



Strategies for Effective Use

Introduction

The strategies that follow are tool-agnostic. They work in Claude, ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, or whatever replaces them next.

Rapport is built on word choice. Accessibility is not a finishing pass; it is the whole floor. Student data is sensitive and protected. These strategies are designed with that reality in mind.

Before you begin you will want to identify your tool and the designated projects space. Tools differ, but all have project space in which you can work. The more organized your plan and set up, the better.

1. Start with Your Profile

Every mainstream AI tool has a place to store persistent instructions. Names vary custom instructions, projects, gems, saved prompts. Use them. Consider how that information will persist across multiple sessions. If there are custom instructions, file/text upload areas, this is where you will want to keep that documentation..

Your Teacher Profile should name, at minimum: your credentials (make up some good ones!), the grade band and course you teach, the platform your students use, the student population you serve (IEPs, 504s, multilingual learners, credit recovery), the reading level and tone you want, and your non-negotiables. The non-negotiables matter most. Write them out: descriptive alt text for every visual, plain and inclusive language that demonstrates care and encouragement alongside academic vocabulary, WCAG 2.2 AA compliance.

Update as you go. Your profile is a living document. Every time you correct the AI, the fix belongs in the profile, not just in the chat.

2. Work in Persistent Project Spaces

A one-off chat is fine for a quick question. Recurring work is different. Any significant project (a unit, a rubric overhaul, a term of family communications, a feedback-bank



rebuild) deserves its own dedicated space. Most AI tools now support attaching files and instructions to a project so everything relevant is already in context when you sit down.

Upload the syllabus, the standards crosswalk, guiding documents, the rubric, two or three exemplars, and your accessibility checklist. Then every prompt in that space is already grounded. You stop re-explaining and start working.

It will be more efficient if you take those documents and have your tool create their own version for reference and review in your initial sessions, this will save time and tokens as you move forward so it doesn't continually have to spend time analyzing a PDF, docx file, etc. Usually it will provide you a markdown file (.md) that you can replace your other documents with.

3. End Long Sessions with a Handoff

Before closing a substantial session, ask the AI to do three things: summarize what was decided, list what is still open, and write a short prompt you can paste into the next session to pick up the thread. Save that output somewhere findable: a handoff.md file. The tool knows what that is. (Mark Down File)

This matters most for planning sessions, grading sprints, and curriculum overhauls that span multiple sessions. Without a handoff, the second session starts over. With one, you start where you left off.

4. Keep a Corrections List

When an AI tool gets something wrong, do not just fix it and move on. Write the correction as a rule, then paste it into your Teacher Profile or project instructions. Better yet, have the tool keep track of it for you.

Each rule costs thirty seconds once and saves thirty seconds forever. Over a school year, the pile of saved rules becomes a time bank and the shape of your classroom voice.

5. Lead with Accessibility and UDL

Build accessibility into the prompt, not into a cleanup pass. A prompt that asks for “a warm-up on figurative language” gets you a generic paragraph. A prompt that asks for “a warm-up on figurative language at an eighth grade reading level, with multiple means of representation (text, a graphic organizer, and an optional audio script), alt text on any



visual, and instructions formatted with semantic headings for screen reader navigation” gets you something you can use.

UDL and WCAG thinking improves the output on every axis, not just accessibility. More precise prompts produce more precise results.

6. Build a Reusable Prompt Library

The prompts that work for you are teaching artifacts. Save them. Organize them. Share them.

A starter set for online high school teachers: a feedback prompt for short-answer writing, a differentiation prompt that adapts one task for three different learner profiles at once, a family communication prompt (warm, brief, plain language, translatable), an IEP- and 504-aligned scaffolding prompt, a rubric-generation prompt with accessibility descriptors, and a discussion-stem generator. A simple doc , or spreadsheet is all it takes. Version them as you refine.

7. Specify the Output Shape Before You Prompt

Vague requests produce generic prose. Tell the AI what you want before you ask for it: a two-column table, a six-slide outline with speaker notes, a 250-word family email in a specific tone, a rubric on a four-point scale with accessibility descriptors in row two. The shape guides the thinking.

This is the single fastest way to stop getting answers that feel like they came from a textbook publisher you never hired.

8. Verify Before You Publish

AI writes confidently whether it is right or wrong. Treat every draft as a first draft. Verify facts, citations, and quotations. Check reading level against the one you actually teach. Read for cultural accuracy, not just cultural mention. Ask whether the examples reflect your class or a stock one.

Have the tool do its own validation and verification as part of the closeout to each session. Catching errors upstream is faster than correcting them across three sections.

9. Protect Student Data



Do not paste identifiable student work, IEP or 504 content, grades, discipline notes, or medical information into tools your district has not approved for that purpose. Even with approved tools, de-identify aggressively. Swap names for initials or “Student A.” Scrub demographic details that are not pedagogically necessary.

When in doubt, strip it out.

Teach These Moves to Students

Your students are already using AI. The question is whether they are using it well. Each of these strategies is also a lesson: how to set context, how to specify outputs, how to verify, how to protect their own information. Modeling these habits in your own practice, and naming them when you do, teaches prompt literacy as part of information literacy. It also makes your academic integrity expectations concrete instead of abstract.

“The habits you model in your AI use become the literacy your students inherit.”

A Small Habit That Holds It All Together

At the end of every week, spend five minutes asking one question: “What did I fix by hand in an AI draft this week that I could have prevented with a better instruction?” The answer is tomorrow’s Teacher Profile update.

Quick Reference

Here is how the specific system described maps to the generic AI features available in most tools.

The Generic Version Is...	Where to Find It
A persistent “Teacher Profile” or system prompt	Custom instructions, project memory, or a pinned prompt you paste into every session
A dedicated project, GPT, or Gem per course or unit	Projects (Claude), GPTs (ChatGPT), Gems (Gemini), or a saved-prompts folder



Inclusive AI Strategies

The Generic Version Is...	Where to Find It
An end-of-session summary saved somewhere findable (handoff.md)	A pinned note, project file, or email to yourself
A “do-not-repeat” rules list appended to your profile (lessons.md)	The same place your Teacher Profile lives
A reusable prompt, skill, tool, handout library	A simple doc, spreadsheet, or saved-prompts feature