

## AI Writing Tools, Politics, and History

*Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI), such as ChatGPT, are tools capable of generating new and original writing, images, video, audio, art, music, 3D models and computer code that are largely, but not entirely indistinguishable from what humans can create. Activities explore how students can learn to distinguish authentic writing by humans from materials that are AI-derived and contain false or bias information.*

The November 2022 arrival of [ChatGPT](#) – an interactive artificial intelligence writing tool that generates natural language text-based responses to user questions and prompts in seconds – made an largely invisible technology (artificial intelligence) highly visible to millions of users.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is already prevalent in our lives - recommendation algorithms on social media and streaming platforms, facial recognition used to unlock phones to autocorrect, and autocomplete features in email and text messaging apps. But AI tools often remain invisible - meaning that we don't spend a lot of time thinking about what they are and how they work (maybe we should!).

ChatGPT (GPT stands for "generative pre-trained transformer") has produced revolutionary changes in our relationships with digital tools and technologies. When launched publicly in November 2022, it gained more than **1 million registered users in just 5 days** - becoming the fastest-growing technology platform ever ([Harris, 2022](#)).

As a digital writer, ChatGPT almost instantaneously circles through its database of text to produce natural sounding sentences and paragraphs in response to a prompt from a user. It can write essays, draft emails, create a list of ideas for a birthday party, write lesson plans, offer step-by-step tutorials for solving math problems, write blog posts and articles, draft a cover letter or resume, suggest life hacks or financial tips, describe complex scientific processes to different age levels (e.g., describe string theory to a 5 year old), write code, and create content in multiple languages. It can even write a poem about golf in the style of Maya Angelou!



Write a poem about golf in the style of Maya Angelou



Golf, a game of grace and skill,  
Where one can find peace and thrill,  
A place where nature and sport unite,  
A pastime that brings joy to sight.

Beneath the sun, the greens do shine,  
And the wind blows with a gentle sigh,  
The fairways stretch out far and wide,  
And the flagstick stands proud and dignified.

With a club in hand and steady heart,  
We swing with all our might and art,  
And watch as the ball takes flight,  
A perfect shot, a beautiful sight.

Golf is not just a game of score,  
But a test of patience, will and more,  
For every stroke we make and take,  
Teaches us something that we can make.

It teaches us of life's ups and downs,  
And the joy that can come from small sounds,  
For golf is not just a game we play,  
But a journey that will never fade away.

Such results are amazing, blurring the lines between what humans can do that machines cannot.

Take this [quiz from the New York Times](#) to see if you can tell if a fourth grader or the new chatbot wrote an essay.

And, imagine what might happen in a future where news articles and media materials are written by AI...wait you don't have to imagine that, it's already happening (see [CNET found errors in more than half of its AI-written stories](#)).

But, what are the implications for everyday citizens when politicians, campaign managers, and political staff can have AI writing tools draft press releases, campaign slogans, social media posts, blogs, and more?

- Will you, or any other citizen, be able to tell if what you are reading from a political group was produced by AI tools and not actual human writers?
- What might happen when voters find out that everything written by a politician they were backing was generated by AI?

And, what impact might ChatGPT have on social studies/history, civics, and government learning if students turn to this tool (known for spewing misinformation and perpetuating harmful stereotypes) for help with their research?

ChatGPT brings with it real complexities and dangers. Technology researcher and educator Torrey Trust has shown that the system is not always safe or reliable as a information source (see [ChatGPT & Education slide deck](#)).

If AI tools produce false or misleading claims, then people's roles as democratic decision-makers are curtailed, distorted, even blocked.

## Activity 1: Critically Interrogate ChatGPT Text

NOTE: Before you begin this activity, please know that ChatGPT is **not to be used by children under 13 years old** (see the [privacy policy](#)) and the [Terms of Use](#) state that the user must be 18 years or older to use the tool. Therefore, it is recommended that the **teacher use ChatGPT to generate text** for students to analyze, rather than asking students to use ChatGPT on their own.

- First, complete the "[Design an Online Political Campaign for a State Political Office](#)" activity on your own (or in small groups).
- Review your classmates' political campaigns and vote on the most influential one.
- Then, as a class, ask ChatGPT to generate all the text for an online political campaign that matches the one voted as most influential.
  - For example, you might ask ChatGPT to generate a series of social media posts related to the campaign promises, write a script for a podcast or video that will be embedded into the campaign website, write all the text for the campaign website based on specific political views and goals, and even devise a strategy for increasing voter engagement with the campaign.
- Next, use the [Teacher and Student Guide to Analyzing AI Writing Tools](#) to critically interrogate the text that ChatGPT produced and compare and contrast that text with the text produced by the student(s) who designed the most influential campaign.
- Based on your analysis, design a tool (e.g., flowchart, blog post, rubric) to help your family members tell the difference between AI-generated text and human-written text.

### Designing for Learning: Student-Created Activity Example

[Critically Interrogate ChatGPT Text](#) by Ramlochan Et al.

## Activity 2: Explore Black History with ChatGPT

The "[Exploring Black History with ChatGPT](#)" choice board offers educators and students a way to develop their critical media literacy skills as they investigate text from ChatGPT and explore Black history in the United States ([click here to make your own copy of the choice board to remix/use](#)). Given ChatGPT's potential for generating misinformation and biased information, these activities offer students a critical way to investigate how ChatGPT writes about Black lives and history, and potentially consider why this may be.

- Complete at least 3 boxes in the "[Exploring Black History with ChatGPT](#)" choice board.

<p><a href="#">Langston Hughes</a></p> <p>Ask ChatGPT to <b>write a poem</b> about a social issue (e.g., homelessness, climate change, gender inequality) in the style of Langston Hughes. Critically analyze the language, word choices, and style compared to Langston Hughes' poems.</p> 	<p><a href="#">Yvonne Y. Clark (Y.Y.)</a></p> <p>Ask ChatGPT to write a <b>motivational graduation speech</b> given by <a href="#">Yvonne Y. Clark</a>. Critically examine the writing style, language, and word choices compared to other <a href="#">graduation speeches</a>. Revise the speech to present a more authentic and accurate version of what Y.Y. might say.</p> 	<p><a href="#">Aisha Bowe</a></p> <p>Ask ChatGPT to write a <b>nonfiction story</b> about <a href="#">Aisha Bowe's first flight in space</a>. Fact check and analyze the credibility, trustworthiness, and authenticity of the story. Present your findings as a <b>news report article or video</b>.</p> 
<p><a href="#">Elizabeth Freeman (Mum Bett)</a></p> <p>Ask ChatGPT to present a <b>court docket</b> for the <a href="#">Brom and Bett v. Ashley</a> case. Fact check and critically analyze the credibility, trustworthiness, and authenticity of the court docket. <b>Create a podcast</b> about events leading from that case to Juneteenth.</p> 	<p><b>Exploring Black History with ChatGPT: A Critical Media Literacy Digital Choice Board</b></p> <p>*NOTE: If you work with students under 18 years old, please do not ask them to use ChatGPT on their own devices (see the <a href="#">privacy policy and terms of use restrictions</a>). Instead, use your own device to insert prompts.</p> <p>Learn more from <a href="#">resourcesforhistoryteachers</a>, <a href="#">Building Democracy for All</a>, &amp; <a href="#">Critical Media Literacy &amp; Civic Learning</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Frederick Douglass</a></p> <p>Ask ChatGPT to <b>write a news article</b> to fight for equality in the style of Frederick Douglass. Use <a href="#">Teacher &amp; Student Guide to Analyzing News &amp; Newspapers</a> to critically analyze ChatGPT's text compared to Douglass' work.</p> 
<p><b>Black Innovators in STEM</b></p> <p>Ask ChatGPT to generate a list of 10 lesser-known Black individuals in science, math, technology and engineering. Select one for whom to <b>research and then design an augmented reality statue or digital 3D model</b>.</p> 	<p><a href="#">A Philip Randolph</a></p> <p>Ask ChatGPT to <b>write a movie script</b> about A. Philip Randolph and Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Critically evaluate the credibility, trustworthiness, and authenticity of the script then remix it into your own version of a script.</p> 	<p><b>Political Courage</b></p> <p>Ask ChatGPT to <b>write a children's book</b> about <a href="#">individuals who refused to give up their seats on buses, trains, and streetcars</a>. Fact check and revise ChatGPT's text to <a href="#">design your own book</a>.</p> 

\*Exploring Black History Month with ChatGPT® Choice Board by [Robert W. Maloy](#), Ed.D. & [Torrey Trust](#), Ph.D., College of Education, University of Massachusetts Amherst is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 4.0](#)

## Designing for Learning: Student-Created Activity Example

[Explore Black History with ChatGPT](#) by Latchman Ramlochan

- Here are the responses from ChatGPT for each of the prompts in the 8 boxes in the Exploring Black History choice board.

## Additional Resources

- [California Governor Executive Order about AI](#) (September 2023)
- [AI wrote a bill to regulate AI. Now Rep. Ted Lieu wants Congress to pass it.](#)
- [The Next Great Misinformation Superspreaders: How ChatGPT Could Spread Toxic Misinformation At Unprecedented Scale](#)
- [Could a ChatBot Answer a Prime Minister's Questions?](#) BBC News (December 27, 2022)
- [ChatGPT & Education slide deck](#)



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