**What Students Are Saying about ChatGPT\***

**Is this new chatbot the end of education as we know it? Or a useful new tool for learning? Teenagers weigh in.**

By The Learning Network

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<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/02/learning/students-chatgpt.html>

By now you’ve probably heard of ChatGPT, a powerful new artificial intelligence chatbot released to the public late last year that can craft jokes and working computer code, guess at medical diagnoses, and create text-based Harry Potter games.

And, yes, it can also write essays and solve problem sets, a fact that has “sent many educators into a panic,” notes Kevin Roose, a Times Tech columnist. Some school districts have already banned this new technology; others are attempting to teach students how to use it responsibly.

We invited teenagers to read Mr. Roose’s column and then tell us how they thought schools should respond to ChatGPT. Many came to the conclusion that the chatbot was a mighty, if at times unreliable, tool. Some worried that ChatGPT would rob them of their motivation, creativity and critical thinking; others that it would lead to widespread cheating. But several teenagers argued that A.I. is the future, and schools should embrace it rather than restrict it. At least one student thought all of this was an overreaction: “Everyone needs to chill out!” she wrote. “ChatGPT is certainly not the end of the world, nor the eradication of writing as a whole.”

**ChatGPT is a powerful, if imperfect, tool.**

My ninong (godfather) recommended using ChatGPT, so I gave it a try. It was very powerful (it can write a sonnet about admission to Harvard, which I requested for fun) but inaccurate. Sometimes, ChatGPT kept changing its answers when I asked it the same question over and over. Nevertheless, I have never used it to answer my schoolwork or write my essays (I like to write, so I do that myself).

*— Shekina, Philippines*

I have never used ChatGPT, but I have used similar chatbots purely for exploration. When I used these chatbots I came to the conclusion that they aren’t very good at writing papers for the fact that they are very brief and often lack the level of knowledge required to write a paper on a certain topic. When you type in a prompt they just use very brief, filler words to write your response rather than actually use educated terms. I think the concept is decent but it needs to be very much advanced upon before it can be used frequently.

*— Will, Saint Peter High School, MN*

Personally yes, I used and experimented with ChatGPT and it is extremely useful for assignments. Not just because it answers all of your questions that you ask, but it completely destroys the use of tutors. However, it should be noted that it can be used productively but unethically because it is easier to cheat and just copy whatever the AI is providing.

*— Kaden, VSN*

ChatGPT is much less developed than the article here suggests. The AI uses language and sentence structure that a middle schooler would use. It could be a good inspiration tool for students who lack ideas for an essay and it could also be used in a way to teach students the proper essay structure and many more key basic things.

*— Bozhidar, AAS Sofia*

**Some think A.I. has no place in education because it inhibits learning…**

In almost all classes in school, ChatGPT should not be used. As it continues to get better and better, ChatGPT will be doing work that the student should do for them. For example, I could instead of writing this myself just have ChatGPT write this for me. How will teachers be able to know for sure that their students are actually learning what they think they are or is it just a robot doing their work for them? Students who do not use A.I. will also be affected. Instead of their lessons being centered around what mistakes the students actually make they will be based on what ChatGPT or another A.I. does.

*— Henry, Glenbard West High School*

I think schools should have ChatGPT blocked because it ruins the whole idea of schools. If you want to learn about something related to the assignment then you should probably resort to asking the teacher. The teacher is way more reliable than any internet source. ChatGPT can be helpful when you’re outside of school, on weekends and/or on summer break. It’s also important to know how to use real books and not always rely on the internet.

*— Tim, Hinsdale Central High School*

**…and robs students of the motivation to do their work.**

I personally believe that the use of chatbots and AI in school is dangerous for motivation and knowledge. Why write if a bot does it for me? Why learn when a bot does it better? I find this similar to the lack of motivation faced in math classes across the world when the portable calculator was invented and it is plausible that the same can happen in English classes if this AI is used; kids (especially high schoolers/teens) would love to generate their challenging assignments … Quite frankly I am terrified of ChatGPT’s growth among the younger generations, mainly for the intelligence and motivation of the kids, but also for the future of English as an art and skill to be learned, not generated.

*— Jonathan, PACE High School, TX*

Essentially the program is a cheat code for writing essays because all you have to do is insert a scenario and it will write for you. I think it is a bad thing for schools since students can become underdeveloped in their literacy skills — writing stories or essays — and would give people no incentive to learn and that would lead to them becoming lazy. In addition this is unfair to the teachers since they wouldn’t know if a student is cheating and they would essentially be grading an AI’s work instead of an actual human’s.

*— Sergio, Glenbard West High School*

**Students worry we’ll lose our creativity and critical thinking skills if we rely on chatbots.**

One of my biggest worries is that I would rely too much on these tools and lose the capacity for critical and creative thought. I personally want to learn how to communicate myself clearly and to find my own distinctive voice. If I always rely on ChatGPT to generate material for me, I might not be challenged to improve as a writer. I’m also concerned that the information produced by ChatGPT might not be reliable or secure. As a student, I want to be able to trust the knowledge I’m gaining and avoid coming into contact with false information or damaging viewpoints.

*— Faris, Hinsdale Central High School*

A student’s use of generative AI to accomplish writing assignments is entirely counterproductive to the goals of an English class. As a receiver of the average American education, every English class I’ve been in has emphasized the importance of writing as a means of thinking. Indeed, to produce engaging and persuasive writing, students must learn how to research to understand a topic, thoughtfully take a position, and organize the information to be consumed. In English classes, students not only learn the grammar behind writing but also learn to become effective communicators. Communicators are how society learns to understand one another and share ideas that can help develop and change minds.

*— Leslie, Ames High School*

**Others believe A.I. is the future and students need to get familiar with technology they’ll inevitably use someday.**

It would be very unreasonable to students if their schools completely banned the tool of writing AIs. The reality is that these kids will be experiencing these AIs as they grow older, so the schools should introduce them to the students at a young age. As these students grow older and begin to work in the world, ChatGPT and other online writing AIs will be taking over. If these students are never taught about, and never learn how to operate ChatGPT in their schools, they will be unprepared for their life ahead, which will be filled with writing AIs.

*— Whit, Byfield, MA*

**They said ChatGPT can actually aid learning.**

I have used ChatGPT a number of times to test its capabilities. I was very impressed with its ability to write essays, including essays using sources. I understand that this would not necessarily be ideal for a school environment where students are meant to create their own essays and develop writing skills by doing so. However, it can also be used to give essay outlines, which I could see as being incredibly helpful for students. It also provides accurate information on historical situations, which allows for easy access to a reliable source for students.

*— Rachel, Atrisco Heritage Academy*

I’ve had experience using ChatGPT before and it’s been really helpful for me: When using it for personal questions, joke questions, or help on school assignments, it helps me gather research or understand the topic a lot better and faster … I also find it fun to experiment with, especially as a programmer. It’s given me new ideas and ways to think about code. However, I do think it’s important to fact check what it tells you since it’s not always accurate.

*— Grange, Glenbard West High School*

ChatGPT doesn’t allow for an accurate assessment of understanding. But when used on homework, something usually meant for learning and practice, it can allow a student to more clearly grasp the subject. If a student needs to look up an answer anyway, is it not far better to have a more convenient option that also very clearly explains the concept? So when it’s assumed to be nothing more than a newer, better calculator, ChatGPT can hinder the assessment of prior learning. But when used as a learning and reinforcement tool itself, it can provide a wealth of otherwise inaccessible knowledge.

*— Zac, Miami Country Day School, Florida*

**And that teachers should embrace this new technology…**

If I was in charge of setting the rules regarding ChatGPT, I would try and make teachers implement the A.I. into their work, to allow students the ability to learn how to work alongside an A.I. and so that they won’t be tempted to cheat later on. Students have a lesser chance using ChatGPT to cheat when it’s not forbidden and is actually allowed.

*— Ankitha, Cary High*

People should look further into what ChatGPT can actually do because this artificial intelligence bot can do some pretty cool things. Some teachers can use this technology for making personal lesson plans for students so that they can be more successful. Or some teachers can use it to give highly detailed feedback on a student’s work.

*— Sophia, Hinsdale Central High School*

A teacher at my school recently asked her class to use ChatGPT to write papers on the novel they were reading in class. The students also wrote their own papers, and compared the results. I found this teaching method to be extremely accommodating and productive. Rather than framing ChatGPT as a way to cheat, and therefore encouraging students to secretly use the forbidden program, teachers can show their students how to use it to their advantage, while still keeping their own original ideas. In today’s world, technology is quickly becoming more intelligent, but I don’t think we have to fear it.

*— Devin, New York*

**…while setting boundaries around how to use it.**

Students can use ChatGPT to learn about new things, improve their vocabulary, and continue their learning when the teacher isn’t always there to help them. However, I do think its usage needs to be monitored very carefully, as students who use it as a way to get out of their work will end up falling behind in the classroom.

*— Josh, Harvard Westlake*

An easy tactic for schools to avoid the mess which is deciding whether to embrace or drop AI is to mandate hand-written, done-in-class assignments. This would help students develop handwriting (which is atrocious), quick thinking (as we will have a limited time to write), and fight back against procrastination.

*— John, Northwest High School, Germantown, MD*

I think that programs like ChatGPT are going to force teachers to change the way they assign homework. Doing more homework in class and less at home activities might help deter using AI generated work … doing more assignments that require students to talk and collaborate with other students will help counteract this.

*— Noah, St Peter High School*

**Perhaps, though, our fears are overblown.**

In my personal opinion, as a student who excels in English, (and who has never used ChatGPT in my life) I assert, to put it frankly, everyone needs to chill out! ChatGPT is certainly not the end of the world, nor the eradication of writing as a whole. Nearly all ChatGPT essays pass plagiarism tests, however, every ChatGPT fails the AI writing detection tests. Every. Single. Time. So I offer a simple solution: if you’re a teacher, after checking for plagiarism, copy and paste the essay into an AI writing detection test. It’s as simple as writing an essay with ChatGPT.

*— Emilia, Illinois*

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