



Developing a Classroom AI Policy

Target Grade: 6th – 12th grade

Time Required: One 90-minute class period

Standards

ISTE Standards for Students

- **Digital Citizen:** Students recognize the responsibilities and opportunities for positively contributing to their digital communities.
- **Knowledge Constructor:** Students critically curate a variety of resources using digital tools to construct knowledge, produce creative artifacts, and make meaningful learning experiences for themselves and others.
- **Innovative Designer:** Students use a variety of technologies within a design process to identify and solve problems by creating new, useful, or imaginative solutions.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1:** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners.

Lesson Objectives

Students will:

- Explain the difference between ethical and unethical uses of AI in schoolwork.
- Recognize the potential consequences of misusing AI tools in academic environments.
- Collaborate with peers to draft an AI Use Policy that reflects classroom values and promotes responsible technology use.
- Explain their reasoning and communicate their perspectives effectively during group discussions and policy creation.
- Develop an awareness of their responsibilities as ethical users of technology, including citing AI tools appropriately.

Central Focus

This lesson introduces students to the ethical and practical implications of using artificial intelligence (AI) in education. It is great for the beginning of the school year to set the tone for AI use in your classroom. Through discussions, collaborative activities, and real-world scenarios, students will explore the benefits and risks of AI tools, reflect on classroom values, and develop an AI Use Policy for the classroom that



promotes responsible and effective technology use. The lesson emphasizes critical thinking, digital citizenship, and collaboration while preparing students to navigate the evolving role of AI in their academic lives.

Key terms: AI literacy, AI rules, AI guidance, group, team, collaboration, ethical, ethics

Materials

- [AI scenarios worksheet](#)
- [AI policy template](#)
- Optional: computers or tablets with internet access for interactive sharing
- Optional: sticky notes

Instruction

Brainstorm Potential Classroom Uses of AI (10 minutes)

- Students enter the classroom and jumpstart their thinking by writing answers to the bell-ringer questions:
 - What are some AI tools that you know about? Try to list at least three.
 - For each AI tool, answer the following
 - What can this tool do?
 - How could it be used for school?
 - How could it be misused at or for school?
- Building on the bell-ringer questions, begin with a short discussion on artificial intelligence (AI) and its applications in school. Students are likely to identify tools like ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, and other chatbots. They may also identify image generators such as DALL-E or slide generators such as SlidesGo or Canva.
- Talk about the misuses that they identified, focusing on the potential effects of misusing AI. Sample responses are:
 - Turning in an AI-generated essay as your own work is cheating. You could get in trouble and you won't learn anything.
 - Using AI to find answers during tests isn't fair.
 - Relying on AI to tell you answers may result in you not actually learning content.
 - Using AI to create fake data or impersonate someone can lead to ethical and reputational issues.
- Review the learning objectives and explain to students that they will work together to determine the AI Use Policy for the class for this year.

Values Discussion (10 minutes)

- Lead a discussion with the class on the purpose of school, learning, and your specific class. Use questions such as the following:
 - Why do people come to school?



- What matters most in our classroom?
 - What are your goals related to our learning?
- Make notes on the board recording student answers, focusing on answers that align with the values you want for your class.
- Connect the values and student answers to comments made during the introduction.
 - If a core value in our class is originality, how does that relate to writing an essay with AI?
 - If a core value in our class is learning, how does that relate to using an AI chatbot to create practice questions?

Review Scenarios (15 minutes)

- Break students into small groups of about three. Pass out the AI Scenarios worksheet. Alternatively, project the scenarios on the board or share within your virtual classroom.
 - While doing homework, a student uses an AI chatbot on their phone to clarify complex concepts from the textbook, such as summarizing key points or explaining difficult terms.
 - The day before an exam, a student uses an AI chatbot to generate practice quizzes and flashcards to help them prepare.
 - A student types homework questions into an AI chatbot and writes modified versions of the answers given by AI on their paper.
 - A student copies and pastes an essay they wrote into an AI chatbot to check grammar, spelling, and sentence structure before submitting it.
 - While getting started on a group project, a student uses AI to brainstorm ideas, helping the team develop creative approaches to their assignment.
 - A student uses AI to generate an essay and submits it as their own work without proper citation or acknowledgment.
 - During an online exam, a student uses AI to find answers to test questions.
 - While at home, a student uses AI to learn coding, language translation, or a different skill outside of their regular curriculum.
 - A student uses AI to create fake research data for their science fair project instead of conducting an experiment.
 - During class, a student uses an AI chatbot on their phone from inside their hoodie pocket to get answers to the teacher's verbal questions.
 - A student copies their blank homework worksheet into AI and asks it to provide answers to the questions.
 - A student with a learning disability copies and pastes the teacher's notes into an AI tool to simplify complex materials for easier understanding.
- Have students discuss the scenarios and determine whether each scenario represents an ethical or unethical use of AI.
- Students should record notes on their worksheet so they can refer to them during the upcoming discussion.



- For groups that complete the activity early, have students rank the scenarios from least harmful to most harmful.

Brainstorm Suggestions for the Policy (15 minutes)

- Explain to students that together, as a class, they will use what they've learned so far and their opinions on ethical use of AI technologies to develop a classroom AI use policy.
- The first step will be to brainstorm ideas for the policy within small groups. Then, the class will come together to discuss ideas and create the final policy.
- Explain to students that the classroom policy should clearly outline:
 - The acceptable uses of AI for the class
 - The prohibited use of AI
 - Guidance on how to cite AI use for the class
 - Consequences for not following the policy
- Remind students of the classroom values identified earlier and encourage them to connect their policy suggestions to classroom values.
- Instruct students to use the information on classroom values, potential uses of AI, and other previous knowledge to develop suggestions for guidelines on AI use in this class.
 - Provide the AI Policy Template to support learners as needed.
 - This small group brainstorming portion can be accomplished with pencil and paper, via a virtual classroom, on a Padlet or your favorite other brainstorming tool.
- Depending on your students, you may need to heavily influence the section on citation.
 - You can see examples for different ways to cite AI at <https://guides.lib.purdue.edu/c.php?g=1371380&p=10135074>
 - For younger learners, it may be good enough to add a note on any assignment for which they used AI that states "[AI Tool] was used to..." and then have them add, in their own words, what they did with AI. For example:
 - ChatGPT was used to generate ideas for this project.
 - Gemini was used to do a grammar check of this paper.

Create Policy (35 minutes)

- Have student groups share their drafted guidelines with the class.
 - Ideally, students will share using an interactive tool such as Padlet, a Google Document, or a class discussion board. This will encourage participation from quieter students.
 - If your classroom doesn't have access to an interactive tool, a discussion will work well. Use a method such as writing ideas on sticky notes or using popsicle sticks to select a random student to share to ensure that you hear ideas from all students.
- Once all ideas are listed, allow students to add comments or use sticky dots to vote on ideas that they feel are important.
- As a class, discuss differences between guidelines, resolve disagreements, and combine the best ideas into a single classroom AI policy that covers:
 - The acceptable uses of AI for the class



- The prohibited use of AI
 - Guidance on how to cite AI use for the class
 - Consequences for not following the policy
- Present the new AI Use Policy to the class
 - Print and hang the policy in your classroom or post to your virtual classroom or LMS
- Remind students that AI tools are rapidly evolving and that this policy can be revisited and revised as needed.

Closing (5 minutes)

- Answer written closing questions and follow with a short discussion, if time allows.
 - Do you feel that our AI policy is thorough? Why or why not?
 - Are there any changes you'd make to the policy at this point?
 - How will this AI policy help you to develop as a learner?

Differentiation

- **For Students Less Familiar with AI:** Share a short introductory video or infographic about AI tools and their capabilities. Provide examples of commonly used AI tools to help them brainstorm during the bell-ringer activity.
- **For Kinesthetic Learners:** Use hands-on activities, such as physically sorting scenario cards into "ethical" and "unethical" categories.
- **For Students Who Need Additional Support:**
 - Pair them with peers during group work to provide scaffolding.
 - Offer sentence stems or prompts for discussions (e.g., "I think this use of AI is ethical because...").
 - Provide simplified versions of the AI scenarios with fewer technical terms.
- **For English Language Learners (ELLs):**
 - Offer translations of key terms or a glossary of AI-related vocabulary.
 - Use visuals, videos, or demonstrations to support comprehension.
 - Pair them with bilingual peers or provide sentence frames for discussions.

Background Information

Before implementing this lesson, teachers should reflect on their own perspectives regarding the use of AI in their classroom. While the goal of the lesson is to create a collaborative AI Use Policy with student input, teachers may have specific "hard nos" or non-negotiable rules they want to ensure are addressed. For example, a teacher may decide that using AI to generate entire essays is strictly prohibited or that all AI-assisted work must be cited appropriately.

Teachers should have a general idea of their desired approach to AI use in the classroom. This includes identifying acceptable uses of AI, such as using it for brainstorming, grammar checks, or accessibility purposes, and considering how AI can align with classroom values like originality, learning, and academic



integrity. By clarifying their own stance beforehand, teachers can guide discussions effectively while ensuring the final policy reflects both student input and their educational priorities.

It is also important for teachers to understand that this lesson is on creating a classroom-specific policy for AI use, not a lesson on digital citizenship or responsible AI use as a whole.

Prior to this lesson, students should have the following basic knowledge:

A basic understanding of what AI is and some common applications in daily life (such as voice assistants, recommendation systems, etc.) will be beneficial. Students do not need in-depth technical knowledge but should grasp that AI involves machines or programs performing tasks that typically require human intelligence. AI includes a lot of different types of tasks from generating text to recognizing faces to driving cars.

Students should have some familiarity with common AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, DALL-E, Grammarly) and their basic functions (e.g., generating text, creating images, checking grammar). They should also have a general idea that AI can be used in school for things like research, writing, making presentations, and studying.

An understanding of digital citizenship, including the ethical use of technology and internet safety, is crucial. Students should be aware of the importance of respecting copyright, privacy, and the responsible use of AI tools.

Before engaging in discussions about the use of AI in education, students should have a basic understanding of what constitutes ethical and unethical behavior. Ethical behavior refers to actions that align with principles of honesty, fairness, respect, and integrity. In the context of schoolwork, this includes completing assignments independently, citing sources properly, and contributing original ideas. Unethical behavior, on the other hand, involves actions that violate these principles, such as cheating, plagiarism, or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own.