Activity 1: Mystery Helpers

Working Together with Robot Friends (Grades K-2)

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> ❗ Teacher Overview
>
> This activity introduces the youngest learners to the concept that **people and computers work best as a team**. Using a simple classroom mystery, students discover that their robot helper (AI) is good at some things, and people are good at other things—and together they solve problems better!
> **Duration**: 25-30 minutes **Grade Levels**: K-2 **Group Size**: Whole class with teacher leading
> **Technology**: Teacher device only (students do not need devices)

Learning Goals

By the end of this activity, students will:

- Understand that computers can be **helpers**, not just toys or tools
- Recognize that people and computers are good at **different things**
- Experience working **together** with a computer helper to solve a problem

CYBER.org Standards Alignment (K-2)

- **K-2.DC.CIT**: Digital citizenship foundations
- **K-2.SEC.SAF**: Basic safety concepts

The Mystery

Oh No! The Class Pet Picture Is Missing!

Setup: Tell students that the class computer had a picture of the class pet (real or imaginary) saved on it, but now it's gone! We need to figure out what happened.

The Clues (show on screen or as printed pictures):

1. The computer screen shows: "File not found"
2. Someone saw a student at the computer during snack time
3. The recycling bin icon on the computer looks full
4. There's a note that says "oops" near the computer

Activity Flow (25-30 minutes)

Part 1: Look at the Clues (5 minutes)

Teacher says: > "We have a mystery! Our class pet picture is missing. Let's be detectives and figure out what happened. First, let's look at the clues together."

Show each clue. Ask students: - "What do you see?" - "What do you think this means?"

Part 2: Ask Our Robot Helper (10 minutes)

Teacher says: > "Now, I have a special helper—a robot friend on the computer! The robot is really good at remembering things and finding patterns. Let's ask our robot helper what it thinks."

Open your AI assistant (ChatGPT, Claude, etc.) and say to students: > "I'm going to ask our robot helper. Listen to what it says!"

Type this prompt (read it aloud as you type): > "You are a friendly robot helper talking to kindergarten and first grade students. We have a mystery: a picture file is missing from the class computer. Here are our clues: the screen says 'file not found', someone was at the computer during snack time, the recycling bin looks full, and there's a note that says 'oops'. What do you think might have happened? Use simple words."

Read the AI response in a fun "robot voice" if you like!

Part 3: What Did We Each Figure Out? (5 minutes)

Discussion questions:

1. "What did our robot helper notice?"
   - (AI probably mentioned: recycling bin, accidental deletion, checking the trash)
2. "What did WE notice that the robot might not understand?"
   - (Humans noticed: the "oops" note suggests someone feels bad, someone was there at snack time, this was probably an accident not on purpose)
3. "Who solved the mystery—us or the robot?"
   - (Answer: BOTH! We worked together!)

Part 4: Check the Answer Together (5 minutes)

Teacher says: > "Let's see if we can find our picture! Our robot helper said to check the recycling bin…"

Demonstrate opening the recycle bin and "finding" the picture (pre-stage this).

Celebrate: "We found it! Our robot helper knew WHERE to look, and WE understood that it was probably an accident. **Together** we solved the mystery!"

Key Teaching Points

What to Emphasize

Robot helpers are good at: - Remembering where things are on computers - Finding patterns - Knowing computer rules (like "deleted files go to recycling bin")

People are good at: - Understanding feelings (the "oops" note) - Knowing about our classroom and friends - Deciding what to do next

Together: - We solve problems better than either one alone!

Simple Vocabulary

Word	Kid-Friendly Meaning
Robot helper	A computer program that can answer questions
Clue	Something that helps us figure out a mystery
Pattern	When things happen the same way again and again
Team	People (or people and robots!) working together

Variations

For Kindergarten

- Use only 2-3 clues
- Focus on the "together is better" message
- Skip the AI interaction and use a pre-written "robot helper says…" card

For 2nd Grade

- Let students suggest questions to ask the robot helper
- Discuss: "What questions would you ask?"
- Introduce the word "partner"

Low-Resource Option

If you don't have AI access, use this pre-written robot helper response:

> "Beep boop! I am a robot helper. I see the recycling bin is full—that is where deleted files go! I think someone might have accidentally put the picture in the recycling bin. We should check there! But I don't know who was at the computer or why they might have done it. Can you help me understand that part?"

Follow-Up Activities

Art Connection

- Draw a picture of "Me and My Robot Helper" solving a problem together

Discussion Circle

- "When else might a robot helper be useful?"
- "What are YOU good at that a robot might not understand?"

Take-Home Connection

- Simple note to families: "Today we learned that people and computer helpers work best as a team!"

Assessment

Observation Checklist

Student Behavior	Observed?
Participated in identifying clues	
Listened to robot helper response	
Contributed to discussion about human vs. robot strengths	
Expressed understanding that teamwork helped solve mystery	

Exit Ticket (for 1st-2nd grade)

Draw or write: "One thing I'm good at, and one thing a robot helper is good at"

Assessment Connection

This table shows how activity elements connect to the Human-AI Collaboration Rubric criteria:

Rubric Criterion	Developed Through	Evidence Source
AI Partnership Framing	Listening to robot helper as team member	Observation: Does student talk about robot as "helper" or "friend"?
Complementary Strengths	Discussion of human vs. robot abilities	Exit ticket drawing/writing
AI Limitation Awareness	Teacher emphasis on what robot couldn't understand	Verbal responses during Part 3 discussion
Synthesis Quality	"Together we solved it" celebration	Student articulation of teamwork message

Teacher Notes

Why This Matters

Even our youngest learners are growing up with AI assistants (Alexa, Siri, Google). This activity helps them develop a healthy mental model: AI is a **partner**, not magic, and humans bring important things that AI can't do.

Preparation Checklist

- ☐ Choose or create a "class pet picture" to "lose"
- ☐ Pre-delete the picture to recycle bin
- ☐ Test AI access OR prepare the pre-written response
- ☐ Print clue images if not showing on screen
- ☐ Practice your "robot voice" (optional but fun!)