# dese Ai

---

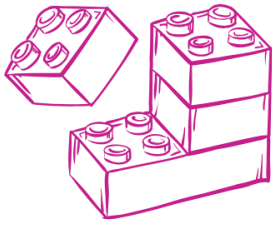# AI Literacy for Massachusetts Educators

## FACILITATION & DISCUSSION GUIDE

*Companion resource to the online AI Literacy for Educators module.*

### *2.5 Hour Session - Sample Agenda*

collaborative.org
Collaborative for Educational Services

THE KULOWIEC GROUP

# Contents

![dese Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education]

# HOW TO USE THIS FACILITATION & DISCUSSION GUIDE

This companion resource is designed to complement the online resource AI Literacy for Massachusetts Educators. It supports those who want to extend their own learning or facilitate deeper engagement in others.

**The AI Literacy online resource includes 7 main sections:**
- An introduction and overview
- Principle 1: Grasp the fundamentals
- Principle 2: Center human intelligence
- Principle 3: Guide and judge AI
- Principle 4: Prioritize people
- Principle 5: Explore broader impacts
- Principles in practice

**This companion resource includes** a sample 2.5-hour agenda for those who may be facilitating learning during half-day professional development days. Printable handouts that include the "key takeaways" and/or content from the online section, and three discussion/reflection questions.



---
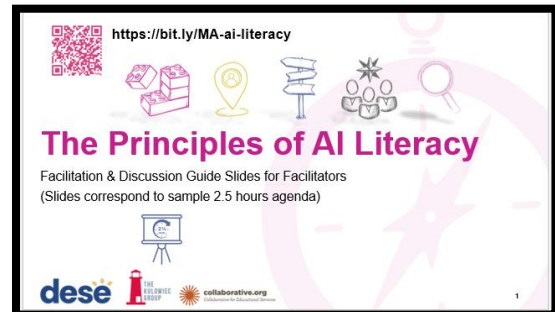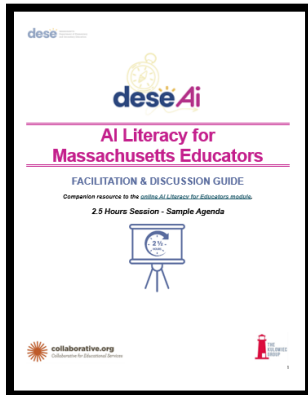
**Facilitator Notes:**

1. A set of optional slides for use with these sample agendas is provided on the Department's Artificial Intelligence (AI) in K12 Schools page.
2. This facilitator guide assumes participants **have completed their review** of the online AI Literacy for Massachusetts Educators resource prior to the meeting. Participants may want to interact with the online AI Literacy resource during this session as well. This will require a device with internet access (tablet, laptop, phone, etc.) to engage fully with the content.
3. If you plan to issue PD certificates at the end of the session (included on pg. 29), you will need to track attendance. The completion of this session will equate to 2.5 hours of PD total.

*Sample agendas are provided for reference. They do not assume that the person facilitating them will be an AI expert, nor that you will use AI during any workshops or meetings. Educators are encouraged to modify these agendas to suit local goals and contexts.*

# 2.5 Hours Facilitation and Discussion Agenda

**Overall Goal:** Deepen understanding of the five AI literacy principles and prepare for thoughtful, ethical approaches to AI in education.

| 0:00–0:15 (minutes) | WELCOME, FRAMING & CONNECTION |
|---|---|

*Purpose: Set tone, connect prior online learning to today's goals, build shared expectations.*

- **SLIDE 3** - Facilitator welcome, review of the day's agenda.
- **SLIDE 4** - Opening question: "When you were going through school, what was the 'new' classroom technology of the time, and how was it used?" Turn and Talk (1 min each person).
- **SLIDE 5** - Review the five principles: Ask different participants to read each one aloud. Then, ask participants to identify one principle they want to focus on most today and why. (Note: This can be done as an independent reflection or as an extension of the turn and talk.)

| 0:15 – 0:30 (minutes) | EDUCATORS' PERSPECTIVES |
|---|---|

*Purpose: Allow all participants to acknowledge and express their own perspectives about AI.*

- **HANDOUT [Introduction & Overview handout] – Share handout**
- **SLIDE 6 -** Prompt: Review the 6 numbered composite quotes from educators about AI on your handout. Which is closest to your own perspective as of today?"
  - Ask educators to form groups based on the quote they choose.
- Brief large group share out of key small group discussions.
- As educators finish their discussion, ask them to read the rest of their handout and **take time to answer the reflection questions on the back.**

| 0:30 – 0:50 (minutes) | PRINCIPLES 1 & 2 |
|---|---|

*Purpose: Refresh and deepen knowledge from the online resource.*

- Share both handouts with all participants.
  - **HANDOUT [PRINCIPLE 1: Grasp the Fundamentals]**
  - **HANDOUT [PRINCIPLE 2: Center Human Intelligence Handout]**
- **SLIDE 7 -** Create small groups. Assign each small group to either Principle 1 or Principle 2 (Note: Try for an even distribution.)
- **SLIDE 7 - 1st animation** - Groups read the front of the handout and answer the reflection questions on the back.
- Ask each group to spend ~10 minutes reviewing and sharing responses to the reflection questions
- **SLIDE 7 - 2nd animation** Then, ask each person to find a partner who was in a group that discussed the other principle.
- Ask each pair to share with their new partner the most important things to know and understand about the Principle their group explored. Discuss their responses to the reflection questions.

| 0:50 – 1:05 (minutes) | PRINCIPLE 3 |
|---|---|

*Purpose: Refresh and deepen knowledge from the online resource.*

- **SLIDE 8 – Principle 3**
- **SLIDE 9 – Quick Poll** - How confident do you feel about your ability to craft a prompt for an AI tool that will yield the results you are looking for?
- Break the group into two groups; those who have 1, 2, or 3 fingers up on one side of the room and those with 4 or 5 fingers up on the other.

- **SLIDE 10 – (animation)** Review "Crafting a prompt"
- **HANDOUT [PRINCIPLE 3 Guide & Judge AI] - Share handout**
- Allow 10 minutes for review of handout, ask people to **write out** the "Practice crafting a prompt" and take time to answer the reflection questions.
- Then, ask people from one side of the room (people who picked 1, 2, or 3) to find a partner from the other side of the room (people who picked 4 or 5). Partners should take 5 minutes to review and critique the prompts that were written by their partner. *(Note: If the district uses a generative AI tool, this would be an opportune time for hands-on exploration to witness the impacts of different prompts on its output.)*

| 1:05 – 1:15 (minutes) | 10 MINUTE BREAK (TIMING OPTIONAL) |
|---|---|

| 1:15 – 1:30 (minutes) | PRINCIPLE 4 |
|---|---|

*Purpose: Refresh and deepen knowledge from the online resource.*
- **SLIDE 11 –** Principle 4
- **HANDOUT [PRINCIPLE 4: Prioritize People] - Share handout**
- **SLIDE 12 -** Prompt: In small groups (4-5 people) **take 5 minutes** to explore this scenario from the online resource: "I used an AI tool to help create an engaging slide presentation for an upcoming lesson. Do I disclose this use of AI to my students? To others?" How would you respond?
- **SLIDE 13 –** Then, Have participants share one insight, one tension and one question this raised for them. (5 minutes) (Note: you may want people to add these ideas to Post-its to be able to collect responses.)
- **Slide 14 –** Review Principle 4 handout and answer reflection questions. (5 minutes)

| 1:30 – 1:48 (minutes) | PRINCIPLE 5 |
|---|---|

*Purpose: Refresh and deepen knowledge from the online resource.*
- **SLIDE 15 – Principle 5**
- **SLIDE 16** - (2 minutes) How do you currently handle verifying information or misinformation in your life? (Facebook, Instagram, news outlets, X, etc.) – Remind people about the picture examples used in the online module. How might you be able to verify whether or not these were real or AI generated? Ask a couple people to share.
- **HANDOUT [PRINCIPLE 5: Explore Broader Impacts] - Share handout**
- **SLIDE 17 -** Have people review the three bullets on the front of the handout that include the key takeaways from the online resource.
    1. How do we model and reinforce academic integrity in a world with AI?
    2. How do we help students navigate AI-generated misinformation?
    3. What other AI impacts should I be aware of?
- Have people choose one of the three to focus on for this discussion.
- **Split up the group based on the topic people have chosen to focus on (1, 2, or 3)**
- Ask each group to spend ~10 minutes discussing responses to the relevant reflection question on the back of the handout.
- **SLIDE 18 -** (6 minutes) Ask each group (2 minutes per group) to report a summary of their discussion to the whole group.

| 1:48 – 2:15 (minutes) | PRINCIPLES IN ACTION |
|---|---|

*Purpose: Apply principles to real-world scenarios*

- **SLIDE 19 –** Principles in Action
- Randomly divide participants into three groups.
- **HANDOUTS [Principles in Action] - Share handouts of one scenario with each group: SLIDE 20:**
  - Group 1: Scenario 1- A building administrator uses AI to help plan faculty meetings
  - Group 2: Scenario 2- A 5th grade teacher uses AI to create grade-appropriate text
  - Group 3: Scenario 3- A high school English teacher navigates AI detection and academic integrity
- Allow 3-4 minutes for people to silently review the scenario.
- **SLIDE 21** - Prompt: "Spend some time in your groups talking about your scenario. What do you APPROVE of about this educator's approach? What do you ASPIRE to emulate about this educator's approach? What choices about AI would you ARGUE with if you were talking to this educator?
- **SLIDE 22 -** After about 10 minutes, assign groups a new scenario.
  - Provide each group copies of a new scenario:
    - Group 1: Scenario 3- A high school English teacher navigates AI detection and academic integrity
    - Group 2: Scenario 1- A building administrator uses AI to help plan faculty meetings
    - Group 3: Scenario 2- A 5th grade teacher uses AI to create grade-appropriate text
- **SLIDE 23 -** Ask educators to review the new scenario and repeat the steps above.

| 2:15 – 2:30 (minutes) | GROUP DEBRIEF |
|---|---|

*Purpose: Make collective meaning of the day's learning*

- **Facilitator Note:** *You will want to hang posters around the room with headings: One takeaway, 2 topic areas/2 people, and 3 next steps.* (Note: You may want participants to use Post-it notes to facilitate the activity below.)
- **SLIDE 24 -** Tell participants: "Together, we've reflected on DESE's full AI literacy resource over the course of this professional learning session. To process what you've learned reflect on the following – **one idea per post – it, then ADD your ideas to the posters around the room:**
  - Summarize your (1) biggest takeaway from this PD.
  - Identify (2) two topic areas from this PD you want to work on moving forward **and** (2) colleagues you can partner with to do so.
  - Identify (3) immediate next steps you can take in your role to implement what you've learned.
- Encourage participants to add their sentiments to the posters around the room, and gallery walk to read others' thoughts. They should sit back down when they are done.
- **Slide 25 -** In the large group, ask people to share the **key themes that emerged as** they read on the gallery walk. Facilitate a discussion– "What might be done to support further learning about and/or use of AI? What could school and district leaders do? What could teachers do? What could students do?"
- Close with a message of appreciation.

# HANDOUTS

- [Introduction & Overview handout](#)

- [Principle 1 handout](#)

- [Principle 2 handout](#)

- [Principle 3 handout](#)

- [Principle 4 handout](#)

- [Principle 5 handout](#)

- **Principles In Action Handouts**

  - [Scenario 1 - A building administrator uses AI to help plan faculty meetings](#)

  - [Scenario 2 - A 5th grade teacher uses AI to create grade-appropriate text](#)

  - [Scenario 3 - A high school English teacher navigates AI detection and academic integrity](#)

# Introduction & Overview Handout

## Educators have a wide range of perspectives about AI.

Some are excited about its potential in schools, while others have serious concerns. Many hold a mix of nuanced views shaped by their experiences with technology, their teaching practice, and their awareness of the complex challenges AI presents.

**1** I'm already finding a lot of ways to use AI in my planning and my teaching. It's letting me spend more time on the things about my job that I love.

**2** I'm worried that AI is already exacerbating the crisis of student attention and motivation. I don't think it has any place in schools.

**3** My biggest fear is that AI will widen the gap between students with resources and those without. We need to make sure it's used in ways that promote equity, not deepen divides.

**4** AI is here to stay. I hear about things that worry me, but I'm trying to keep an open mind. If I don't know about it, how can I help students learn about it?

**5** Honestly, I'm still trying to get comfortable with the other tech tools I'm supposed to be using. AI feels like one more thing I have to figure out.

**6** I'm having fun working with my students to explore AI. We have been playing with a bunch of tools to see what we make of them, and what uses they might have. It feels like we're exploring this new frontier together.

## DESE has 5 guiding values about AI in education.

The department is maintaining a focus on the following: data privacy and security; transparency and accountability; bias awareness and mitigation; human oversight and educator judgment; and academic integrity.

Data Privacy & Security

Transparency & Accountability

Bias Awareness & Mitigation

Human Oversight & Educator Judgment

Academic Integrity

## AI literacy connects with Massachusetts's Educational Vision.

Knowledge of how AI systems operate—and how they may serve or undermine individuals' and society's goals—helps bridge classroom learning with the decisions they will face outside school. It also supports students' college and career readiness, and helps position them to move from passive consumers to active shapers of technology and society.

**There are several solid definitions of AI literacy.** They mostly agree on the basics, while differing slightly in emphasis and scope.

**Here are a few examples:**

- **From Digital Promise:** *AI literacy includes the knowledge and skills that enable humans to critically understand, use, and evaluate AI systems and tools to safely and ethically participate in an increasingly digital world.*
- **From TeachAI:** *AI Literacy represents the technical knowledge, durable skills, and future-ready attitudes required to thrive in a world influenced by AI. It enables learners to engage, create with, manage, and design AI, while critically evaluating its benefits, risks, and ethical implications.*
- **From aiEDU:** *The collection of skills and knowledge that a person needs to confidently understand, ethically use, and critically evaluate artificial intelligence in a world where AI is ubiquitous.*

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe your current perspective on AI in schools?

2. What connections do you see between AI literacy and your professional practice? Why might it be important for you to learn about AI?

3. What values will guide the way you approach AI in your practice? How will those values meaningfully shape your actions?

# Principle 1: Grasp the Fundamentals Handout

*Smart choices about AI begin with a clear grasp of its basic mechanics.*
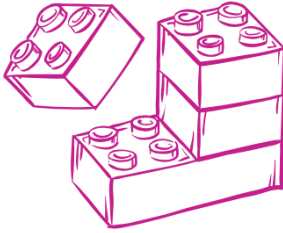
## What is AI?

AI refers to computer systems that can detect patterns in data and adapt over time, unlike traditional computerized tools that follow fixed instructions. Generative AI systems (the focus of this resource) can synthesize text, images, code, audio, and video that often mimic that which is made by humans.

## How Does AI Work?

Generative AI systems cannot reason or think in a human-like way. Instead, they learn patterns from massive amounts of human-created content—like text and images—and then use those patterns to produce synthetic content.

## AI & Bias

Along with rules of grammar and syntax, AI systems have also picked up more subtle patterns that exist in human-created training data — things like social and systemic biases.

## AI & Fabrications

Generative AI models can produce convincing but false information because they are built to mimic patterns, not to determine truth. These fabrications—sometimes called "hallucinations" or "AI fictions"— can contribute to the spread of misinformation if users aren't vigilant.

## The Echo Chamber of AI

Generative AI models are designed to please users, so they often produce overly agreeable or flattering responses, even if those responses are wrong or potentially harmful. This tendency, known as "sycophancy", can lead to confirmation bias and reinforce bad ideas instead of challenging them.

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

What's one thing you learned or clarified about how AI works from this resource?

How does understanding AI basics help you think about its role in your practice, or in education in general?

If AI systems can reinforce inherent biases from their datasets, how can we use them in ways that support equity and inclusion instead?
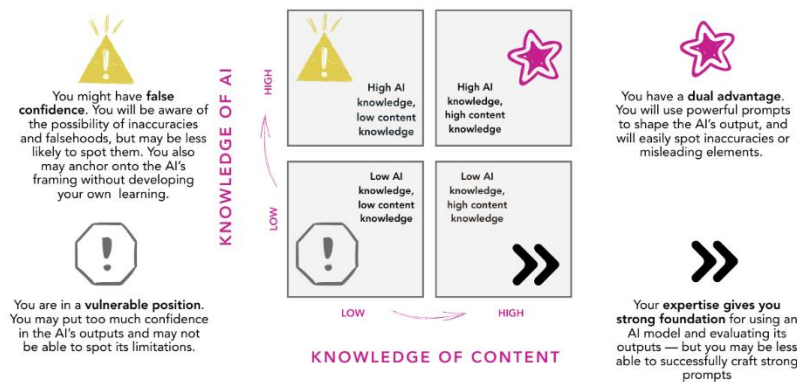
# Principle 2: Center Human Intelligence Handout

*Let human insight and agency steer every engagement with AI.*



### Am I prepared to use AI well?

Understanding your own knowledge of both the subject matter and how AI works is critical. When either one is low—but especially both—you're more likely to get poor or misleading results and less able to catch errors.



### Am I still the one doing the real work?

Understanding your own knowledge of both the subject matter and how AI works is critical. When either one is low—but especially both—you're more likely to get poor or misleading results and less able to catch errors.
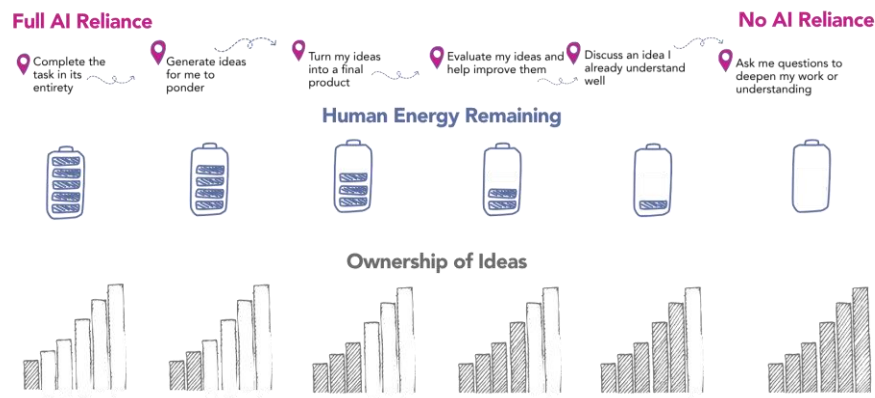
**REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

What do you think it means to "center human intelligence" when using AI?

Describe circumstances where you will be well-positioned to use AI, and circumstances where you should refrain from using AI.

How do technological tools shape the way we think, and how might AI shape our thinking differently than tools before it?

# Principle 3: Guide & Judge AI Handout

*Skillfully craft inputs and rigorously critique outputs*

### 💡 How can I guide AI to give me better results?

Prompt engineering is the practice of carefully crafting your inputs to get better outputs from an AI model. While AI can respond to simple prompts, more strategic prompts—especially those with clear goals, format requests, examples, and context—can push it beyond default responses and help you get results that are more useful, accurate, and engaging.

**Practice crafting a prompt:**

- **Goal (*what you want*):**


- **Structure/Format *(what you want the output to look like)*:**


- **Warnings, limitations, or requests *(things you want the model to avoid, include, or be aware of)*:**


- **Context dump *(anything else you think could be useful)*:**


### 💡 How can I evaluate what AI produces?

Because AI outputs can sound confident even when they're wrong or biased, it's essential to evaluate them critically. A simple framework like MVP—Meaning, Veracity, Perspective—can help users quickly assess whether an AI response is useful, accurate, and fair.

**M — Meaning**
Does this make sense to me?
Does this do what I asked it to?
Is the style and focus what I needed?

**V — Veracity**
Is this true and real, or did the AI make something up — like a quote, person, or book that doesn't exist?

**P — Perspective**
Who or what is missing that should be here?
How might different people react to this?

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

Have you tried any AI prompting strategies? If so, which ones have worked well for you? If not, where might you start?

How might your own viewpoint affect what you notice, trust, or question in an AI model's output?

What opportunities or challenges might emerge if you and your colleagues collectively get stronger at both prompting AI and critically assessing what it produces?

# Principle 4: Prioritize People Handout

*Protect privacy, dignity, and integrity over efficiency or convenience*



### 💡 Could I be risking student data or privacy?

Data privacy is a paramount consideration when using AI. Improper use of AI may breach critical data protection laws.

## CIPA
The Children's Internet Protection Act

## COPPA
The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act

## FERPA
The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act

## IDEA
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

## Mass. Student Records Laws
m.g.l.c.71§§34D-E

### 💡 Am I using AI in ways that respect others and build trust?

Using AI often brings us into ambiguous moral territory, where clear rules may not exist. Prioritizing people means thinking carefully about how you use others' work — and being honest about your own use of AI.

⚠️ CONSENT          ⚠️ DISCLOSURE

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

How do the laws noted in this section apply to you? Are you already familiar with these laws? Which ones are you less familiar with? *(FERPA, CIPA, COPPA, IDEA, MA Student Record Laws)*

How do your own values and experiences shape the way you approach both getting consent and being open about AI use? How might others' values and experiences impact their approach to consent and being open about AI use?

In your opinion, what are the most important ways to "prioritize people" when it comes to use (or non-use) of AI?

# Principle 5: Explore Broader Impacts Handout

*Cultivate knowledge of how AI is influencing schools and society*

## How do we model and reinforce academic integrity in a world with AI?

Educators play a key role in shaping students' understanding of academic integrity in the age of AI. This includes communicating clearly about responsible use, fostering a culture where students feel safe disclosing how they use AI, designing authentic assessments that are less susceptible to AI misuse, and steering clear of unreliable detection tools. While there's no one-size-fits-all approach, thoughtful guidance and transparency can help students engage with these tools ethically and grow as independent thinkers.

## How do we help students navigate AI-generated misinformation?

As AI-generated content becomes harder to distinguish from real, everyone—especially educators and students—needs stronger skills and habits around critically evaluating media and information. There's no easy fix, but school librarians and other educators can play a key role in helping schools respond to deep fakes, misinformation, and the unethical use of digital content.

## What other AI impacts should I be aware of?

AI technologies are impacting our personal, professional, and global lives in a variety of ways. Being aware of the various impacts will help educators become wise stewards of these technologies and promote safe, ethical use of these technologies for themselves, their students, and the profession.

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

In the context of student use of AI, how should academic integrity be defined? Should that definition differ for educators?

Are there ways that you can help students deepen their understanding of media literacy? If so, how?

What broader impacts of AI are most important to you? Why? Are there ways you can help students learn about them?

# Principles in Action Scenario 1 Handout

**Scenario 1: A building administrator uses AI to help plan faculty meetings**

**The Scenario:**

Dr. M (they/them) has been struggling to make monthly faculty meetings more engaging and productive. They want to create meeting agendas that build coherently over time, connecting monthly discussions around the school's improvement goals rather than treating each meeting as an isolated event. They also want teachers to be fully engaged and participatory in the meetings.
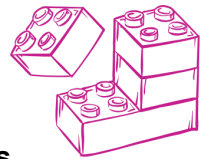
### PRINCIPLE 1: Grasp the Fundamentals

*Smart choices about AI begin with a clear grasp of its basic mechanics.*

When Dr. M first used a generative AI model, they were surprised by how well it was able to transform just a few bullet points into clear and coherent paragraphs. It seemed like magic. Then one day Dr. M realized they didn't know a lot about how this AI tool worked. They decided to play a bit and they asked it, "how many r's are in the word strawberry?" and it replied, "there are two r's in the word strawberry." No matter how Dr. M prompted it, the model insisted on that wrong answer. Their sense of the model's magic began to fade, leading Dr. M to look further into why this technology that seemed so sophisticated could not answer such a basic question correctly.

As they learned about the model's underlying functionality, they realized that it can't think like a human — it uses statistical modeling to synthesize text that has a good probability of being close to what the user is looking for. This basic understanding has helped Dr. M feel more confident using AI as an assistant rather than treating it as a reliable expert about anything. They now approach it with curiosity and caution, recognizing both its usefulness and its limitations.

### PRINCIPLE 2: Center Human Intelligence

*Let human insight and agency steer every engagement with AI*

Dr. M isn't an AI expert, but they've learned quite a bit by reading and through a professional development workshop offered by their district. They consider themselves to have a fairly strong grasp of the fundamentals of the technology. They also hold an advanced degree in school leadership and possess a deep understanding of how educators need to be supported in their own learning and professional development.

Dr. M uses this knowledge to brainstorm (with no AI) what they want their meetings to look, feel, and sound like. They review some of their relevant materials from graduate school and set clear goals for what they hope to accomplish for their faculty and students through strong collaborative meeting times.

**PRINCIPLE 3: Guide & Judge AI**

*Skillfully craft inputs and rigorously critique outputs*

After carefully considering the task at hand, Dr. M feeds the AI model with prompts that provide clear guidance. (See their prompt in the box below.) They critically review each output that the model provides. For example, after reviewing the first result from their prompt, they instructed the AI model to: "Reference the action steps from previous meetings and show clear connections to our school improvement plan."

---

**Goal**: I want to create a 3-meeting sequence to help my middle school teachers strengthen their relational practices in the classroom. Our school climate survey showed that 65% of students often feel misunderstood by their teachers. I want these meetings to build on each other and result in concrete changes in how teachers connect with students.

**Structure/Format**: For each meeting, provide a 75-minute agenda with specific time allocations, interactive elements that get teachers talking to each other, and clear action steps that connect to the next meeting.

*Planned Meeting Sequence -*
Meeting 1 (October): Foundation - helping teachers understand why relationships matter for learning and assessment of current practices
Meeting 2 (November): Application - specific strategies for building connections, especially with reluctant or struggling students
Meeting 3 (December): Reflection and sustainability - what's working, troubleshooting challenges, planning for spring semester

**Specific Requirements**:
- Each meeting should reference and build on the previous one
- At least 70% of each meeting should be teachers talking and thinking together, rather than me talking at the front of the room.
- Keep it practical - our teachers are overwhelmed and need strategies they can use tomorrow

**Overall Context**: Our 6th-8th grade teachers range from first-year to veterans. About 40% of our students qualify for free/reduced lunch, and we have a growing population of multilingual learners. Teachers often focus heavily on academic rigor but sometimes miss the relational foundation that makes that rigor accessible to all students.

---

## PRINCIPLE 4: Prioritize People

*Protect privacy, dignity, and integrity over efficiency or convenience*

Dr. M is careful not to provide the AI model with any school data, nor any information or text that they don't have permission to use. Instead, they use the goals established in their school improvement plan, and summarize what they know to be true about their district — that students can sometimes feel misunderstood by teachers, that teachers often feel overburdened and disempowered, and that teachers have little opportunity to build strong shared practices around responding to challenging student behaviors.

In addition, they are open with their faculty and district colleagues about when, how, and why they use generative AI. Their faculty meeting agendas include the line, "I use generative AI to help me plan meetings that are meaningful, well-organized, and make the most of our time together." They also provide a link to some of their most frequently-used prompts, which colleagues are free to adapt and use.

## PRINCIPLE 5: Explore Broader Impacts

*Cultivate knowledge of how AI is influencing schools and society*

Dr. M knows that educators in their district hold a wide range of opinions about AI, and they make a conscious effort to model not just responsible use, but also curiosity and caution. They lead with insight and humility modeling continuous learning about new and emerging technologies. They're also careful to ensure that their own use of AI doesn't come across as pressure for others to follow suit.

Recently, Dr. M came across a news story about the amount of energy that AI requires. They capitalized on this learning opportunity, asking their environmental club to read the story, and think about what recommendations they might make about AI use in schools with the environment in mind.

# Principles in Action Scenario 2 Handout

**Scenario 2: A 5th grade teacher uses AI to create grade-appropriate text**

**The Scenario:**

Ms. L's (she/her) 5th graders have become fascinated with Shays's Rebellion after a field trip to a local historical site. She's covered everything in her curriculum about the topic, but wants to capitalize on her students' enthusiasm. She decides to devote an additional hour of class time to the topic — all the time she has before she really needs to move on. She prompts an AI model to generate three brief personas:
 (1) a farmer who can't pay his debts or taxes;
 (2) a government official who fears that rebellion will destroy the new nation they just created;
 (3) a shopkeeper who depends on farmers as customers but also needs a stable government.

Each persona includes where they live, what they do for work, and an age-appropriate description of their point of view. All students choose a persona, and for the rest of the class period, they hold small group conversations (in same-persona groups, then in mixed groups) to articulate their character's perspective and debate whether Shays and his followers were right to rebel.
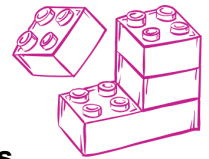
**PRINCIPLE 1: Grasp the Fundamentals**

*Smart choices about AI begin with a clear grasp of its basic mechanics.*

Ms. L started experimenting with AI a couple of years ago to see whether it could support her work in the classroom. She was surprised when it began generating responses that referenced "visual learners" and "kinesthetic learners"—terms she knew had been largely discredited by educational research. Several of her professional development sessions had emphasized that these learning styles were not supported by evidence.

Curious about why the AI still used these terms, she looked into how the model was trained and discovered that they had been widespread in educational literature for many years. As a result, they were likely part of the model's training data, even if they no longer reflect current understanding. This realization made her more cautious about the possibility that AI might reproduce information that is outdated, inaccurate, or potentially harmful.

In this case, she is aware that AI might generate stereotypical historical scenarios and may oversimplify complex political conflicts into simple good vs. bad narratives that don't reflect the nuanced reality of the rebellion. She also knows that there are biases and racist stereotypes that might crop up, especially when asking for personas.

**PRINCIPLE 2: Center Human Intelligence**

*Let human insight and agency steer every engagement with AI*

Ms. L has been teaching 5th grade for several years and knows a great deal about Daniel Shays's Rebellion and the historical context surrounding it. In recent years, she's also developed a working understanding of AI. She doesn't consider herself an expert, but she has a solid grasp of how it functions and what its limitations are.

Because she knows her subject well and has a clear sense of her instructional goals, she begins by focusing on the kind of learning experience she wants her students to have. Using backward design, she maps out the lesson first—then turns to AI as a tool to help her carry out the work more efficiently.

**PRINCIPLE 3: Guide & Judge AI**

*Skillfully craft inputs and rigorously critique outputs*

Ms. L uses a basic prompt to begin her work with the AI. (See her prompt in the box below.) Ms. L then reviewed the results of the prompt to ensure they met her needs: (a) the content had to be grade-appropriate and useful for her intended purpose; (b) it needed to be historically accurate in both tone and information, with enough nuance to avoid oversimplifying complex events; and (c) it had to be free of glaring biases or distortions.

---

**Goal**: Generate three historically grounded, age-appropriate character personas to help 5th-grade students explore different perspectives related to Shays's Rebellion. Each persona should represent a distinct point of view that was present at the time: a struggling farmer, a government official, and a shopkeeper.

**Structure/Format**: Return a bulleted list with three separate persona profiles. Each profile should include:
-A name, age, occupation, and place of residence (within Massachusetts); A short paragraph (4–7 sentences) written in the first person, explaining the character's perspective on the rebellion.

-The tone and language should be age-appropriate for a 5th-grade classroom (clear, simple, engaging—but not childish)

**Specific Requirements**:
- Each persona must offer a historically plausible perspective on Shays's Rebellion based on their role and position in society.
- Keep language accessible, using clear sentences and vocabulary suitable for 10–11-year-olds.
- Avoid anachronisms, exaggeration, or cartoonish language.
- Ensure the perspectives are different but nuanced—no character should be entirely right or wrong.
- Do not insert modern political values or terminology.

**Context Dump**: My 5th graders have just finished covering Shays's Rebellion as part of her U.S. history unit. This activity to prompt critical thinking, discussion, and empathy. The goal is for students to consider different viewpoints from the time, not to debate who's "right," but to understand the motivations and pressures that people faced. Students will have an hour to talk to each other about the personas, and consider what they might have thought if they had been alive during Shays's Rebellion.

## PRINCIPLE 4: Prioritize People

*Protect privacy, dignity, and integrity over efficiency or convenience*

Ms. L considered this a responsible use of AI: it didn't involve any student data or rely on someone else's intellectual work. Since the personas she created were entirely fictional—not based on real individuals—she felt this approach was more ethically sound than, say, prompting an AI to impersonate Daniel Shays or another historical figure. Still, she was aware that even fictional characters could carry unintended biases. To be cautious, she asked a colleague to review the AI-generated personas with her and help identify any perspectives or assumptions she might have overlooked.

Ms. L also thought about the question of disclosure and how to talk about her use of AI. She decided to bring this up with her colleagues at their next team meeting.

## PRINCIPLE 5: Explore Broader Impacts

*Cultivate knowledge of how AI is influencing schools and society*

In talking with her colleagues, Ms. L decides to disclose her use of AI to the students, and explain her process to them — but she is going to do so as part of a co-planned lesson with the school librarian. Ms. L and the librarian focus on the DLCS strand, Digital Tools and Collaboration, specifically, 3-5.DTC.c.3: "Evaluate digital sources for accuracy, relevancy, and appropriateness." Students will use a list of compiled resources to verify or rebut the facts provided by the AI output (the creation of the three personas) they used for their class discussion. As a closing activity, they will have a class discussion about combating misinformation in the age of AI.

# Principles in Action Scenario 3 Handout

**Scenario 3: A high school English teacher navigates AI detection and academic integrity**

**The Scenario:**

Mr. W (he/him) teaches 11th grade English and suspects that some students have used AI for a writing assignment. He wonders what he should do.
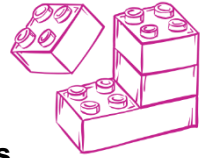
### PRINCIPLE 1: Grasp the Fundamentals

*Smart choices about AI begin with a clear grasp of its basic mechanics.*

As an English teacher, Mr. W has been anticipating that something like this would happen, so he has tried to learn a bit about AI technologies. He knows that "AI detector" tools use algorithms to take a finished product (student writing) and work backward to predict how the product was made. He knows that this process is unreliable, can be biased, and that the detector tools can not reliably determine authorship.

### PRINCIPLE 2: Center Human Intelligence

*Let human insight and agency steer every engagement with AI*

Mr. W knows his students' writing styles well, and part of what he has noticed in the latest batch of essays is a departure from a few students' earlier work. He also notices that while the syntax is fairly smooth and error-free, it is conceptually thin, without meaningful reference to many of the ideas that came up in class.

He realizes that this is not a guarantee that AI use is involved, and he also knows that some students are sophisticated enough to use AI completely undetected. Some students know they can provide an AI tool with samples of their previous work, for example, or they can use an AI "humanizer" tool that makes AI-synthesized text sound more natural.

**PRINCIPLE 4: Prioritize People**

*Protect privacy, dignity, and integrity over efficiency or convenience*

Mr. W knows that AI detector tools can show bias against English language learners (several of his students), which makes him even more hesitant to use them. He also understands that uploading student work to a third-party AI detector without a district-approved data privacy agreement could violate students' intellectual property rights.

For these reasons, he chooses a different approach: having private, respectful conversations with the students to explore what may have happened with their essays. He shares his concerns openly, without accusation, and explains why he decided not to use an AI detector. He also uses the opportunity to talk with students about why the use of AI in English class raises important questions for him as a teacher.

Since he knows the district uses a tool that captures digital document version history, he asks the student to sit with him to show him their writing process which allows them the opportunity to discuss some of the choices they made, and helps Mr. W understand the thinking behind the writing.

**PRINCIPLE 5: Explore Broader Impacts**

*Cultivate knowledge of how AI is influencing schools and society*

It is clear to Mr. W that students are aware of, and sometimes using, AI. He decides to make writing conferences a regular part of his conversations with his students. He also provides them with some clear guidance about how he thinks about AI in the context of this classroom. He gives students a handout that details his own stance on AI use, keeping his district's AI guidance in mind (see handout on the next page):

**Mr. W's Handout**

> You use AI to summarize lecture or chapter notes you or a classmate have taken, and then use that summary to study.
> **What I think**: Fine use of AI, as long as you make sure that the AI summary is accurate and sufficiently detailed.
>
> You use AI to get a general sense of what experts think about a topic.
> **What I think**: Fine use of AI, as long as you make sure that the AI summary is accurate and sufficiently detailed.
>
> You use AI to generate feedback for a peer's writing.
> **What I think**: Not OK, because YOU need to be doing the reading and thinking
>
> You write your own paper, but then use AI to refine what you've written.
> **What I think**: Probably not OK, especially if I'm trying to get a sense of your writing. There may be instances when this is OK but talk to me first. Always make sure to cite/disclose AI.
>
> You're stuck and staring at a blank page. You use AI to get you started with a paper or assignment, but do the rest yourself.
> **What I think**: Staring at a blank page can actually be a really important part of the writing process. Even though it can be frustrating, our minds will ultimately take us places that AI can't, and it's worth it to spend the time to get your own thoughts down first.
>
> You use AI to write 25% of your midterm paper, but you cite it.
> **What I think**: Not OK — If I'm assigning you a paper, it's because I think that's the best way to demonstrate YOUR thinking. If AI has done a quarter of the work, I can't accurately or fairly assess you.
>
> You are struggling with a complex reading that you really don't understand. You upload it to an AI tool and ask it to summarize it and explain key parts to you.
> **What I think**: It depends. I don't want you to struggle unnecessarily, but when AI is used in place of learning, to save time or effort, it becomes a problem in this class. (But also, talk to me if you find a reading too challenging; I may have an alternative for you.)

# AI LITERACY FOR MASSACHUSETTS EDUCATORS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING CERTIFICATE

# [YOUR DISTRICT HERE]

*presents this*

## *Certificate of Completion*

*to*

# [participant's name]

for completing <u>2.5 hours</u> of facilitator-led AI Literacy professional learning based on DESE's AI Literacy for Massachusetts Educators online module and companion training session.

Authorized by: [facilitator to sign here]                    Date: _____

[Type facilitator's name] [Type facilitator's Title]