



# AI Literacy

Understanding AI with a Critical Eye

*Lessons for lower elementary students  
aged 5-8*





# AI Awareness

*Lessons for lower elementary students  
aged 5-8*

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# AI Awareness – Teacher/Parent Guide

## Learning Objectives



By the end of these lessons, students will be able to:

1. Understand what Artificial Intelligence (AI) is in a simple, age-appropriate way.
2. Recognize examples of AI in their everyday lives.
3. Distinguish between humans and AI, understanding that AI is not a person and does not have feelings.
4. Explain some ways AI can help people in different situations.
5. Describe how AI learns and gets better over time.
6. Identify safe and unsafe ways to use AI and know when to ask an adult for help.

## Learning Rationale

AI is becoming a common part of children's lives—appearing in toys, games, voice assistants, and online tools. While young learners are quick to adopt new technology, they may not fully understand how AI works or how to use it safely.

These lessons introduce AI concepts in a relatable way, helping children:



Build awareness of AI in their surroundings.



Develop critical thinking about what AI can and cannot do.



Practice digital safety skills and make responsible choices.



Grow confidence in asking for help when unsure about technology.

These lessons scaffold understanding—from identifying AI to exploring how it works, its benefits, and its risks—while using interactive activities that engage 5–8-year-olds in both guided and independent learning.



# AI Awareness – Teacher/Parent Guide

## Introduction for the Teacher/Parent

These lessons are designed for lower elementary students (ages 5–8) and can be used in the classroom, at home, or in small group settings. Each lesson begins with a short reading section for an adult to guide the learning, followed by hands-on and discussion-based activities.

The lessons are:

- **Flexible** – Can be completed in short 15–20 minute sessions or extended with extra discussion and drawing activities.
- **Engaging** – Uses relatable examples like voice assistants, video games, and everyday objects.
- **Safe** – Encourages children to think critically about technology and practice asking for help when something feels wrong.



You do not need to be a technology expert to use this pack. **Simply read the “A teacher, parent, or older sibling should read this” sections aloud**, guide the discussions, and support the activities. The icon (like the one to the left) will show you what to read out loud.

The goal is not to teach coding or technical skills but to develop early AI literacy—giving children the understanding and habits they need to safely and confidently navigate a world where AI is everywhere.

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- **Pre-Assessment** – Checking what students already know about AI.
- **Lesson 1: What is AI?** – Introduction to AI and where we find it.
- **Lesson 2: Is AI a Human?** – Understanding that AI is not a person and does not have feelings.
- **Lesson 3: How Does AI Learn?** – Exploring how AI improves through practice and data.
- **Lesson 4: How Does AI Help People?** – Recognizing the ways AI supports everyday life.
- **Lesson 5: How Do I Stay Safe Using AI?** – Learning safety rules and responsible use.
- **Post-Assessment** – Reflecting on what students have learned.



# AI AWARENESS PRE-ASSESSMENT

## Teacher/Parent Lesson Plan



### Learning Objectives

By the end of the pre-assessment activity, students will:

1. Demonstrate their initial understanding of what AI is.
2. Recognize or identify examples of AI they might use in daily life.
3. Express their current beliefs about whether AI can have feelings or is a person.
4. Show their understanding of AI's role (e.g., helper, tool, entertainment).
5. Begin reflecting on how they interact with AI (e.g., Siri, Alexa, games).

### Learning Rationale

The pre-assessment is not a test—it's a way to understand what children already know and what misconceptions they may have about AI.

This starting point will:

- Guide instruction – Teachers/parents can adjust explanations and examples based on student understanding.
- Highlight misconceptions early – Many young learners think AI is alive, has feelings, or can make independent decisions like humans.
- Encourage student voice – Students get to share their own experiences with technology, making lessons more relatable.
- Track growth – Comparing pre- and post-assessments will show how their knowledge and thinking have changed.

Because AI can feel abstract to children, these smiley-face rating scales help them express their ideas without the pressure of “right” or “wrong” answers.



# AI AWARENESS PRE-ASSESSMENT

## Teacher/Parent Lesson Plan

### Lesson Plan

- 1** Read each statement aloud slowly and point to the response icons (smiley, thinking face, and confused/upset face).
  - Make sure students understand that they are showing how much they agree or know about the statement.
  - Encourage honesty—there are no “correct” answers at this stage.
- 2** Clarify the format: Students can circle or color the box that matches their answer. If doing in a group, you can have them point to a face on the page or a large visual in the room.
- 3** Optional discussion:
  - After each statement, you may ask for brief examples (“Who can give me an example of something that uses AI?”) but avoid correcting them yet—just listen and note answers.
  - Keep it light and exploratory. The goal is to learn what they think, not to teach in this step.
- 4** Record insights: Consider jotting down brief notes of their responses so you can look back during the post-assessment to see changes in understanding.
- 5** Set the tone: Let children know that by the end of the lessons, they’ll have learned new things about AI, and it’s perfectly fine if their answers change later.

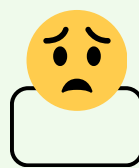
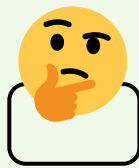


# AI AWARENESS PRE-ASSESSMENT

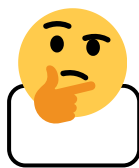
For each statement below, rate how well you understand the idea by choosing one of the following:

- I understand this well 😊
- I am not sure if I understand this 🤔
- I don't understand this well 😞

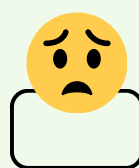
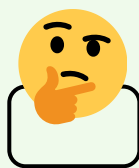
**I know what AI (artificial intelligence) is.**



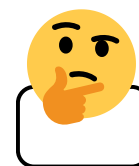
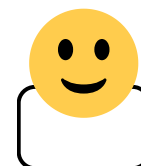
**I can give examples of things that use AI.**



**I know that AI doesn't have real feelings like a human.**



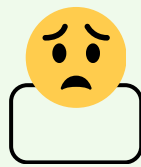
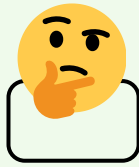
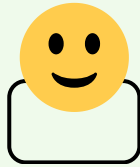
**I know AI doesn't always makes correct & right decisions.**



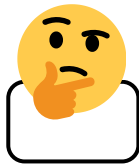


# AI AWARENESS PRE-ASSESSMENT

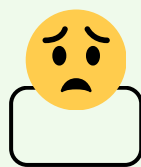
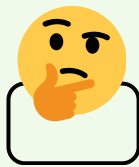
I can explain that AI learns from data and patterns.



I understand that AI was created by people.



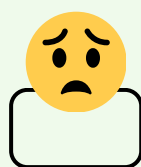
I know some ways AI helps people in everyday life.



I think it's okay to ask an adult if an AI gives me strange or confusing advice.



I know that AI doesn't always makes fair and right choices.







# WHAT IS AI?

## Teacher/Parent Lesson Plan



### Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Define AI (Artificial Intelligence) in simple, age-appropriate terms.
2. Identify examples of AI they may encounter in daily life.
3. Distinguish between objects that use AI and those that do not.
4. Explain simple ways AI can solve problems or help people.
5. Begin thinking critically about where and how AI appears in their environment.

### Learning Rationale

AI is already woven into many areas of children's lives—voice assistants, smart devices, streaming recommendations, and even toys.

This introductory lesson:

- Builds foundational understanding by explaining AI as a “brain for machines” without overcomplicating the concept.
- Uses relatable examples (Siri, Alexa, video game characters) to make AI concrete and memorable.
- Promotes observation skills as children look for AI in their own surroundings.
- Encourages problem-solving thinking by exploring how AI can help in everyday scenarios.

By connecting AI to familiar experiences, this lesson sets the stage for later discussions on what AI can and cannot do, how it learns, and how to use it safely.



# WHAT IS AI?

## Teacher/Parent Lesson Plan

### Preparation

Review the “A teacher, parent, or older sibling should read this” section.  
Have coloring tools ready for drawing activities.

If possible, bring real-world objects or images of AI examples (phone with voice assistant, smart speaker, robot vacuum) and non-AI objects for comparison.

### Lesson Plan

- 1** Read the Introduction
  - Use clear, conversational language.
  - Emphasize that AI is not a person—it’s technology that can help in different ways.
  - Share the given examples (Siri, Alexa, video game characters) and add personal or student-provided examples.
- 2** Activity 1: Where is AI?
  - Have students look around their space to spot items they think might use AI.
  - Encourage them to draw these objects in the provided frames.
  - Prompt with questions like:
    - “How does this object know what to do?”
    - “Does it respond to you?”
- 3** Activity 2: AI or Not?
  - Show each object in the picture.
  - Ask students to circle the ones that use AI.
  - After circling, discuss why they think each one does or does not use AI—don’t correct yet if they’re unsure. The goal is to hear their reasoning.
  - *Optional extension: Ask students to draw pictures of other objects and have a partner circle which ones use AI.*
- 4** Activity 3: Problem-Solving Using AI (p. 7)
  - Read each short scenario aloud.
  - Let students choose the most helpful AI-related answer by pointing or marking a check.
  - Briefly discuss why that choice works best and how AI helps in that case.
  - *Optional extension: Give students time to share when they used AI to solve a problem.*



# What is AI?



**A teacher, parent, or older sibling should read this:**

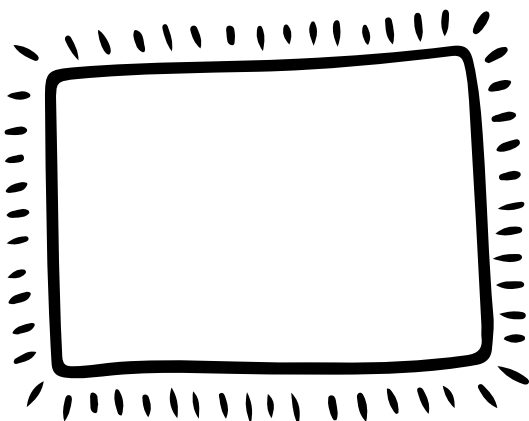
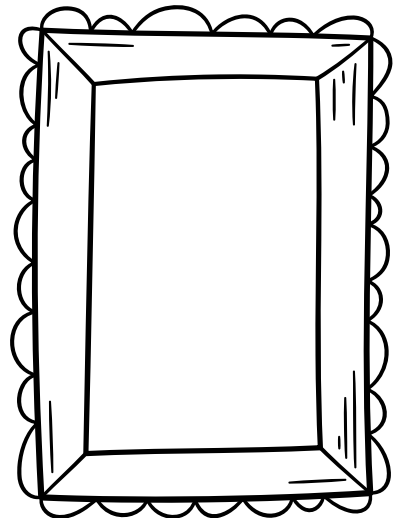
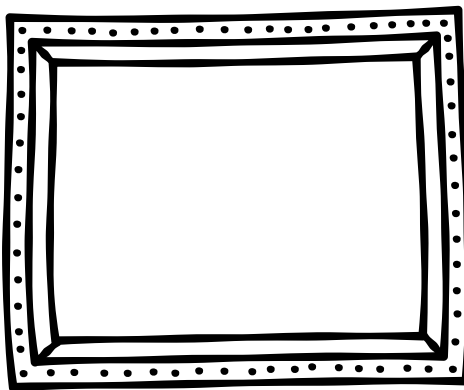
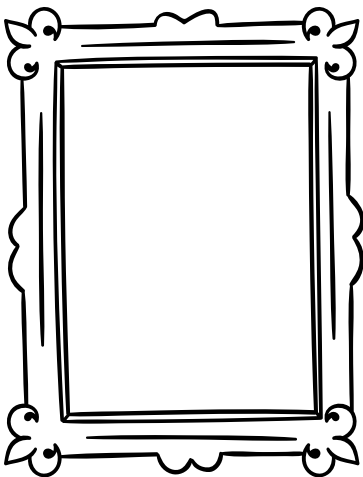
AI stands for Artificial Intelligence. It's like a brain for machines or computers. AI can help do things like answer questions, play music, or even help you find information.

AI is not a person, but it can help us in many ways. Some examples of AI are Siri, Alexa, and even characters in a video game that act like helpers or enemies. These AI characters respond to what you do in the game, like running away if you chase them or helping you solve puzzles.



**Activity 1: Where is AI?**

Look around your space. What things might be using AI right now? Draw them in the frames below.



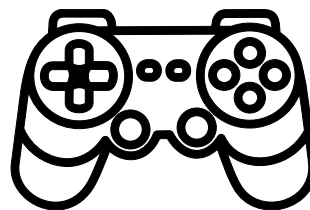
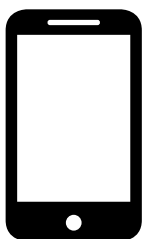
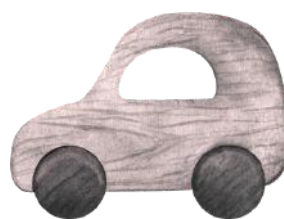
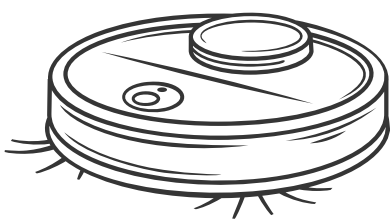


# What is AI?

## Activity 2: AI or not?



Circle the objects that use AI. Then, share with a parent, teacher, or classmate why you think each object does or does not use AI.



Why do you think each object does or does not use AI? How do you know?