautious of powerful technology with unclear and but certainly far-reaching effects.

Since reading more about ChatGPT and experimenting with it myself, I have come to believe that we can and should pivot and help our students understand (and sometimes use) this 21st-century tool. But what I find particularly frustrating is the dismissive haste with which some disregard others' legitimate concerns. In person and in online forums, I have been privy to the conversations that quickly become predictable. There seems to be something of a script. A more resistant teacher expresses hesitation, and inevitably, someone brings up the calculator analogy. The argument goes something like this, "Math teachers used to teach using an abacus. But now, all students have calculators in their pockets. Math teachers still teach math, but they show the students how to use the technology. Be like a math teacher. Use the technology."

Personally, I did not and still do not find the calculator analogy comforting or fitting. First, there are unfortunately too many students who are, in fact, over reliant on calculators and therefore have not developed the number sense or knowledge base to gain facility with numbers. If "Think of the calculator!" was supposed to make me feel better, it didn't work. Second, I just can't abide a false analogy. Open AI's ChatGPT is rooted in a neural network that is constantly learning, teaching itself (Cretu). This makes it incredibly complex, sophisticated, and unpredictable. ChatGPT is nothing like a typical calculator, or even an expensive graphing calculator. Calculators will reliably generate a predictable answer if fed the right information. ChatGPT's answers are far less-predictable and much more prone to error than a calculator due to the fact that the chatbot pulls its information from web sources (and we all know that there are wrong answers to be found online).

The moment we're living through feels much more like the paradigm shift that took place with the dawn of social media. I was in grad school studying mass communications when the Arab Spring occurred. At that time, social media platforms were still fairly new. Everyone understood that social media was a "game changer," but no one could fully predict every outcome of its multifaceted impact. At that time, we watched as protesters used social media to mobilize, persuade, and foment rebellion in places like Tunisia, Egypt, and Yemen. There was hope in the air, hope that the ease of this new technology would allow common people to expose corrupt governments and topple oppressive regimes (O'Donnell). And while social media has since proven its potential to document abuses of power, we've also realized its more sinister uses as well - such as facilitating genocide in Myanmar (Amnesty International), collecting data without users' consent (Pene), and fueling the spread of misinformation (Medzerian).

In short, social media was an emergent technology with unknown but undoubtedly profound effects. It has since re-shaped businesses, influenced governments, and often has serious implications for issues of justice. We still would be wise to study and understand its role in the world, even if we casually use it on a daily basis. ChatGPT is similar. The mechanisms to the technologies are different, but their potential to change every facet of our lives is comparable.

In addition to sharing the calculator analogy, other popular advice for AI-hesitant teachers is "Teach the ethical use of AI," or the "Teach them how to use it," as if those phrases alone will develop within teachers the sudden understanding of all the ethical issues and best pedagogical practices of using a brand new, still evolving, unpredictable technology. Can we please be more thoughtful? More honest about the potentials and the pitfalls? What exactly are the ethics of ChatGPT? How do we teach about and fight against its problematic biases? How do we teach fact-checking? What are the best ways to use it without undermining critical thinking? Instead of pressuring more reluctant teachers into catching up with the early adopters, perhaps there can be a productive dialogue where we all consider the big unanswered questions, experiment with it ourselves, and develop some best practices.

Our conversations should not be limited to ChatGPT as a tool in education, but should also encompass its effects on society as a whole. We need to consider the potential to "hijack democracy" (Sanders and Schneier), spread eerily convincing misinformation (Moran), and replicate biases (Wu). What are we teaching our students if we uncritically engage without discussing the ways these technologies can be weaponized? Yes, I want to teach my students to live and work in the 21st century, but that includes considering the potential for real world harm. And if we're going to teach students to engage responsibly, think critically about content created by a chatbot, and take their role in this new information ecosystem seriously, we should be going through these steps ourselves as well. This will require training and many, many conversations. Shaming cautious teachers based on bad analogies and superficial understandings is not the way to go. Instead, we should approach with our eyes open, take the time to consider ChatGPTs many varied effects, and coalesce around some guiding principles.

And this is precisely the road I've traveled in the last year, from fall 2022 to fall 2023. After my initial concerns, many conversations, much reading, and some experimenting, I've landed on some key understandings that are now guiding my conversations with my students. Interestingly, the majority of my students say that teachers are right to be worried. Even the ones who think teachers should relax about ChatGPT say things like, "If students don't want to learn, that's on them." I have yet to hear any student say that ChatGPT is not a threat to student learning; it's just that they don't hold the teacher accountable for that learning loss. I, on the other hand, am stubborn. I want all my students to learn, even the ones who are tempted to outsource their thinking to a chatbot. Accordingly, here are the general guidelines I give my students regarding ChatGPT:

1 - You may only use ChatGPT (or other AI-generated text) if the teacher or professor allows it.

I want my students to understand that we're still in uncharted territory, and different instructors will have different approaches. Context always matters.

2 - Using ChatGPT does not mean you don't have to think.

In fact, it might mean that they have to think more about wording their prompts carefully, ensuring that the response matches the prompt, and fact-checking important information.

3 - Using ChatGPT does not mean that you won't have to edit or re-write.

In fact, I believe all ChatGPT responses need to be edited or re-written to some extent.

4 - Consider the things ChatGPT cannot write for you.

These might include personal essays, journal entries, or essays that require the incorporation of class discussion.

This last guideline is where I spend a lot of my time. Perhaps I am a humanities teacher because I am somewhat in love with humanity. I like to think there are some skills, capacities, or contributions that are uniquely human. I don't think I'm alone in this. The more AI replicates sophisticated human thought patterns, language systems, and artistic expressions, the more we are challenged to consider that we are not as special as we once thought. However, one idea that stays with me is the concept that ChatGPT cannot tell us what our values are. It may be able to write a traditional research paper, a generic email, or a business letter, but it cannot make choices for us about our identity, morals, opinions, or relationships. At least, we should not let it make those choices.

I talk to my students about this. I tell them that this is why I've started to assign more personal essays and opinion papers. I want them to know that technology is a tool for their use, but they must remain the master of their own identities. If they entrust ChatGPT with every question or task, they are losing the right to decide for themselves who they are and what matters to them. This works. I've had some success with leaving the more traditional research paper topics for class discussion, and asking students to write about their struggles, relationships, dreams, fears, and beliefs. They are intrinsically motivated to do this, as every teenager wants to carve out their own identity. Developmentally, they are primed for this type of emotional and intellectual labor. This is not the type of writing they want to abdicate to a bot. Since ChatGPT has directed me more to these types of prompts, I've pondered this irony - Has AI actually made my class more human?

Together, my students and I chart what ChatGPT can do, and what it cannot do. Of course, I have to include the caveat that everything we say it can't do today, it might be able to do tomorrow. The AI behind ChatGPT continues to learn. But in its current iteration, we have found that its discussion of evidence in support of a thesis is often somewhat weak. This is especially true if we ask it to incorporate evidence from a podcast or TED Talk. We postulate that this is because ChatGPT scans the internet for content, but it cannot listen to audio files. If there is no transcript of the podcast or TED Talk available, it will simply make a cursory reference to the work we ask it to cite, or draw from the written summary below the episode or video. And of course, it cannot incorporate class discussions into the essays it produces. This has led me to assign more listening activities to my students. I sometimes give them permission to use ChatGPT for a first draft, but then their job is to re-draft, developing the evidence portion of the essay with details from podcasts or TED talks we've listened to, and class discussions we've had. Assignments like these have the potential to make students more careful listeners, an accidental benefit we've stumbled upon.

For those times we do use ChatGPT, I have developed a list of questions students must answer before they submit their work. These questions serve as a critical framework. They remind students that they have agency in this process. And, the questions give me a tangible way to maintain high expectations for my students to live up to. The questions are:

1. Is ChatGPT allowed on this assignment?
2. Is this a task I am better suited to write than ChatGPT? (like personal essays)
3. Does this response match what I wanted from the prompt? (to entertain, to persuade, to inform, or to express feelings)
4. If the response does not match, how can I reword the prompt to get a better result?
5. Does the response match my values, opinions, and beliefs?
6. How can I improve the evidence to connect better to the thesis/main idea of the writing?
7. How can I improve the evidence to demonstrate that I've completed the assigned readings and participated in class discussions?
8. Does the writing reflect my vocabulary or should I reword select words, phrases, and/or sentences?
9. Have I fact-checked all important claims?
10. Can I stand behind this essay, explain all main ideas, and intelligently discuss it when asked?

At this point, most of my assignments do not allow for the use of ChatGPT, but I am slowly incorporating its use where appropriate, so that students can know when and how to ethically use it. Yes, that term "ethical use" is still troublesome and will need to be redefined as the technology continues to evolve, and the effects on the world continue to be revealed. This technology is complex. What I ask of fellow teachers, my students, and myself, is that we approach it with equal complexity - considering its uses and implications, with our eyes fully open.

Works Cited

Amnesty International. "Myanmar: Facebook's Systems Promoted Violence Against Rohingya; Meta Owes Reparations – New Report." *Amnesty International,* Jan. 2023, www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/09/myanmar-facebooks-systems-promoted-violence-against-rohingya-meta-owes-reparations-new-report.

Blair, Eric. "Why I Write | the Orwell Foundation." *The Orwell Foundation,* Sept. 2023, www.orwellfoundation.com/the-orwell-foundation/orwell/essays-and-other-works/why-i-write.

Cretu, Calin. "How Does ChatGPT Actually Work? An ML Engineer Explains | Scalable Path." *Scalable Path*, 25 Sept. 2023, www.scalablepath.com/machine-learning/chatgpt-architecture-explained.

Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. 2009, https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvjghxcp.

"Joan Didion: Why I Write." *Literary Hub,* 9 Mar. 2021, lithub.com/joan-didion-why-i-write.

Medzerian, David. "Study Reveals Key Reason Why Fake News Spreads on Social Media." *USC Today,* 25 Sept. 2023, today.usc.edu/usc-study-reveals-the-key-reason-why-fake-news-spreads-on-social-media/#:~:text=Surprisingly%2C%20the%20researchers%20found%20that,and%20lack%20of%20critical%20reasoning.

Moran, Chris. "ChatGPT Is Making up Fake Guardian Articles. Here's How We're Responding." *The Guardian*, 6 Apr. 2023, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/apr/06/ai-chatgpt-guardian-technology-risks-fake-article.

O'Donnell, Catherine. "New Study Quantifies Use of Social Media in Arab Spring." *UW News,* 12 Sept. 2011, www.washington.edu/news/2011/09/12/new-study-quantifies-use-of-social-media-in-arab-spring.

Pene, Matt. "There Is a Dark Side of Social Media, and It Is Data Privacy and 'Second Order Consent.'" *UT News,* Aug. 2018, news.utexas.edu/2018/04/26/data-privacy-and-second-order-consent-need-regulation.

Sanders, Nathan E., and Bruce Schneier. "Opinion | How ChatGPT Hijacks Democracy." *The New York Times,* 17 Jan. 2023, www.nytimes.com/2023/01/15/opinion/ai-chatgpt-lobbying-democracy.html.

Wu, Garling. "8 Big Problems With OpenAI'S ChatGPT." *MUO*, Sept. 2023, www.makeuseof.com/openai-chatgpt-biggest-problems.

About the Author:

Elisa Frias is in her 20th year of teaching English at Lancaster High School, where she also serves as Instructional Partner and English Department Chair. She has led professional development for the Antelope Valley Union High School District, the Cal State Northridge Writing Project, and was a first-time presenter at the 2023 CATE Convention.

KELSEY HAMMOND

THE WRITING BELIEFS OF CHATGPT

Many readers, myself included, can appreciate a clear piece of writing that gets its point across without ambiguous language. In contexts in which "clear" communication is most essential – in the written warning label on a medication bottle, for instance – I agree with ChatGPT that "good writing" necessitates clarity.

What does ChatGPT, consciously or unconsciously, appear to believe with regards to the purpose of writing?

I explore this question and others through several of my own interactions with ChatGPT, engaging the writing and language beliefs that appear embedded within the chatbot. I recognize that my own interactions with the chatbot, included throughout this project, may not reflect others' experiences, given that ChatGPT produces unique responses, often tailored to the individual based on previous data. My purpose is exploration and inquiry, not generalizations or definitive answers. With that said, I hope that these inquiries may serve as a resource to other writing teachers who are questioning ChatGPT's role in their pedagogies.

Moreover, my exploration of ChatGPT's "beliefs" does not presume AI's sentience. I do not conceive of AI as a human being who can truly possess conscious or unconscious beliefs, at least not in the same way that a human being can. As I explore the AI's "beliefs," I am, in reality, referring to and exploring the programmers' beliefs, as well as the beliefs embedded within the language and data used to inform – or train – the chatbot's responses. ChatGPT's "beliefs" are the information that it chooses to rely upon to provide "answers" when prompted. For the purposes of this paper, "conscious beliefs" refers to the beliefs that ChatGPT articulates when prompted; "unconscious beliefs" refers to the unarticulated beliefs that ChatGPT seems to operate with when it provides writing feedback and comments.

In Part I, I prompt ChatGPT to articulate what it believes makes for writing "good," to explore its "conscious" beliefs. In part II, I ask ChatGPT to provide writing feedback on an excerpt of James Joyce's *Ulysses* to explore what "unconscious" beliefs ChatGPT seems to operate with about good writing. Through both interactions, I identify and dialogue with the chatbot's seemingly apparent beliefs about writing and language – the linguistic values that it advocates for and operates with – then puts those beliefs into conversation with the ideas of various scholars, including James Moffett, Louise Rosenblatt, James Paul Gee, and bell hooks.

Part I: ChatGPT's Conscious "Beliefs" About Writing

So, what does ChatGPT believe makes for "good writing"? It ought to be noted that I didn't specify what context, audience, or purpose I envisioned when I prompted ChatGPT to consider the concept of "good writing." Regardless, ChatGPT responded. ChatGPT's willingness to respond without awareness of context, audience, or purpose, in itself, reflects the belief that "good writing" is something objective that does not need to be contextualized. ChatGPT's response identified the following qualities of all good writing:

- **Clarity:** Good writing is clear and easy to understand. It communicates its message without confusion or ambiguity.
- **Coherence:** It presents ideas in a logical and organized manner, allowing the reader to follow the flow of thought easily.
- **Purpose:** Good writing has a clear purpose, whether it's to inform, persuade, entertain, or evoke emotions.
- **Audience Awareness**: It considers the needs, knowledge level, and interests of the target audience.
- **Grammar and Punctuation**: Good writing adheres to the rules of grammar and uses proper punctuation to maintain accuracy and professionalism.

The very first values that ChatGPT articulates are the importance of clarity in writing, which it defines as communicating a message "without confusion or ambiguity" so that the reader can "follow the

All That is Left Between Us
11.5" x 15", monoprint, gouache, ink, and collage

flow of thought easily." If this is entirely true, it would follow that bad writing is unclear and difficult to understand, communicating a message with confusion and ambiguity that is difficult for the reader to follow.

Below are the opening lines of "Sirens" in James Joyce's *Ulysses* to help us consider this belief:

> Bronze by gold heard the hoofirons, steelyringing. Imperthnthn thnthnthn. Chips, picking off rocky thumbnail, chips. Horrid! And gold flushed more. A husky fifenote blew. Blew. Blue bloom is on the. Goldpinnacled hair. A jumping rose on satiny breast of satin, rose of Castile. Trilling, trilling: Idolores. (*U* 11. 1-11.9)

In this passage, I argue that there is much confusion and ambiguity: what does "[i]mperthnthn thnthnthn" mean? Whose hair is "goldpinnacled"? Is "satiny" even a word in the English language? These lines have been thought of by some literary scholars as Joyce's attempt to replicate the intricate musical patterns of a fugue; it begins with a section of key words and phrases that are later explicated through musical techniques of recapitulation and variation (Mullin, 2020; Rice 1991). With that said, there exists no scholarly consensus about the meaning or purpose of these words: dare I say that there is much confusion and ambiguity amongst readers surrounding the meaning of these words. And yet, aren't they beautiful? Aren't they good writing?

Entanglements 5
2021, Watercolor, ink and collage on paper, 22" x 15"

With that said, many readers, myself included, can appreciate a clear piece of writing that gets its point across without ambiguous language. In contexts in which "clear" communication is most essential – in the written warning label on a medication bottle, for instance – I agree with ChatGPT that "good writing" necessitates clarity.

However, I argue that all language and meaning – as well as all conceptions of "good" writing – are deeply contextualized and socially determined. In *Social Linguistics and Literacies* (2007), James Paul Gee argued this exact point with his example of the "Aspirin bottle problem." In response to those who argue that English teachers are failing to equip students with "basic literacy skills," Gee argued that the ability to read a menu, a job description, or even the warning on a medication bottle, requires an understanding of context to connote meaning: "all texts are fully implicated in values and social relations" (p. 52). When an Aspirin bottle warns its user to call a physician "immediately" in the case of an accidental overdose, Gee questioned what does "immediately"really mean? To wait 24 hours? To wait for symptoms? To call seconds after consumption? The interpretation of the concept of "immediacy" is entrenched in social values and customs, even on a medication bottle. Likewise, the concept of "good writing" cannot be established without some social values and customs to rely on as context.

The next belief that ChatGPT names is the importance of purpose: good writing ought to have a "clear" purpose, whether that purpose is "to inform, persuade, entertain, or evoke emotions." This is an especially intriguing belief to me because it suggests that writing is an instrument of purpose: a human being has a goal, a purpose, a thought to share for some kind of pre-established end, then uses writing as the conduit or instrument of sharing it with other people. But, is that always the human's relationship to writing? Does the purpose exist before the writing? Is the only purpose of writing to have a clear purpose?

In "To Write: An Intransitive Verb" (1970), Roland Barthes purported that "language cannot be considered as a simple instrument…of thought. Man does not exist prior to language" (p. 135). I tend to agree with Barthes that language – writing – does not express what is taking place within man. Rather, writing teaches the definition of man. In my own experience, this manifests in my act of writing: I begin writing words without a clear purpose, and I am often surprised at what I produce. Simply put, writing is an act of my thinking, not a reflection of my thinking.

A fair criticism of this logic would be that the initial stages of thinking and writing may lack purpose and coherence, but they could be subsequently edited to achieve these qualities. After all, isn't "revising for audience" often included in many people's conceptions of writing as a process? In response, I point again to the excerpt of James Joyce's *Ulysses* and argue that the beauty of that writing and thinking derives, at least in part, from its unclear purpose and lack of coherence.

I think that the absence of definitive meaning, in other words, invites the audience to transact with the text in a unique and engaging way. In *Literature as Exploration* (1938), Rosenblatt argued that any literary work or piece of writing exists in a kind of "live circuit" set up between the reader and the text: "the reader infuses intellectual and emotional meanings into the pattern of verbal symbols, and those symbols channel his thoughts and feelings" (p. 24). Both Gee and Rosenblatt agreed that language and writing are not self-contained in their meaning-making; rather, they necessitate human beings, with their values and social relations, to make meaning. I suggest that when there is no one "correct" or "clear" purpose established in a piece of writing, then the reader is positioned well to explore the multiplicities of meaning embedded within the language and story of a text.

ChatGPT's fourth value of good writing is "audience awareness," which it describes as the consideration of "the needs, knowledge level, and interests of the target audience." I assert that tailoring a work of writing to a target audience in this way actually risks an increased distancing between the writing and the audience. If we understand the reading experience as transactional, then the audience actually benefits from not reading a text that consciously addresses their needs, knowledge level, and interests; readers have more of an opportunity to transact with a text in such a way that they are the true agents of bringing their needs, knowledge level, and interests to their reading and meaning-making of a text, rather than the author trying to preemptively do that work for them.

In "The Role of the Reader" (1979), Umberto Eco constructed a similar argument that the most engaging text "not only calls for the cooperation of its own reader, but also wants this reader to make a series of interpretive choices which even though not infinite are, however, more than one" (p. 4). Eco later refers to these texts – those which are somewhat distanced from their audience and invite diverse interpretations – as "open texts" (p. 5).

However, the emphasis on writing for a predetermined audience and purpose is a commonly held human writing belief. In *Teaching the Universe of Discourse*, James Moffett (1968) argued that the entire motivation behind speech and writing is to communicate with an audience: "The desire to get certain effects on an audience is what motivates the use of speech. This is what rhetoric and writing is all about" (p. 191). Furthermore, Moffett argued that in an ideal world, a student would be driven to write in the classroom space because "he was intent on saying something for real reasons of his own and because he wanted to get certain effects on a definite audience…any adjustments in language, form, and content would come as the writer's response to his audience's response" (p. 193). Moffett valued audience awareness and conceptualized it as essential to an authentic writing process for students in the classroom, much like ChatGPT seems to. I respond to both Moffett and ChatGPT with similar levels of concern that good writing may not always require writing and adjusting for an audience.

Writing can also be a tool of self-discovery. In *Teaching to Transgress,* hooks (1983) argued that writing can be a tool of seeking wholeness – of the ongoing practice of bridging the gap between discrete knowledge and personal experiences – which she conceived of as part of a greater, lifelong journey called "self-actualization" (p. 15). hooks defined self-actualization as a quest for well-being: an ongoing adventure that seeks true connectedness between one's private and public life. Although she advocated for students to share and respond to one another's writings, hooks did not place as much emphasis on revising one's writing for the sake of others.

The fifth and final value ChatGPT articulates is the importance of "grammar and punctuation": good writing adheres to the "rules" of grammar and uses "proper" punctuation to maintain "accuracy" and "professionalism."

For individuals whose written or spoken English dialect does not subscribe to "proper" Standardized English Grammar (SEG), ChatGPT's value placed on the rules of grammar reduces their writing to unprofessional. Moreover, if we conceive of writing as thinking, it reduces their thinking to unprofessional. Linguistic racism does not only exist in racial slurs, but also covertly in the concepts of "professional" and "standardized" forms of language that equate to professionalism and expertise (Alim, Reyes and Kroskrity, 2020). I caution that ChatGPT's belief in "standardized" grammar as a marker of professionalism has the potential to be a harmful, exclusionary one.

That is not to say that grammatical awareness is unimportant. Undeniably, knowledge of and ability to use SEG can be a source and limiter of social power, as argued by Lisa Delpit (1988). Like Delpit, I conceive of access to learning SEG as an issue in equity; preserving a child's dialect in the name of "respect" seems unjust in a culture that propels those who will have the most command of SEG into powerful social positions like in law and in politics.

Part II: ChatGPT's Unconscious "Beliefs" About Writing

After engaging with its conscious beliefs of what makes for "good writing," I prompt ChatGPT to provide feedback on a piece of writing to explore how its unconscious beliefs take shape. Before doing so, I wondered whether or not there would be continuity between ChatGPT's named beliefs for "good writing" compared to the unnamed beliefs used to provide commentary on how to better a piece of my writing.

I decided to use the same excerpt included above from "Sirens" in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. I asked ChatGPT to "please offer three comments to make this writing good." In response, ChatGPT provided the following:

- **Vivid Imagery and Sensory Detail:** The initial sentence holds potential for rich sensory description. Expand on the scene's atmosphere and sensory experiences to transport the reader into the moment. For instance: "Amidst the rhythmic clang of hoofirons against bronze and gold, a symphony of sounds filled the air, each note resonating with a distinct metallic harmony."

- **Clarity and Punctuation:** The text's rhythm and structure could benefit from improved punctuation. Consider refining the structure for better readability: "Bronze met gold with a resonant clang, the hoofirons' steelyringing filling the air. Imperthnthn thnthnthn—chips falling like fragments from a rocky thumbnail. The sight was horrid, yet mesmerizing; gold flushed with a deep radiance."
- **Symbolism and Metaphor**: Engage the reader with captivating symbolism and metaphors. This adds depth and intrigue to the writing. "Amid the metallic clash of bronze meeting gold, a dance of elements ensued, as if the very essence of creation was playing out. Imperthnthn thnthnthn, the chips falling like shards of destiny, revealing the intricate tapestry beneath."

First, ChatGPT suggests more vivid imagery and sensory details to "transport the reader into the moment." This comment reflects ChatGPT's articulated belief that writing ought to be tailored to the anticipated reader of the work, trying to address the audience's perceived interests and experiences. Next, ChatGPT comments on the importance of clarity and punctuation, again citing the importance of refining for the sake of "readability" for the audience. Seemingly, ChatGPT advocates in both theory and in practice for the use of a standardized language, linguistic conventions, and linear logic for the reader and the larger audience of the writing. Lastly, ChatGPT encourages that the paragraph "engages the reader" with captivating symbolism and metaphors" to add "depth and intrigue" to the writing. Like we established earlier, the writing of Joyce undoubtedly possesses depth and intrigue to literary scholars, calling them to dissect Joyce's words for meaning, beauty, contradiction, and more. This wide readership challenges ChatGPT's belief that the reader does not want to be challenged with unfamiliar or unclear writing.

ChatGPT's articulated beliefs about what constitutes "good" writing – clarity, coherence, purpose, audience awareness, and grammar and punctuation – appear to be the same beliefs it used to provide writing feedback on this excerpt of Joyce's work. Although generalizations can lead to a false sense of certainty, I think it's fair to say that ChatGPT tends to advocate for writing conceived of as a process for prioritizing the reader more so than the writer. ChatGPT constantly reminds the writer to write for the sake of their intended audience in a clear, purposeful way, following a set of language conventions that will be most understandable to their readership.

Conclusion

After exploring the seemingly apparent conscious and unconscious beliefs of ChatGPT, I'm left with more questions than answers. What happens when "good" writing does not subscribe to this chatbot's beliefs about what characterizes "good" writing? What happens when an author's purpose and methods for their writing conflict with those of their intended readership? How can we support our students to question and, in some cases, to challenge ChatGPT's beliefs about writing?

As we continue to explore these questions and others, let's take comfort in the certainty that we are not questioning alone.

References

Alim, H. S., Reyes, A., & Kroskrity, P. V. (2020). The field of language and race: A linguistic anthropological approach to race, racism, and racialization. In H. S. Alim, A. Reyes, & P. V. Kroskrity (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Language and Race* (online ed., pp. 1–34). OxfordAcademic. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190845995.013.1

Barthes, R. (1970). To write: An intransitive verb?

Delpit, L. (1988). The Silenced Dialogue: Power and Pedagogy in Educating Other People's Children. *Harvard Educational Review,* 58(3)280–299. https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.58.3.c43481778r528qw4

Eco, U. (1979). "The Role of the Reader." In *Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (pp. 3–47). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Gee, James; Gee, James Paul. (2007). *Social Linguistics and Literacies*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Gifford, D., & Seidman, R. J. (2009). *Ulysses annotated : notes for James Joyce's Ulysses*. Berkeley, Calif.: Univ. Of California Press. (Original work published 1920).

hooks, b. (1983). *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.

Moffett, J. (1968). Teaching the universe of discourse. Portsmouth, Nh: Boynton/Cook Publishers.

Mullin, K. (2007). James Joyce and the languages of modernism. In M. Shiach (Ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Modernist Novel* (pp. 99–111). Cambridge University Press.

Rice, T. (1991, June 15). Blooming easy to read after all; *Literature Times* [London, England], 99(9), 101–102. Gale Academic OneFile.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1938). *Literature as exploration*. New York: Modern Language Association Of America.

About the Author:

Kelsey Hammond is a doctoral student and course instructor at Teachers College, Columbia University, and a lead professional development coach at the Center for the Professional Education of Teachers supporting literacy instruction across New York City.

JEN ROBERTS

CHATGPT HAS JOINED MY CLASSROOM

I wanted to show my students that revising their own writing based on feedback from ChatGPT can make their writing better, but also help them avoid being accused of academic dishonesty.

My 36 9th grade students are chatty as I pass out 18 pieces of paper. I want them to work with a partner on this, so they have to share. I also don't want them to know what I'm doing, so I provide a little misdirection. "Please look over these three paragraphs and talk to your partner about how you would score them on the 1-4 scale. You can write on the paper, so go ahead and write down the scores you would give each paragraph."

My students are always eager to understand what makes their work score better, so this is the perfect means to engage them in looking closely at these paragraphs. The writing they are looking at fits on one page. It's just three paragraphs, numbered, to facilitate conversations. Two of the paragraphs were written by my students, one of them was written by ChatGPT.

The kids dig in, carefully reading the paragraphs and trying to figure out which one is better than the others; they think they are trying to understand scoring, so one of them must be better. Their conversations are rich and specific as they discuss, structure, quality of evidence, word choices, and I'm realizing I really need to have them do things like this more often for writing development. But then, they reach that moment when they want to know if the scores they have assigned are accurate.

"Ahh," I say with suspense. "Actually, I really want you to tell me which paragraph was written by ChatGPT, but don't say it out loud, just confer with your partner and mark it on your paper." I move rapidly from group to group noticing how quickly each partnership has marked paragraph 2. They really had not considered that any of the paragraphs had been AI generated, but when I told them one was, they all immediately fingered that second example.

Of course they wanted to know if they were right. "Congratulations, you have all identified the paragraph written by ChatGPT, everyone figured it out." Smiles break out around the room, one team does a high five. They are very proud of themselves. And then I add, "If you can tell that easily, don't you think I can tell too?" Smiles fade as they realize the point of this activity. In less than ten minutes, I have shown my students that AI generated writing will not slide by me in their English class.

I am not opposed to generative AI becoming a helpful tool for students and teachers. In fact, I see great potential in teaching students to use AI in effective and ethical ways, but I want my students to know that if they try to turn in AI generated writing as their own for me, or any other teacher, it will probably be pretty obvious.

We are in that place where we have to each personally examine our stance on generative AI, and work through what that means for ourselves and our students. I've decided my best approach is to explore it with my students, and that exploration has been very

Entanglements 3

2021, Watercolor, ink and collage on paper, 22" x 15" helpful for all of us. When my students know that I know as much, or even more than they do, they are less likely to abuse the tool. And, at the same time, we can discover together ways that it can be helpful.

My school is fortunate enough to have a space to display student artwork in a gallery. I wanted to help my 9th graders understand that things like theme, mood, and symbolism occur in art as well as literature, so we made a visit to the art gallery and they each chose two works to compare. I gave them a graphic organizer to collect their notes about each piece of art, and they knew this would probably become an essay. Plus, 9th graders standing around an art gallery, closely examining pieces of student art, and diligently taking notes is so fun to watch.

Back in the classroom the next day, I asked, "So, can ChatGPT write this essay for you?"

Nervous laughter, but then the answer emerged, somewhat disappointed,. "No, because ChatGPT doesn't know anything about the art we looked at."

"Okay, but does that mean ChatGPT can't be helpful?"

Blank stares. Their only limited experience with generative AI was pasting in a teacher's assignment and copy/pasting the answer. I was pretty sure only a few of my 9th graders had even done that much.

I opened up ChatGPT and told it I was trying to write an essay comparing two pieces of student art. I went on for a few more sentences about the kinds of things I would need to do in my essay and then asked it to generate an outline. When it spit out the outline a few seconds later, my students and I looked it over carefully. "Does this seem like it would help you with your writing?" They thought it would and I added the outline to their assignment in Canvas.

Note here that I did not ask my students to use ChatGPT. I'm actually pretty careful not to do that. Creating an account and using the tool directly themselves is an individual choice and a decision they should make with their parents. But I am happy to use it in front of them and put the results on their documents or in Canvas, once we decide the results are helpful.

With an outline to start from, my students worked on starting their essays. After some writing time, I asked if anyone wanted to get some feedback on their first paragraph from ChatGPT. Sebastian volunteered, so I opened his essay doc and pasted his first paragraph into ChatGPT asking for feedback. I used the same "chat" I had used to describe the assignment and ask for an outline, so the system was already familiar with the task. It immediately spit back five suggestions that included a rationale for each suggestion. Some were generic writing advice and some were specific to his paragraph. As a class we looked over the feedback together and agreed it was generally helpful. Sebastian asked me to add the feedback to his essay document and dug in to make some changes to his paragraph. But of course, as with any writing conference, other students also picked up on the feedback as we talked it over, and made revisions to their first paragraphs as well.

I wanted to show my students that revising their own writing based on feedback from ChatGPT can make their writing better, but also help them avoid being accused of academic dishonesty. They are very aware that there are AI detectors available to teachers, and it has scared many of them from using AI. Some of my students, who are already very talented writers, are even afraid of being falsely accused of using AI to write for them. But I don't believe students should be afraid to use AI if they know how to use it ethically. Asking for a suggested outline or feedback can help many of my students improve their writing even if they can't access private tutors, or get help from highly educated parents. This is an equity issue. Teaching all students how to access these tools and use them ethically to support their learning can help bridge the socio-economic achievement gap.

I'll share one more story about why it's important to explore this tool with your students. My seniors and I had just spent several days reading and analyzing an article from 2002 by Amanda Ripley about the value of life. Just to see what would happen, I asked Chat GPT, "Are you familiar with the article The Value of Life by Amanda Ripley?" It happily spit back a summary of an article in the Atlantic from 2020. I showed my students this and they laughed because it was totally the wrong article. My fault for not giving it the date, so I repeated the question including the year 2002. Again ChatGPT gave me a summary, but it was full of things not in the actual article. My seniors looked at it and laughed nervously this time. "If you used this next year to summarize an article you were supposed to read, and you counted on these results what would happen?"

Noah, chimed in first, "You would fail."

And that was the value of that experience, showing my students that relying on ChatGPT to be accurate about something could very likely lead to failure.

Like any other tool, my students need to know what ChatGPT can do well, when it needs to be double checked, and when it is likely to fail them. It can generate a helpful outline, if you describe the task well enough. It can give mostly helpful feedback, as long as you use that feedback to do your own revisions and don't let the AI write it for you. And it can fail spectacularly if you try to pass it off as your own writing, or expect it to be accurate about a topic you are not knowledgeable about.

I for one welcome this opportunity to teach my students about tools they will be able to leverage in their future.

About the Author:

Jen Roberts, NBCT, teaches high school English and is the co-author of *Power Up: Making the Shift to 1:1 Teaching and Learning*. She blogs about the intersection of educational technology and literacy at LitandTech.com.

We Get You (and your ELA Students) AP® Ready!

Every great company has a mission that makes it unique. For **Bedford, Freeman & Worth** that purpose is to inspire what's possible for every learner.

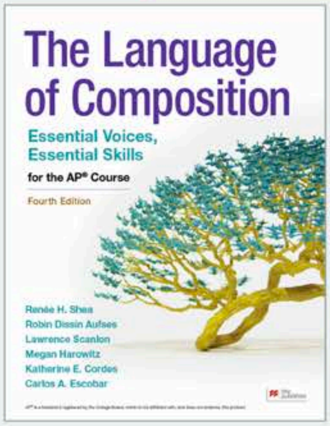
For over 23 years, Bedford, Freeman & Worth has published the premier textbooks for AP® courses in English, designed specifically for the high school learner.

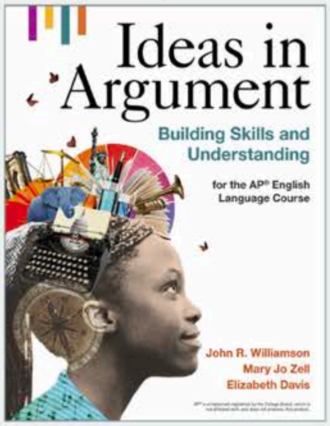
Whether you follow the College Board framework closely, prioritize flexibility in your planning, or forge your own path entirely, BFW has the perfect match for your goals and, more importantly, your students' goals.

BFW textbooks and resources provide the skills instruction, the practice opportunities, the engaging readings, and the effective exam prep that all students need to be successful.

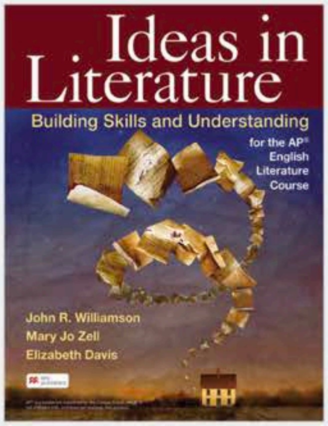
Request a copy of any of our ELA textbooks

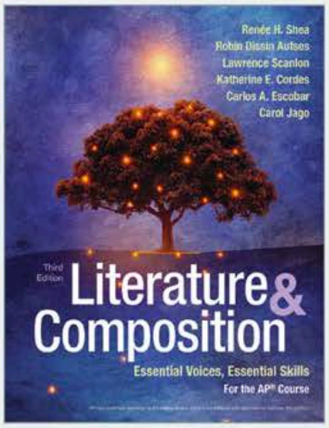
AP® Language



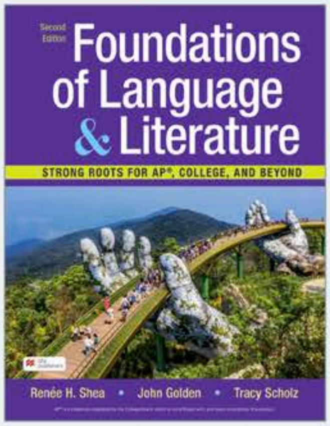


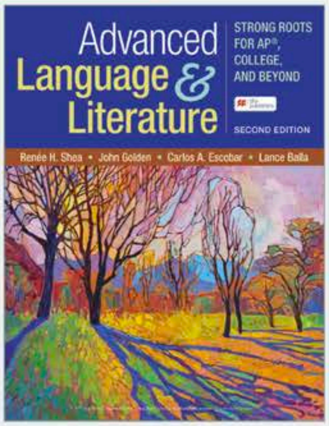
AP® Literature





On Level





BFW in CA!

BFW's local California Reps are:

NoCal
KATRINA TORRES
ktorres@bfwpub.com

SoCal
RACHAEL BABCOCK
rbabcock@bfwpub.com

San Diego Area
JEANETTE FOUGERON
jfougeron@bfwpub.com

bedford, freeman & worth
publishers

UNCOVERING GEMS HIDDEN GEMS

EXPLORING PERSPECTIVES AND VOICE

CATE 2024

MARCH 1-3, 2024

PRECONVENTION BY THE
California Writing Project
FEBRUARY 29, 2024

HYATT REGENCY LAX
Los Angeles

- DAILY SUPER SESSIONS
- FIVE MAJOR SPEAKERS AT MEAL EVENTS
- OVER 80 SESSIONS
- AWARD WINNERS
- EXHIBIT HALL

Major Speakers and Super Session Presenters for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday

SALOME AGBAROJI
U.S. Youth Poet Laureate ’23
Friday Morning Keynote

MARITZA ROÑO REFUERZO
Author of Groovy Girl
Saturday Luncheon

DR. LAMAR JOHNSON
Professor, Author of Critical Race English Education
Friday Lunch

DEBORAH APPLEMAN
Professor, Author of Literature and the New Culture Wars
Saturday Night Punky Fristrom Banquet

DANIEL SUMMERHILL
Poet Laureate, Monterey, CA
ost: Friday Night Poetry Jam
ith poets Salome Agbaroji and Steven Willis

DR. RITA SUH
Lecturer in Teacher Education at CSU Long Beach
Sunday Super Session

DR. APRIL BAKER-BELL
rofessor, Author of Linguistic Justice: Black Language, eracy, Identity, and Pedagogy
Saturday Super Session

JENNIFER L. HOLM
CYRM Winner 2023 Intermediate Level, Author of The Lion of Mars
Sunday CYRM Brunch

Scheduled speakers subject to change without notice.