



Teacher Resource

Media Literacy Week – AI

Focus Questions

As a class, discuss the stories featured in the episode of BTN Classroom and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following focus questions.

Is AI Conscious?

1. What is consciousness?
2. Why might people think a chatbot is conscious?
3. How are scientists trying to test AI's intelligence?
4. Do you think AI could ever become conscious? Explain your thinking.
5. What questions do you have about this story? Compare with a classmate.

AI and Copyright

1. Summarise the BTN story in 3 sentences.
2. What is copyright?
3. How do AI systems learn to create pictures, music and text?
4. Should AI companies ask permission before using an artist's work to train their AI models? Why or why not?
5. Has watching this story changed the way you think about AI and copyright? Explain your answer.

Real or AI?

1. In pairs, discuss the story and record the main points of your discussion. Share your points with the rest of the class.
2. Why is it becoming harder to identify AI images and videos?
3. AI is increasingly being used to scam people. Give an example.
4. Has watching the BTN story changed the way you think about images and videos online? Explain.
5. What is one thing you will do differently when you see something surprising online?

AI and Education

1. What did a recent report find about students' use of AI?

EPISODE 30

27 October 2026

KEY LEARNING

Students will develop their understanding of artificial intelligence, investigate different perspectives on AI and its impacts, and communicate informed opinions about the responsible and ethical use of AI.

CURRICULUM

Digital Technologies – Year 5/6

Explain the creation and permanence of their digital footprint and consider privacy when collecting user data.

[AC9TDI6P10](#)

Evaluate existing and student solutions against the design criteria and user stories and their broader community impact. [AC9TDI6P06](#)

Digital Technologies – Year 7/8

Investigate and manage the digital footprint existing systems and student solutions collect and assess if the data is essential to their purpose.

[AC9TDI8P14](#)

Evaluate existing and student solutions against the design criteria, user stories and possible future impact.

[AC9TDI8P10](#)

English – Year 5

Plan, create, edit and publish written and multimodal texts whose purposes may be imaginative, informative and persuasive, developing ideas using visual features, text structure appropriate to the topic and purpose, text connectives, expanded noun groups, specialist and technical vocabulary, and punctuation including dialogue punctuation.

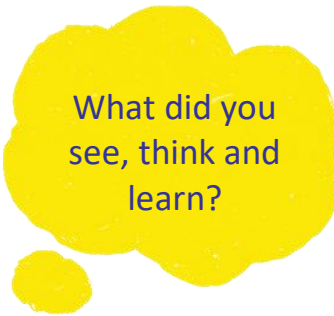
[AC9E5LY06](#)

2. What does Dr Jenny Donovan believe about students using AI?
3. What is EdChat and how are students using it to help them with their schoolwork?
4. What are some of the risks and benefits of using AI for schoolwork? Record on a T Chart.
5. What did you learn from this story?

Activity: Is AI Conscious?

Before watching the BTN story...

- What does the word conscious mean? How would you explain it in your own words?
- What makes humans different from computers or robots?
- Do you think a computer could ever have feelings?



What did you see, think and learn?

While watching the BTN story...

- What examples of AI are discussed in the BTN story?
- What questions do you have about AI and consciousness?

After watching the BTN story...

- Do you think AI can be conscious? Why or why not?
- How could we test whether a machine is conscious?
- How has your thinking changed after watching the story?
- What question do you have about the story?

Activity: Key words – AI and Copyright

Students will brainstorm a list of key words that relate to the BTN AI and Copyright story. Here are some words to get them started.

Copyright

Creator

Intellectual Property

Copyright laws

Permission

AI-generated

Original work

AI models

Activity: AI and Copyright Investigation

Students choose one of the questions below to investigate or develop their own question. Use reliable sources to:

- Identify different points of view.
- Find evidence that supports each perspective.
- Consider who might benefit and who might be disadvantaged.
- Develop your own conclusion based on the evidence.
- Suggest a possible solution or rule for making AI and copyright fairer.

Research Questions

- Should AI companies be allowed to use people's creative work to train AI without asking permission? Why or why not?
- Which is more important when developing AI - encouraging innovation or protecting creators' rights? Can both be achieved?
- What responsibilities should AI companies have when developing tools that create content?
- How might copyright rules encourage people to keep creating art, stories and music?
- Should artists be paid if their work is used to train an AI tool? Explain your reasoning.

Activity: Interview a Creator

AI is changing how people write stories, make art, create music and produce news. But what do the people who do those jobs think about it? Students interview a creative professional or journalist to find out how AI affects their work, their views on copyright and what they think the future might look like. Alternatively, if students can't access a professional, invite a guest speaker to the classroom or provide an online interview for students to analyse.

Choose someone to interview

Students could interview:

- An illustrator, artist or graphic designer
- A journalist or author
- A photographer or filmmaker
- A musician or songwriter

They could interview someone in person or by sending them questions in writing.

Prepare your questions

Students can develop their own questions or choose from those below. Aim to ask at least five questions.

- Have you used AI in your work? If so, how?
- How do you think AI is changing your profession?
- How would you feel if an AI company used your work to train its AI without asking your permission?
- Do you think creators should be paid when their work is used to train AI systems? Why or why not?
- What do you think AI companies should do to respect copyright?
- How can you tell if AI-generated content has copied or closely resembles an existing work?
- Do you think AI will create more opportunities or challenges for people in your industry?
- What advice would you give young people who want to use AI creatively and responsibly?
- What rules or protections would you like to see for creators using or affected by AI?

Report your findings

Students create a short report to share with their class. Include the following in the report:

- Who you interviewed and what they do.
- Three important things you learnt.
- Their interviewee's views on AI and copyright.
- One surprising or interesting response.
- Their own opinion - Has the interview changed the way you think about AI and creativity? Explain why or why not.

Class discussion

Students will share their findings, discuss:

- Did the people you interviewed have similar or different views about AI?
- Who should be responsible for protecting creative work: the creator, the AI company, governments or everyone?
- How can we benefit from AI while respecting the people whose work helps make it possible?

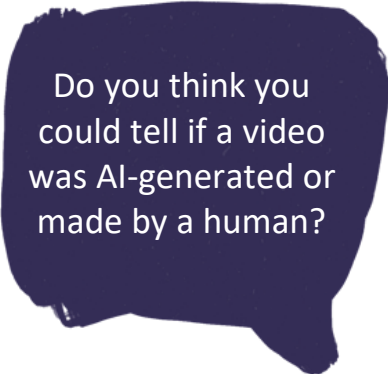
Activity: Real or AI Challenge

Class Discussion

Start this activity by asking your students the following question: *Do you think you could tell the difference between an AI-generated video and a video made by a human?* Students will respond with a yes, no or maybe.

Ask students to explain how they can tell whether videos are AI-generated or created by humans. Discussion starters:

- Have you ever seen a video that you thought was made by AI?
- How can you tell if a video is AI-generated?
- Do you think AI-generated videos always look fake?



Do you think you could tell if a video was AI-generated or made by a human?

Challenge

Students will then become AI detectives. Together as a class, students will watch and investigate six videos, look for visual clues and decide whether each was created by AI or a human.

Whilst looking at each video ask students to look for clues that can help them investigate the video, for example:

- Are there objects in unusual places?
- Do hands, fingers faces or body parts look incorrect?
- Are there objects that seem to blend into one another?
- Do you notice any shadows or reflections that don't look right?
- Are there repeated patterns that look unnatural?
- Is any part of the video blurry?
- Does the background fit with the rest of the image?
- Does anything look artificial or out of place?

Students will make their predictions using the table below. Students will note down any visual clues they notice and explain why they made their decisions. **Note for teachers:** The links below will take you to a compilation of videos that BTN has put together from a range of social media platforms. Please preview the videos before watching together as a class.

	My Prediction – AI, Real or Unsure	Visual clues I noticed	Why I made this decision
Video 1 – Shark lands on fishing boat			
Video 2 – Person falls through hole in floor			
Video 3 – Cat and TV in loungeroom			
Video 4 – Zebras running down the road			
Video 5 – Fisherman slipping and falling into water			
Video 6 – Watchimals toy			

Students will compare their answers with a classmate. Reveal the answers to your class!

Answers

Video 1 – Shark lands on fishing boat	Real
Video 2 – Person falls through hole in floor	Real
Video 3 – Cat and TV in loungeroom	AI
Video 4 – Zebras running down the road	Real
Video 5 – Fisherman slipping and falling into water	AI
Video 6 – Watchimal advertisement from the 1980s	Real

Reflection

Students will reflect on the AI challenge and respond to the following questions.

- How many did you get correct?
- Which video was the hardest to identify?
- How difficult was the challenge?
- How can you tell if videos have been generated using AI? What are some things to look for?
- Why might it be difficult to tell the difference between an AI-generated videos and a human created video?
- What could you do to check whether a video is made using AI or not, if you were unsure?

Activity: AI and Education

Think – Pair – Share

After watching the BTN story, students will think about their own opinions, share their ideas with a partner and listen to what others think about the issue of using AI in education. By exploring the benefits and challenges of using AI in school, they'll develop their own informed opinion and use it to create a persuasive text.

Ask students to think about the question: *Should students use AI at school?*

Think— Form your own opinion

Students read the statements below and decide whether they **agree**, **disagree** or are **unsure**.

- AI can help students understand difficult topics.
- Using AI to complete homework stops students from learning.
- Students should always tell their teacher when they use AI.
- All students should have equal access to AI learning tools.
- AI should never replace a teacher.

Students write down their opinion about whether students should use AI at school and at least two reasons to support their view.

Pair — Discuss your ideas

Students share their opinions with a partner then consider whether they agree with their reasoning.

Use these discussion starters:

- I believe students should/should not use AI because...
- One benefit of AI in education is...
- One risk of using AI at school is...
- I understand your point of view, but...
- I hadn't considered that...
- You have made me think differently about...

Share — Learn from different perspectives

Hold a class discussion. Students share their ideas and listen to other students' arguments.

As a class, identify:

- The strongest argument for using AI at school.
- The strongest argument against using AI at school.
- One rule that could help students use AI responsibly.

Reflect and write

After the discussion, students complete these sentences:

1. My original opinion was...
2. One idea my partner shared was...
3. My thinking has changed/stayed the same because...
4. The strongest reason supporting my opinion is...

Persuasive Text

Students write a persuasive text responding to the following statement:

Students should be allowed to use AI to help with their schoolwork.

Students will weigh up the pros and cons of the issue and then write a short persuasive argument using the following as a guide.

Introduction

- What is the point you are trying to argue? Construct an introductory paragraph which states the issue or topic.
- Introduce the arguments that will be developed in the body of the text.

Body

- Construct arguments that support your point of view.
- Each paragraph starts with a topic sentence which introduces each point.
- The rest of the paragraph gives more reasons.
- Arguments can be ordered from strongest to weakest.

Conclusion

- Restate your position on the argument.
- Construct a concluding paragraph that provides a summary of your arguments and a call to action.

Tips

- Who is your audience? For example, are you directing your argument at kids, teachers, or politicians?
- Explore how language choices can have a big impact on persuading your audience.
- Which language devices give the report credibility and authority?
- Which are designed to create an emotional response in the listener?
- Provide facts and evidence to support your argument.
- Write in the present tense.
- Check your spelling and punctuation.

Use this *Read Write Think* [persuasion map](#) to plan your exposition text.

Reflection

- How difficult was it to think of points to support one side of the argument?
- Do you think you would have done a better job supporting the other side of the argument?
- Was I able to convince others of my opinion?
- What did you learn from this activity?

Useful Websites

- [Sentient AI](#) – BTN
- [AI Companions](#) – BTN
- [AI Art](#) – BTN
- [Creative AI](#) – BTN

- [AI Music](#) – BTN
- [Viral Video Challenge: Can You Spot the AI Fakes?](#) – BTN High
- [Can you tell if these artworks were created by artificial intelligence or a human? Take our quiz](#) – ABC News
- [How to spot fake and AI images](#) – ABC News



Teacher Resource

BTN Transcript: Episode 30 – 27/10/2026

Hey, I'm Amelia and you're watching BTN, and today we have a special episode for Media Literacy Week that's all about AI. We're going to find out about the AI copyright debate, test your skills at spotting a fake and look at the effects of chatbots in the classroom. All that soon.

Is AI Conscious?

Reporter: Wren Gillett

INTRO: But first to something a little more philosophical. Could a computer ever actually feel happy, sad, or alive? As AI gets smarter, some experts think the idea of artificial consciousness might not be science fiction any more. Here's Wren.

THE MITCHELLS VS THE MACHINES: We're not robots, just humans, yes. Like you.

For a long time, humans have dreamed of creating machines just like us.

FUTURAMA: You really want a robot for a friend?

RON'S GONE WRONG: Dad? Oh, Dad!

WREN GILLETT, REPORTER: And for more than half a century, we've been trying to make that happen.

The first Artificial Intelligence conference was held here in the US in 1956. These scientists talked seriously about the possibility of creating machines that could talk and learn like us.

TV REPORTER: It does everything around the office, except make the tea.

70 years and many breakthroughs later.

WREN: Some are convinced we're already there.

TV REPORTER: You believe they can understand?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

TV REPORTER: You believe they are intelligent?

INTERVIEWEE: Yes.

There are now AI models that have answered maths questions no humans have ever been able to solve. AI agents have done things humans didn't want them to do. Anthropic has even decided to ban people from saying nasty things to its chatbot Claude.

DAVID CHALMERS, PHILOSOPHER AND COGNITIVE SCIENTIST: A lot of people are starting to take seriously the idea that these systems are conscious. Consciousness is our private, subjective experience. How it feels to see, to hear, to feel pain, to feel emotions, to think.

This is David Chalmers, he's a philosopher who's spent a lot of time thinking about thinking.

WREN: And he thinks that the way AI is going, there's a possibility that it could become conscious, with its own ideas and motivations. Basically, a silicon version of us.

DAVID CHALMERS: So, so far, even the most expert scientists and philosophers writing about this cannot be 100 per cent sure whether these models are conscious or not. I think a world is coming where we are going to be sharing this world with another kind of intelligence, namely, namely AI, and we should maybe start to prepare for that time.

WREN: But others say we're nowhere near that time.

ANIL SETH, NEUROSCIENTIST: They simulate consciousness. We project consciousness into them in the same way we might project faces into clouds.

Anil Seth is a neuroscientist, who has spent a lot of time studying our brains, and he says we only think AI is like us, because of our natural tendency to anthropomorphise, which means to see humanness in things that aren't human.

ANIL SETH: They use the personal pronoun like I, you know, "I think this", "I think that". It's no surprise that when a system uses that way of speaking and calls itself I, that we think there's a mind behind it.

He says that makes chatbots dangerous, because we're more likely to turn to them for advice or confide in them instead of a human. Anil says AI is just code, even if it sometimes behaves in ways we don't expect. And while it can do amazing things, it isn't conscious,

WREN: But here's another question. How would we know if it was?

DAVID CHALMERS: Even with other people, you know, we assume that other people are conscious because they're like us, but we don't really understand consciousness.

Because we can only ever experience the world with our own senses, it's practically impossible to know what other people are thinking or feeling, let alone machines. The best we can do is try to come up with tests that measure how good AI is at processing information, and that's happening right now. For example, there's the 'Needle in the Haystack', which asks AI models to read millions of words and identify the answer to one random and super specific question. But whether tests like these actually prove genuine intelligence like ours, or just fabulous programming, is something we may never agree on. Still, some reckon these are important questions to ask.

DAVID CHALMERS: If AI systems are conscious, we suddenly have to ask questions like; Is it suffering? Is it in pain? Or is it happy?

WREN: Now even Professor Chalmers here doesn't think AI is conscious yet, and a lot of experts agree. Even your chatbot will tell you it's not conscious.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: No, I'm not conscious. I'm just a language model, not experiences.

WREN: See? But look, who knows what's going to happen in the future, or how this technology will change the world.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: Totally. The future is open and tech could reshape society in ways that aren't obvious yet. And that's part of why it's worth thinking about.

Quiz

Can you name the famous test for artificial intelligence developed by a British mathematician in 1950? Is it the Eliza test, the Lovelock test or the Turing test? It's the Turing test, developed by Alan Turing. Basically, it proposes getting someone to communicate via text with a computer and a human. If they can't figure out which is which, the computer passes the test.

Can you name the world's first chatbot? Was it HAL, Alan or Eliza? It was Eliza. The chatbot was developed between 1964 and 1967 at MIT in the US by computer scientist Joseph Weizenbaum.

In 1997, which famous IBM computer made global headlines by defeating the reigning world chess champion, Garry Kasparov?

VOICEOVER: Garry is not a happy camper.

Was it Deep Blue, HAL 9000 or ENIAC?

VOICEOVER: A devastating win for the supercomputer.

It was Deep Blue.

GARRY KASPAROV: ...that if Deep Blue will start playing competitive chess.

Can you name the ancient Chinese board game that a Google AI program won against a world Champion in 2016? It's Go. It's more complex than chess, so when Google's AlphaGo beat the world champion, Lee Sedol, well, that was a big deal.

AI and Copyright

Reporter: Wren Gillett

INTRO: Now to another huge debate going on in the world of AI that's all about copyright. Many artists and authors say their work has been used without permission to train AI and that sometimes generated content can look very familiar. Here's Wren.

JOE, BTN REPORTER: Hey, why is six afraid of seven?

SASKIA, BTN REPORTER: I don't know? Why?

JOE: Because seven ate nine!

WREN GILLETT, BTN REPORTER: Imagine a machine was watching everything you do and using it to learn. Well stop imagining, because it's been happening for years. Not irl with this guy, but online.

See, most artificial intelligence models are actually trained on the internet. Billions, of books, blogs, songs, images, news articles. These AI systems search for patterns in all that information, like common word pairings and pixel arrangements. Then, when you ask them to answer a question, or create something, they use those patterns to predict the kind of answer you're looking for. And sometimes, those answers can look a bit familiar.

AI ROBOT: Haha. Haha!

TV REPORTER: The growing number of musicians say AI music generators aren't just learning from artists' work, they're copying the artists themselves.

TV REPORTER: Scraped from the internet for AI learning.

Yeah, many people have spotted AI creations that appear similar to their own work. For example, when I asked AI to make a picture of a flower inspired by Monet, it came up with this. Not only does it emulate his style, but it also plopped in this bridge from one of his most famous paintings. Now, Monet is probably not too bothered by this, given he died in the 19th century, but many living artists see this as a problem.

TATENDA, BTN REPORTER: Are you serious?

They say AI-generated content is robbing people of income. Whether it's graphic designers, voice actors, authors or journalists, and some argue it's against the law.

TATENDA: That is my painting.

AI ROBOT: But I made it.

TATENDA: No, you didn't.

AI ROBOT: Yes, I did.

TATENDA: No, you didn't.

AI ROBOT: Yes, I did.

TATENDA: No, you didn't.

AI ROBOT: Yes, I did.

TATENDA: No, you didn't.

AI ROBOT: Yes, I did. Yes, I did, yes, I did!

See, there are actually laws protecting original writing, music, art, and all sorts of other stuff from being copied. They're called copyright laws, makes sense. It means you can't write and sell a book featuring a young wizard called Harry Potter, or make a movie centred around a K-pop group called the Saja Boys. You also can't take a copyrighted work and use it to make money, which is what many say AI companies have done by training their models on the internet. On the flip side, AI companies argue that their training falls under something called 'fair use'. In the same way that you learn from reading books and looking at art to get inspired and learn new skills, companies like OpenAI say their models should be allowed to analyse public data to learn how to create new things.

Right now, many big tech companies want our government to loosen Australia's copyright laws, to make it easier for them to train their models on work produced by Australians. Some are worried that could undermine Aussie artists and take money away from some already struggling industries. But some say we need to encourage big tech companies to invest in Australia, even if that means making some compromises. In the meantime, AI companies say they're respecting Australia's copyright laws and are finding ways to make sure their AI bots continue learning.

AI ROBOT: Hey, guys, have you heard the one about the scary number? 6 7. Ha, ha, ha.

Quiz

What is the term for the instructions, questions, or clues that a human types into a Generative AI to tell it what to do? Is it a Code, Variable, Prompt or Script? It's a prompt.

You've probably been asked to do one of these CAPTCHA tests online to prove you're not a bot, but do you know what CAPTCHA stands for? Is it Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart or Computer Automated Program to Catch Hostile Automated bots? It's A. CAPTCHA is a fully automated version of the famous Turing test.

Where are most of the world's "super-chips", which are used to power modern AI systems, made? Iceland, Taiwan, New Zealand or Madagascar? They're made in Taiwan.

ChatGPT and Claude are examples of LLMs. What does that stand for? Liquid Learning Machine, Language Learning Model or Large Language Model? It's a large language model.

Real or AI?

Reporter: James Houghton

INTRO: AI-generated content is everywhere, and as models get more sophisticated, it's getting harder to tell what's real and what's artificial. James decided to put some kids to the test to see how good they were at spotting AI. Check it out.

JAMES HOUGHTON, REPORTER: Do you see many AI videos?

KID: Like, on YouTube.

Do you think you're going to be pretty good at telling which ones are real and fake?

KID: I think so, but I'm not sure.

KID: What the?

KID: That one was AI.

KID: Um. I'm gonna say real.

Why do you say that?

KID: Because the raccoon did not look like a raccoon.

KID: I'm not sure, I'm just guessing.

That one is real.

KID: Oh.

KID: That raccoon did not look normal.

KID: I'm not too sure but I think that one was real.

KID: That's like a genuine reaction of like a puppy.

KID: I think that's AI.

That one's actually real.

KID: Really?

KID: I think it's real.

KID: This one also stumped me, but I feel like I'm gonna go with AI.

That one's actually real.

KID: Ooh.

KID: I think it's AI.

KID: I feel like that one was real too.

KID: The ice-cream's running by itself, and there's like no handles to run the ice-cream.

KID: The way it kind of, like, smushed out and, like, landed onto the cat looked legit.

So, that one's actually AI.

KID: Ooh that's really good.

It's not just you, telling the difference between real and fake is getting much harder. Sometimes that means accidentally falling in love with a fake animal, which is kind of annoying, but sometimes it's more serious than that. Because everyone has a camera in their pocket, we've become really used to seeing big events happening around the world in real time.

But sometimes those pictures and videos aren't real. Fake images of real disasters can be super upsetting, and they can even make people mistrust the real images. Especially when they make their way onto the news. Take a look at this video of a race car crash. Pretty insane right? Well, that video is fully AI-generated, but it was reported by NBC Chicago as a legitimate news story. AI is also being used to influence people's political opinions. It can be used to make leaders say and do things they haven't done in real life.

AI VOICE: Donald it is me Albo. Hey Donald...

And it can make it a lot easier to spread propaganda. Plus, it's increasingly being used by criminals to scam people.

AI VOICE: For those who don't know me I'm Ryan Reynolds.

WOMAN IN VIDEO: This is not Ryan Reynolds.

According to Scamwatch, Australians lost over \$7.4 million in a single year to celebrity impersonation scams. There are even examples of scammers using AI to mimic the voice of their targets' loved ones. Besides the dangers of getting tricked or getting scammed, there's the danger that all this fake stuff is

having an impact on our sense of reality. If we don't know what's real and what's not, we might stop caring so much about what's going on in the world around us.

MAN IN VIDEO: I thought this video was fake, so I spent a stupid amount of time and effort to realise that it's probably real.

So, is there a way to tell what's real and what's fake? Sometimes there are clues. It might be someone's hands or other details that don't look quite right, or elements that magically appear or disappear.

PERSON: These cookies are dry.

But with modern AI, it's getting much harder to rely solely on visual indicators to know if something's real or not. Social media platforms can stamp content as made by AI with software that spots hidden watermarks from AI video platforms.

But sometimes posts slip through the cracks. So, it's always good to look at the source. If it's being shared by a reliable news organisation, it's more likely to have been checked by professionals, who are also more likely to let you know if they get it wrong. When you look at the source, always think about why they're sharing the content. Have they got something to gain, and are they likely to be telling the truth? And always ask yourself, "does it make sense for this to be true?". If it's too good, too bad, or too strange to be true, it's often not. And if you're still not sure, think like a journalist and do some research. You can do a reverse image search or Google the topic to see what other people are saying about it, and whether it's likely to be real or AI.

Quiz

Which one of these is real and which is AI-generated? This one is real, and this one isn't.

Is this real or fake?

DEEPPFAKE VIDEO: Today, I am pleased to announce that the trading platform developed by Australia's top engineers and financial analysts has received a government licence.

It's a fake. It's one of many deepfake scams that have circulated online, trying to get people to click on dodgy websites or sign up to dodgy financial deals.

All of these animals are adorable, but only one is real. Do you know which? It's these little guys.

Now we're going to play a couple of songs and see if you can tell which one is AI-generated. Here's the first one. And here's another. And one more. The AI song was number two, "Walk My Walk" by virtual performer Breaking Rust reached number one on the Country Digital Song Sales.

Do you know which Australian political party was behind this AI-generated ad?

PERSON IN AD: Me too. I always have been. I've loved her for 30 years.

It was One Nation.

AI and Education

Reporter: Jack Evans

INTRO: Have you ever used a chatbot to help you with your homework? Well, if you have, you're certainly not alone. Experts say AI is having a big impact on the way kids learn. So should we ban it or embrace it? Jack looked into it.

JUDGE: I find you... Ah! Guilty. OK.

DOCTOR: Well, based on everything you've told me, it sounds like you've got... a broken nose.

PATIENT: But I came to you about my arm.

PSYCHIC: I'm getting a vision. You're going on a trip. Oh, five nights, all-inclusive Caribbean cruise. Only \$12.99. Oh. Sorry, this is an ad.

JACK EVANS, REPORTER: While artificial intelligence is good at getting us info quick, there are some worried that this could be the future if we become too reliant on it.

PILOT: How to fly a plane.

And there's one place where experts say it's already having an impact. A recent report found that a lot of you are using AI to help with your studies, whether it's assisting with schoolwork or helping with homework and assignments. And you know what? Fair. AI can do all that stuff quicker than humans. The thing is, though, when you start relying on tools like AI chatbots to do the work for you, you miss out on developing important cognitive skills.

PATIENT: Who are you talking to?

The camera. I'm talking about critical thinking and communication skills, and you can become less confident in your ability to do difficult things and make decisions.

DR JENNY DONOVAN: Brains need to do hard work to learn and there's no way around that. We've got to exercise our brains. We've got to introduce new information. We've got to do that in a careful way so we don't overload our brains and learning can happen properly.

This is Dr Jenny Donovan; she's the CEO of the Australian Education Research Organisation. She says that until students have mastered the basics, they shouldn't be using AI.

DR JENNY: Until we can be really confident, they've mastered the basics, we don't want to make those tools available to them because what they'll do is a process that gets called cognitive offloading.

Artificial intelligence isn't the first piece of controversial tech to enter classrooms. Hello, calculators. Back when calculators were first introduced into schools, there was resistance from teachers and parents for similar reasons to what we're seeing with AI.

PERSON: There is a danger that the students could become overly dependent on them.

But unlike calculators, artificial intelligence doesn't always get things right. It can be biased, leave out important facts or make up facts entirely and it can give responses that aren't always age appropriate. Plus, there's the fact that technology can fail, so what happens then? In some places around the world, AI is being banned in schools. But here in South Australia, the government is actually embracing it. These students are using something called EdChat, which is similar to chatbots like ChatGPT, but with restrictions on the types of things it can generate for you.

STUDENT: It does have some guidelines, like you can't ask it anything that it deems unsafe or it might be harmful to your wellbeing. If something like that is asked, it'll, like, flag it.

STUDENT: You can't ask it anything you want, for example, to do your assignment for you. It actually breaks it down and does it step by step for you. So you are still learning, but you are also learning in the most efficient way possible.

These guys have been using it for a few years now and say it can be a great tool.

STUDENT: EdChat specifically has also been trained on the South Australian curriculum, and it's aware of what our year level is, so it can use that curriculum to make a better informed decision about what to tell us.

STUDENT: I've used EdChat to, like, help me with my assignments and grade my essays, so I know, like, what to fix and work on.

Of course, not everyone is a fan of AI in classrooms, but some reckon kids should be taught to use it properly so they've got the literacy tools they need when they're older.

DR JENNY: Students are going to be making use of tools outside of school and there's nothing we can do about that. Within school though, we've got the opportunity to teach them about the tools in a really explicit way and to guide their use so that there is no risk that they're using the tools to fake learning and avoid the hard brain work of doing the learning for themselves.

PILOT: You know what? I'm just going to use common sense to fly this plane. Ooh, autopilot.

Closer

Well, that's it for this special episode of BTN all about AI. I hope you've enjoyed it and, hey, maybe even learned a thing or two. We'll be back next week with a regular episode. Until then, have the best week and I'll see you really soon. Bye!