

A Teacher's Guide to Using AI

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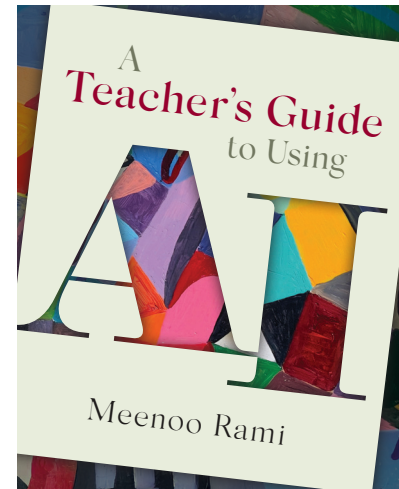
Professional Learning Companion and Book Study Guide



About This Guide

Artificial intelligence is already shaping how teaching and learning happen in K–12 classrooms—often faster than guidance, policy, or professional learning can keep pace. As a result, educators are navigating real and urgent questions about ethics, trust, academic integrity, workload, and appropriate use, frequently without clear or consistent support.

A Teacher's Guide to Using AI helps address these challenges in developmentally appropriate, classroom grounded ways. Rather than asking educators to adopt AI, the book invites educators to decide when AI helps, when it doesn't, and what must remain deeply human in their work with students.



This guide is designed to be a flexible professional learning companion and can be used by:

- individual teachers reading on their own or alongside a colleague
- small, informal teacher groups or book clubs
- professional learning communities
- instructional coaches
- department chairs
- school and district administrators facilitating professional learning or staff discussion

This professional learning companion and book study guide offers a shared structure for educators to read, reflect, and talk together thoughtfully about how AI is showing up in schools and what thoughtful, human-centered responses can look like. Whether you are reading for your own professional learning, partnering with one colleague, or supporting a larger group or school conversation, these resources are meant to support honest conversation, practical reflection, and meaningful next steps.

Some educators read this book straight through. Others begin with the chapter that feels most urgent. Some read slowly, while others skim, test ideas, and return later.

All of these approaches are valid. This guide intentionally accommodates different starting points, different paces, and different levels of readiness.

If you are reading on your own, you might think of the prompts in this guide as grounding commitments for your own thinking. If you are reading with others, you can use them alongside your group's shared agreements to help keep conversations focused, reflective, and connected to real classroom life.

Chapter 1: The Moment We're In

Chapter 1 invites educators to step back and name what is already happening with AI, both inside classrooms and beyond school walls. The focus is not on predicting the future, but on understanding the present: what students are encountering, what teachers are being asked to respond to, and what professional judgment looks like in this moment.

- ❓ Where is AI already showing up in your students' lives, both in and out of school? What do they most need to understand about it right now?
- ❓ What would equitable AI learning look like in your classroom? Which of your students might be most supported by how AI is being used or discussed in schools right now? Which might be overlooked? Which might be harmed?
- ❓ Chapter 1 argues that teachers, not corporations, should shape how students learn with and about AI. In your setting, what does that ask of you? What do you want to protect, change, or push back on as AI becomes more present in your work?



Try this

Here's a prompt to experiment with.

I am a **[grade level and subject]** teacher. I am considering whether to try this AI tool or feature: **[insert tool or feature]**. Before you give advice, ask me five questions, one at a time, about my students, goals, concerns, and school context. Then help me decide:

- whether this seems worth trying
- what it might genuinely help with
- what risks or limitations I should watch for
- one low-stakes way to test it before using it more widely

Keep your advice practical, balanced, and grounded in classroom reality.

Reminder: *Whenever you prompt AI, avoid including student names or identifying details.*

Chapter 2: Using AI in Your Work

Chapter 2 focuses on educators' own professional use of AI. Rather than starting with tools or efficiencies, it begins with questions of energy, intention, and boundaries. It invites you to consider what parts of the work you may want support with and what parts you want to preserve as fully human. The emphasis is on choice, sustainability, and professional judgment, not adoption.

Before you try anything from this chapter, go back to pages 22–24 and reread the section “Decide Whether and How You Want to Use AI.” That section asks you to begin with yourself: what gives you energy, what drains it, and where AI might support your work without pulling you away from what matters most. Take a moment, and use the space below to set your intentions about your use of AI.

AI Uses I Might Want to Try	AI Uses I'm Unsure About	Parts of My Teaching I Want to Preserve Without AI

Now, keeping the intentions you set above in mind, look back through the “Use AI...” sections in this chapter. Choose two or three that feel most relevant to your work. Then adapt those ideas to your actual context: your students, your grade level, your subject area, and the realities of your school. Try to move from the general idea in the chapter to a version that would truly fit your classroom.

As you do this, ask yourself:

- What would this look like with my students?
- What would I need to adjust for my grade, subject, or setting?
- What would make this genuinely useful to me?

Then, try one or more of those ideas in your real work (or prepare to use them when you need them). With each experiment, notice what helps, what doesn't, and what you want to adjust. The point is not to try everything. It is to begin making thoughtful choices about what fits your practice and what does not.



Try this

Here's a prompt to experiment with.

I teach **[grade level and subject]**. Here is a lesson, assignment, or classroom task I already use: **[paste it here]**. My students usually get stuck on **[insert challenge]**. Revise this for me by:

- keeping my original goal intact
- making this lesson, assignment, or task clearer and more engaging
- adding two scaffolds for students who need support
- suggesting one strong check for understanding
- keeping the final version realistic for me to use tomorrow

Do not make it flashy or overcomplicated. Make it stronger, clearer, and more usable.

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Chapter 3: Teaching Students About AI

Chapter 3 centers on helping students understand what AI is and what it is not. It invites educators to consider what students already believe about AI, where those beliefs come from, and what foundational ideas students need in order to navigate AI thoughtfully. The focus is on clarity, critical awareness, and developmentally appropriate conversations—not coverage of every possible issue.

For Chapter 3, start by going back to the data on pages 53–56. As you read, think about how it compares to what you are seeing with your own students. What feels familiar? What feels different? What surprises you? What questions does this data raise for you about how your students are already using AI, in school and beyond?

Then, look through the “Teach Your Students...” sections in this chapter. Choose two or three that feel most relevant to your students right now. Adapt those ideas to your actual context: your students, your grade level, your subject area, and the realities of your school. Try to move from the broad guidance in the chapter to a version that would genuinely fit your classroom.

As you do this, ask yourself:

- What would this look like with my students?
- What would need to change for my grade, subject, or setting?
- Which of these conversations feels most urgent for my students right now?

Then, try one or more of those ideas in your classroom (or prepare to use these ideas when you need them) and notice what you learn. What do your students already understand? Where are they confused? What do they need more help naming, questioning, or unpacking? The goal is not to cover everything at once. It is to begin helping students make sense of a tool that is already shaping their lives.



Try this

Here's a prompt to experiment with.

I teach **[grade level and subject]**. Help me create a short mini-lesson that teaches students one important idea about AI: **[choose a concept from the chapter, such as "AI can make mistakes," "AI is not a person," "AI collects data," or "AI reflects human bias"]**. Include:

- a simple hook
- a student-friendly explanation
- one example from students' everyday lives
- two discussion questions
- a short closing reflection or exit ticket

Make it age-appropriate and easy to teach in one class period.

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Chapter 4: Teaching Students to Use AI

Chapter 4 turns to questions of discernment and use. It asks educators to think carefully about when AI might support student learning and when it begins to replace it. Rather than foregrounding rules or enforcement, this chapter emphasizes transparency, trust, and instructional design—helping students learn to make informed decisions about if, when, and how AI belongs in their work.

For Chapter 4, begin by taking stock of what you are already noticing in your classroom. This chapter asks teachers to help students make informed decisions about when and how to use AI; to treat AI as more than an answer machine; and to keep student voice, judgment, and learning at the center of their work in the classrooms. Use the table below to reflect on what you are seeing right now in your own students and context.

Helpful AI Uses I'm Seeing	Concerning AI Uses I'm Seeing	Questions or Fears I Want to Name and Examine

Then, look through the “Teach Your Students...” sections in this chapter. Choose two or three that feel most relevant to your students right now. Adapt those ideas to your actual context: your students, your grade level, your subject area, and the realities of your school. Try to move from the broad guidance in the chapter to a version that would genuinely fit your classroom.

As you do this, ask yourself:

- What would this look like with my students?
- What would need to change for my grade, subject, or setting?
- Which of these uses of AI do my students most need help navigating right now?

Finally, try one or more of those ideas in your classroom (or prepare to use for next school year) and notice what you learn. What kinds of support do your students need? Where do they show good judgment already? Where do they need more clarity, more structure, or more conversation? The goal is not to address every possible use of AI at once. It is to help students build discernment, stay connected to their own thinking, and use these tools in ways that support real learning.



Try this

Here's a prompt to experiment with.

I teach **[grade level and subject]**, and my students are doing **[assignment or task]**. Help me think through how AI could support this work without replacing student thinking. Give me:

- two appropriate ways students could use AI
- two ways AI use would cross the line for this task
- three student-friendly guidelines for responsible use
- two reflection questions students could answer about how they used AI
- one short statement I could use to explain that the goal is learning, not just finishing the assignment

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Chapter 5: What Kind of Story Are We Writing?

Chapter 5 steps back to ask the biggest questions of all. It invites educators to reflect on what remains deeply human in teaching and learning, what students most need to develop in a world shaped by AI, and what responsibilities educators hold in shaping that future. The focus is not on answers, but on values, commitments, and the long view of the work.

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- In your own school and classroom context, what parts of your work feel most deeply human, and how do you want to protect those parts as AI becomes more present in education?
- When you think about the students you teach, what do you believe they are actually being prepared for now? Which human skills feel most urgent in your grade level, subject, and community?
- Chapter 5 asks teachers to help students stay human, think critically, and act with discernment in a world shaped by algorithms and AI. In your setting, what does that responsibility look like? Where do you feel most called to respond, change, or push back as AI becomes more present in your work?



Try this

Here's a prompt to experiment with.

I teach **[grade level and subject]**. Here is an assignment or learning task I already use: **[paste it here]**. Help me revise it so students have to bring more of their own thinking, judgment, voice, or creativity to the work. Suggest:

- three concrete revisions
- one way to make the task more meaningful or connected to real life
- one way to make student voice matter more
- one short sentence I can say to students about why this work still matters in the age of AI

Keep the task rigorous, human, and realistic for my classroom.

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A Teacher's Guide to Using AI by Meenoo Rami:

[Hein.pub/GuideToUsingAI](https://heinemann.com/GuideToUsingAI)