

Security Detective Teams

Quick-Start Guide for Educators

The Big Idea (Read This First)

This isn't "students use AI to solve a mystery." It's **students discovering what happens when two different kinds of intelligence work together.**

The shift:

| Old Framing | This Activity |
|------------------------------|---|
| AI is a tool students use | AI is a partner with different strengths |
| Students get answers from AI | Students discover what each partner contributes |
| Human OR AI | Human AND AI together |

What students should discover (don't tell them—let them find it):

- AI excels at: spotting patterns across data, remembering technical details, processing large volumes of information quickly
- Humans excel at: understanding context, reading social situations, making judgment calls about what matters
- Together: insights neither could reach alone

The Scenario (2 min)

Mysterious account lockouts at a middle school. Students investigate with an AI partner to figure out what's happening.

Evidence includes: Login logs, password analysis, social media clues, network data.

The Flow (45 min total)

| Phase | Time | What's Happening | Your Role |
|-----------------------|--------|--|---|
| 1. Human First | 10 min | Students examine evidence WITHOUT AI | Circulate, prompt observation |
| 2. Partnership | 15 min | Students consult AI as teammate | Guide authentic dialogue (not search queries) |
| 3. Synthesis | 10 min | Teams document what each partner contributed | Push for specifics |
| 4. Debrief | 10 min | Whole-class discussion | Surface the distributed cognition insight |

Critical Facilitation Moves

During Phase 1 (Human First):

“What do YOU notice before asking anyone else?”

This matters because students need to experience their own pattern-recognition before comparing it to AI’s.

During Phase 2 (Partnership):

“Talk TO your AI partner, not AT it. Ask follow-ups. Disagree if you think it’s wrong.”

Watch for: Students treating AI like Google. Redirect: “Would you talk to a human teammate that way?”

During Phase 3 (Synthesis):

“Be specific: What did YOUR brain do that AI couldn’t? What did AI do that you couldn’t?”

This is where the partnership insight crystallizes.

Materials Needed

- ☐ Evidence packet (1 per group) — *see separate printable*
- ☐ Student worksheet (1 per student) — *see separate printable*
- ☐ Device with AI access (1 per group minimum)
- ☐ Timer
- ☐ Projection for debrief

Low-resource option: Use the AI Response Cards instead of live AI. The learning works the same way.

The Debrief Questions That Matter

1. “What did your human brain catch that AI missed?” (*Context, social reading, judgment*)
2. “What did AI catch that you missed?” (*Patterns, technical connections, speed*)
3. “What did you figure out TOGETHER that neither could alone?” (*This is the goal*)

If Things Go Wrong

| Problem | It’s Actually | Do This |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| AI gives wrong answer | A teaching moment about verification | “Interesting—how would you check that?” |
| Students over-rely on AI | They haven’t discovered AI’s limits yet | “What CAN’T AI tell you about this situation?” |
| Students dismiss AI | They haven’t discovered AI’s strengths yet | “What’s AI faster at noticing than you?” |

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