

Notice First Student Conversation Starters/Reflection Questions

Thinking

- Do I know enough about this topic to check AI's answer?
- What kinds of thinking do I try to avoid in general?
- What kinds of thinking or tasks do I try to get AI to do for me?
- What am I actually trying to figure out here?
- If AI handed me a wrong answer, would I catch it? How?
- What part of this could I do on my own, even if it took longer?
- What kind of thinking comes easily to me, and what feels hard?
- Am I using AI to start my thinking, or to skip it?
- After AI helps, what do I still not understand?

Feeling

When I use AI, what am I feeling?

- Nervous, because...
- Excited, because...
- Relieved, because...
- Curious, because...
- Confused, because...
- Guilty, because...
- Frustrated, because...
- Impressed, because...
- Rushed, because...
- Proud, because...

Trust

- What kinds of tasks, thinking, or activities do I trust AI for?
- What do I not trust it for?
- Where did my trust in AI come from? Something I saw it do, or something I heard?
- Has this tool earned my trust for this kind of task, or am I just hoping it works?
- When AI has been wrong before, what was it wrong about?
- Do I check its answers, or do I trust it more when it sounds sure of itself?
- What would AI have to do to lose my trust? What would it take to earn more?

Values

- What do I want AI to help me with?
- What would I never want it to do for me?
- What is that protecting?
- What is one thing that stays mine no matter how good AI gets? (your voice, your art, your way of working something out)
- Does using AI this way fit the kind of person I want to be?

My AI Values (Student Version)

Teacher notes (delete this panel before sharing)

This template is modifiable on purpose. Shape it for your space: a classroom, a cart, an office. Edit the language to match your school/classroom vocabulary. Consider the following:

1. **Lower the stakes.** A values document written for a grade, or written under your gaze, may report what a student thinks you want to hear. Ungraded, private-by-default, or share-one-commitment-by-choice formats protect honesty.
2. **Scale it.** The full template below fits most high school students. For middle school, trim to Sections 1, 2, and 3, and ask for one commitment they hold plus one commitment they are unsure about. For elementary, skip the template and use the class version at the bottom of this document.
3. **Ground it in what they have seen.** Many students arrive with a stance absorbed from friends or social media, held with real heat and little evidence. "What have you actually seen it do?" is the grounding question. Borrowed positions soften when the evidence question arrives gently.

Section 1: What I actually use it for

Be honest. Nobody is grading this. List the ways you have used AI in the last month, for school or not.

Circle the one you would not want to give up. Put a star next to any you are not sure you feel good about.

Section 2: The two big questions

What do I want this tool to help me with?

What would I never want it to do for me?

The second answer matters most. It is usually protecting something. What is it protecting?

Section 3: My commitments

Write two or three. A real commitment is specific enough that a friend could catch you keeping or breaking it, and it says why.

I will let AI _____

because _____

I won't let AI _____

because _____

I won't let AI _____

because _____

Section 4: The honest part

One commitment I want to hold but might not, and when it will be hardest:

Two things I want that pull against each other (for example: wanting the grade and wanting to know I could do it myself):

Section 5: What I keep

One thing that stays yours no matter how good the tools get. Your voice in an essay. Your drawing. Your way of figuring things out. Name it, and name why.

Section 6: Check-back date

Your commitments can change when you learn something new. They should not change just because you got tired or busy. Pick a date to re-read this and ask: did my evidence change, or did I just drift?

I will re-read this on: _____

Class Version (Elementary)

For teachers of younger students: build one shared statement together, out loud, and post it. The goal at this age is one idea: a person gets to decide what a tool is for. The chart is just where the idea lands. Answer the two questions as a class and fill in the frame.

Our class talked about it, and here is what we decided:

Our AI tool helps us with:

Our AI tool never does these things for us:

because those are OUR jobs, and we like doing them.

We check our commitments together, and checking is normal.

Class: _____ Date: _____

Notice First Terminology and Research Base

Thinking

Metacognition. Thinking about your own thinking: noticing what you know, where your understanding is solid, and where it thins out. It is what tells you what kind of help you need before you write a prompt (Flavell, 1979).

Cognitive offloading. Using something outside your head, a note, a calculator, a tool, another person, to reduce the mental work a task takes. Ordinary and often smart. The question is what happens when you offload a kind of thinking heavily, habitually, and in areas where you were never strong (Risko & Gilbert, 2016; Gerlich, 2025a, 2025b).

Multiple intelligences. Gardner's proposal that intelligence is several relatively independent capacities rather than one general one. Gardner cautions against treating them as fixed learner types or a match-the-lesson-to-the-style scheme (Gardner, 1983, 1999).

Executive function. The mental processes that let you hold a goal in mind, resist the easy impulse, and adjust when conditions change.

Feeling

Fluency and the fluency trap. Fluency is the ease with which information is processed, and smoothness can be misread as a signal of truth (Alter & Oppenheimer, 2009). AI output is built to be smooth, so comprehension can feel like verification when it is not.

Emotional granularity. Naming what you feel with precision rather than in broad strokes, which gives you more accurate information to work with (Barrett, 2017).

Thin emotional vocabulary. Brown's finding that many of us name only a small handful of emotional states as we feel them, which limits how well we can work with what we feel (Brown, 2021).

Confirmation bias. The pull to seek and read evidence in ways that favor what you already believe. AI tends to build on the framing you bring to the prompt.

Sycophancy. AI's tendency to affirm and flatter, shaping answers toward what a user seems to want to hear rather than what is accurate (Cheng et al., 2026; OpenAI, 2025).

Trust

Choosing to make something you value vulnerable to another's actions (Feltman, 2008). Handing a task you care about to AI is already an act of trust, named or not. The scholarly anchor weighs it on ability, benevolence, and integrity (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995).

Values

The guiding commitments that decide what you are and are not willing to use AI for. Capability is not permission: what a tool can do is a fact about the tool; what you use it for is a decision drawn from your values (UNESCO, 2023).

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