Tips for Framing Discussions with your Students about AI

May, 2026

Plan for the Workshop

The presentation will cover:

1. Broad considerations Related to AI

2. Potential Impacts on Learning and Cognitive Development

3. Academic Integrity and Honest Work

Currently undergoing community consultation, *Champlain's Guiding Principles for the Use of Artificial Intelligence* can also be used to community learning priorities to your students.

The document stipulates 7 guiding principles:

1. Lifelong Learning and Development
2. Valuation of Human Experience and Expression
3. Quality and Efficacy of Education
4. Accountability and Integrity in Studying and Learning
5. Critical Thinking
6. Well-Being of Individuals, Community, and Environments
7. Privacy, Information Security, and Leveraging Technology

The principles are elaborated to show what is at stake (both positive and negative possibilities) in using AI for learning.

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Guiding Principles for the Use of Artificial Intelligence for Teaching and Learning at Champlain College-Lennoxville

Prepared by the Techno-Pedagogical Advisory Committee

Winter 2026

1. Broad Considerations Related to AI

- This section concerns some broad topics related to AI.
- These topics will not all be appropriate to every course or possible to broach in all teaching contexts.
- It is nevertheless important that students receive some of this information at some point early in their studies.

What is (Generative) AI?

AI, including generative AI, commonly refers to software and computer technologies that use very complex series of algorithms to ***transform digital data in ways that appear to mimic the complex thought and actions of human beings***.

What is (Generative) AI? (*Continued)*

Generative AI is NOT:

- *a magic oracle, a genie, or otherwise mysterious source of knowledge;*
- *an entity with subjecthood, desires, aspirations, feelings, intentions, or any kind of personal identity;*
- *literally able to 'speak', 'think', 'believe', 'affirm', 'want', etc.*
- *actually 'intelligent' in the common sense of the word.*

Generative AI is:

- *A very complex algorithm (or series of algorithms)…*
- *used to transform existing digital data into new data…*
- *that is interpreted by human users as information…*
- *which they are statistically likely to appreciate or find coherent.*

What is (Generative) AI? (*Continued)*

It is useful to recall that **Large Language Models** (LLMs) **do not actually process information *linguistically*** using any kind of natural language (like English or French, for example).

LLMs **reduce text-based *information* to *tokens***, small combinations of letters or characters.

(ChatGPT 4 used about 100,277 such symbols or tokens, while ChatGPT 5 uses about double that number. See Andrej Karpathy, "Deep Dive Into LLMs.")

What is (Generative) AI? (*Continued*)

- LLMs are then ‘trained’ by processing massive amounts of text and data to establish patterns and statistical relationship between textual characters.

- ‘Parameters’ establish how certain tokens are associated with one another, or the statistical probability according to which various characters will be found together.

What is (Generative) AI? (*Continued*)

Why does this matter for a non-specialist?

- When an LLM generates text, it does *not do so* by 'contemplating' possibilities, by reasoning, by comparing likely 'true' responses, or by speculating about what will please the user.

- **Extraordinarily complex algorithms simply rearrange sets of data and tokens that are mechanically translated back into characters that we read as language**.

Summary of what to bring to your students #1

- LLMs and Generative AI are machines or tools and should be used as such.
- Generative AI agents are not intelligent in the usual sense of the word, and are not ‘collaborators’ with any kind of agency or responsibility.

Ecological Considerations

There are **some hopes that generative AI can be made more energy efficient.**

Some hope that AI computing power **can be used to develop technologies and strategies** to help solve some sustainability problems.

But for the moment, the infrastructure required to sustain generative AI is energy intensive, makes large contributions to carbon emissions, uses up important water supplies, and creates electronic waste.

Social and Psychological Considerations

In many cases it might be possible to use these tools to humanistic ends, but that might not always be the motivation behind their production and advertisement.

As Microsoft and other massive tech companies are **trying to attract users and to make them dependent on their tools and services**, it is important to remember that these companies are **profit-driven**.

"Educating Kids in the Age of A.I.," *The Ezra Klein Show*.

May 13, 2025, with guest education author Rebecca Winthrop.

The Race to Attract Young Users or Adherents:

"They are racing to get allegiance of young kids. This is terrible because those products are not designed for children and for learning."

Potential Impacts on Psychological Health

"From a developmental perspective, adolescence is a critical period for identity formation and interpersonal skill-building.

AI companion apps that are endlessly accommodating and emotionally responsive can circumvent this process by providing an easier alternative to in-person, spontaneous human interactions [...].

Overreliance on technology may inhibit the development of resilience and conflict resolution skills.

Teens accustomed to the instantaneous responsiveness of AI may find real-world relationships frustratingly complex, exacerbating the crisis of loneliness."

"AI could broaden access to mental health support but also harm mental health.

Twelve percent of adolescents use AI for mental health and emotional support. AI can assist with mental health diagnosis or refer resources to users, but therapy and counseling are traditionally built on human interaction and connection.

Chatbots often do not respond constructively to mental health inputs and may encourage self-harm or suicide in struggling adolescents."

Social and Philosophical Perspectives

Not everyone is equipped (or wants) to teach philosophy or social science, but **students can be encouraged to 'check in with themselves' and keep an eye on their own mental health and the well-being of those around them**.

"**Mental breakdown of varying degrees is the very common result of** [social] uprooting and **inundation with new information and endless new patterns of information**."

— Marshall McLuhan ("The Medium is the Message," p. 16).

"**Anything time-consuming is on the way out. Truth is time-consuming.** Where bits of information come in quick succession, we have *no time for truth* [...].

Everything that stabilizes human life is time-consuming. **Faithfulness, bonding and commitment are time-consuming practices** [...].

Today, we pursue information without gaining *knowledge* [...].

We communicate incessantly without participating in a *community*.

We collect vast quantities of data without following up on our *recollections* [...]"

—Byung-Chul Han, *Non-Things*, p. 6-7.

Economic Impacts

- Leaders in industry and government are generally in agreement that AI will have a large impact on various industries and jobs.

- ‘White-collar’ jobs, jobs with a clerical aspect, etc., are expected to be the most affected.

- Amazon and other companies are also making a considerable effort to replace workers with robots.

- Even for jobs that do not disappear, some predict that the nature of many kinds of work will change.

  - For many kinds of work, employees will have to be adept at using AI to improve efficiency and solve-problems.

For these reasons, **teachers and students should take seriously the need for basic forms of computer literacy** and at least some minimal practical knowledge of generative AI.

Not every teacher can be individually responsible for this part of students' education; but **all teachers can demonstrate a proactive attitude and demonstrate that learning about AI is part of preparation for work and further studies**.

Programs can then strategize for how and where to introduce learning about AI into their programs.

Summary of what to bring to your students #2

- Generative AI has some potential to be a useful tool in many domains.
- It is likely to be an increasing part of many forms of work and many areas of research and study.
- However, students should remain critical about its limitations and possible negative side effects.
- For ecological reasons, they should not use it too superfluously (for example, to render large format videos that they do not really intend to use).
- Students should try to monitor their own use of AI and consider its impacts on their mental health, their relationships, and the world around them.
- Remind students to sometimes take things slowly, and to develop the discipline required to learn new habits and to form deeper reflections, connections, and ways of interacting.

2. Potential Impacts on Learning and Cognitive Development

Within higher education, the primary concern is about whether AI is promoting or inhibiting learning outcomes.

An important preliminary MIT study in late 2025 suggested that use of AI to write essays **resulted in short term benefits** in terms of the apparent quality of the work. **However**, it also resulted in:

- Students writing essays **without mentally processing** the content;
- The promotion of a form of **'metacognitive laziness,'** where students offload cognitive and metacognitive responsibilities to the AI, **hindering their ability to engage deeply with the learning material** (p. 19);
- More **biased information querying** with LLM-powered conversational search (p. 21);
- **Psychological dissociation from the written output**;
- Essays being written that carried a **lesser significance or value to the participants** (p. 143).

Cognitive offloading can be positive in certain contexts—for skipping repetitive tasks such as formatting a document, rearranging text in some systematic way, or processing some information in a procedural manner that requires little thought or higher-order skills.

The important thing is for teachers to communicate to students about the **difference between**:

(a) **Productively cognitively offloading some work** for the sake of efficiently completing a task; versus

(b) **Unproductively cognitively offloading work or study**, thereby bypassing any development of literacy, competency, discipline, intellectual curiosity, etc.

Truth and Inquiry

Besides the well-known phenomenon of “hallucinations” (which are increasingly avoidable), LLMs can also be subject to subtle forms of **algorithmic bias**.

The MIT study also suggested that, “**The conversational nature of LLM interactions compounds [the effects of algorithmic bias]**, as users can engage in multi-turn conversations that progressively narrow their information exposure” (p. 21).

LLMs cannot really be designed to find ‘truth’.

They primarily deliver content that is supposed to be appealing to the user.

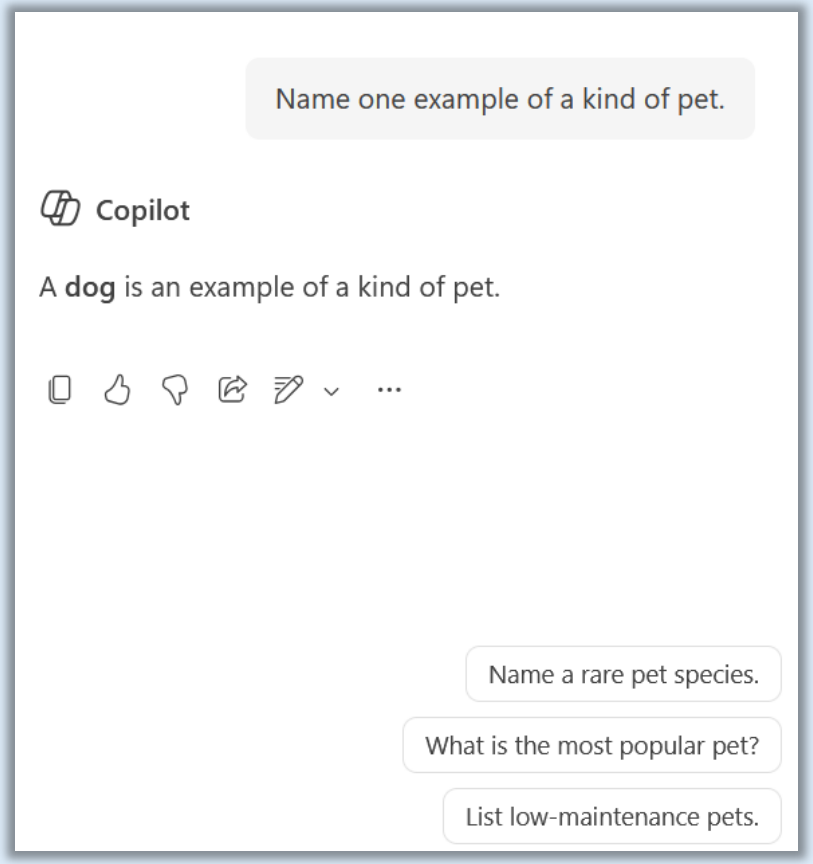
They simulate sycophantic behaviour, and do not necessarily support a Socratic search for truth.

Practical Exercise 1!*

Try having your students together, each on their own device, pose questions to Copilot. For example:

- Ask students to write into Copilot: “Name one example of a kind of pet.”
- Have students ask Copilot to “Name a random number between 1 and 50.”

See how many students get different responses. Have them compare the ‘follow-up’ suggestions offered by Copilot.



Use this to preface a conversation about the kinds of deeper research and thinking skills you would like them to develop in your course, and the limitations of AI for research and critical thinking.

*Adapted from a presentation given by Stephane Paquet at Intercollegiate Ped Day, January 13, 2026; later published in Eductive.

Basic Forms of Literacy and Discipline Methodology

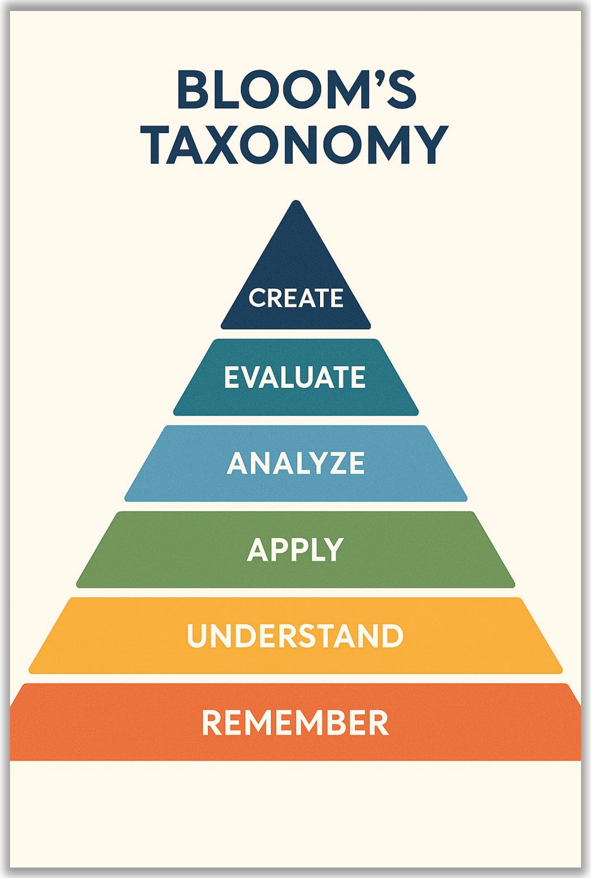
Bring your students (and yourself!) back to the basics: *ɣ ẽÎ qf̂ ờcº qẽcºẽ̊sl åÎ κ cl qî īºẽ! Î īɔº̣ ẽ̊ủ! sờ̊ạ! sờcº̂ l åºqẽcºợ̀ ẽ̃ờ̂ κ 3*

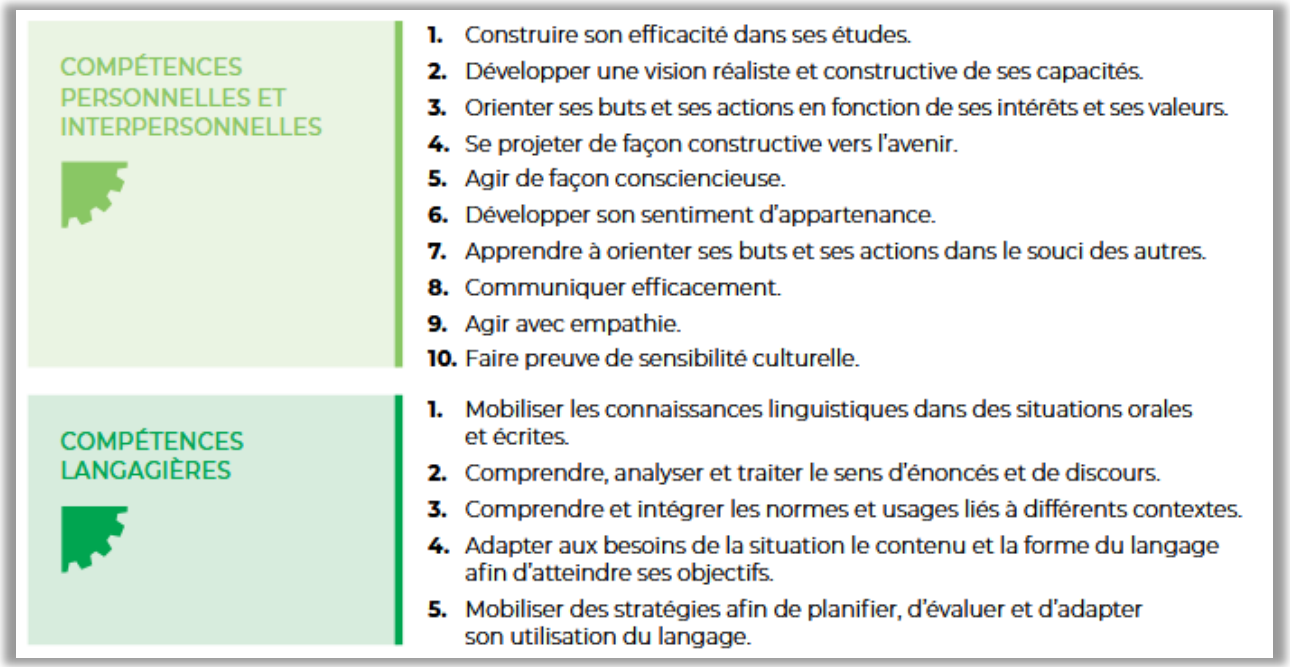
When possible, find ways to bring discussions back to the **specific competencies of the course and to the exit profile of the program** so that students can understand the implications of using LLMs or generative AI to help finish the work.

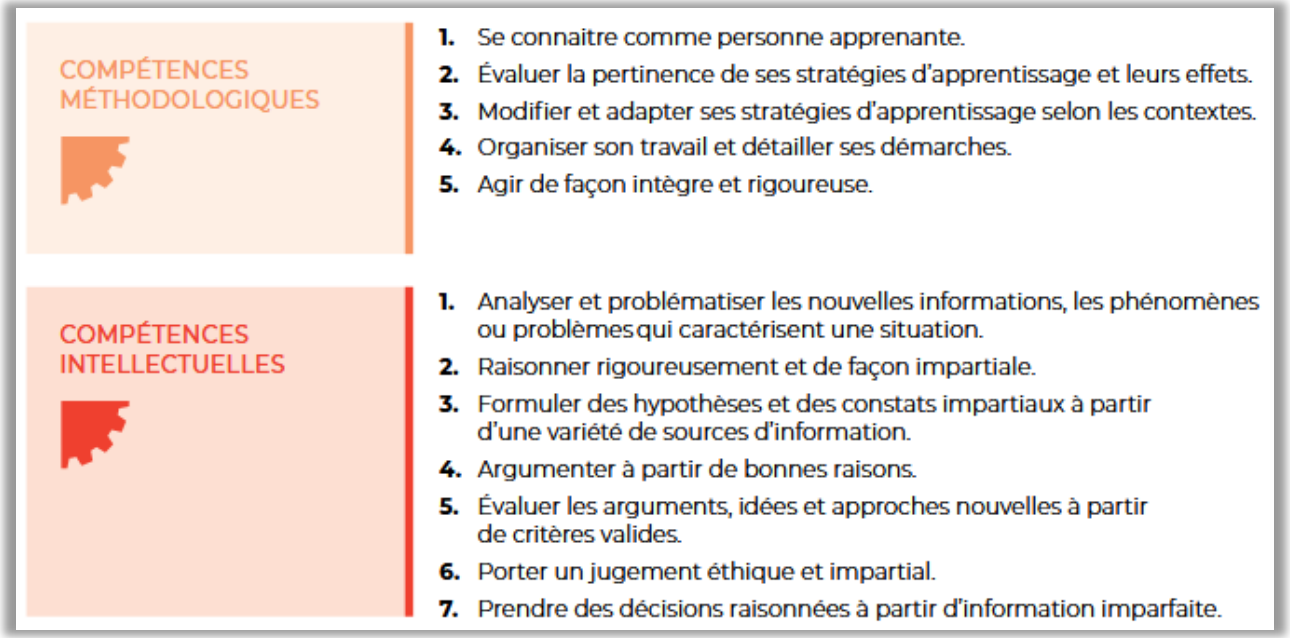
Discuss with students:

(a) *σợ̀ åsạḑ ẽ̃º̂ ºσợ̀ åsạqºẽ! κ cù! ờ̈ ºɔsäκ ɡɔḑ l* versus

(b) **developing taste, discipline, judgement**, **problem-solving skills, literacy** (of various kinds), etc.



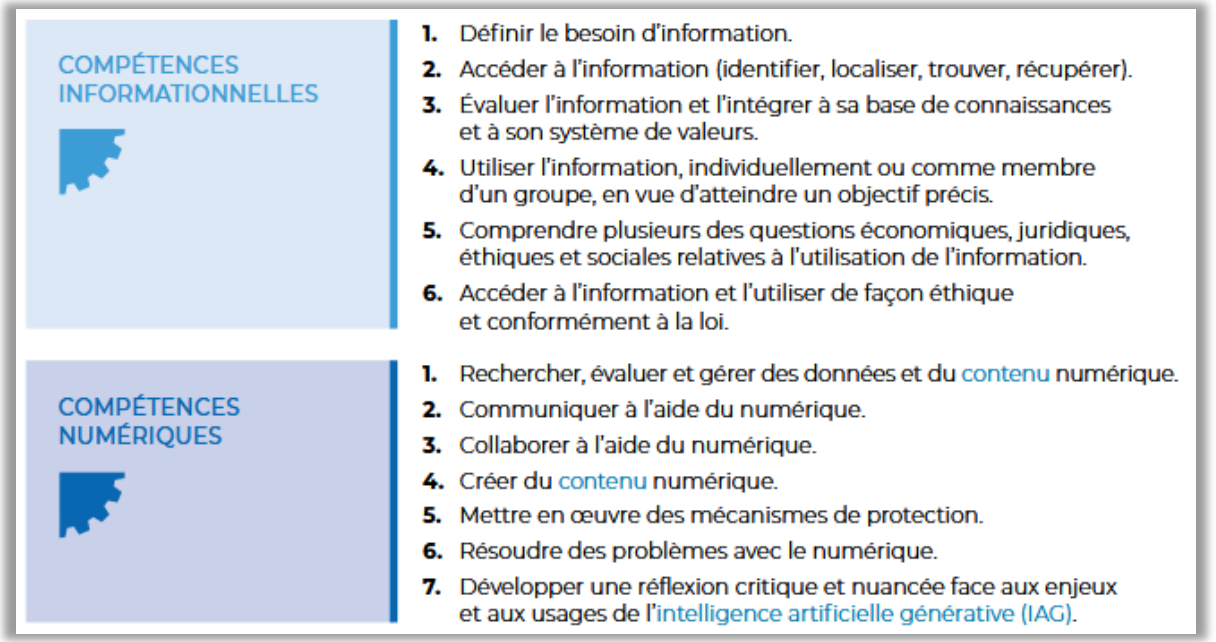




It is impossible to know with certainty what specific task-based skills will be needed on the job market in 5 or 20 years; but we can assume that some basic sorts of competency will be essential for a flourishing life.

These competencies are valuable as part of a person's fundamental way of moving through the world.

Most of us would feel that something important is missing when we outsource (or cognitively offload) these tasks to generative AI.



Référentiel de développement des compétences essentielles aux études postsecondaires, created by Université de Québec and several cégeps, 2026.

Impacts of AI on Fundamental Competencies

- Some researchers have observed that use of LLMs—at least in current, popularly available forms—decrease users' metacognitive abilities and assessment of their own skills.

- *That is, using LLMs made users overestimate their own ability to complete tasks (even with the use of the LLM).*

"Performance and Metacognition Disconnect when Reasoning in Human-AI Interaction," D. Fernandes et al.

Practical Exercise! 2 *

Have your students try out various forms of conversation and track the results; or show them your own positive/negative examples of a conversation with a generative AI agent.

This negative example (right) shows a student having practiced very few competencies; though the student might not know why this method of producing work is problematic for their learning.

Teachers might have other, less essential tasks in mind for which AI *could* be productively used; or there might be more productive uses of AI for essential tasks; and that can be modeled as well.

*Adapted from a presentation given by Stephane Paquet at Intercollegiate Ped Day, January 13, 2026.

Student: Hey. I'm working on a philosophy essay about Plato's Republic. We're supposed to analyze a short passage and explain what Plato means. I'm not totally sure how to read it. Can you help?

AI: Yes. You can paste the passage here, and I can explain what it means and how it supports Plato's argument.

Student: Great. Here's the passage. *(Pastes excerpt.)*

AI: This passage is part of Plato's discussion of knowledge and belief. Plato is arguing that true knowledge comes from understanding unchanging Forms, while most people mistake opinions based on appearances for real knowledge.

Student: Okay. That makes sense. So how would I turn that into an essay paragraph?

AI: Here is an example paragraph explaining the passage and connecting it to Plato's broader argument in *The Republic*. *(Provides a polished analytical paragraph with a topic sentence, textual explanation, and conclusion.)*

Student: That's pretty much what I would have said, just written better. The assignment asks for three body paragraphs. Can you do two more using different parts of the passage?

AI: Yes. Here are two additional body paragraphs, each focusing on a different aspect of Plato's argument.

Student: Awesome. Can you write an introduction and conclusion too? I'm never sure how to start and end essays.

AI: Here is an introduction that outlines Plato's concerns about knowledge and education, followed by a conclusion that summarizes the analysis and restates the main claim.

Student: Yeah, that sounds right. I think I get Plato now—he's saying people don't really know things unless they understand the deeper truth behind them.

AI: That is a general summary of the argument, yes.

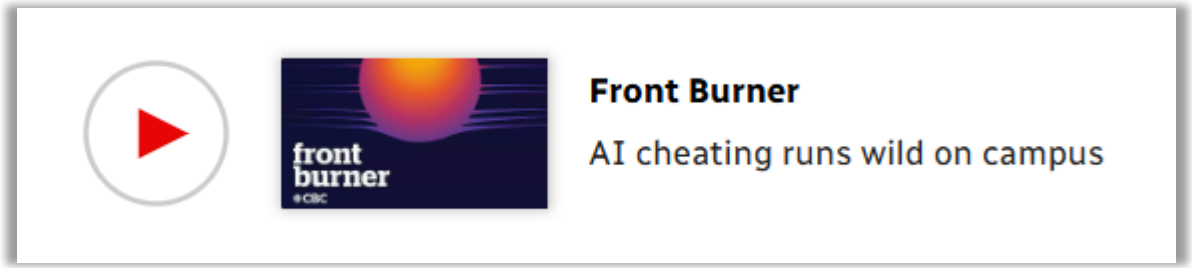
Summary of what to bring to your students #3

- Teach students about algorithmic bias and other limitations of generative AI (especially for learning).
- Introduce students to thinking about competencies and the development of their skills.
- Discuss the deeper kinds of research and thinking skills you want them to practice and acquire in your course.
- Warn them about the long-term effects of cognitively offloading tasks that are intended to help them develop essential competencies.
- Explain the difference between learning/practicing skills vs. completing a product-oriented task efficiently.

3. Academic Integrity and Honest Work

Some formal and informal research suggests that **60% – 90% of higher education students are using generative AI to complete their schoolwork, with 4-5% using it to cheat**.

"**More than half of students now use generative AI** to help with their assessments, according to a survey by the *Higher Education Policy Institute*, and **about 5% of students admit using it to cheat**."



May 30, 2025

Students might have different conceptions than their teachers about what constitutes "legitimate" use of AI.

"...I spoke to a student at a top university in New York City [...]. [S]he started off our conversation saying, 'I am totally against cheating' [...].

But what she did instead [...] was she asked ChatGPT to generate an outline and topic sentences for each paragraph of an essay. So, essentially, this chat bot was coming up with the idea, the topic sentences. And she [...] had to do a kind of paint by numbers for her essay [...].

She was very proud of how quickly she can do this [.... S]he said she started the assignment the morning it was due, woke up early and spent two hours on it and filed the assignment when normally, it would have taken her, you know, four or five days of writing [...]."

"**Many academics seem to believe that 'you can always tell' if an assignment was written by an AI** [...]. Researchers at the University of Reading recently conducted a blind test in which ChatGPT-written answers were submitted through the university's own examination system: **94% of the AI submissions went undetected and received higher scores than those submitted by the humans**."

If given work to produce at home unsupervised, students who are very adept with generative AI will be able to produce work using AI such that it will be difficult for the instructor to trace.

Some lesson-design tips are here.

Two (2) broad ways to avoid some of these difficulties:

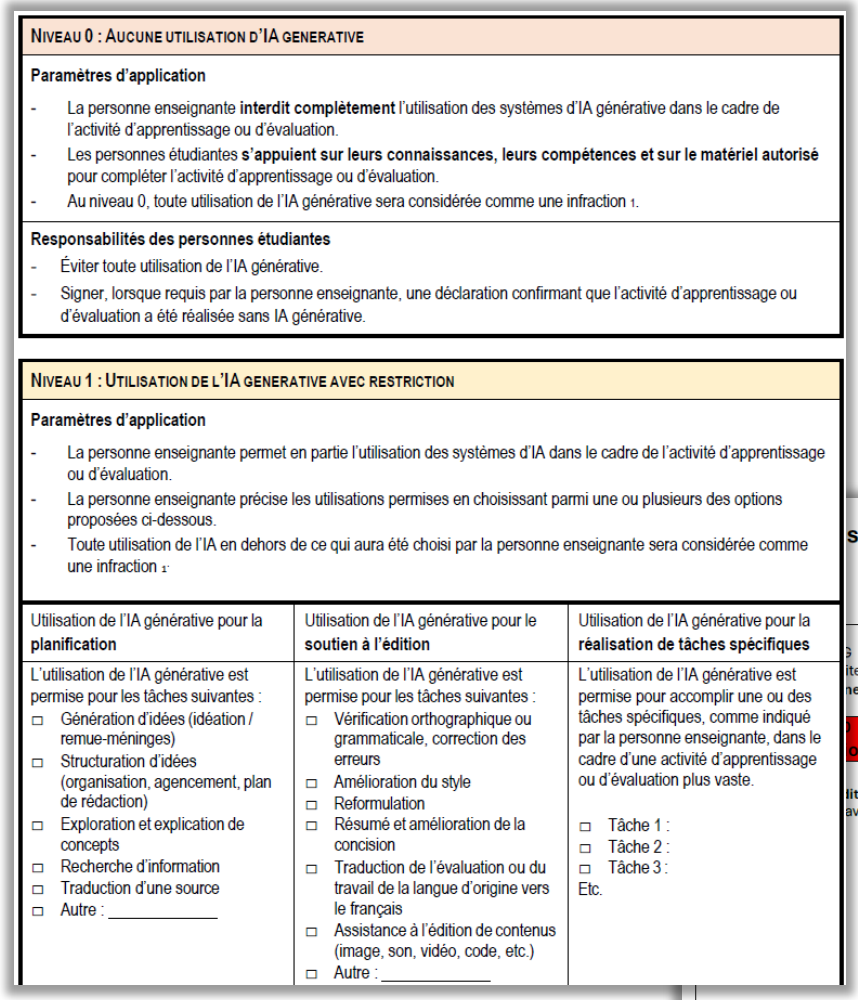
I. Get clear with students what the permitted and forbidden uses of AI are.

II. Use alternative kinds of assignments.

It will be difficult to get students to (a) understand and (b) embrace the rules you have set out if you have not discussed points from the previous sections with them.

To begin with, try to offer reasonably precise directions concerning what is and is not permitted.

Some documents available at Champlain can help get you started. Other examples include these from the Cégep de l'Outaouais and the Cégep de Sherbrooke.



NIVEAU 0 : AUCUNE UTILISATION D'IA GENERATIVE

Paramètres d'application

- La personne enseignante **interdit complètement** l'utilisation des systèmes d'IA générative dans le cadre de l'activité d'apprentissage ou d'évaluation.
- Les personnes étudiantes **s'appuient sur leurs connaissances, leurs compétences et sur le matériel autorisé** pour compléter l'activité d'apprentissage ou d'évaluation.
- Au niveau 0, toute utilisation de l'IA générative sera considérée comme une infraction [1].

Responsabilités des personnes étudiantes

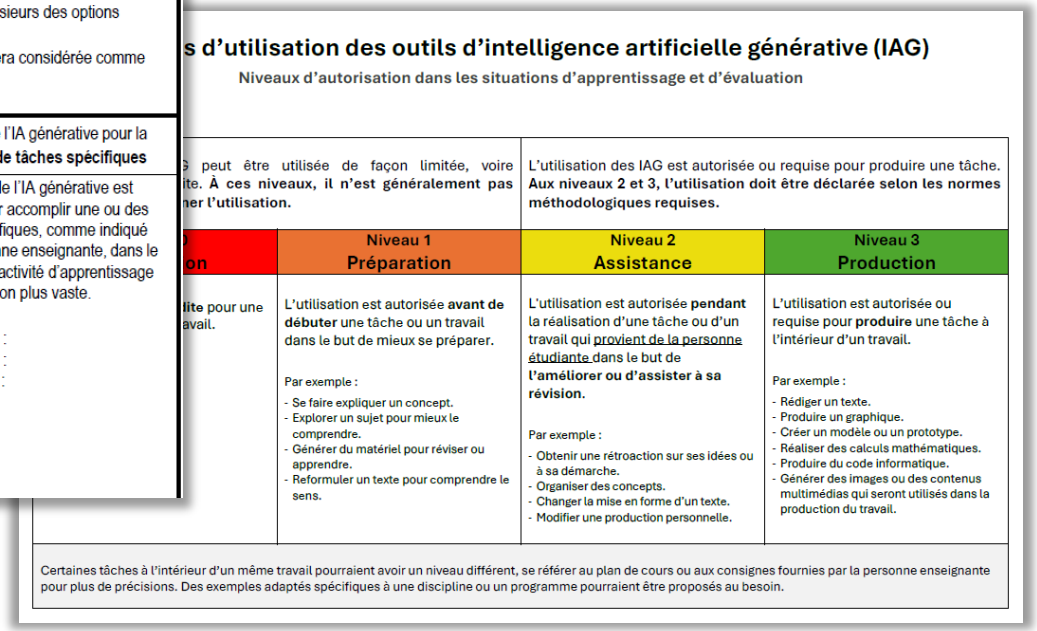
- Éviter toute utilisation de l'IA générative.
- Signer, lorsque requis par la personne enseignante, une déclaration confirmant que l'activité d'apprentissage ou d'évaluation a été réalisée sans IA générative.

NIVEAU 1 : UTILISATION DE L'IA GENERATIVE AVEC RESTRICTION

Paramètres d'application

- La personne enseignante permet en partie l'utilisation des systèmes d'IA dans le cadre de l'activité d'apprentissage ou d'évaluation.
- La personne enseignante précise les utilisations permises en choisissant parmi une ou plusieurs des options proposées ci-dessous.
- Toute utilisation de l'IA en dehors de ce qui aura été choisi par la personne enseignante sera considérée comme une infraction [1].

Utilisation de l'IA générative pour la **planification**	Utilisation de l'IA générative pour le **soutien à l'édition**	Utilisation de l'IA générative pour la **réalisation de tâches spécifiques**
L'utilisation de l'IA générative est permise pour les tâches suivantes : ☐ Génération d'idées (idéation / remue-méninges) ☐ Structuration d'idées (organisation, agencement, plan de rédaction) ☐ Exploration et explication de concepts ☐ Recherche d'information ☐ Traduction d'une source ☐ Autre : _____	L'utilisation de l'IA générative est permise pour les tâches suivantes : ☐ Vérification orthographique ou grammaticale, correction des erreurs ☐ Amélioration du style ☐ Reformulation ☐ Résumé et amélioration de la concision ☐ Traduction de l'évaluation ou du travail de la langue d'origine vers le français ☐ Assistance à l'édition de contenus (image, son, vidéo, code, etc.) ☐ Autre : _____	L'utilisation de l'IA générative est permise pour accomplir une ou des tâches spécifiques, comme indiqué par la personne enseignante, dans le cadre d'une activité d'apprentissage ou d'évaluation plus vaste. ☐ Tâche 1 : ☐ Tâche 2 : ☐ Tâche 3 : Etc.



s d'utilisation des outils d'intelligence artificielle générative (IAG)

Niveaux d'autorisation dans les situations d'apprentissage et d'évaluation

	Niveau 1 Préparation	Niveau 2 Assistance	Niveau 3 Production
on **lite** pour une avail.	L'utilisation est autorisée **avant de débuter** une tâche ou un travail dans le but de mieux se préparer. Par exemple : - Se faire expliquer un concept. - Explorer un sujet pour mieux le comprendre. - Générer du matériel pour réviser ou apprendre. - Reformuler un texte pour comprendre le sens.	L'utilisation est autorisée **pendant** la réalisation d'une tâche ou d'un travail qui provient de la personne étudiante dans le but de **l'améliorer ou d'assister à sa révision.** Par exemple : - Obtenir une rétroaction sur ses idées ou à sa démarche. - Organiser des concepts. - Changer la mise en forme d'un texte. - Modifier une production personnelle.	L'utilisation est autorisée ou requise pour **produire** une tâche à l'intérieur d'un travail. Par exemple : - Rédiger un texte. - Produire un graphique. - Créer un modèle ou un prototype. - Réaliser des calculs mathématiques. - Produire du code informatique. - Générer des images ou des contenus multimédias qui seront utilisés dans la production du travail.

L'utilisation des IAG est autorisée ou requise pour produire une tâche. **Aux niveaux 2 et 3, l'utilisation doit être déclarée selon les normes méthodologiques requises.**

peut être utilisée de façon limitée, voire ite. **À ces niveaux, il n'est généralement pas ner l'utilisation.**

Certaines tâches à l'intérieur d'un même travail pourraient avoir un niveau différent, se référer au plan de cours ou aux consignes fournies par la personne enseignante pour plus de précisions. Des exemples adaptés spécifiques à une discipline ou un programme pourraient être proposés au besoin.

Practical Exercise 3!*

One helpful way to distinguish uses of AI is to divide them between uses for **studying** versus uses for doing **homework or assignments**.

Consider asking students to suggest ways in which they have used AI or would like to use AI for their schoolwork.

Studying	Homework
Creating flash cards?	Writing a draft of an essay?
Organizing a student's own notes?	Creating an annotated bibliography?
Validating non-credit practice work?	Reading a text for comprehension?

What about other uses?: **Generating ideas for paper topics? Using generative AI to suggest improvements to a draft of a paper that a student has written? Having an AI agent suggest possible sources to consult which the student will then read and validate?**

In discussing these particular cases, teachers and students can become better aligned on expectations, and teachers can have a chance to explain the reasoning behind the rules.

*Adapted from a presentation given by Stephane Paquet at Intercollegiate Ped Day, January 13, 2026.

In the case that some forms of generative AI are accepted, give students clear instructions on how to trace their work or indicate their use of AI.

Text generated by AI Chat	Key Terms or Concepts	Credible Source to Verify the Important Information	Student's Own Reformulation of the Generated Text/Information

This example (adapted from a 2024 REPTIC working group document) guides students' use of AI.

Students ultimately have to **produce their own words**, **consult legitimate sources**, and **show how AI was used** as a tool to get them started.

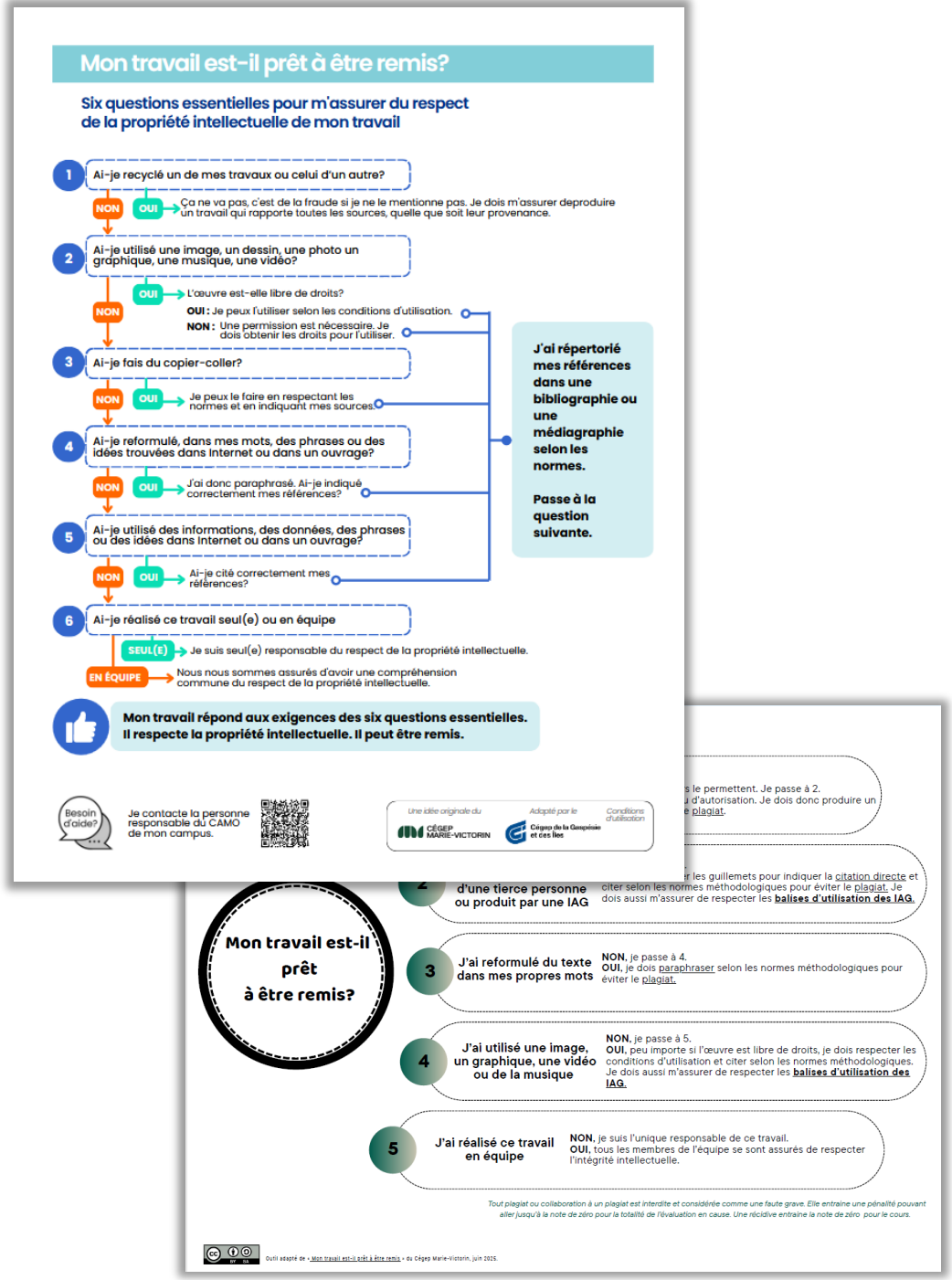
Contracts, checklists, flow charts, etc.

Several tools can be used to at least help your students check in with themselves about whether their work has been prepared adequately.

Before an assignment or at the beginning of the term, you can **ask your students to agree to a contract** about how studying and schoolwork should be done.

Students can be asked to **submit checklists along with graded work**. Items might include, “I have thoroughly read the text/sources on which my work is based”; “All text in my submission was written exclusively by me”; etc., specifying the basic conditions under which students were expected to work.

Flow charts can help students determine for themselves whether their work is ready to submit.



Summary of what to bring to your students #4

- Try to be as clear with your students as possible what the expectations are.

- Try to offer tools to help them verify the validity of their own work and track their use of AI as required for your course.