

## Make your assignments work better in a world where students have AI tools



### Engage: Take a closer look at your assignments

#### Step 1: Pick an assignment to work with

Choose one assignment you currently use with students. Think about:

- A writing assignment
- A research project
- A problem-solving task
- A creative project

#### Step 2: Think through how AI might affect this assignment

For the assignment you picked, work through these questions:

Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

If students used AI to complete this assignment, what would they miss learning?

---

---

---

What are you really trying to teach or measure with this assignment?

---

---

---

What parts could AI handle easily? If you're having students practice something AI can do well, why?

---

---

---

What parts need human thinking, creativity, or personal experience?

---

---

---

## Engage: Take a closer look at your assignments (continued)

### Step 3: Redesign your assignment

If you worked through the values activity earlier in “Your values and AI,” think about how your values can guide this redesign. Here are some ways to make assignments work better when students have AI tools:

- **Make it personal:** How can you connect this assignment to your students’ own experiences, communities, or interests in ways AI can’t replicate?
- **Focus on process:** How can you see students’ thinking process, not just their final product?
- **Add real-world context:** How can you put this assignment in a situation that requires student judgment and decision-making?
- **Include reflection:** How can you ask students to reflect on their learning process and explain their thinking?
- **Design for collaboration:** How might students work together in ways that require discussion, debate, or peer feedback?

### Step 4: Set clear AI guidelines for students

Instead of banning AI completely, be specific about how students can and can’t use it. Clear guidelines help everyone stay on the same page. For example:

#### Students **CAN** use AI to:

- ☐ Brainstorm initial ideas
- ☐ Get feedback on drafts
- ☐ Research background information
- ☐ Check grammar and spelling
- ☐ Generate practice problems
- ☐ Create images with Image Playground
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Students **CANNOT** use AI to:

- ☐ Write their final responses
- ☐ Generate their main arguments
- ☐ Complete their analysis/evaluation
- ☐ Create their personal reflections
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Engage: Take a closer look at your assignments (continued)

### Students **MUST**:

- ☐ Cite when and how they used AI
- ☐ Explain their thinking process
- ☐ Demonstrate personal understanding
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Investigate: Examine best practices

### See it in action

**Before:** “Write a five-paragraph essay comparing two historical figures.”

**After:** “Choose two historical figures who faced similar challenges to ones in your community today. After researching their approaches (you may use AI for initial research), interview a community member about how they’ve faced similar challenges. Write a reflection comparing the historical approaches to your community member’s experience, explaining which strategies you think would be most effective today and why. Include a brief note about how you used AI in your research process.”

### Why this redesign works:

- **Personal:** Connects to student’s own community
- **Process-focused:** Requires interviewing and personal reflection
- **Authentic:** Real-world application to current issues
- **Reflective:** Students explain their reasoning and AI use
- **Collaborative:** Involves community member interview

### Before you try your redesigned assignment

Check these boxes to make sure it’s ready:

- ☐ Does this assess what I actually want students to learn?
- ☐ Will completing this assignment help students develop important skills?
- ☐ Is it clear to students when and how they can use AI?
- ☐ Does this require students’ personal thinking, creativity, or judgment?
- ☐ Will I be able to see evidence of student learning and growth?
- ☐ Does this connect to real-world situations or contexts?

## Investigate: Examine best practices (continued)

### Guidelines for designing assignments in an AI world

- **Focus on learning, not catching cheaters:** Make AI use part of the learning process rather than trying to catch students using it when they shouldn't.
- **Think “both/and” instead of “either/or”:** Create assignments that need both AI help and human thinking.
- **Make thinking visible:** Use reflections, peer discussions, drafts, and process work so you can see how students think.
- **Connect to purpose:** Help students understand why they're learning these skills and how they'll use them later.
- **Keep expectations high:** Just because students can use AI doesn't mean the work should be easier — it's often more complex and challenging.

## Act: Think about what you learned

### Reflect on your experience

- How did working through this redesign process change your thinking about assignments in an AI world?
- What was trickiest about figuring out when students should and shouldn't use AI?
- How would you explain these changes to students and parents?
- What help would you need to make AI-aware assignments work in your classroom?