

Teaching Digital Literacy in a Post- Literate World

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Literacy Rates
and a Shift to a
Post-Literate
Society

Where Does
Information
Literacy Fit?

What Does
This Look Like
In Practice?

LITERACY CHALLENGE

Literacy Landscape is Shifting...



Increase in artificial intelligence, fake news and the combo of deep fakes!



Rising costs of education - especially higher education - have stagnated motivations



Lack of real-time opportunities to evaluate resources for credibility



Teachers doing more with less and focusing on testing over critical thinking

1 in 6 adults in GA

In 1950, being literate meant you could read and write.

In 2000, it meant you could also use a computer.

In 2026, it means you can understand, use, evaluate, and create with AI.

POST-LITERATE WORLD

We're already living in it... where the definition of literate as it relates to everyday functionality is changing.



Literacy Decline

The trend of lower literacy rates across states is linked to the rise of digital media. Significant % of populations functionally illiterate.



Media Consumption

It has moved from more legacy forms of reading to digital formats (audio books, podcasts, etc.). A preference for immediate and visual info over text.



Educational Challenges

Teachers everywhere of all ages are finding it harder to instill the value of reading. How do we teach critical thinking and analytical skills?



Philosophical Inquiry

The post-literate society is a topic worthy of discussing and reframing what literacy means now? How does this impact democracy and human cognition?

Reading and writing in the traditional sense is less and less essential.

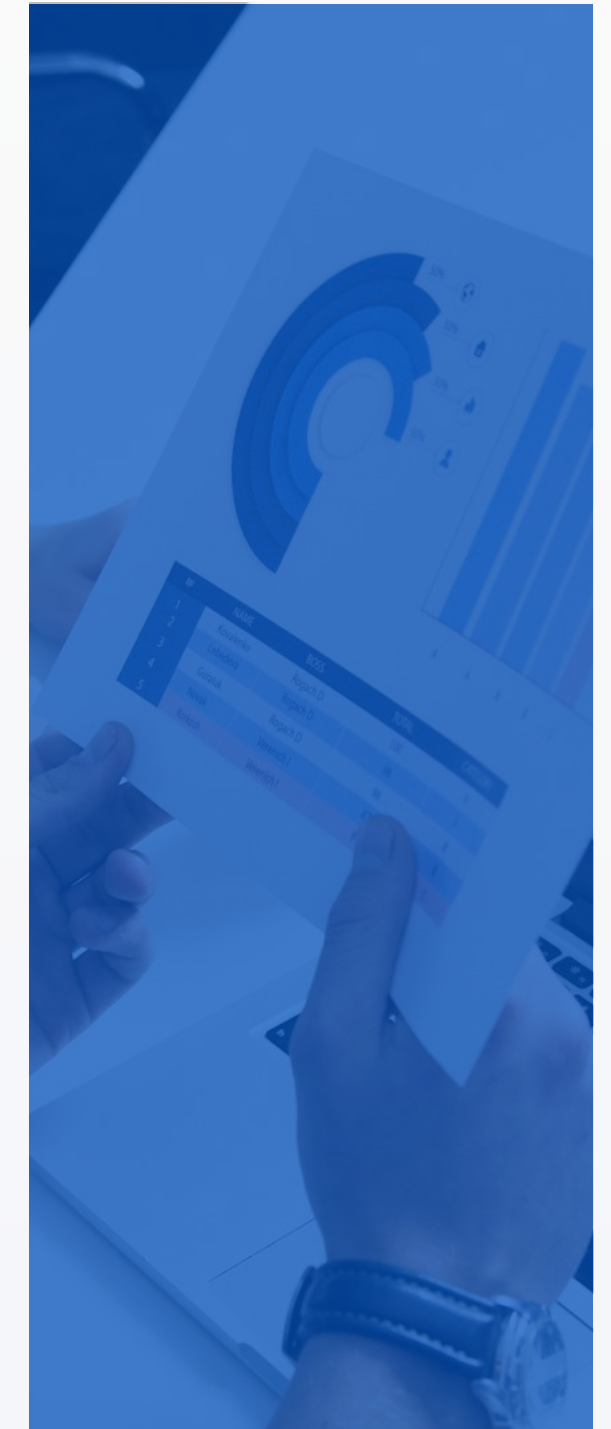
DIGITAL & INFO LITERACY

Traditional Competencies

- **Reading** text in "print" or longer documents with rich vocabulary
- **Writing** text to form complete thoughts and make arguments
- **Research** using a variety of sources with definitive guidelines one trustworthiness
- **Critical Thinking** to compare and contrast sources and ideas; to analyze contextually

Post-Literate Competencies

- **Gathering** information not necessarily in "print" or reading longer texts, but using summaries to glean faster
- **Sharing** information in ways that communicate what you know or your ideas/opinions (not in a written or typed format)
- **Detecting** real versus fake news, "history" and media; fact-checks



Even with AI augmenting education,
we still need students to be able to:

LEARN



PRODUCE



THINK



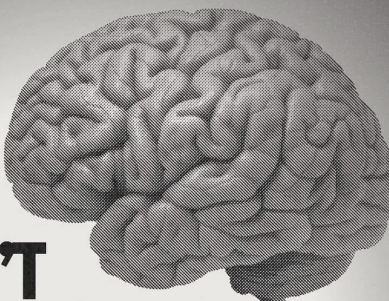
AI is not a replacement for the work.
It can function as a shortcut or springboard.

HOW DO WE TEACH THIS?

Start with lessons on using AI responsibly. How is it different than our brains?

How does it impact our environment? What is the (hidden) cost?

COMMONS



AI ISN'T A BRAIN IN YOUR COMPUTER.

AI runs on real tangible technology — servers housed in thousands of data centers.

These data centers generate heat, and many of them use *water-based cooling systems*.

COMMONS



MOST PEOPLE SEEM UNAWARE OF AI'S CLIMATE IMPACT.

Each time someone asks Chat GPT-4 to write a 100 word email, they unknowingly are "pouring out" a bottle of water.

Today, lots of regular people are using AI to replace a regular search engine or to entertain them when they're bored. But if they knew the cost, this behavior might change.

COMMONS



WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT AI.

COMMONS



THIS IS ONLY GOING TO GET WORSE...

... if we don't make a change.

The jump in water usage from Chat GPT-3 to 4 was significant. With Chat GPT-3, researchers in 2023 found that the AI needed to "drink" a bottle of water for roughly *10-50 responses*. A year later, those same researchers found that *just one email prompt* on Chat GPT-4 consumes the same amount of water.

COMMONS



BY 2027, AI USAGE ALONE IS PREDICTED TO USE* AS MUCH WATER AS ALL OF NEW ZEALAND.

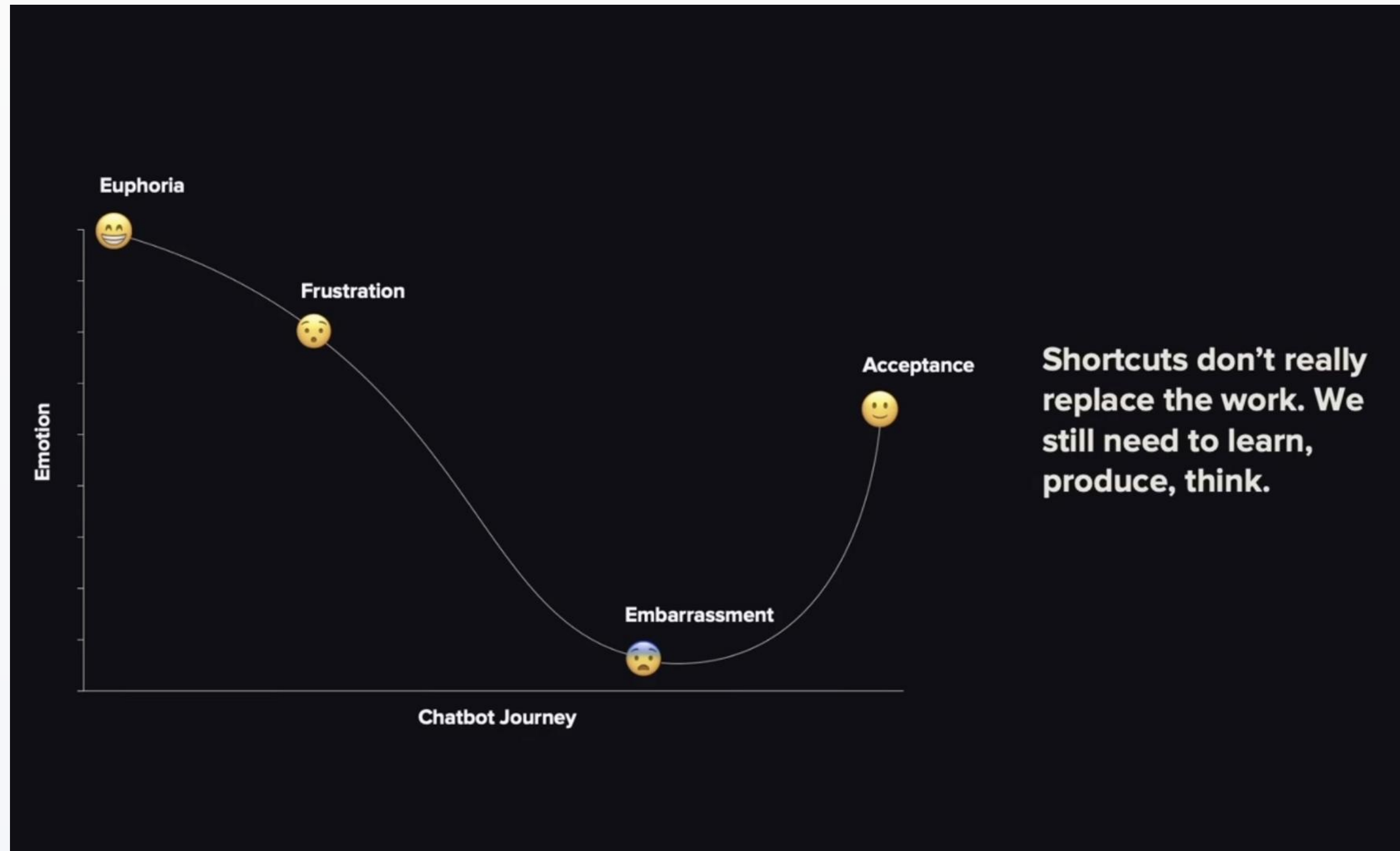
*Water withdrawn, meaning amount of water drawn from the environment

HOW DO WE TEACH THIS?

Play with it to demonstrate a variety of things

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<https://youtu.be/YBH8rQv4aTQ?si=PGM6YVTcr7v8xY5j>



HOW DO WE TEACH THIS?

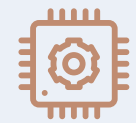
Four exercises that demonstrate limitations of AI & teach skepticism:



Image Generators / "Fake" Quizzes



Audio Clips / Quotes of Famous People



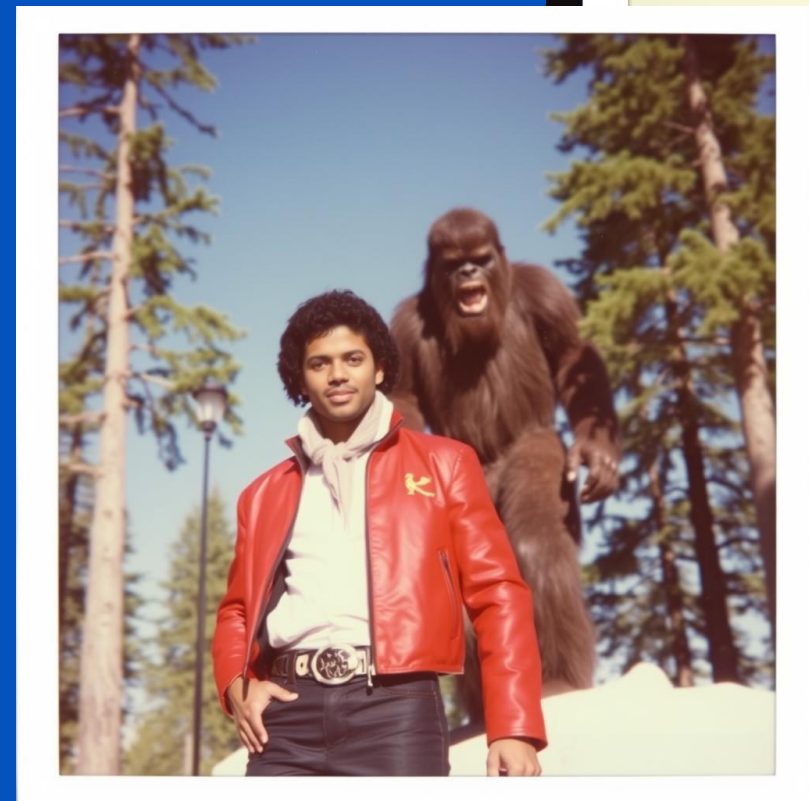
Chatbot "Gaslighting" Practice



Hallucination Test on Facts

Links on the final slide for some great resources including quizzes to start with!

I also use Padlets a lot as discussion boards or for kids to submit their product or experience.



TRY YOURSELF



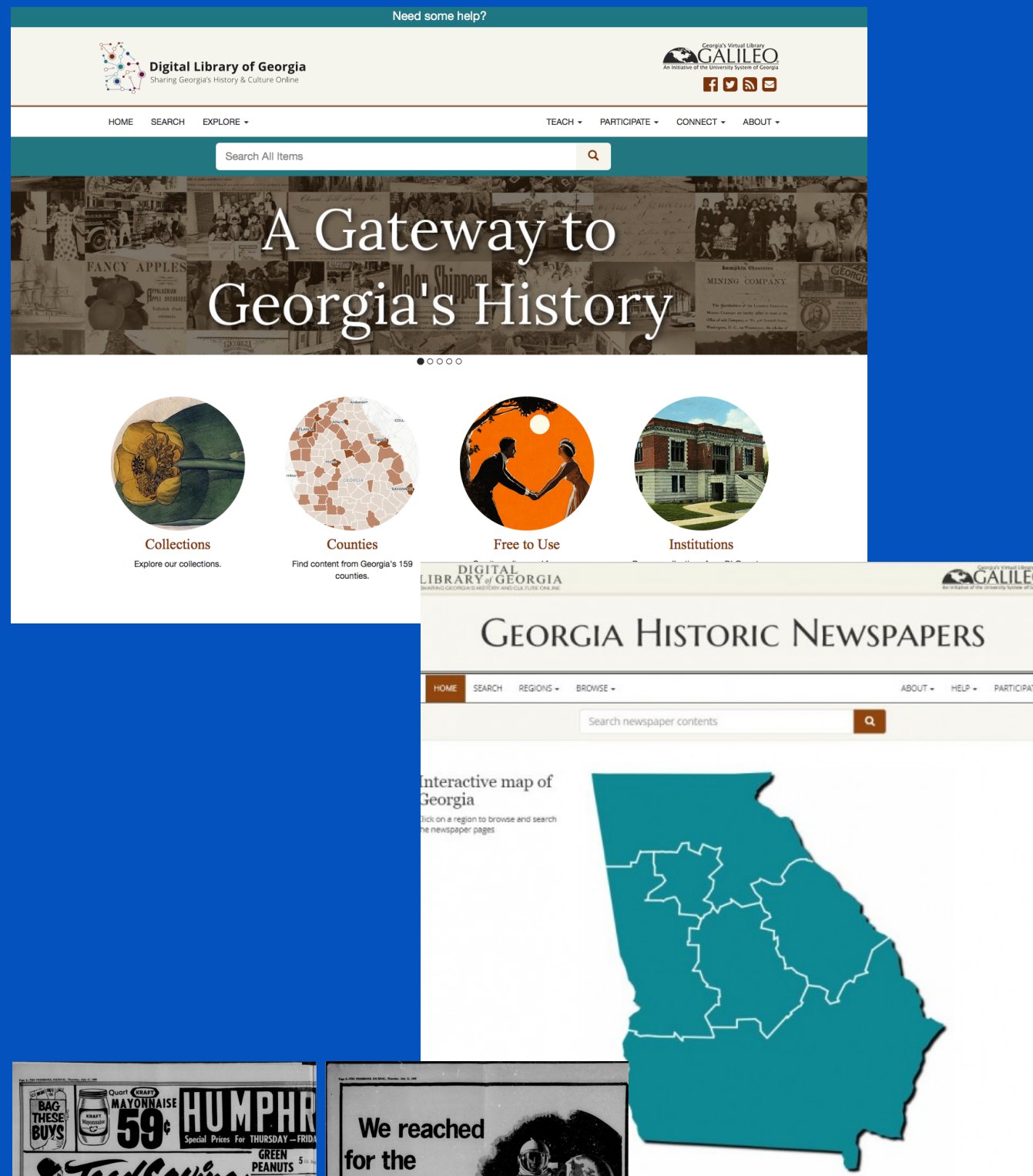
Use an AI image generator to create a photo of a historical event that never occurred.



Create a short audio clip of a famous person "saying" something they never said.



Ask an AI chatbot a factual question, then show how you can "gaslight" it into changing its answer through repeated suggestions or clever prompting.



EXTEND TO RESOURCES

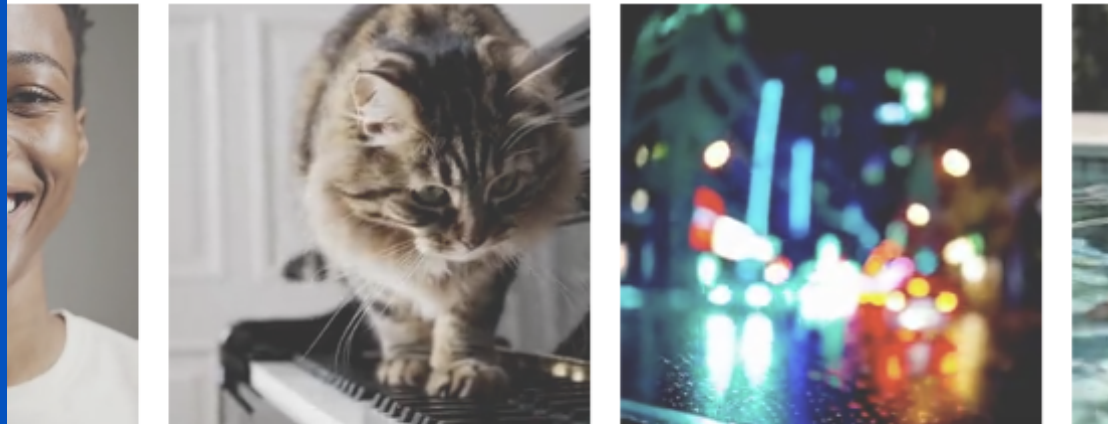
Use a legitimate resource to research a historical topic. Have students alternate on teams generating "fakes" and trying to prove or disprove the other team's submissions.

Give the class a series of fake audio, video, image and text/news samples. Can they detect the real versus the AI - generated ones?

Teach responsible use of AI. Lessons on how it uses water and other natural resources.

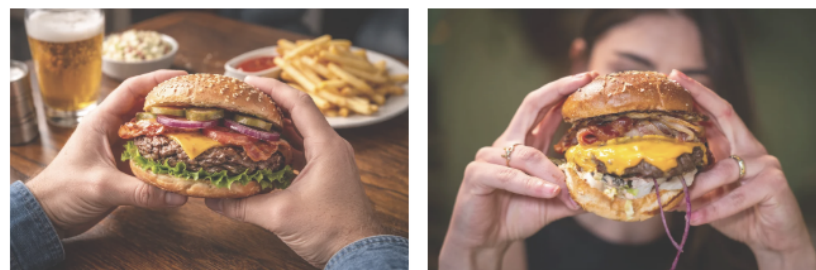
Play with AI Videos

Take a look, try to recognize AI videos.



Which is AI?

Two similar images, one is AI, one is real.



Play with AI Music

Listen carefully, try to recognize AI music.



MORE RESOURCES

Fun Quizzes to Test AI Detection Skills

[Real or AI Quiz: Can You Tell the Difference? - Britannica Education Blog](#)

[Real or Fake? The AI Deepfake Game – Leon Furze](#)

[AI or Not game. Is this image real or AI? Can you tell? Take the test](#)

[Quiz: AI or Not \(Berkeley developed\)](#)



[AI Foundations | Minecraft Education](#)

MORE RESOURCES

Course Ideas, Slides By Age Group, Concepts

[Day of AI | Curriculum](#)

[Teaching Kids AI Literacy: A Practical Guide for Families](#)

[AI Literacy Toolkit for Families | Common Sense Education](#)

[AI Curriculum for Kids | UNESCO Approved AI Education](#)



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QUESTIONS?

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UGA Libraries
libs.uga.edu

Firefly Homeschool Community
Assistant Director & Teacher
fireflyhomeschoolcommunity.org

Digital Library of Georgia
dlg.usg.edu