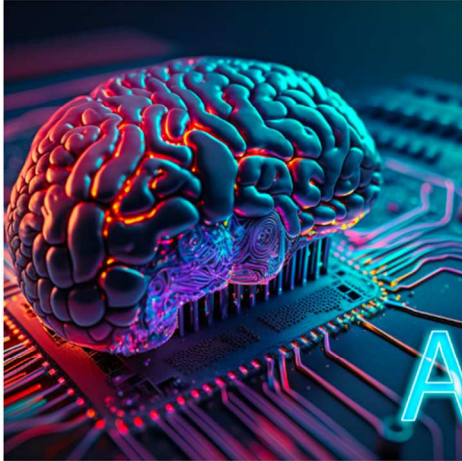


IS AI DANGEROUS?



Can Robots Think?

Can computers think? Do robots have the same characteristics as humans? Which is more intelligent—man or machine? The debate is ongoing.² Humans are capable of several traits. Among them are reasoning, planning, learning, and communication. Are computers and machines capable of the same traits? Essentially, the definition of artificial intelligence is the intelligence that a machine demonstrates. With the onslaught of robots, computers, and other technological advances, one might believe the study of artificial intelligence is new. However, people have been working on intelligent machines for years. One of the more famous names associated with the field is Alan Turing. Turing believed that if a machine could pretend to be human, then it was intelligent.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE? WHAT DO YOU THINK?

The thing that people can do with artificial intelligence is play games. Machines are available that play chess at expert levels. They're not even that costly. Turing wrote the first computer chess program in 1950; however, it wasn't until 1958 that a chess program beat a human for the first time. Over the years, computers began playing in tournaments with some wins and some losses. As the years progressed, computers started winning more and more. In 2005, a team of computers beat chess champions Veselin Topalov, Ruslan Ponomarev, and Sergey Karjakin.⁴ Many industries, such as airlines and technology, are incorporating artificial intelligence into their work. AT&T lists artificial intelligence as one of its research areas. Universities such as Carnegie Mellon, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Stanford University have done research in the field. MIT has CSAIL (Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory). One of the lab's research areas is an attempt to understand and develop artificially intelligent behaviour. A lot of the research is done by faculty members who work with students. Some US government agencies help fund CSAIL.⁵ As industries experiment and researchers study, the public has become more aware of the possibilities. The movie industry has made several films that usually are classified as science fiction. One popular film was *I, Robot*. Another was simply titled *Artificial Intelligence*. People have also started buying toys and tools that display certain traits. The Furby™ was a popular robotic toy that eventually learned to speak English. The Roomba™ is a vacuum that is made by the iRobot Corporation. It vacuums without being pushed. If it doesn't need a human to guide it, is it smarter than a human? There are many questions left to be answered in this field.