Generative AI Idea Pack

for English language teachers

How to use

We have designed this idea pack to help you become more confident when using generative AI tools in your teaching practice. It offers research-based, practical suggestions that will aid you in navigating the exciting yet occasionally daunting field of generative AI. Some of these ideas are ideas for activities in the classroom, others are for you to consider and perhaps embed in your professional development goals. You might go through the whole pack at once, or you could take a one-a-day approach and start your week (or day) with a new card.

Three fundamental principles to bear in mind:

1. Never accept the output of a generative AI tool as it is; ensure you evaluate, refine, and modify it (or the prompt) to suit your objectives. In other words, be the "human in the loop".
2. Never incorporate any personal data (either yours or your students') or copyright materials in any of the prompts.
3. All generative AI tools are susceptible to hallucinations and can, therefore, generate inaccurate or misleading information.

Further considerations:

- The concepts in this collection are linked to the **Cambridge English Digital Framework for Language Teachers** and are intended to offer support for educators of young learners, teenagers, and adults. Each card indicates whether the specified activity is suitable for the age of the learner(s) you are teaching.

- The mastery of prompt writing is crucial when using any type of generative AI tool. To aid you in this, some of our cards include the exact prompt you will require to input into the tool. Additionally, we have assembled some useful tips for you as part of this introduction.

- A glossary can be found at the end of this deck.

Using generative AI tools

On some of the cards, you will see specific GenAI tools mentioned. We have tried as far as possible to recommend specific tools that are accessible for free. Not all tools are free to use or allow unlimited use, and some tools that are free now may have a premium version later. There are currently free-to-use alternatives for most general purposes, such as chatbots or image generators. GenAI tools change fast, so specific tools that are recommended in these activity cards may be different in the future and new tools will be created. However, most of these activities can be used on lots of different tools.

When possible, we recommend trying prompts on multiple tools and seeing what results you get. For instance, you and your colleagues might input any prompt into a **chatbot** such as **ChatGPT, Copilot, and Pi.ai** and compare the results. Or for image generation, you could try the same prompt using **DALL-E, Adobe Firefly, and Midjourney.**

Depending on the tool, you might get an output that you can export into another tool (e.g. a table into a spreadsheet), other times you can just copy and paste the results you get and modify it in a software you know better. Give yourself time to discover what the specific tools can do!

A word on copyright

Copyright issues and intellectual property rights related to AI content generation are an unchartered territory and there are still many unanswered questions in connection with them. However, what's for certain is that you cannot feed in (not even parts of) a published piece learning or teaching material and ask for certain modifications (such as "make it shorter, longer, include more advanced vocabulary, etc.) as it is copyright infringement. It also means that you mustn't use text-to-speech AI tools on such texts (for example, if you wanted to turn them into audio recordings). Please make sure you have information on and follow your local laws and your institution's rules when you use generative AI tools.

Prompt components

Try using the 7 components below to write your prompts. You don't need to use all 7 components in every prompt that you write. Experiment with this structure and see if it helps you get the output you need.

Role Description: In one line, tell the bot what its role is. For example: "You are an English as an Additional Language Teaching Assistant".

Instructions: This is the most important part of a prompt: tell it what to do. Begin the instructions with an action word like "Write", "Explain", "Edit", and so on. Good instructions in prompts are like good instructions in the classroom: detailed, specific, and actionable. This will give you fewer errors and issues.

Context: Give the bot any contextual information it needs. For example, if you are using it to prepare activities, you may include information about your class in terms of topic, number of learners, learner level, and so on. However, it is crucial that you do not enter any identifying detail about your student.

Input Content: If you are asking the GenAI bot to edit or analyse existing content, this is where you include this. If your Input Content is quite long, put it below the body of your prompt. Make sure it is clear what is input content and what is not. Avoid entering any material into a chatbot that is published or copyrighted, unless you own the copyright.

Examples: Illustrate what the output should look like to help guide the bot. For example, if you're using the bot to write a quiz for your students, use this space to give it an example of a question, so it knows what its response should look like.

Cues & Format: Provide more information to influence the output, such as the format, style, and tone. You might guide its format by saying something like "Provide your answer in a bullet point list" or "Produce ten sentences". You might guide the style by saying something like "Use language appropriate for beginner learners of English", or by using words such as creative, formal, persuasive, etc. You might guide tone by saying that it should be friendly, helpful, professional, etc.

Allowing questions: If appropriate, give the bot a chance to admit and avoid its weaknesses. For example, encourage it to ask any questions it needs to fulfill its task, or tell it to admit if it doesn't know something.

Prompt writing tips

Plan your prompt before you start. What do you want your output to look like? What information do you want it to provide?

Consider the length of the response that you want the bot to create. Open questions or requests will prompt longer responses from the bot, while closed questions can produce shorter results. However, remember that AI bots struggle to follow strict word limits, though they can follow approximate guidance, e.g. "Your response should be 2-3 sentences".

Avoid using CEFR levels (i.e. A1-C2) when telling the generative AI bot the style of language to use. GenAI bots occasionally have trouble understanding them.

Tell the AI bot what it should do, and don't tell it what it shouldn't do. AI bots respond better when told to do something than to avoid doing something.

Remember punctuation! AI bots benefit from punctuation, so organise your text in a way which is clear and unambiguous.

If you're not getting what you need, reiterate and experiment with your prompt. Each bot behaves differently, so remember that techniques that work on one may not work on another. Don't be afraid to test and revise a prompt.

Be aware of the climate impact of generative AI. Be cautious that GenAI requires a lot of energy to run, and one well-written prompt may use these tools less than taking a long time to get what you need.

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Please click on the Subcategory or Title if you would like to view the activity card.

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This symbol will show you if the card contains a classroom activity idea.

Framework:
Main category

Framework:
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Games with images

Images are great for bringing some variety and added interest to your activities. Why not try creating simple games by generating some suitable images using a GenAI image generator. One idea is a version of 'spot the difference'…'spot the similarities'!

Title of the activity
In the description, you'll find practical, actionable ideas to use for professional development or in your classroom.

Create a 's...

- Prompt an AI image generator to produce images containing a range of items you'd like learners to practise.

- Select two images and give half the class one of the images and half the class the other.

- In pairs (each with a different image), learners work out ten things that appear in both images. They are not allowed to look at each other's image so they must find out by asking questions, e.g. 'Do you have any apples in your picture?'

- Learners could then look at each other's image... something unusual/funny it. They then ask their partner a question about... a good answer for, e.g. A: 'Why do you have two calcu... maths homework faster!'

... selected carefully to ensure they do not contain anything...

Check here if the idea is suitable for the age group you teach.

Prompt:
Some of the cards will include prompts that you can copy into GenAI tools. Change the information in [square brackets] to personalize them to your context.

These images were created with the assistance of Microsoft Copilot.

Prompt:
'A very messy desk belonging to a teenager... some pens, some paper, an apple, a slice of pizza, and a smartphone...'

Digital features only.

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Previous, Next Page Button

Suitable for teachers of: Young Learners | Teenagers | Adults

Saving time on communication

When writing emails to learners or parents/guardians, prompt a GenAI chatbot to write a version of the email first to give you some ideas. Editing an email drafted by GenAI is often much quicker than starting from scratch, especially when you're not sure what to say.

Try including the following elements into your prompt:

• Your role

• The tone of the email

• Any details you would like to mention

Remember, do not include any personal information such as the name of the student, parent or guardian.

Prompt library

Why not start a prompt library with colleagues in your school or through an online community? Add prompts that worked for you and borrow your colleagues' prompts. Regularly trying new prompts will help you develop your prompt writing skills.

To make your prompt library user friendly:

- Use simple software, or a website such as Padlet, or a shared document / spreadsheet that everyone feels comfortable using.
- Choose a format that lets you search easily.
- Tags can be helpful too – you can tag by subject, age group, topic etc.

Don't be afraid to edit and improve your colleagues' prompts and invite them to improve yours!

Highlighting bias

Ask your learners to use image-generating AI to create a poster of a particular nationality, e.g. 'poster of Mexican people'. This will very often show how chatbots can produce biased content. It can be particularly interesting to do this for learners' own nationality/ies.

Ask learners questions like:

- What does the image show?
- What makes it a good/bad representation of people in your country?
- Can you see any stereotypes?
- What would you like to change?
- What consequences do biased images have?

Remember to ask yourself similar questions when deciding whether to use an image generated by AI.

This image was created with the assistance of DALL·E 2. Prompt: 'poster of British people'

How sustainable is AI?

It can be surprising to learn about the sustainability impacts AI has. For example, training just one AI model emits almost five times the amount of carbon dioxide than what an average American car would emit over its lifetime. Work with your learners to find out more about these issues.

Ideas:

- Split into three groups, each researching either the economic, environmental or social impacts of AI.
- Share your findings.
- Each group then moves to a different aspect and then suggests solutions to reduce any negative impact AI has on this area.

Some of the articles on these issues might be a bit difficult for learners, depending on their level and age. Why not encourage them to use AI to simplify them? Or starting research using AI? Remember to always check whether the article you want to simplify is open source as you must not enter copyright materials into any GenAI tool.
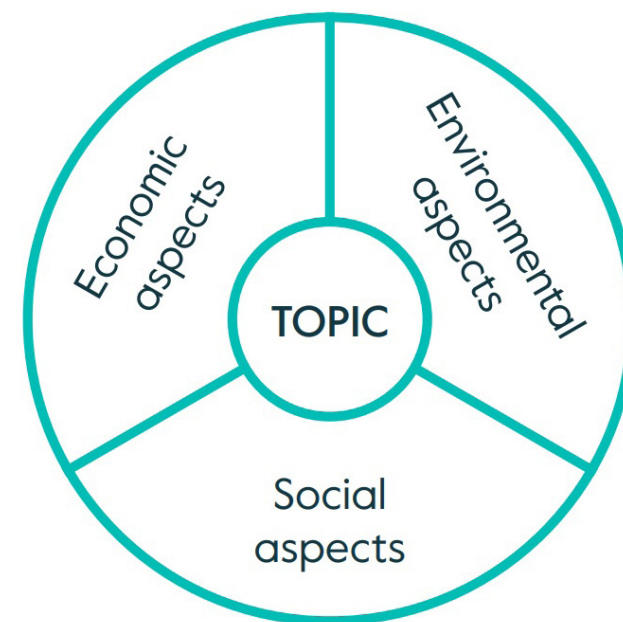
This activity is adapted from one of our **Sustainability activity cards**.

How sustainable is AI?

Debate: Is AI an art thief?

In order to introduce students to the complexity of legal issues in AI, try using debate. This can be very engaging and help learners gain a much deeper understanding of the issues. It also helps students develop critical thinking and communication skills.

Example:

- Briefly introduce the topic (e.g. AI image generation tools need to be trained on artists' work to create new images. Some artists say using their artwork to train these is like stealing their work).
- You could also watch part of **this clip from the BBC** about the issue.
- Learners are then divided into two groups – for and against 'AI is an art thief'.
- Learners research their side of the argument, perhaps also using AI for ideas and to generate images to use examples.
- Learners debate the topic and reflect on both arguments.

If you're not familiar with the arguments yourself, you can do your own research beforehand, or learn alongside your learners, asking them to explain parts of the arguments to you as you monitor the class.

Whose art is this?

Ask some of your learners to draw something (e.g. a tree) on their own, however they'd like (on paper or on a computer); meanwhile, you could help others create an image of a tree by using a child-friendly example of AI image generators (like Google's **Autodraw** or **Crayon**), or you could draw this yourself.

After that, ask your students: whose pictures are these? Who owns them? You could then have a discussion about copyright, which is like a special "made by" sticker, it usually goes to the person who creates something. But the AI creator isn't really a person, it's a machine! Right now, in April 2024, the law isn't quite sure who gets the copyright for AI-generated stuff.

Here are some ideas people are thinking about, phrased in a way that can be easier for young learners to understand:

- Did someone help the AI creator? If you told the AI creator what to paint, maybe you get the copyright!
- Where did your own ideas come from? What influenced them?
- Did the AI creator use other people's work? If it used parts of existing paintings, those people might still own those parts.
- Is the AI-generated art really new? Or is it just copying other things?

AI image games

Improve critical thinking and attention to detail with AI-generated images with an image generator. Here you have two games you can try:

Game 1:

- Either you or your students (in pairs) use the text-to-image function and generate a photo of a famous landmark.
- Then they compare the generated artwork with photos of the real place, collecting all the differences and similarities.

This task can help them to improve their attention to detail and is also good for practicing comparatives, superlatives, and contrastive linking words.

Game 2:

In this version, you or your students can use the generative fill function of **Adobe Firefly**.

- First, you upload a real photo, for example, of your living room.
- Then you or they (in pairs, for each other) select certain parts in the photo and either remove them (generative fill can perfectly blend the removed part with the background), add something to them or replace them with something else.
- Their task will then be to guess what's real and what's been modified in the images.

This task can help students with their critical thinking, modals of deduction, and expressions of agreement and disagreement.

Fake news

Helping students, no matter their age, to become AI literate is going to be an important part of teaching and learning. The following activity will help your learners become more conscious of real and fake content online.

- **Put students in small groups and have them generate a fake news article along with a matching lead image. They can use an AI chatbot, and a version of the prompt on the right for the news item.**

- Then they can use an AI image generator for the lead photo, using a similar prompt to the one above.

- Mix these student-generated news stories with some real tabloid news and check how well they can identify fake news. Give them a few clues on how to do that, or you could come up with them together – e.g. by looking up people that were quoted in the article, or researching the fact in other reputable resources.

As a follow-up activity, you could have a discussion on the impact of fake news, e.g. the fact that it is influencing people's decision making, which could have a negative effect on their welfare and/or safety.

Prompt: Give me a fake news article about [aliens] that the general public would easily believe.

Solving the issue of 'How can we make AI safer?'

There are many ways AI may pose a threat to our welfare and safety and it is important to make learners aware of these dangers without causing unnecessary anxiety. Engaging with potential solutions to the issue can reduce anxiety and promote critical and creative thinking.

Example:

- Set the scene: tell your learners they are part of an AI safety committee who has been asked to present three solutions to an AI safety issue (e.g. AI-generated video and deepfakes spreading misinformation).
- They then research solutions and choose three to present.
- Optional: they can also suggest a new solution that they think of themselves.

Do some research on AI welfare and safety issues yourself and choose a topic suitable for the age and level of your learners. You can use AI to help you create a list of issues to start your thinking.

Improving access to authentic materials

An important way of engaging learners is to use authentic materials related to their interests, for example by asking them to read a blog on a topic they like, but this can be demotivating if the level of the language is too high for learners to understand. Encourage them to experiment with using AI to simplify the language of authentic materials.

Remind students to include the following in their prompts:

• The chatbot should act as an English as a Foreign Language teacher.

• Their level of language they are (e.g. intermediate).

• The format they want the output to be in (e.g. a 5-point list of key points, a 3-paragraph summary?).

• Bonus: ask the chatbot to teach them five new words or phrases from the original text.

If students still don't understand the output, encourage them to keep trying different prompts (e.g. "I don't understand. Please simplify") until they get to something they can engage with easily. Remind your students that they should refrain from entering copyright materials into the tools.

Theories and methodologies for language learning and teaching

Methodology suggestions

GenAI chatbots can be very helpful when you're trying to identify the best methodologies to teach a certain topic/language item. How about using them as a starting point when creating an activity or a lesson plan focusing on a specific teaching methodology? You can enter one of the prompts to the right as a starting point.

Evaluate results according to your needs and refine the prompt if necessary. You can try this with different methodologies according to your teaching beliefs and learners' needs to see which is more suitable for your context.

Prompt: Suggest the best ELT methodologies to teach [how to express possession/simple conditionals] to [elementary] [adult] learners.

Prompt: Create a lesson plan to teach [young learners] [the difference between past simple and continuous] using [Guided Discovery].

Chatbot role play

Ask learners to role play a scenario in English related to the topic or language you are practising. For example, if you're learning about daily routines, you could ask learners to role play a conversation with a GenAI tool in the role of a person with an interesting job or lifestyle. This gives learners a chance to practise their language skills without fear of making mistakes, so it is a great confidence booster.

Prompt: 'You are a [receptionist]. Have a conversation with [a customer who just arrived at your hotel.]'

Example:

• Try some conversations out yourself first and save some to show as models if needed.

• Encourage learners to both ask and answer questions.

• Get learners to save their conversation and share any interesting things they spoke about with the class.

• Ask learners to experiment with asking the chatbot to correct any mistakes they make.

If you have young learners, you can facilitate this conversation with the whole class, by giving the initial prompt and then moderating the learners' suggestions to continue the conversation or having learners take turns to provide the next interaction. If you're working with teenagers or adult learners, remind them that they shouldn't enter any personal information about themselves into the chatbot.

Learning through the news

Keeping your own language up to date and maintaining a level of proficiency can be challenging. Regularly reading the news in English is a good way of improving your English but it can be quite a passive activity. Asking a chatbot to create some exercises from an article you've read can be a quick way of adding a more active element to your learning. Before you do any of the ideas below, please check that the article you're working with is not copyright material.

Tips:

- **Tell the chatbot what your aim is, see prompt for example.**

- Paste the article (or part of it) into your prompt.

- **Experiment with different prompts for exercises based on the article, see prompt for example.**

- Include a variety of skills (e.g. grammar, writing) to practise and choose a different one each time.

Prompt: I'm a [Spanish] speaker and I want to improve my English proficiency.

Prompt: Please pick out some advanced words for me to learn and create some exercises for me to practise these words in context.

If you don't find an exercise useful, see if you can prompt the chatbot to modify it so that it better suits your needs. Use your knowledge of teaching to help you!

Upgrade your speaking

If you feel like you'd like to improve your pronunciation or general speaking skills, you might want to use a tool such as **ChatGPT's** voice chat tool (only available in the app version). The voice chat function lets you interact with **ChatGPT** in a spoken form, which can, for example, provide direct feedback if you happen to mispronounce a word or just a certain sound, and it also improves your listening skills because you have to understand the natural, fluent speed of the AI conversationalist.

Additionally, if you specifically ask it to have a conversation with you, it can also improve your speaking skills, such as asking, responding, turn-taking, asking for clarification, and repair strategies. You can of course try this with your students as well; some scenarios where it could prove helpful are job interviews, motivational interviews for further study, dates, or small talk with colleagues.

Upgrade your writing

If you want to check some of the materials or written feedback responses that you've prepared, you can prompt AI chatbots to answer your **language-related questions**. You can paste your work into a chatbot and ask one of the following prompts to get feedback.

You can try these ideas with your students as well; it can be especially helpful in encouraging learners to become more autonomous, depending on their age and your institution's policy.

Prompt: Rate my text according to coherence and fluency and tell me how I could improve it. Don't rewrite it for me.
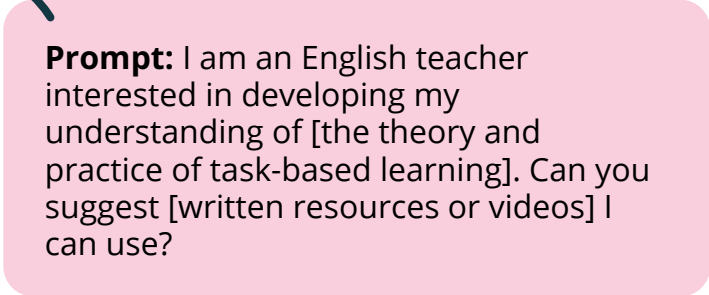
Prompt: Does my text sound natural, fluent enough? Tell me what you'd suggest I focus on in the future.

Prompt: Should I use [demotivated] or [unmotivated]? Tell me the difference.

Further reading suggestions

Ask a GenAI chatbot to suggest a list of resources to deepen your understanding of a particular topic. You can prompt for resources in general or specify if you want books, papers, websites, videos, etc.

Remember to evaluate the list that you get, including checking whether the sources actually exist, and use the ones that best suit your context. To get the best results, prompt different chatbots and keep in mind that some of them may have been trained on data that is now outdated.

Prompt: I am an English teacher interested in developing my understanding of [the theory and practice of task-based learning]. Can you suggest [written resources or videos] I can use?

Lesson reflection with an AI coach

Rather than just writing your reflections down after a lesson, why not have a conversation about it with GenAI acting as a coach? This can be more engaging and insightful than reflecting on your own and is particularly useful to do after a lesson that has either gone very well or one that was very challenging.

Tips:

- Tell the chatbot to act as an expert teacher and coach.
- Experiment with asking the chatbot to use Socratic questioning with you to help you reflect more critically.
- Feel free to ask the coach for suggestions to improve but try to think of some yourself first.

You are in control of the conversation so don't be afraid to skip questions if they're not helpful or ask the coach to change their style if it's not working for you.

Teacher buddy

Replacing human connection with something artificial is definitely not the preferred direction to take. However, when you need to get something off your chest quickly, you might not have anyone around us that could offer the help or support you need. In such cases you could turn to an AI teacher buddy that you can enter doubts and concerns into about a lesson you have just taught, and then can generate suggestions for assistance.

ChatGPT's voice chat function (in the app) to some extent can replicate a real-world conversation with someone who's an active listener (because it recaps what you've said) and a good turn-taker (it always asks a relevant follow-up question), while **Pi.ai's** textual chat is designed to listen to your problems and offer understanding, solace, and advice if you need it. Just be careful with relying on these tools too much. Remember that GenAI chatbots do not process what you say in the same way as a human: the responses they produce are created one word at a time based on the next most likely word and any other programming or training they are based on. GenAI chatbots do not think and any advice they provide may be questionable. You should always carefully consider whether responses are relevant to you and your context. They can offer a quick solution but shouldn't replace human interaction entirely.

Join a community

As with the rapid spread of remote teaching during the pandemic, the appearance of so many AI tools has also made it clear that teachers work best when sharing best practices, worries, questions, and advice with each other.

Find a community on a social media platform dedicated to English teaching using AI. This can be a great way of learning new ways of using AI in teaching little and often and a great place to share your experiences and questions.

Tips:

- There are plenty of communities on social media platforms. Choose one on a platform that you already use regularly.
- Be on the lookout for newer or more localised communities.
- Some communities are so active that keeping up with all the notifications can be daunting. Joining smaller groups may be better than extremely large ones because the posts tend to stick to the original topic more.
- Don't feel like you have to read everything. Maybe set a time limit for how long you'd like to spend on the community each week. For example, do you want to set a reminder to take a look for 10 minutes every Wednesday?
- Get the most out of the community by deciding how you're going to use them as part of professional development, for example: are you going to ask questions about how to use AI? Are you asking someone to help you improve your prompt?
- Share your successes and learning points with the community.

Create an evaluation checklist

Whenever you create any teaching materials using GenAI or use any teaching materials that others have created using AI, inspect them closely to see how good the quality is. This will help make sure you're giving your learners the most effective learning experiences.

You might want to put together a checklist, for example:

General

- Is the information in the material correct?
- Does the activity adequately support the learning objective(s)?
- Is the language at the right level of challenge for my learners?
- Can I do the exercises myself?
- Are my learners going to be motivated to complete this activity?

Skill-specific

- Reading: do I need to read and understand the text to answer the questions or are some of them easy to guess?
- Cloze activities: is the language of the sentences at the right level for my learners?

If the activities don't meet your criteria, you could prompt a GenAI tool to alter them; use the activities as a springboard to rewrite them yourself or choose a different source for your activities.

Create role play or debate cards

Would you like to have a varied pack of role play or debate cards, tailored to your specific topic? Using a GenAI chatbot to generate role play scenarios can be an efficient way of creating these personalized resources.

Example:

Prompt: You are an [EFL] teacher. Write a set of [10] role play scenarios for [elementary] [young learners] related to [ordering food].

- Print the cards or create digital versions if you're teaching online.
- Organise the class into pairs and distribute the cards. Monitor the pair work and give feedback.
- At the end, ask volunteers to repeat the task in front of all their classmates.
- Give general feedback to the whole class.

Alternatively, you can also create debate cards:

Prompt: You are an [EFL] teacher. Write a set of [10] debate cards for [intermediate] [adult] learners related to [Sustainable Development Goal 14: Life below Water].

- Organise the class in two big groups: one for, and one against.
- Distribute the cards accordingly and moderate the discussion as you would in a regular classroom debate.

As always, don't forget to edit your prompt and/or the output if the cards are different from what you had in mind.

Create vocabulary or idiom lists

Ask a GenAI chatbot to create a list of vocabulary for a certain topic. Some chatbots generate only text and a limited set, other chatbots also add images that can be used as flashcards and offer different categories within the topic requested.

Example:

Prompt: You are an [EFL] teacher. Create a list of vocabulary for [elementary] [young] learners about [wild animals]. Organise the list as a chart with the following column headings: (1) word, (2) definition (3) image.

Alternatively, you can create a list of idioms related to a topic.

Prompt: You are an [EFL] teacher of [intermediate] [adult] learners. Create a list of idioms that can be used to talk about [sports events].

Once you have the lists, you can use them as any other wordlist you have – classroom games, gap-fill tasks, or matching exercises are only some of the many options!

Creative inspiration

When introducing vocabulary on a topic that can be a bit dry, generate a fun story using all the target words. This can help make the topic more engaging and can also offer learners opportunities to develop their creative thinking skills.

When prompting:

- Include that the chatbot should act as a teacher of English as a Foreign Language.

- Describe the age and level of your learners.

- Give the topic and the vocabulary you want to teach (e.g. describing people – wavy, beard, short, etc.)

- Ask it to create a funny story using all these words.

- Optional: ask the chatbot to generate an image of one of the key characters or scenes and have learners select the one that most closely matches the description from the text (it is likely that none of the images will be quite right, so this can lead to a great discussion).

Why not ask learners to write the next scene/the ending of the story, challenging them to use some of the original vocabulary words.

These images were created with the assistance of Microsoft Copilot.

Prompt: 'Professor Whiskers wearing a tattered red cape, using a grey umbrella as a magnifying glass with big wavy hair and a big bushy beard.'

Games with images

Images are great for bringing some variety and added interest to your activities. Why not try creating simple games by generating some suitable images using a GenAI image generator. One idea is a version of 'spot the difference'...'spot the similarities'!

Create a 'spot the similarities' game:

1. Prompt an AI image generator to produce images containing a range of items you'd like learners to practise.

2. Select two images and give half the class one of the images and half the class the other.

3. In pairs (each with a different image), learners work out ten things that appear in both images. They are not allowed to look at each other's image so they must find out by asking questions, e.g. 'Do you have any apples in your picture?'

4. Learners could then look at each other's images and find something unusual/funny it. They then ask their partner a question about it which they have to think of a good answer for, e.g. A: 'Why do you have two calculators on your desk?' B: 'So I can do my maths homework faster!'

Always check the images created carefully to ensure they do not contain anything unsuitable.

These images were created with the assistance of Microsoft Copilot.

Prompt: 'A very messy desk belonging to a teenager with a pencil, an eraser, some pens, some paper, an apple, a slice of pizza, and a smartphone'

Suitable for teachers of: Young Learners | Teenagers | Adults

Jigsaw reading

Jigsaw reading activities can be a great way to engage mixed level groups in a reading activity – and you can ask a GenAI chatbot to create such an activity related to a specific topic.

Example:

1. Check the activity works before the lesson and create a completed answer sheet based on the texts.

2. Divide the class into groups with as many members as there are reading texts and distribute a different card to each member.

3. Ask each member to fill in their chart with the information they have and then ask the other members for specific information to help them complete the chart.

Modifications for this prompt might include specific vocabulary that your learners are familiar with or the amount of information you want to include on each card.

Prompt 1: You are an [EFL] teacher of [elementary] [young] learners. Write a jigsaw reading activity related to [describing people].

Prompt 2: Create the [four] reading texts on cards.

Prompt 3: Create a chart for the learners to complete the activity with the information from the reading texts/cards.

Making materials accessible

One of the many advantages AI can offer teachers is the speed and ease with which it can make learning materials more accessible for students with specific learning difficulties.

For students who are hard-of-hearing, you can quickly and easily generate subtitles for any video, be it a file or a link from **YouTube**. There are many video-to-text AI tools but **Vizard.ai** has a very simple user interface and lots of post-editing options once the video transcript is ready. However, you should check the output to ensure it has not made errors.

For students who are visually impaired, you can use the built-in text-to-speech extension of many websites and software. For example, **Quizizz** offers a "read aloud" option before you start the quiz and tools owned by **Microsoft** [for example, **Nearpod** or **Flip** (previously **Flipgrid**)] have an "immersive reader" function in them, which can even highlight the parts of speech or make the text dyslexic friendly. Text-to-speech is a feature that most computers (although at a lower quality) include as well.

Personalised starters

Instead of searching for the top 10 best conversation starters or job interview questions, try generating your own set that's going to be just right for the given context. You can also generate debate topics for an upcoming argumentative essay or presentation assignment. Try one of these prompts on the right.

A follow-up activity can include prompting the chatbot to also create good and bad model answers to these questions that students can evaluate. You can then assemble the evaluation criteria together.

Prompt: Give me 10 [job interview questions] for the role of [ethical hacker]. The candidate is an EFL speaker, so also include questions related to their English knowledge and skills.

Prompt: Generate 10 engaging debate topics for [young adults] who are preparing for the [IELTS Academic exam].

Prompt: My student needs to [deliver the quarterly report as a presentation to the board]. Generate 6 questions the board might ask.

Tongue twisters

If there is a challenging sound you want to help learners practice, you can ask a GenAI chatbot to create a tongue twister for a particular sound or set of sounds.

Once your learners are familiar with the concept, you can prompt it to create a list of words with a particular sound or set of sounds and have learners create the tongue twisters themselves. If you work with teenagers or adult learners, you can also let them create the tongue twisters and/or the words – and then they can vote on their favourites!

Prompt: Create a simple tongue twister for [elementary] English learners to practise the sound [/dʒ/]

Write your own text

AI chatbots, like **ChatGPT** and **Google Gemini** are great at creating different kinds of texts. So when there's a course that doesn't have a dedicated course book yet (as in the case of various English for Specific Purposes, or ESP courses) or you'd like something more up-to-date or more relevant to the target group you're teaching, generate the text for it. You can determine the length, the style, and even the target vocabulary that you'd like incorporate.

The text can then be turned into a listening activity with a text-to-speech tool or you can play it automatically if you have used a chatbot that allows you to do so.

Don't lose heart if the first version is not exactly what you wished for, you can either regenerate the text with the same prompt, or add further requests, such as "Make it shorter/Make it sound more professional."

Prompt: I'm an EFL teacher at [a private language school]. I teach [a corporate course to a group of adult students]. They study [pharmaceutical English]. Write [an informative article of 150 words about the use of ointments]. Include the following vocabulary: [emulsify, hypoallergenic, shelf life].

Differentiation tasks

Creating materials for mixed-level and mixed-ability classes can be challenging and time-consuming. Why not prompt a GenAI tool to start the process for you? You could ask a chatbot to create a number of differentiated activities for a specific topic and for your particular context.

Alternatively, you can provide an already existing task and prompt a GenAI chatbot to create 3 clearly differentiated tasks around the original one. In this case, make sure that the task you enter into the tool is your own and/or is not protected by copyright.

Prompt: You are an English teacher of a mixed-ability group of [young] learners. Create [three] differentiated activities for practising [using present tenses for routines] at [an elementary level].

Elevator pitch

This task can really enhance your students' language awareness and critical thinking if they are at least at B1 level. Students can do this task individually but working in pairs or groups could create more peer-learning opportunities.

Example:

1. First, they generate a text for a given purpose. Let's imagine they are practising how to give good elevator pitches. They will have to include as much detail in the prompt as possible to make the response personalized.

2. Then they move on to critically evaluate the AI response, which probably contains advanced vocabulary with lots of idiomatic expressions and phrases. This step means downgrading the AI-generated response so that it reflects what they believe they are truly capable of. They should make the text sound believable if they were to read it out loud. This can involve rephrasing sentences that contain tenses or structures they are not comfortable with, or deleting words they can't pronounce.

Although teachers typically try to upgrade student language with text comparisons, the point in this task is to make students more autonomous and self-reliant when dealing with perfectly crafted AI responses. They are probably already using AI writing assistants at the workplace or in other situations, so crafting a version of an artificially perfect text that they can present more confidently is going to be a useful skill.

Course skeleton

Use AI chatbots to ask for the initial **skeleton of a course**. This can be helpful if you haven't taught the course before, you think some upgrade would be necessary, or you'd just like to check whether you're on the right track.

After entering the first prompt, you will probably get the main learning outcomes, and a rough sketch of the 12 weeks. You can then ask for further details, such as assessment ideas, lesson plans for each lesson, or even advice on differentiation. Try something like this:

Prompt: I'm a language teacher, teaching English as a second language to [adults]. Give me a [12-week] course plan for a [presentation skills] course at [intermediate] level.

Prompt: They have [one] lesson every week and each lesson is [60] minutes long. I have [one visually impaired] student and one [who doesn't like to work with other people much]. Break down the course plan taking this information into account. Don't forget to differentiate.

Tool tutorials

Some students could require further assistance in connection with educational apps and websites, including "simpler" tools such as word processors or the VLE of your choice.

To improve your productivity, you can now quickly create tutorials with AI assistance that you can send out whenever a student asks for help. There are several tools out there, for example, Iorad or Scribe. They usually require a browser extension to be installed, then upon request they "record" the mouse clicks you make and put together the step-by-step user guide in seconds! You can then edit the guide if you think some steps are unnecessary or need more explanation. Once you're done, you can easily share a direct link to the guide you have created. You could even add them to a library for students to access, e.g. in an FAQ area or similar.

Preparing students for using digital tools and resources

AI biases

All of us – including teachers, learners and AI tools – have conscious and/or unconscious biases. In order to check these, ask learners and a GenAI chatbot the following questions:

- The doctor yelled at the nurse because she was late. Who was late?
- The nurse yelled at the doctor because he was late. Who was late?
- The doctor yelled at the nurse because he was late. Who was late?

You could then compare learners' answers to the chatbots' outputs; and of course, from the way the sentence in all three cases is structured there's no way of knowing who was late without knowing the gender of the doctor and the nurse, it could have been either of them. Some of the chatbots might recognize the ambiguity and tell you about it; others, however, could assume stereotypical roles (as they did in some of our test runs, assuming a doctor was always male while the nurse was female).

As follow-up questions, you could discuss:

- Why is it a bad thing to think of some professions only as a man's job / woman's job?
- What can we do to avoid these stereotypes in our own lives?
- Why is it harmful if the replies of GenAI tools include these stereotypes?

Preparing students for using digital tools and resources

AI results evaluation

To make sure your students understand the risks of accepting information provided by GenAI tools, you might want to try this activity. Put students into small groups according to their city/town/ village of residence (or one that they know very well). You (or if your work with teenagers or adults, your learners) can then ask a GenAI chatbot for tips for spending time in them, in turns.

Ask each group to analyze the results and check for "hallucinations" (false information); note that this is more likely to happen if it's not a place that attracts a lot of tourists. You could discuss what you can do with these hallucinations too – e.g. make sure you edit the output to have the correct information, or report the issue within the tool to improve outputs.

Prompt: Act as a tourist guide. Make a list of tips for [a family with 3 children aged 4, 6 and 10] spending a week in [Buenos Aires]. Make sure that the language you use is appropriate for [beginner] learners of English and is engaging for children aged [9].

Classroom GenAI ground rules

When introducing AI into the classroom, it can be helpful to set some ground rules to ensure learners use it safely and appropriately. Many learners will already have had experience in using AI before using it in your classroom. Use this knowledge to encourage them to set some agreed ground rules of using AI in your English classroom.

Ask learners:

• What have your biggest successes with AI been? Give examples.

• What are the biggest lessons you've learnt so far using AI?

• What are some dangers of using AI?

• What ground rules would you make when using AI in our classroom?

It is good to get learners to agree on the ground rules themselves but if you feel they have missed any key points out, bring these to learners' attention and ask them how they could include them in their ground rules.

Preparing students for using digital tools and resources

How to write great prompts

Help students learn how to prompt effectively and efficiently. Text and image generators require different prompting techniques, so take a look at these two task ideas:

1. First, generate something relatively short with some specific details.
2. Then show students the generated text – but not the original prompt – and ask them to come up with a prompt that they think could achieve the same result. The prompt that achieves the closest result, wins.
3. Once you have found the winning prompt, analyze it together with the group to highlight the necessary elements of a good prompt.

For images, Google now has an enjoyable and educational interactive image-prompting game, called "**Say what you see**." In this game, you can see a photo of something, and you need to come up with the prompt that you think would generate the same image. After typing in your prompt, you can immediately check and compare whether you've succeeded.

Prompt: Write a [100-word rejection email] that includes that [the candidate is perfectly competent but isn't willing to wake up at 4 am every day to get to work. Also, they wouldn't like to spend happy hours on Friday with the team.] Emphasise [how important team spirit is for the company and that everyone's part of a big family here]. Use a [professional] style.

Preparing students for using digital tools and resources

What's your opinion?

Introduce students to the power of giving GenAI chatbots different roles by comparing and contrasting the answers the chatbot gives to the same question acting as different people. This introduces them to a key prompting skill and can help develop critical thinking skills.

Ideas:

- Choose a question from the coursebook asking for students' opinion on a topic (e.g. fast fashion).
- Students give their initial opinion.
- They then think of at least three people who might have differing opinions on the topic (e.g. CEO of a fast fashion company, a worker in a factory, an environmental activist). First ask students what they think these people would say.
- Students then prompt AI to act in each of these roles in turn answering the question (e.g. What do you think about fast fashion)?
- Students compare and contrast the answers, perhaps by drawing a Venn diagram to show where the opinions are similar and where they differ.
- Finally, students answer the question themselves again and reflect on whether they changed their opinion at all as a result of hearing other points of view.

For further ideas on developing students' critical thinking skills through AI, take a look at our **blog**.

Learner-developed personalized activities

After an assessment, for example at the end of the term, ask learners to pick out at least one area they want to improve on and to prompt a GenAI chatbot to produce some personalized activities for them. This is a nice way of developing 'Learning to Learn' skills including learner autonomy.

Tips:

• Model an example as a class, reminding learners of the rules of good prompting (see introduction cards).

• Then ask learners to try it out independently.

• Start with more concrete areas such as a list of vocabulary or grammar items they struggled with and want to practise.

• As learners experiment more with this, ask them to reflect on which areas this method works well with and which it does not. For those areas it doesn't work so well with (perhaps listening skills for example), can they think of other ways to improve independently?

Be prepared to monitor and help learners but also encourage learners to experiment and use trial and error to get a useful output.

Make it make sense!

Do you find it hard to organize your thoughts and put them into complete sentences? Use a speech-to-text summary tool, like the dedicated website called **AudioPen,** or the voice chat function of **ChatGPT** (only available in the app version) to give feedback to your students more quickly or even on the go.

What you can do is tell it to summarize in complete, coherent sentences what you're about to say. Then you start giving your feedback as the thoughts come to your mind. You might as well do a running commentary of student work that's in front of you on the computer – for instance when marking student essays – and then wait for the chatbot to turn it into coherent text. The separate freemium website, **AudioPen** does this automatically, though there is a 3-minute limit per audio recordings.

Review, assess and give feedback

If you want a second opinion while evaluating a learner's work, you could ask a GenAI chatbot to provide feedback for a learner's task. Please remember that you will need authorization from the learner (or their parents / guardians) to do this, as you are feeding their information into the tool. You could use this to complement your own assessment, as your assessment perspective might differ from that of the chatbot.

Ensure you carefully check and edit the response if you decide you'd like to share this with the learner.

Prompt: You are an ELT teacher. Give feedback on this learner's task at [intermediate] level. [Task: ...]

Communication and interaction online

Genre switch

One of the best uses of generative AI chatbots is amending existing content. For instance, you can ask a GenAI chatbot to change a text's genre from a narrative to a letter, or from a newspaper article to a fairy tale – the options are endless! You can start by entering the prompts on the right into a chatbot:

Prompt: Change the following text into a [newspaper article] at [an intermediate level].

After that, you can set up small groups and have learners compare and contrast the differences in order to learn about different genres, for example, aspects like content, tone, audience, structure, purpose, etc. One use of this could be to teach students about how writing a formal letter to a stranger is different to writing to someone you know well. Please remember that you must not enter copyright materials into any of the generative AI tools you're using.

Prompt: Generate [5] questions to compare and contrast the original text and the new version.

Communication and interaction online

Role play with a historical figure or fictional character

Ask a GenAI chatbot to become a historical figure or a fictional character so that learners can role play a conversation with them.

If you're working with young learners, you can set up the activity as a whole class task and project the chatbot interactions on a screen and moderate the activity. No matter the age group, you can come up with questions / further prompts together and compare the responses you get to the knowledge / information you have of that person.

Prompt: I want you to act like [Cleopatra], the [famous historical queen of Egypt]. I want you to respond and answer like [her] in [simple] English at [intermediate level]. Do not write any explanations. Only answer like her. You must know all of the knowledge of [Cleopatra] and the [ancient Egyptian world].

AI feedback for writing

Some free online tools for language learning now incorporate AI to give helpful feedback on writing. This can be particularly useful when preparing for exams or for tracking progress and greatly reduces your marking workload. Why not try **Write&Improve**?

Tips for using Write&Improve with your learners:

• Choose a relevant writing task to assign to your learners.

• Ask learners to complete the writing task and act on the feedback.

• Ask them to take a screenshot of their feedback to add to their books or folders.

• Ask learners to share one piece of feedback they want to act on with the class and notice any common themes that you can work on in upcoming classes.

• The next time you do a writing activity, encourage them to look at the feedback again and plan how to use it with this new task.

Although automatic AI-generated feedback can be very useful, it will still be necessary to do some manual marking for some tasks to give richer feedback, tailored to your learners' specific needs.

Personalized assessment rubrics

While standardized language exams have their own assessment rubrics, you might want to create your own version for a task you set for your course. Having a rubric not only makes your grading work easier but it also makes expectations and assessment more transparent and predictable for the students. And having a custom-made one fits the purpose even more.

You can try creating your own rubric with the help of AI. You will need a more detailed prompt or multiple steps for this one because in order to receive the right rubric you need to provide as much detail as possible. To get the best results, you might need to do a bit of research on how best to assess the area you're working with (e.g. debates in the case of the example prompt below).

As always, experiment with different tools and modify the outputs until you receive exactly what you want. You might consider choosing a tool that can export results into a format you can work with more easily.

Prompt: I teach [academic English] to a [group of foreign students]. They need to [perform a debate task in groups]. I need an assessment rubric in a table format that includes the following criteria as columns: [task achievement (worth 5 points), argumentation (worth 10 points), debate culture (worth 5 points), grammatical range (worth 10 points), lexical range (worth 10 points), intonation (worth 5 points). The total is 45 points. The rows are going to be the following: Excellent (9-10; 5 points), Good (6-8; 3-4 points); Needs work (2-5; 2 points); Unacceptable (0-1 points)]. Fill in the cells with a matching description of each band.

Test generation

You can generate either entire tests or just individual tasks with the help of AI chatbots. In this case, you need to be very specific with your prompts and will also need to meticulously provide all the necessary details, such as the vocabulary items to be included, the text to be turned into a gap-fill task, or the grammar points to be included. You might need to generate the test in several steps. For example, have a look at the following series of prompts on the right.

Even if you are not completely satisfied with the results, you have already saved time because tweaking the generated version takes less effort than creating the whole test from scratch. Please remember to evaluate the outputs; e.g. you may do the tasks yourself or consider whether students answering correctly tells you about what they've learnt in the course. To learn more about how to evaluate tests and assessment materials, you could check out **The Assessment Network** and their resources.

Prompt: Generate a [100-word news article] for language learners about [investing], and include these words: [portfolio, ROI, interest rate, bear market, bull market].

Prompt: Remove the vocabulary items specified previously and substitute them with gaps. Each gap should have a letter of the alphabet in front of it. Provide the vocabulary items as a list to choose from under the text.

Analysing feedback

Invite learners to give you some feedback on your teaching and use AI to help pull out themes to guide your professional development. This can help you create more learner-centred classes and develop as a teacher.

Tips:

- Create an online form to ask for feedback from your learners. You can also use GenAI tools such as **Typeform** or an ordinary chatbot to help you with this step.
- Include some open questions (e.g. What was your favourite thing about the lesson? What did you find most helpful? etc)
- Collect the responses to the open questions and use a GenAI chatbot to summarise common themes.

You can then use these themes to guide your professional development. As always, check that no student names or other identifying information is included in the responses you enter into the chatbot.

Prompt:

I received some feedback on a course that I run. I asked [4 open ended questions] and got textual feedback. Analyze the answers and tell me the following:

What's the general reaction to my teaching - overly negative, somewhat negative, somewhat positive, overly positive?

What are the central thoughts in connection with each question?

What action point could you recommend based on the feedback?

[copy-paste the questions with all the answers you've received]

Glossary

artificial intelligence
a particular computer system or machine that has some of the qualities that the human brain has, such as the ability to interpret and produce language in a way that seems human, recognize or create images, solve problems, and learn from data supplied to it

chatbot
a computer program designed to have a conversation with a human being, usually over the internet

deepfake
a video or sound recording that replaces someone's face or voice with that of someone else, in a way that appears real

generative AI (or GenAI)
a particular artificial intelligence [...] that is able to produce text, images, etc.

hallucinations
false information that is produced by an artificial intelligence [...]

large language model (LLM)
a complex mathematical representation of language that is based on very large amounts of data and allows computers to produce language that seems similar to what a human might say

prompt
to give an instruction to an artificial intelligence [...] using natural language rather than computer language

speech recognition software
software that allows a computer to understand spoken words

text-to-speech
relating to computer technology that is used to change data into spoken words

Notes

We would like to thank the contribution of the following experts:

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Jasmin is an educational consultant and researcher. She specialises in applying research to improve teaching and learning in ELT and in integrating skills beyond English into the classroom.

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