

COMMUNICATION

# Debating artificial intelligence

**LEVEL**

Upper-Intermediate  
(B2)

**NUMBER**

EN\_B2\_2101X

**LANGUAGE**

English

## Learning outcomes

- I can talk in detail about artificial intelligence and machine learning.
- I can clearly express my opinions on machines and their future development.



## Warm-up

**Do you have anything in  
your home you would  
label an intelligent  
machine?**

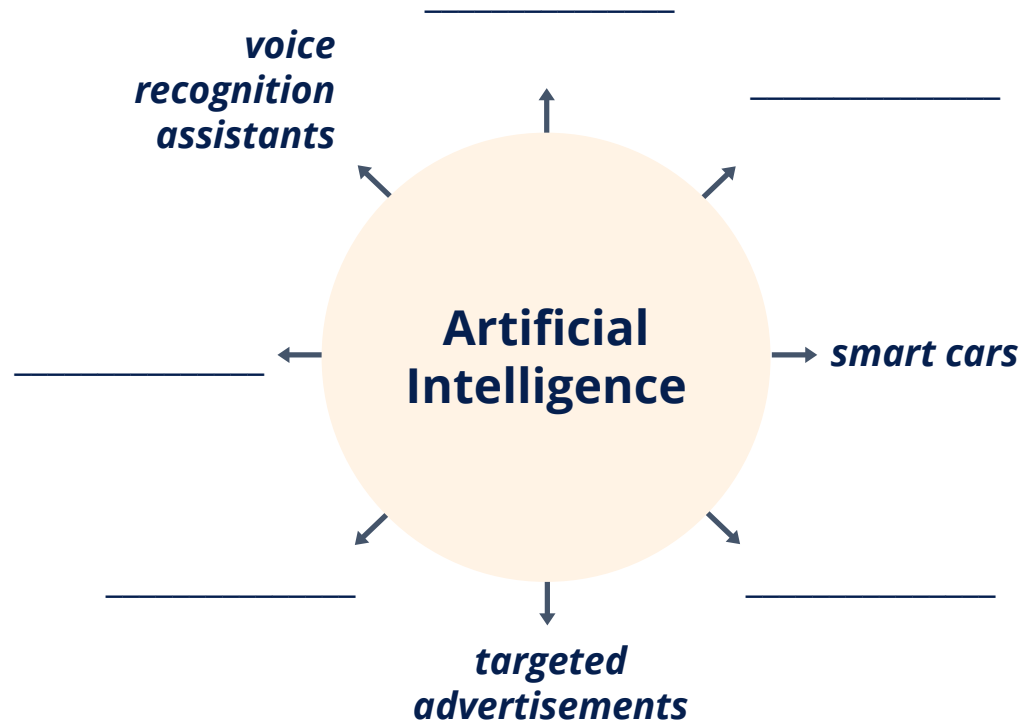
**Share your answer with the  
rest of the class!**





# Brainstorm

Mention **artificial intelligence** and many people think of intelligent robots with human traits. In reality, AI takes many forms. **How many can you think of?**



# Machine intelligence and AI

**Read** the text below.

Machine intelligence is a different concept to natural intelligence. The human brain learns by recognising patterns, whereas machines can only recognise rules and data with which they have been programmed. Machines learn through a process of memorisation and computation. Using complex mathematical structures which are built on huge amounts of data, machines can recognise errors or mistakes from statistics and correct their behaviour and improve their performance. Machine learning is what enables AI.

AI has been developing at an incredible pace in recent years. Opinion among the public, experts and researchers is split – many believe that a self-aware, self-learning machine would grow immensely powerful, and eventually become impossible for its human creators to control.





# True or false

1. **Read** the statements below.
2. **Decide** if they are *true* or *false*.

		true	false
1	Machines learn by recognising patterns.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Machines can correct their behavior and improve their performance from statistics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	The pace of AI development has slowed down considerably in recent years.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	The public, experts, and researchers unanimously agree that AI is beneficial for humankind.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Many believe that a self-aware machine could grow powerful enough that it can't be controlled by humans anymore.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





# Discuss

In breakout rooms or together as a class, **answer** the question below.

**Which of the potential threats of AI below do you think is most harmful? Why?**

**Danger to privacy:**

AI might read and identify information sent via e-mail, text or telephone calls.

**Danger to safety:**

Self-aware AI may decide that human existence is not in its best interest.

**Threat to the labour market:**

AI may replace workers in certain industries.





# Categorise

1. **Read** the phrases below.
2. **Categorise** them into one the boxes below.

1

I'm not sure I agree...

2

I'm indifferent.

3

It's an interesting idea, but...

4

It doesn't matter to me.

5

I don't believe...

6

Both points of view have merit.

7

That can't be true...

8

You make some good points, however...

9

I don't care one way or the other.

10

I can see both sides.

**expressing scepticism**

**expressing neutrality**





How does a **healthy dose of scepticism** differ from **blind pessimism**?

**Discuss** your ideas with your classmates and teacher!



# What's your opinion.

1. **Read** the statements below.
2. **State** your opinion. **Use** some of the phrases from the previous slide: *I'm not sure I agree; I'm indifferent; it's an interesting idea, but...; I don't believe...; I don't care one way or the other.*

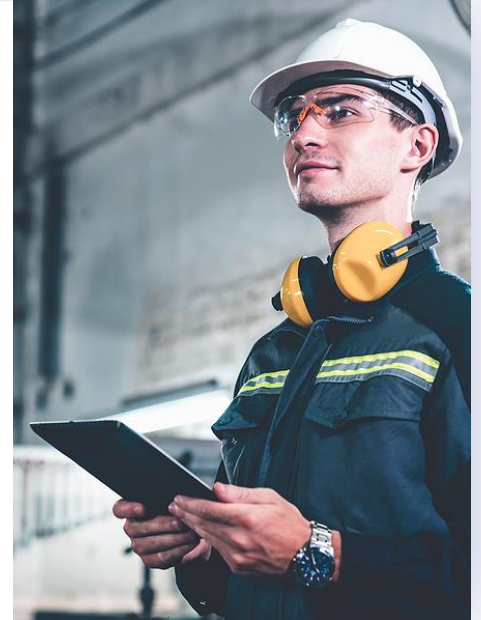
- 1 AI will bring benefits to humankind and eradicate problems such as war and environmental issues.
- 2 The development of AI should be regulated and monitored carefully to ensure the negative consequences are kept in check.
- 3 AI has the potential to develop beyond our control, becoming more intelligent than any human and having the potential to destroy humankind.
- 4 It is not possible for AI to be creative.



# The rise of intelligent machines

1. **Read** the text.
2. Then **answer** the questions below.;

The goal of many AI developers is to create a full AI – a machine that can perform any intellectual task a human could. A full AI could potentially improve itself repeatedly and quickly surpass and outperform the levels of human intelligence. Such a superintelligence could eradicate many of our global issues, but It is also possible that such an intelligence could have different goals than our own, bringing about our extinction. Furthermore, several tasks traditionally performed by humans have already been adopted by AI, robots, and algorithms. The automation of many jobs has a negative impact on wages and growth, leaving many workers unemployable and out of work.



What are some industries that are already affected by AI?

What are some global issues that AI has helped resolve?

What are some human characteristics which might be difficult to program into a machine?



# Matching

**Match** the word from the text to its correct definition.

1

**surpass**

a

to get rid of something completely

2

**eradicate**

b

to do well at a job or activity compared to others

3

**extinction**

c

to cause something to happen

4

**outperform**

d

to do or be better than

5

**to bring (something) about**

e

the dying out of a species



# Fill in the gaps

1. **Complete** the statements below.
2. Then **say** if you **agree** or **disagree**? **Share** your reasons with your classmates.

- 1 AI will never \_\_\_\_\_ the levels of human intelligence.  
Imagination, intuition, and anticipation are unique to humans.
- 2 If we do not carefully regulate and monitor AI development, we might  
cause our own \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 AI can help humankind \_\_\_\_\_ poverty by using data to find  
solutions to mitigate global hunger.
- 4 AI has \_\_\_\_\_ more positive changes than negative ones.
- 5 There is a 50% chance of AI \_\_\_\_\_ humans in all tasks in 45  
years.

surpass  
brought about  
extinction  
outperforming  
eradicate

# Discuss

1. **Read** the quote.
2. Then **answer** the questions below.



The automation of many jobs has a negative impact on wages and growth, leaving many workers unemployable and out of work. What happens to human dignity when we have been rendered obsolete by functioning intelligent machines that can complete our tasks with ease?



What do you think about the quote above?

Is AI progressing too quickly?

Do you think AI can replace you in your job? Why or why not?





# End of the lesson

Idiom

***nuts and bolts***

**Meaning:** the most important and practical details

**Example:** I met with Susan to discuss the nuts and bolts of the deal.



# Additional practice



# Fill in the gaps

**Complete** the sentences with the correct word.

- 1 Certain technological advances can help \_\_\_\_\_ diseases, like smallpox.
- 2 Some experts warn that highly intelligent AI robots will lead to our \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 It's predicted that machines will \_\_\_\_\_ humans in many workplace tasks in the next two decades.
- 4 Last quarter, sales of the new computer \_\_\_\_\_ last year's record.
- 5 Reckless spending \_\_\_\_\_ the tech company's collapse.

extinction  
surpassed  
brought about  
outperform  
eradicate



## Discuss

Answer the questions below.

**Would you feel safe travelling in a self-flying plane? Why or why not?**



**Telesurgery is the ability for a doctor to perform surgery from a different location.**



# Discuss

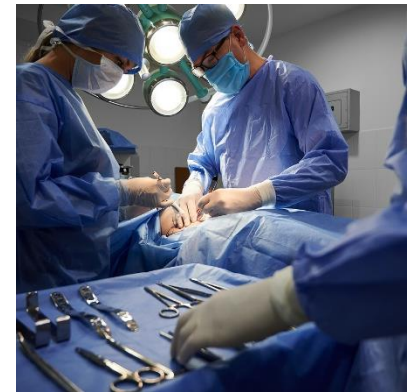
1. **Read** the text in the yellow box.
- 2, Then **answer** the questions.

**Telesurgery is the ability for a doctor to perform surgery on a patient from a different location. The doctor controls a robot surgical system.**

What do you think about this idea?

What might be some of its benefits?  
Its drawbacks?

Would you trust this form of surgery?  
Why or why not?





# Answer key

**P.4:** *possible answers:* navigation apps, rideshare apps, 3-D photography, facial recognition, spam filters, media recommendation, online banking

**P.6:** 1.) false 2.) true 3.) false 4.) false 5.) true

**P.8:**

*expressing scepticism:* 1, 3, 5, 7, 8

*expressing neutrality:* 2, 4, 6, 9, 10

**P.12:** 1.) d 2.) a 3.) e 4.) b 5.) c

**P.13:** 1.) surpass 2.) extinction 3.) eradicate 4.) brought about 5.) outperform

**P.18:** 1.) eradicate 2.) extinction 3.) outperform 4.) surpassed 5.) brought about



# Summary

## Artificial intelligence

- *a healthy dose of scepticism; blind pessimism; to surpass*
- *to eradicate; extinction; to outperform; to bring (something) about*
- *AI will **surpass** the levels of human intelligence; Superintelligence could **eradicate** many global issues.*





# Vocabulary

voice recognition assistant

a healthy dose of scepticism

blind pessimism

to surpass

to eradicate

extinction

to outperform

to bring (something) about



## Notes

