

# Commonsense Retrieval-Augmented Generation for Large Language Models

CPSC 532V 2023W2 Project Proposal - 2024.03.06

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THE UNIVERSITY  
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- 1 Introduction
- 2 Implementation Steps
- 3 Experimental Setup
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# Background

Natural language generation has improved considerably owing to the rapid development of large language models (LLMs) [1, 2, 3].

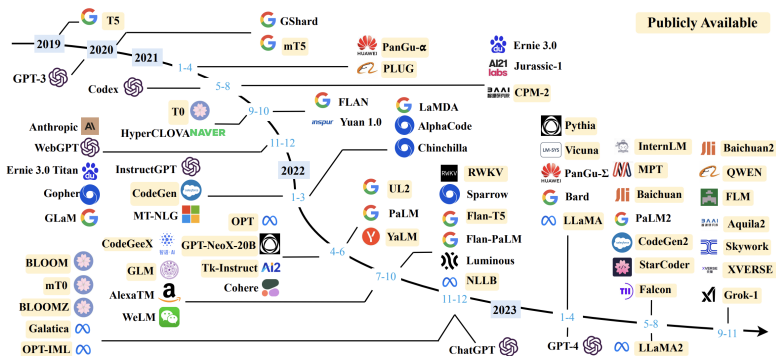


Figure 1: A timeline of existing LLMs (size > 10B) in recent years [3].

# Background

	Claude 3 Opus	Claude 3 Sonnet	Claude 3 Haiku	GPT-4	GPT-3.5	Gemini 1.0 Ultra	Gemini 1.0 Pro
Undergraduate level knowledge <i>MMU</i>	<b>86.8%</b> 5-shot	<b>79.0%</b> 5-shot	<b>75.2%</b> 5-shot	<b>86.4%</b> 5-shot	<b>70.0%</b> 5-shot	<b>83.7%</b> 5-shot	<b>71.8%</b> 5-shot
Graduate level reasoning <i>GPQA, Diamond</i>	<b>50.4%</b> 0-shot CoT	<b>40.4%</b> 0-shot CoT	<b>33.3%</b> 0-shot CoT	<b>35.7%</b> 0-shot CoT	<b>28.1%</b> 0-shot CoT	—	—
Grade school math <i>GSM8K</i>	<b>95.0%</b> 0-shot CoT	<b>92.3%</b> 0-shot CoT	<b>88.9%</b> 0-shot CoT	<b>92.0%</b> 5-shot CoT	<b>57.1%</b> 5-shot	<b>94.4%</b> Maj1@32	<b>86.5%</b> Maj1@32
Math problem-solving <i>MATH</i>	<b>60.1%</b> 0-shot CoT	<b>43.1%</b> 0-shot CoT	<b>38.9%</b> 0-shot CoT	<b>52.9%</b> 4-shot	<b>34.1%</b> 4-shot	<b>53.2%</b> 4-shot	<b>32.6%</b> 4-shot
Multilingual math <i>MGSM</i>	<b>90.7%</b> 0-shot	<b>83.5%</b> 0-shot	<b>75.1%</b> 0-shot	<b>74.5%</b> 8-shot	—	<b>79.0%</b> 8-shot	<b>63.5%</b> 8-shot
Code <i>HumanEval</i>	<b>84.9%</b> 0-shot	<b>73.0%</b> 0-shot	<b>75.9%</b> 0-shot	<b>67.0%</b> 0-shot	<b>48.1%</b> 0-shot	<b>74.4%</b> 0-shot	<b>67.7%</b> 0-shot
Reasoning over text <i>DROP, F1 score</i>	<b>83.1</b> 3-shot	<b>78.9</b> 3-shot	<b>78.4</b> 3-shot	<b>80.9</b> 3-shot	<b>64.1</b> 3-shot	<b>82.4</b> Variable shots	<b>74.1</b> Variable shots
Mixed evaluations <i>BIG-Bench-Hard</i>	<b>86.8%</b> 3-shot CoT	<b>82.9%</b> 3-shot CoT	<b>73.7%</b> 3-shot CoT	<b>83.1%</b> 3-shot CoT	<b>66.6%</b> 3-shot CoT	<b>83.6%</b> 3-shot CoT	<b>75.0%</b> 3-shot CoT
Knowledge Q&A <i>ARC-Challenge</i>	<b>96.4%</b> 25-shot	<b>93.2%</b> 25-shot	<b>89.2%</b> 25-shot	<b>96.3%</b> 25-shot	<b>85.2%</b> 25-shot	—	—
Common Knowledge <i>Hellaswag</i>	<b>95.4%</b> 10-shot	<b>89.0%</b> 10-shot	<b>85.9%</b> 10-shot	<b>95.3%</b> 10-shot	<b>85.5%</b> 10-shot	<b>87.8%</b> 10-shot	<b>84.7%</b> 10-shot

Figure 2: Claude 3 – a new standard for intelligence [4] (Mar 4, 2024).

# Motivation

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producing outputs that are coherent and grammatically correct but *nonsensical*, *unfaithful* [6], or *factually incorrect*.

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- LM training paradigm [8, 9]: LLM models **predict the next token** based on the previously generated ones.  
“The president of US is” → “Biden” or “Trump” (Which year?)
- Hence, the models are supposed to produce better output if they are **conditioned on more relevant context**.  
“In 2020, the president of US is” → “Trump” (with context)

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- **Modeling and Inference Methods:**
  - > architecture (encoder, attention, decoder),
  - > training (planning, reinforcement learning, multi-task learning, controllable generation),
  - > post-processing, etc.
- **Data-Related Methods:**
  - > building a faithful dataset,
  - > cleaning data automatically,
  - > **information augmentation, etc.**

# Research Problem

The focus of this project:

- *How do we effectively incorporate contextual information to enhance problem-solving performance and mitigate hallucination in LLM generation?*

# Retrieval-Augmented Generation

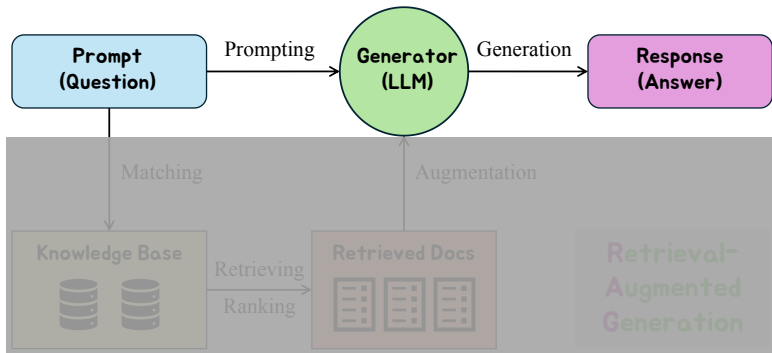


Figure 3: The overview of LLM generation.

# Retrieval-Augmented Generation

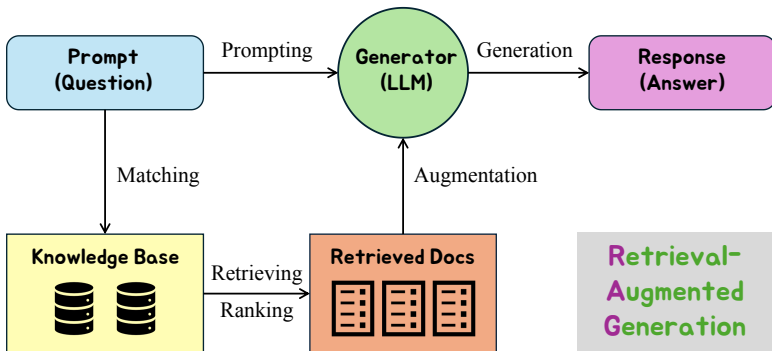


Figure 4: The overview of retrieval-augmented generation (RAG).

# Retrieval-Augmented Generation

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  - 5. LLM generation and commonsense evaluation
  - 6. Incorporating various advanced RAG methods
- ★ All points will be covered in our implementation.  
Skip related work (in our proposal) for the sake of time

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# Implementation

Our project aims to develop an RAG system to examine and compare different RAG methods of integrating external knowledge into LLMs for solving commonsense NLP tasks.

## Steps

- 1 Building knowledge base
- 2 Indexing
- 3 Retrieval
- 4 Augmentation
- 5 Generation
- 6 Advance RAG



## Step 1 & 2: Building Knowledge Base and Indexing

- Encyclopedic and commonsense knowledge sources
  - ① Atomic [10]
  - ② ConceptNet [11]
  - ③ Wikipedia <sup>1</sup>
  - ④ NCLB [12]
  - ⑤ ...
- From individual KBs with different formats  
→ a unified, structured KB.

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<sup>1</sup><https://pypi.org/project/Wikipedia-API/>

## Step 3: Retrieval

The **retriever** module is responsible for *searching*, *semantic matching*, and *result ranking*.

### Pre-retrieval

- Rewriting [13]
- Query routing [14]

### Post-retrieval

- Re-ranking [15, 16]

## Step 4: Augmentation

- Zero-shot generation [8, 9]
- In-context Learning (ICL) [17]
- Chain-of-Thought prompting (CoT) [18, 19]
- Supervised fine-tuning (SFT) with Instruction Tuning [20, 21, 22, 23, 24]

## Step 5 & 6: Generation/Evaluation/Training and advanced RAG

- We will implement the language model evaluation scripts on selected commonsense benchmarks.
- If time allows, we will try to incorporate several advanced RAG methods like Robust RAG [25, 26], GAR (Generation Augmented Retrieval) [27, 28, 29], etc.

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# Tasks, Datasets, and Evaluation

- **Tasks**: Multi-choice Commonsense NLP Tasks (classification)
- **Datasets**: GLUE, SuperGLUE, WSC, WinoGrande, ANLI, ARC, PIQA, SWAG, HellaSwag, etc.
- **Evaluation**: Acc, F1, Mcc, EM, etc.  
**Acc** (Accuracy): for balanced classification  
**F1**: for unbalanced classification  
**Mcc**: Matthews correlation coefficient [30]<sup>2</sup>  
**EM** (Exact Match): for multiple correct answers scenario

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<sup>2</sup>The advantages of the Matthews correlation coefficient (MCC) over F1 score and accuracy in binary classification evaluation [31]

# Tasks, Datasets, and Evaluation - GLUE

Dataset	Training	Validation	Test	# Class	Metric
GLUE [32]					
cola (The Corpus of Linguistic Acceptability)	8.55k	1.04k	1.06k	2	Mcc
mnli (MultiNLI Matched)	393k	9.82k	9.8k	3	Acc
mnli (MultiNLI Mismatched)	393k	9.83k	9.85k	3	Acc
mrpc (Microsoft Research Paraphrase Corpus)	3.67k	408	1.73k	2	Acc, F1
qnli (Question NLI)	105k	5.46k	5.46k	2	Acc
qqp (Quora Question Pairs)	364k	40.4k	391k	2	Acc, F1
rte (Recognizing Textual Entailment)	2.49k	277	3k	2	Acc
sst2 (The Stanford Sentiment Treebank)	67.3k	872	1.82k	2	Acc
wnli (Winograd NLI)	635	71	146	2	Acc

**Table 1:** The statistics of datasets for evaluation. All of them are classification tasks, where the training and validation set have labels, while the test set does not. For the evaluation metrics, “Acc”, “F1”, “Mcc”, and “EM” mean accuracy, f1 score, Matthews correlation coefficient, and exact match score, respectively.

# Tasks, Datasets, and Evaluation - SuperGLUE

Dataset	Training	Validation	Test	# Class	Metric
SuperGLUE [33]					
boolq (BoolQ)	9.43k	3.27k	3.25k	2	Acc
cb (CommitmentBank)	250	56	250	3	Acc, F1
copa (Choice of Plausible Alternatives)	500	100	400	2	Acc
multirc (Multi-Sentence Reading Comprehension)	27.2k	4.85k	9.69k	2	Acc
record (Reading Comprehension w/ Commonsense Reasoning)	101k	10k	10k	N	F1, EM
rte (Recognizing Textual Entailment)	2.49k	277	3k	2	Acc
wic (Words in Context)	5.43k	638	1.4k	2	Acc
wsc (The Winograd Schema Challenge)	554	104	146	2	Acc

**Table 2:** The statistics of datasets for evaluation. All of them are classification tasks, where the training and validation set have labels, while the test set does not. For the evaluation metrics, “Acc”, “F1”, “Mcc”, and “EM” mean accuracy, f1 score, Matthews correlation coefficient, and exact match score, respectively.



# Tasks, Datasets, and Evaluation - Other Commonsense Benchmark

Dataset	Training	Validation	Test	# Class	Metric
WSC273 [34]	-	-	273	2	Acc
WinoGrande [35]	9.25k	1.27k	1.77k	2	Acc
ANLI r1 [36]	16.9k	1k	1k	3	Acc
ANLI r2	45.5k	1k	1k	3	Acc
ANLI r3	100k	1.2k	1.2k	3	Acc
ARC Easy [37]	2.25k	570	2.38k	4	Acc
ARC Challenge	1.12k	299	1.17k	4	Acc
PIQA [38]	16.1k	1.84k	3.08	2	Acc
SWAG [39]	73.5k	20k	20k	4	Acc
HellaSwag [40]	39.9k	10k	10k	4	Acc
Commonsense QA [41]	9.74k	1.22k	1.14k	5	Acc

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## Baselines and Experiments

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- **Experiments:** Baseline w/ RAG v.s. Baseline w/o RAG  
**Expected Results:** Baseline w/ RAG > Baseline w/o RAG
- **Analysis:**
  - > Task performance (why better or worse);
  - > Ablation study (effectiveness of each component);
  - > Error analysis & Case study & Discussion → Research insights

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## Expected Contributions

The focus of this project: *How do we effectively incorporate contextual information to enhance problem-solving performance and mitigate hallucination in LLM generation?*

- We will systematically implement the RAG system emphasizing commonsense reasoning. The code, data, and results will be released on GitHub <sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup>[https://github.com/YuweiYin/UBC\\_CPSC\\_532V](https://github.com/YuweiYin/UBC_CPSC_532V)

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- We will extensively examine the effectiveness of different RAG methods for multiple LLMs on various commonsense tasks. The results will bring findings & ideas for further improvement.
- We will conduct in-depth analyses and ablation studies to assess the efficacy of different RAG components. The analysis could shed light on future commonsense RAG research.

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# Task Division

We will work together on research idea discussion, result analysis, and paper writing. The main focus of each member is as follows:

- **Juntai Cao & Yilin Yang**:  
Step 1 Building knowledge base;  
Step 2 Indexing;  
Step 3 Retrieval;  
Step 6 Advanced RAG;  
Results analysis
- **Yuwei Yin**:  
Project leading;  
Step 3 Retrieval;  
Step 4 Augmentation;  
Step 5 Generation/Evaluation/Training;  
Step 6 Advanced RAG;  
Paper writing

# Timeline

- Before Reading Week: Project planning & Literature review
- 02.19–02.25 (Reading Week) + 02.26–03.03:
  - > Done: (Yuwei) Step 5 Generation/Evaluation/Training <sup>4</sup>
- 03.04–03.10:
  - > Done: Proposal writing & presenting
  - > Doing: collecting knowledge sources
- 03.11–03.17 Todo:
  - > (Juntai & Yilin) Step 1 Building knowledge base
  - > (Yuwei) Step 4 Augmentation (unify knowledge structure)

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<sup>4</sup>The code and preliminary results: [https://github.com/YuweiYin/UBC\\_CPSC\\_532V/tree/master/Project#experimental-results](https://github.com/YuweiYin/UBC_CPSC_532V/tree/master/Project#experimental-results)

# Timeline

- 03.18–03.24 Todo:
  - > (Juntai & Yilin) Step 1 Building KB & Step 2 Indexing
  - > (Yuwei) Step 4 Augmentation (Zero-shot, ICL, CoT, SFT)
- 03.25–03.31 Todo:
  - > (Juntai & Yilin) Step 2 Indexing & Step 3 Retrieval
  - > (Yuwei) Experiment Pipeline: Step 4 + Step 5
- 04.01–04.07 Todo:
  - > (Juntai & Yilin) Results analysis & Step 6 Advanced RAG
  - > (Yuwei) Experiments (Step 1+2+3+4+5[+6])
- 04.08–04.12 Todo:
  - > (Juntai & Yilin) Results analysis & Paper writing
  - > (Yuwei) Experiments & Paper writing
  - Project Presentation (due Apr 10) & Paper (ddl Apr 12)



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*Thanks*