Generative AI in Education: Have Your Say (v3)

Access resources at: http://connectedbydata.org/ai-in-education/toolkit

Introduction and background

About this resource

What is **generative artificial intelligence**? And how might it be used in schools and colleges? What do the people building it need to hear from children, parents and educators?

This resource is designed to help you have informed and deliberative conversations about generative AI in education, the ways it can be used, and the issues that might raise.

It is designed to be used **in the classroom** - providing a single or double lesson plan for discussing generative AI in education with 10 to 18 year olds (variations provided).

We have also written it with an eye on how it could be adapted for use **in the staff room** (providing an agenda for exploring generative AI in education with school staff and governors) and **in other settings** (supporting flexible workshop sessions outside of school - in informal education settings, or with parents, families and guardians).

This workshop was originally designed to gather feedback and views through an online platform in order to shape a report presented to global education ministers, AI experts, and tech companies at the Department for Education's AI in Education Summit in January 2026. **This version has been adapted for ongoing use to help you have discussions in your own education setting.**

How to use this resource?

This lesson and workshop plan provides all the information you need to run a 50 or 100 minute lesson/workshop on generative AI in education.

It has been designed for use with students aged 10 - 18. In some cases, different versions of worksheets are available, and this will be indicated. In other cases, there may be notes on how to adapt the content to your group.

The resource contains a set of core content and suggested content to cover within a classroom session or workshop, along with suggested activities and feedback questions.

We encourage you to think about how to capture views expressed by students when you use this resource, and to feed those views into classroom, school or other local decision making about uses of Generative AI in education.

Who created this resource?

This resource was commissioned by the Department for Education, and written by Connected by Data, the campaign for communities to have a powerful say in decisions about data and AI.

Draft resources were reviewed for accuracy, balance and approach by: Beckett LeClair (5Rights Foundation), Florence Ackland (PSHE Association), Graham Tavener (Connected by Data Fellow, FE Lecturer), James Vincent (Bath Spa University), Jen Persson (Defend Digital Me), Jeni Tennison (Connected by Data), Louise Couceiro (Department of Education, University of Oxford), Melvin Riley (National Youth Technology Council), Rebecca Eynon (Oxford Internet Institute and Department of Education, University of Oxford), Sarah Turner (University College London), Tania Duarte (We and AI).

The lead author was Tim Davies. Editorial support was provided by Emily Macaulay and Jeni Tennison. Illustrations by Imogen Shaw.

The resource does not necessarily reflect the views, opinions or policy positions of any of the individual contributors or authors.

What license is this resource under?

Where can I find out more about using Generative AI in education?

Education is a devolved issue across the United Kingdom. You can find current policy on generative AI in Education for England on Gov.UK here.

The Department for Education has also published online materials to support staff in schools and colleges in England to use AI safely and effectively, you can find these resources on Gov.UK here.

Updated version (18th January 2026)

This version has been updated to work as a stand-alone workshop.

You can find the earlier version of the workshop here.

Session plans

There's a lot to explore about generative AI in education, but we realise that there is often limited time available. We've put together two suggested schedules, based on around a full 100 minutes (either in a single session, or across two sessions) or a single short 50 minute session.

We have also included guidance on what to do if you have more time available.

[Full] 100 minute session

Time	Activity	Resources needed
00	**Introducing generative AI in education** *A short introduction to generative AI + comprehension quiz. Introduction to UNCRC and education summit input opportunity.* *Optional class discussion on AI hopes and fears (allow extra 10 mins)*	**Presentation slides**
10	**Tools: How can generative AI be used in education** *Small group discussion of different tools with feedback to the class.*	**Tool card handouts** - ideally printed and cut out
30	**Issues for AI in education** *Worksheets on different issues with AI in education for small group discussion.*	**Issue worksheets**
	— Optional break between sessions —	
50	***[Include recap for split sessions then]***	**Presentation slides**
55	**Our message to decision makers** *Voting 'agree' and 'disagree' on a series of statements and suggesting our own statements.*	**Voting on class screen**
75	**Your say: Creative expression** *Choice of three creative feedback activities (writing, design, art) that provide opportunities to express a view on AI in education.*	**Worksheets on paper or in digital form**
95	**Submitting our feedback** *Collect in work or guide students on submitting through the feedback portal.*	**Link to feedback portal**
100	**Close**	

[Short] 50 minute session

The main difference in a short session is that there will be less time for full class feedback. Each table group may end up focussed on a small set of generative AI in education tools and issues.

You could choose to assign these intentionally, or randomly, based on your knowledge of the group.

Time	Activity	Resources needed
00	**Introducing generative AI in education** *A short introduction to generative AI + comprehension quiz. Introduction to UNCRC and education summit input opportunity.*	**Presentation slides**
05	**Tools: How can generative AI be used in education** *Small group discussion of different tools with feedback to the class.*	**Tool card handouts** - ideally printed and cut out
15	**Issues for AI in education** *Worksheets on different issues with AI in education for small group discussion.*	**Issue worksheets**
30	**Our message to AI Decision Makers** *Voting 'agree' and 'disagree' on a series of statements and suggesting our own statements.*	**Voting on class screen**
45	**Optional homework: Creative expression feedback activities** *Give each student a worksheet to complete as an optional homework activity.*	**Worksheets on paper or in digital form**
50	**Close**	

Before you start

Handling Complex Issues and Creating a Safe Environment

Artificial Intelligence is a wide-ranging topic, and students may have many different prior experiences of, and views about, AI.

In this resource, we have kept the focus on AI in education, and have avoided language that might be likely to invite students to share sensitive personal experiences.

The PSHE Association provides registered users with a **free guide on Handling Complex Issues and Creating a Safe Learning Environment**[1] which covers important points including:

- **Having clear ground rules** for discussion, such as: openness to all views; keeping conversations in the room; the right to pass; avoiding personal questions; and seeking further help and advice when needed.
- **Using distancing techniques** to enable students to take part regardless of personal experiences, and avoiding judgemental discussions.
- **Handling questions and concerns safely** and giving age-appropriate answers.

We suggest using a **'Parking lot'** to record issues that come up which cannot be addressed in the session. You could use this to identify issues for future discussions in your setting.

If a student does disclose any information about their experiences with AI that gives cause for safeguarding concerns you should follow your local processes.

Recognising and responding to student concerns

Your group may raise a number of concerns and issues around AI based on their prior experience. There may be cases where these issues are a source of distress to particular students. The bullet points below are issues that you could come up, so that you can be prepared to address, or park these as appropriate for your group.

Note that, from the perspective of the feedback activities, both a desire for more AI in education, and a desire to wholly reject AI in education, are legitimate positions to take.

- **Inequality of access** - not all students have access to digital devices, or can afford subscriptions to AI tools. Talking about prior experience of AI may be uncomfortable for those who are economically or digitally excluded.
- **Environmental impacts of AI** - students may be concerned about the impact of AI on climate change. The 'environmental impacts' issue worksheet provides space to discuss this.
- **AI Friend Apps -** students may have experience of AI companion apps, and have concerns about emotional reliance on these.

[1] https://pshe-association.org.uk/guidance/ks1-5/handling-complex-issues-safely-classroom

- **Artificial General Intelligence and Existential Risk** - some people are concerned that if 'Artificial General Intelligence' was ever developed, this would result in 'super-smart' computers that could threaten humans. There is no scientific consensus on whether AGI is possible, although there are strong arguments that current claims about AGI reflect hype rather than reality.
- **Copyright infringement** - some people take a strong position that, because all current generally available generative AI models were trained on copyright materials, their use constitutes copyright theft.
- **Poor quality / over-hyped** - some students may raise their experience that, in practice, AI tools do not live up to the hype: drawing on experience of using tools that turned out to provide poor quality answers, or unhelpful information. This is no settled science on whether generative AI tools can continue to improve, or whether their capabilities have plateaued.
- **Job losses** - some students may be concerned about the impact of AI on future employment markets. The impact of AI on the job market is outside the scope of this particular workshop, but concerns about how use of AI in education impacts young people's readiness for future employment could be included in feedback activities.
- **Deepfakes - including non-consensual deepfakes** - some students may raise concerns about AI-generated imagery of people (deepfakes) and how these could be used or abused, including cases of pornographic deep fakes. It may be helpful to signpost to your settings online safety resources if this topic comes up. If appropriate, redirect discussions towards whether or not we can trust information generated by AI.

Detailed session plan

Part 1: Introducing generative AI in education

By the end of this section, you should have established the focus of the discussions on generative AI in education.

Generative AI is a specific form of artificial intelligence, based on using models that have been trained by finding patterns in large amounts of data (text, images, video etc).

Prepare

- **Review the slides** on AI and the right of children and young people to have a say.
- **Set up a 'parking lot' space (**flip-chart; whiteboard space etc.) for issues that come up that can't be addressed during the workshop
- **Check if your own school/college/organisation has a policy on use of generative AI**, as you may get asked about this.
- [Optional] The Department for Education has published online materials to support staff in schools and colleges in England to use AI safely and effectively. You might find it helpful to have reviewed these resources, which could be found on Gov.UK here.

If you want to read more about definitions of AI and generative AI, the Scottish AI Alliance have produced this useful explainer as part of their Children's Rights and AI Teaching Pack (note: the Lesson FAQs in the explainer relate to the Scottish AI Alliance teaching pack, not this resource - although many are still useful to review as they provide answers to questions that might come up from your group).

Additional supporting resources (optional):

- What is AI? - AI explained for and by children! (part 1)
- Rights of the Child animation

Deliver

Short version (5 mins)	**Full version (10 mins)**	***With additional time...***
Present the 'Introducing AI' and 'Your say' slides. Skip the 'What can AI do?' activity.	Present the 'Introducing AI' and 'Your say' slides. Spend 2 - 3 minutes on a class brainstorm for 'What can AI do? What can't AI do?'	Show the Scottish AI Alliance 'What is AI? - AI Explained for and by children!' during your introductory slides. Get students to answer 'What can AI do? What can't AI do?' on paper / mini-white-boards before sharing to the class.

Example answers

If you run a class brainstorm on what AI can, and can't do, examples could include:

What can AI do?	What can't AI do?
Answers are likely to describe particular uses of AI. Archetypal examples of generative AI are indicated below with *. Many other uses of AI might now incorporate elements of generative AI, but they were mostly possible and in widespread use *before* the advent of generative AI. • **Predict songs /films you may like** (recommendation systems) • **Filter social media posts** • **Medical research** (analysing scans, predicting disease, developing new treatments) • **Recognise speech or handwriting** • **Control robots** (Automation, navigation) • **Translate languages** • **Control 'Non-Playable Characters' in computer games** • **AI line judges in sports** • **Facial recognition** • **Write essays*** • **Create videos and images** from text prompts** • **Write poems*** • **Advanced chatbots*** • **Write software code***	Answers might be more focussed on concepts - expressed in age-appropriate ways: (e.g. emotional limits of AI as 'AI can't be your friend'), or might be based on examples of AI limitations students have heard about (e.g. 'AI can't recognise black faces as well as white ones'[2]) • **Get every answer right** - generative AI systems don't have a concept of true or false: they just predict likely next words / pixels • **Understand people -** AI mimics understanding, and can misinterpret subtle cues in language • **Common sense reasoning** - AI is based on patterns in data, not a conceptual understanding of the world. • **Empathy or emotional intelligence** - again AI can mimic emotional behaviour, but does not have genuine empathy or compassion. • **True creativity** - AI can't create novel concepts or ideas outside of finding patterns in its training data. • **Be accountable** - the people who use and design AI systems should be accountable for their impacts. AI systems cannot be held accountable.

Gathering feedback

During this section of discussion, be open to comments about any form of AI. You may find it useful to write issues that are raised down on a flip-chart to 'park' them for future discussions.

[2] This was a finding from research in 2018: http://gendershades.org/ - subsequently many systems have been given more diverse training data, which has reduced this disparity.

Part 2: How can generative AI be used in education

By the end of this section you should have given the group an awareness of specific ways in which generative AI could be used in education, and started to reflect on the benefits or problems of these uses.

In a short session, this is a learning activity only. In a full session you can optionally have a class discussion on top-3 and bottom-3 tools.

Prepare

- **Review the tool cards** and familiarise yourself with them.
- **Print out the Tool Cards worksheets**. You can either cut these into individual cards, or give them as single pages to small groups.
- **Review the slides** for this section and delete the activity slides you are not using

Deliver

Short version (10 mins)	Full version (20 mins)
Ask each small group to look at four different tools (one worksheet each) and to discuss: • What do you think the **benefits** might be with using this kind of tool in education? • What do you think the **problems** might be with using this tool for education? After 6 - 7 minutes, ask a few students to give feedback to the class about the tools they were looking at and the benefits or problems they identified. It may not be possible to cover all tools in the time available.	Distribute the tool cards equally between tables. Ask individuals or small groups to place their tool card in the middle of a piece of paper / mini-white-board and write down **benefits** on one side, and **problems** on the other. After 10 minutes invite brief feedback from tables, and then use one of the feedback activities below to identify the **top 3** and **bottom 3** tools.

Feedback activity

In a full workshop session you can discuss the **top 3 tools** (benefit outweighs problems) and **bottom 3 tools** (problems outweigh benefits) for AI in education, as identified by your group.

You can use a range of ways to identify top and bottom tools. Choose from:

- **Class vote: show of hands:** After hearing student feedback, run through the list of tools and for each, ask for a show of hands from students who think the benefits of the tool

outweigh the challenges. Count up the votes to find the top-3 and bottom-3.

- **Carousel and dot-voting:** Give each student three red and three green sticky dots, and invite them to move around the room looking at the annotated tools, and using their green dots to vote for the tools they feel have strong benefits, and red for those they feel have more problems (remind them this is about the strength of the points made, not the number of points on each page). If you don't have sticky dots, ask students to use ticks or crosses (maximum of 3 of each).

  Count up the dot votes and discuss class agreement on the resulting top-3 and bottom-3.

You may want to appoint a particular student to keep a tally of votes.

	**Working with feedback** • Do the top and bottom tools students have identified match decisions around the use of AI in your setting? • Would you make any different choices about the use of Generative AI in education as a result of hearing student views?

Part 3: Issues for generative AI in education

By the end of this section you should have given the group an opportunity to explore some of the critical issues that could be taken into account when considering the use of AI in education.

Prepare

- **Familiarise yourself with the AI issue worksheets**
- **Print out the Issues worksheets -** enough for each student to look at 2 - 3 issues.

Deliver

Short version (10 mins)	**Full version (20 mins)**	***With additional time...***
Handout a set of issues to each table. Encourage the group to work individually or in pairs reviewing an issue at a time, and thinking about who the views they agree or disagree with, and writing their own views. They can use colour or ticks or crosses to indicate agreement/disagreement.	After 10 minutes of individual work, invite a full group discussion of issues. Go around the group and invite students to briefly introduce the issue they were reading about, and what they think of it.	With more time, students will be able to look at a larger number of issues, and to spend more time in group discussion.

Alternatively, if you feel your group will not be able to independently review issue worksheets, a slide version of each issue is available at the end of the slide deck.

Feedback

There is not a specific feedback activity for this part of the session. However, encourage students to make sure issues they feel strongly about are captured in the Creative Expressions section if you are including that.

Part 4: Have your say

In early 2026, the Department for Education hosted an international summit on generative AI in education. In advance of the summit, groups running this workshop voted on a set of statements about generative AI, and their views were fed into the Summit. 10 of these statements were developed with the Department for Education, and 10 further statements were suggested by student groups.

You can use the same statements to explore student attitudes towards Generative AI. You can do this in three ways:

(1) **You could use a 'human spectogram' activity:** Label one end of the room 'Agree', and the other 'Disagree'. Reach each statement out and ask students to move to represent whether they agree or disagree with the statement.

Explain students can choose to be in the middle if they are not sure, or closer to a particular end to indicate where their opinion 'leans' even if they are not certain.

Ask a few students to explain why they have chosen their position. Other students can move if they are convinced by the reasons others have given.

(2) **You could hold a class vote**: discuss the statements first, and then hold a show of hands vote to record how many people agree or disagree.

(3) **Online voting**: you could set-up an online form (e.g. Google forms) with the statements and space for each student to record whether they agree or disagree.

This works well for students to complete individually, and then you can discuss the results in a later session.

We originally used a special installation of the pol.is platform, hosted by the Department for Education. Depending on the age of your group and your local policies, you could set-up a hosted or local version of pol.is which offers a way of finding clusters of opinion amongst your students.

Deliver

Short version (10 mins)	Full version (10 mins)	With more time
Pick the statements most relevant to your group, and show them in a random order. Show statements on screen.		You can spend longer discussing each statement before voting, or could hold a debate, with speakers for and against.

Use your chosen approach to see whether the group agree or disagree with these statements.	

Feedback

	**Working with feedback** Did student views on these statements match your expectations? Are their views aligned with how generative AI in education is currently used. If your setting is currently considering different options for your own uses or, or policies for, generative AI in education, you could include additional statements in this activity.

Part 5: Have your say: creative expressions

In this section you will be inviting the group to produce creative expressions that share their views on generative AI.

You can choose to run a single creative feedback activity, or print out the different worksheets and give group members a choice.

You can adapt the activities to run on paper or digitally as appropriate to your group.

Prepare

- **Choose which activities you will use and print or prepare the appropriate worksheets**
    - **Writing:** Feedback to an AI Maker
    - **Design:** Design your App
    - **Drawing:** Visions with and without AI

- **Update the slide deck to remove activities you don't need**
    - Choose whether you want to show the worked example to your group or not (depending on age, stage and time available, this may help them get started, or could be a constraint on their creativity)

- **Make sure you have appropriate pens or other materials.**

Deliver

Short version (5 mins)	Full version (20 mins)	Extended (25 mins or more)
Introduce the worksheets as an optional homework activity. Agree how you will collect in finished work and when.	Introduce the worksheets and support each group member to choose which creative response they want to focus on.	Provide space for the group to feedback their creations to each other.

Gathering feedback

	**Working with feedback** Look at the creative feedback. What themes does it suggest?

Part 6: What next?

A report from student input to the original workshop in a box workshop can be found at https://connectedbydata.org/resources/generative-ai-in-education-report

If you use inputs from this workshop to make decisions about Generative AI in your educational setting, we would love to hear from you: tim@connectedbydata.org