



iCreative

tel: 877-392-8200

www.theicreative.com

ADDITIONAL AI BITS TO CONSIDER

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IS AI ACCURATE AND HONEST?

Think of AI like a very confident helper: fast, capable, and usually accurate — but still needing supervision.

1. IS AI ACCURATE?

AI is often accurate when:

- Explaining ideas clearly
- Summarizing long text
- Drafting emails, letters, or stories
- Teaching step-by-step
- Generating ideas

AI is less reliable when:

- Information is very new
- Details are extremely specific
- The topic is obscure or conflicting
- The prompt is vague

Accuracy is highest when:

- You ask clear, specific questions
- The information is well-established
- Web search + sources are used

Accuracy is lowest when:

- Facts change quickly (politics, health, finance)
- The AI is asked to “guess”

2. IS AI HONEST?

AI does not lie intentionally. But it can be confidently wrong. This is called a “hallucination.”

AI may:

- Fill in missing details
- Make educated guesses
- Present uncertain answers with confidence

Because AI doesn't know when it doesn't know, important answers should be double-checked.

3. CAN WE TRUST THE RESULTS?

You CAN trust AI for:

- Everyday writing tasks
- Explanations and summaries
- Learning and practicing skills
- Creative brainstorming

You SHOULD double-check AI for:

- Medical advice
- Legal questions
- Financial decisions
- Breaking news

Think of AI as a smart assistant — helpful, but not an authority.

4. IS THERE FACT-CHECKING?

A. Built-in Safeguards

AI includes rules to avoid harmful or fabricated content, but they're not perfect.

B. Web Search (When Enabled)

AI can search the internet, show sources, and cite information — increasing accuracy.

C. YOU Are the Final Fact-Checker

Always verify important or high-impact information.

Good questions to ask AI:

- “Are you certain?”
- “Show your sources.”
- “Search the web and cite them.”

Bottom Line:

- AI is powerful but not perfect.
- Trust it for low-stakes tasks.
- Verify anything important.
- Use web search for the most reliable results.

WHAT DOES “CHATGPT” EVEN MEAN?

ChatGPT is the name of the AI you’re talking to in our class today.
The name has two parts:

1. “Chat”

This simply means you can talk with it the way you’d chat with a person.
You type a question → it responds in natural, conversational language.

2. “GPT”

This stands for “Generative Pre-trained Transformer.”

Here’s what that means in plain English:

Generative

It can create things — like answers, letters, summaries, stories, and explanations.

Pre-trained

Before you ever use it, the AI has already learned from billions of words (books, articles, websites).

This is how it understands language so well.

Transformer

This is the special type of computer program that allows it to understand context — meaning it can follow a conversation and stay on topic.

Put together, CHAT + GPT means:

“A smart assistant you can chat with, trained to understand and generate human-like language.”

TOP 10 QUESTIONS SENIORS HAVE ABOUT AI

1. “Can I trust the information AI gives me?”

Answer:

AI is usually accurate, but not perfect.

It sometimes guesses when it's unsure.

For anything important — health, money, legal questions — it's best to double-check with a real expert or ask the AI to show its sources.

2. “Is my personal information safe?”

Answer:

AI does not automatically know who you are.

It only sees what you type.

Don't share your Social Security number, bank details, or passwords — just like anywhere else online.

Used sensibly, it's as safe as other common tech tools.

3. “Is AI listening to me or spying on me?”

Answer:

No.

AI doesn't secretly watch, listen, or record.

It only responds to what you type or say directly to it.

It has no ability to turn on your camera or microphone on its own.

4. “Will AI replace human jobs?”

Answer:

AI can help with tasks, but it doesn't replace human care, creativity, or judgement.

Most jobs will change, not disappear.

People still make the final decisions.

5. “Will AI replace real human connection?”

Answer:

No.

AI is a helpful tool — like a calculator or GPS.

It doesn't feel emotions, form relationships, or replace family and friends.

It's here to assist, not replace people.

6. “Can I hurt the AI's feelings or say something wrong?”

Answer:

No.

AI has no feelings — you can't offend it or embarrass yourself.

You can ask anything, and it will not judge you.

7. “Is AI hard to learn?”

Answer:

Not at all.

If you can type a question, you can use AI.

Start with simple requests like:

“Explain this in simple terms,”

or “Write this more clearly.”

The more you use it, the easier it feels.

8. “Does AI make scams easier?”

Answer:

Scammers can use AI — but so can you.

Here's the simple rule:

If something feels suspicious, ask AI,

“Does this look like a scam?”

AI can help you spot fake messages and stay safer.

9. “Will AI make people too dependent?”

Answer:

AI helps with tasks — it doesn’t replace your mind.

Think of it like GPS: useful, but you still control the car.

Using AI can actually keep your brain active by helping you explore new ideas.

10. “Can AI be hacked or go wrong?”

Answer:

All technology has risks, but AI itself isn’t dangerous on its own.

Using good habits — strong passwords, not sharing private info, ignoring suspicious emails — keeps you safe.

AI won’t break your device or invade your privacy.

TWO MORE

11. “Does AI learn from what I type? Can it remember my conversations?”

Answer:

AI does **not** remember past conversations unless you choose to save them.

Each new chat starts fresh.

It doesn’t store your personal information or build a profile about you.

You stay in control of what it keeps and what it forgets.

12. “Can AI make decisions for me?”

Answer:

No.

AI can **suggest**, **explain**, and **offer ideas**, but **you** always make the final decision.

It can help you think things through, but it cannot act on your behalf, spend money, or change anything on your device without your permission.

WHERE DO I START IF I WANT TO USE AI?

1. What is a “chatbot” like ChatGPT?

Think of a chatbot as:

A very smart auto-complete that can talk with you in full sentences.

You type a question → it predicts what words should come next based on patterns it has learned from huge amounts of text.

Modern chatbots are powered by “large language models” (LLMs). Different companies have built their own:

OpenAI → ChatGPT

Google → Gemini

Microsoft → Copilot

Anthropic → Claude

Perplexity → Perplexity AI (a search-plus-chat tool)

All of them can:

Answer questions

Explain things in simple language

Help with emails, letters, and documents

Brainstorm ideas

Tutor you on almost any subject

None of them are perfect. They can be wrong, especially about medical, legal, financial, or breaking news topics. You always remain the final decision-maker.

2. The main chatbots in plain language

A. ChatGPT (by OpenAI)

What it is:

Probably the best-known AI assistant. Great for general use, learning, and creativity.

How you use it:

Website: chatgpt.com (or via the ChatGPT app on iPhone/Android)

Works in your web browser; no special software needed.

Pricing (typical personal plans):

Free plan – \$0/month.

Very capable for everyday questions and writing.

Plus plan – about \$20/month in the U.S., billed monthly.

Faster, more powerful models

Better at long or complex tasks

Extra features like better memory, tools, etc.

Higher “Pro/Business/Enterprise” plans exist, but those are usually for heavy or professional users.

Good for seniors:

Very good at “explain this like I’m new to it”

Great for letters, email replies, and learning step by step

Simple interface: just a big box where you type and press Enter

B. Google Gemini (formerly Bard)

What it is:

Google’s main AI assistant. It connects closely with Gmail, Google Docs, Google Drive, etc.

How you use it:

Website: gemini.google.com

Also built into many Google products (Gmail, Docs, Android phones).

Pricing:

Free version – \$0/month for basic tasks.([Gemini][2])

Gemini Advanced – around \$20/month in many regions.([godofprompt.ai][3])

- More powerful model

- Better for long, complex work

Good for seniors:

- Handy if you already use Gmail, Google Docs, Google Photos

- Can help you draft emails right inside Gmail

- Free tier is fine for starting out

C. Microsoft Copilot

What it is:

Microsoft's AI assistant that appears in:

- The Edge web browser

- Windows

- Office apps like Word, Excel, PowerPoint

How you use it:

- Website: copilot.microsoft.com

- On Windows PCs and in Microsoft 365 apps.

Pricing:

There are several ways to get Copilot:

- Copilot Chat (web) – basic access often included for free.

- Copilot for Microsoft 365 / Copilot Pro – about \$20–30/month for more serious use with Office apps.

Good for seniors:

- Very nice if you already use Word, Excel, or PowerPoint

- Can help rewrite documents and build slides quickly

- Setup can be a bit more confusing than ChatGPT or Gemini

D. Claude (by Anthropic)

What it is:

A chatbot known for being polite, careful, and good at long documents.

How you use it:

Website: claude.ai

Runs in your browser.

Pricing:

Free plan – \$0/month, limited usage.

Claude Pro – about \$20/month, gives more usage and new features like “memory.”

Good for seniors:

Very friendly, clear explanations

Good if you want to upload longer documents to summarize

Similar difficulty level to ChatGPT to get started

E. Perplexity AI

What it is:

A mix between Google Search and a chatbot. It’s very focused on finding real web pages and citing them.

How you use it:

Website: perplexity.ai

You ask a question; it shows an answer plus links to sources.

Pricing:

Free tier for simple use

Paid “Pro” plans around ~\$20/month for more advanced models and higher limits (pricing changes over time and by region).

Good for seniors:

Excellent when you want to see where information comes from
More like “smart search” than a personal tutor

3. How are these chatbots different?

In simple terms:

1. Who makes them

ChatGPT → OpenAI

Gemini → Google

Copilot → Microsoft

Claude → Anthropic

Perplexity → Independent company focusing on search

2. What they’re best at

ChatGPT – “All-around helper,” strong at conversation, writing, and learning.

Gemini – Great if you live in the Google world (Gmail, Docs, Android).

Copilot – Great if you live in the Microsoft world (Word, Excel, PowerPoint).

Claude – Very good with long documents and thoughtful, cautious answers.

Perplexity – Very good at web research with citations.

3. How they feel to use

All are similar: a chat box where you type questions.

Style and “personality” differ a bit: some are more concise, some more chatty.

4. Price

All have free versions that are enough for starting out.

Paid personal plans are usually around \$20/month in the U.S. for “Pro/Plus/Advanced” versions.

4. Safety and privacy basics (especially important for seniors)

When you use any AI chatbot:

Do NOT type:

- Social Security numbers
- Full credit card numbers
- Bank account numbers
- Passwords
- Very private health or legal details

Treat it like a helpful stranger on the internet:

- Polite and useful
- But not someone you give sensitive details to

For medical, legal, or money decisions, always:

- Use AI to prepare questions or summaries
- Then talk to a real professional before acting

5. Easy step-by-step guide to getting started

I'll use ChatGPT as the main example, then note how it's similar for others.

Step 1 – Choose one chatbot to start with

To keep things simple, pick just one to learn first.

Good beginner choices:

- ChatGPT if you just want a general helper.
- Gemini if you already use Gmail and Google Docs a lot.
- Copilot if you are deep in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint.
- Claude if you like careful, gentle explanations.

Perplexity if you care most about seeing sources and links.

If you're not sure, ChatGPT Free is a great place to start.

Step 2 – Create an account

Using ChatGPT as an example:

1. Open a web browser (Safari, Chrome, Edge, etc.).
2. Go to chatgpt.com.
3. Click Sign up or Log in.
4. Create an account with:

Your email address and a password, or
Your Google or Apple account.

5. Confirm your email if they send you a link.

For Gemini:

Go to gemini.google.com and sign in with your Google account.

For Copilot:

Go to copilot.microsoft.com and sign in with your Microsoft account.

For Claude:

Go to claude.ai and create an account.

For Perplexity:

Go to perplexity.ai (it works even without an account, but signing up gives more features).

Step 3 – Start with simple, everyday tasks

Type into the chat box like you would talk to a helpful librarian or teacher.

Good first things to try:

“Explain what this letter from my insurance company means, in simple terms.”
“Help me draft a polite email to my grandson about our holiday plans.”
“Explain how social security works in simple language.”
“Give me a 7-day simple meal plan for one person.”
“Teach me the basics of using my iPhone, step by step.”

You can always say:

“Use short sentences.”
“Explain this like I’m brand new to the topic.”
“Use bullet points.”

Step 4 – Learn to ask good questions (“prompting”)

You’ll get better answers if you:

1. Give context

“I am 75 and new to AI. I prefer simple explanations.”

2. Say what you want

“Give me 5 bullet points.”

“Write a short paragraph for a birthday card.”

3. Add tone

“Make it warm and friendly.”

“Make it polite and professional.”

Example:

“I am 72 and new to technology. Explain what cloud storage is, in very simple terms, using no jargon, in about 3 short paragraphs.”

Step 5 – Double-check important answers

For important topics, do this:

1. Ask the AI to show its sources.

“Please search the web and give me links to your sources.”

2. Compare with a second source.

Use a different chatbot, or

Use regular Google or Bing search.

3. Ask a professional for big decisions (doctors, lawyers, financial advisors).

Remember:

AI is a helpful assistant, not a final authority.

Step 6 – Decide if you want to pay later

Start with the free versions. Use them for a few weeks.

If you often see messages like:

“You’ve reached your limit today,” or

You want more power, faster responses, or extra features...

...then consider upgrading to a paid plan like:

ChatGPT Plus (~\$20/month)

Gemini Advanced (~\$20/month)

Claude Pro (~\$20/month)

Copilot Pro or Microsoft 365 with Copilot (~\$20–30/month)

But you do not need to pay to learn the basics and get a lot of value.

6. A simple “starter script” you can use

Here’s a message you can copy and paste into any chatbot as your very first prompt:

“Hello. I am a senior and I am new to AI. Please explain how to use you in very simple language. Tell me 5–10 useful things you can help me with in my daily life, and give examples. Use short sentences and bullet points.”

Then let it guide you from there.

HOW TO GET BETTER AT AI PROMPTING

How to Master AI Prompting

Mastering AI prompting is a skill—almost like learning to talk to a very smart but very literal collaborator.

Here’s the most effective path to get genuinely *good* at it:

1. Understand How AI Interprets Prompts (the *mental model*)

AI models don’t “think” — they **predict patterns**.

So your job is to *steer the pattern*.

Think in these terms:

- **State the goal clearly** → “Write a cold email that gets a response.”
- **Define the style/tone** → “Friendly, concise, 6th-grade reading level.”
- **Set constraints** → “<120 words, 3 sentences max.”
- **Give examples** → “Use a tone similar to: ...”

This framework alone can 10x quality.

2. Use the GO FAR Framework (simple + works every time)

G — Goal: What you want

O — Output format: Email? Table? Strategy? Script?

F — Facts/context: What the AI needs to know

A — Actions you want it to take: Analyze? Rewrite? Compare?

R — Restrictions: Style, length, tone, rules

Example:

“Create a 10-point marketing plan (output format: bullet list) for my AI tutoring app.

Facts: target = college students. Actions: prioritize low-budget tactics.

Restrictions: keep each point under 20 words.”

3. Use Iteration as a Feature, Not a Failure

Great prompting is *interactive*:

1. Ask for a draft.

2. Critique it.
3. Ask for a revision.
4. Repeat until excellent.

Iteration with feedback is where top-tier results come from.

4. Give roles — they change everything

Role prompts anchor the model in a specialized mode.

Examples:

- “You are a senior UX designer...”
- “Act as my negotiation coach...”
- “You are a venture capitalist specializing in SaaS...”

Roles improve precision and reduce generic answers.

5. Use chain-of-thought prompts when you want deep reasoning

You don’t need to ask the model to “think step-by-step” every time — instead, phrase it naturally:

- “Walk me through your reasoning.”
- “Explain your assumptions.”
- “Break the solution into clear, logical phases.”

These produce smarter, more reliable outputs.

6. Practice with *real use cases*

Don’t practice prompting in the abstract.

Pick a goal and prompt until you get mastery:

Examples:

- Content creation
- Brainstorming
- Learning complex topics
- Business strategy and Coding
- Email writing
- Research summarization

Prompting skills transfer across domains.

7. Keep a “prompt library”

Top users store:

- high-performing prompts
- frameworks
- templates
- reusable role instructions

When you find a prompt that works well, **save it** and reuse it.

8. Study excellent prompts

Here are the best resources to learn from:

- Your own iterative improvement
- Other people's prompts
- Reverse-engineering what works and why

DEEPER GLOSSARY OF TERMS

1. Artificial Intelligence (AI)

A computer system that can learn, reason, and make decisions in ways that feel similar to human thinking.

AI doesn't "think" like a person, but it can recognize patterns, answer questions, and complete tasks.

2. Machine Learning (ML)

A method where computers improve at tasks by learning from examples rather than being given step-by-step instructions.

Example: An AI learns what a cat looks like after seeing thousands of cat photos.

3. Large Language Model (LLM)

The type of AI used in ChatGPT.

It's trained on enormous amounts of text so it can understand questions and respond in natural, human-like language.

4. Training Data

The information AI is fed while it learns — books, websites, articles, conversations, and more. It's how the AI gains its "knowledge," although the AI does not store or recall documents like a library.

5. Prompt

Anything you type or say to the AI.

It can be a question, command, or description.
Better prompts → clearer, more accurate answers.

6. Hallucination

When AI gives an answer that sounds correct but is actually made up or inaccurate.

This doesn't mean the AI is lying — it's guessing when unsure.

7. Bias

Patterns in AI's answers that reflect imbalances in the data it learned from.

For example, if most training data comes from certain groups or perspectives, the AI may unintentionally favor those viewpoints.

8. Algorithm

A set of rules a computer follows to make decisions or predictions.
Think of it like a recipe the AI uses to figure out what to say or do next.

9. Model Update

A new version of the AI that improves accuracy, safety, speed, or abilities.

Just like a phone gets software updates, AI models get updated too.

10. Chatbot

A computer program you can “chat” with, like ChatGPT.

It answers questions, writes text, explains concepts, and completes tasks.

11. Neural Network

The design inside AI that mimics how the human brain processes information (in a very simplified way).

It helps the AI detect patterns and understand relationships between words and ideas.

12. Token

A small piece of text (often a word or a chunk of a word) the AI uses to read and write.

You don’t need to count them — they just help explain why longer questions and answers take more processing.

13. Context

The information the AI remembers from your current conversation.
It helps ChatGPT stay on topic.

But it doesn’t remember past conversations unless you choose to save things.

14. Web Search (AI + Internet)

Some versions of AI can look things up online, cite sources, and check recent information.

This makes answers more accurate — and is useful for fact-checking.

15. Safety Guardrails

Rules built into AI systems to prevent harmful or misleading content.

These guardrails help the AI avoid giving dangerous advice, fabricated citations, or inappropriate answers.
