

#293 — AI and Citizenship

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Speakers

Paul (98%), Transition (2%)

Paul Beckermann 0:01

Welcome to Tech Talk for Teachers. I'm your host, Paul Beckermann.

Transition Music 0:05

Check it out. Check it out. Check it out. Check it out. What's in the toolkit? What is in the toolkit? So, what's in the toolkit? Check it out.

Paul Beckermann 0:17

The topic of today's episode is AI and Citizenship. In the past four episodes, I've been exploring how AI fits into the four Cs of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity. In 2014, Michael Fullan and Geoff Scott released a white paper titled "Education PLUS," which expanded on the 4 Cs Framework, adding citizenship and character to the list. They called this new model The Six Cs of Deep Learning. These additions to the list make a lot of sense and add invaluable missing elements to the original model. So, in that light, in the next two episodes, I'm going to dive into these other two Cs, citizenship and character.

Today's focus will be citizenship. While there are many ways to approach the teaching of citizenship in an AI-infused world, I'm going to outline a three-step approach for you to consider. If you adopt this model, it's helpful to think of these steps as tiers. In the first step, or tier, students begin with a self-understanding of AI and Citizenship. In step or tier two, they extend it beyond themselves, applying it to the classroom setting. And then in step three, or tier three, they look beyond their school walls to a global application. Let's look more closely at each of these three steps and how you might design learning around them.

Transition Music 1:43

Here are your three, here are your three tips. Here are your three tips.

Paul Beckermann 1:49

So step one, begin with self-learn about AI and Citizenship. So here we start at the lower levels of Bloom's Taxonomy with the goal of building a strong base of knowledge and understanding. This applies to both citizenship and AI. There are a number of ways you can build this

foundation for yourself and your students. Here's one approach. For citizenship, you might consider this: brainstorm and make a list of various types of citizenship. And of course, be sure to consider categories such as digital citizenship, civic citizenship, national citizenship, and even classroom citizenship. Then research, define, and detail each type of citizenship. What does it mean to be a citizen in each of these types of communities? After that, consider creating a Venn diagram as a class to explore how the various types of citizenships are similar, and different. Discuss what you notice and encourage students to ask questions that probe at a deeper understanding of citizenship, and the nuances associated with each type. As a final activity, you can generate an overarching definition of citizenship as a class, ask students to explore what all the various types of citizenships have in common.

Once you've developed a base of citizenship understanding, you can move on to artificial intelligence. You could facilitate the use of a KWL chart to target and process new learning about AI. This can be done as a full class, small group, or individual. Regardless of how you choose to structure the activity, students should begin by brainstorming and compiling what they already know about AI in the "K" or the "Know" column. Consider some type of sharing activity before moving on to the "W" column or the "Want to Know" portion of the chart. Then you will have students write down what they want to learn in the "W" column of their KWL. It can be helpful to formulate this as a list of questions. Once they have the list, have students conduct research to answer those questions. They should record what they learned in the "L" or "Learned" column of their KWL chart.

As an alternative to research, you could have students actually use generative AI instead. If you or your students have access and permission to use a program like ChatGPT or Gemini, students can use a hands-on approach to experiment and discover answers to their AI questions. For questions that they're unable to answer through that direct experience, they can still conduct research. And then, finally, facilitate some sort of sharing out or summarizing activity so that students can identify and share what they've learned in the process. To save time, you could choose to provide a list of resources to students to review rather than having them research and find on their own. This can still give them voice and choice while cutting out the potentially time-consuming research step. If you choose this option, you may want to consider some of the following student-friendly and high quality resources about AI. They're also very helpful learning resources for teachers who are looking to know more about AI. Code.org is one that has videos and lessons about AI. Lesson 2 is really good, specifically addressing the societal impact of generative AI. There's also Aledu. This is a site fully dedicated to AI and education. It offers many free lessons and resources. AI4all. So it's AI, the number four, and then "all." This has open learning materials and curriculum for high school students. The learning targets and content are aligned to ELA, NGSS, ISTE, and CSTA standards. And then there's also Control F. It's abbreviated Ctrl dash F. This site has resources about media literacy that are targeted more toward middle school students. While not specifically about AI, the material can be applied to AI media literacy.

Okay, let's move on to Step 2, "Apply It in the Classroom." Now that we have a foundation of knowledge and understanding, we can move up Bloom's Taxonomy and apply what we've

learned. We can do this by having students create a set of ai citizenship guidelines for their classroom. By having students create, they will also be applying, analyzing, and evaluating throughout the construction process. This type of activity comes with several benefits. First, it provides an authentic application for the new learning. Second, the new learning becomes more relevant and meaningful because it applies to the students' personal classroom context. And third, it's an authentic and actionable way to generate expectations for your classroom. It includes student input, and is done in a way that deeply engages them in the process. There's a high probability that this approach will increase both awareness and compliance with the expectations since the students were engaged in creating them. Really, it's a win-win situation. There are many ways you can facilitate the development of AI citizenship guidelines in your classroom. Whatever approach you take in designing this experience, it's important that all students not only have a voice in the process, but are required to contribute ideas.

One efficient way to do this is to have every student contribute to a T-Chart or a Y-Chart. A T-Chart has two columns; one describing what something looks like and the other side for what it sounds like. Another T-Chart is used to describe what it does not look like or does not sound like. A Y-Chart is similar, but it adds what something feels like or does not feel like. Once completed, these charts can be hung in the classroom as anchor charts. Students will then have a visual reminder of the guidelines that they helped develop. Step 3 is to go beyond the school walls. Once students have applied the concepts of AI and citizenship locally, they'll be more prepared to extend it globally. So in this third step, we go beyond the school walls. There are several considerations to think about as you design these experiences.

First, consider how you can connect AI citizenship to the content standards you're already teaching in your classroom. If you're teaching social studies, the connections to citizenship will probably seem obvious and plentiful, as citizenship is likely a really central theme in the curriculum. If you're an ELA teacher, perhaps you connect it to the theme and a piece of literature, or perhaps integrate it with a lesson on small group communication skills. Whatever your content area, you can make the learning more relevant and also save time by making some sort of curricular connection to the study of AI and citizenship. Second, determine a community beyond your classroom. Perhaps you target your school. Maybe it's your local community, or you could go bigger and choose your state or even nation. Depending on the age of your students and your objectives, you could even look globally. Naming a specific community and context will give your activities and conversations about AI and citizenship added relevance. Third, determine how you're going to have your students apply the concepts of AI and citizenship to that chosen context. The options are many, but here are a few that can get you started brainstorming some ideas. One option is to critique AI. Ask a generative AI chatbot a question relevant to the audience or context you've chosen. Then examine the response, critiquing it for bias, accuracy, truthfulness, and completeness. How would the people in your target audience respond to that answer? Would they all respond the same? Students may need to do some additional research to vet these AI responses. Another option is to make students be the teachers. Have students develop learning materials about AI that can be shared with the intended audience. If the audience is local, like another grade in the school, or maybe parents and guardians in the community, the materials can actually be shared. With an authentic

audience. Students will likely be motivated by more than a grade on the assignment and it gives the outcome of their work true purpose.

A variation of this could be to create an awareness campaign for the school, including the design and creation of informative signs to be hung around the building. Another option is to do a compare and contrast activity. For this one, seek out AI guidelines from a source beyond your classroom. This could be from another classroom or school, or it could be from a university, an organization like ISTE, or even national guidance generated by a country. Students can then compare and contrast these external versions to the ones that they created in your classroom. This can lead to meaningful conversations about the reasons for differences and similarities. It can also lead to conversations about unique needs and identities of the population targeted by the guidelines. It may even lead to revisions in the classroom version. These can be rich learning experiences. And, finally, have AI help. Use your favorite AI chatbot to help you come up with additional learning activities that can work in your classroom. Generative AI can be a great thought partner. Of course, as any good AI digital citizen will do, be sure to thoughtfully review the AI-generated suggestions before implementing them.

So these ideas are not all-encompassing, nor are they intended to be. They're meant to prime the pump by offering a few suggestions for how you might begin engaging your students about a new and very important aspect of citizenship. AI will almost certainly continue to impact society, and we will all need to learn how to be good citizens in this reshaped world. Having students wrestle with this in your classroom can give them a strong foundation for when they face the same issues outside of school.

To learn more about today's topic, and explore other free resources, visit AvidOpenAccess.org. Specifically, I encourage you to check out our collection of articles about AI. You can find it by going to AvidOpenAccess.org and searching for "AI in the K–12 Classroom." And, of course, be sure to join Rena, Winston, and me every Wednesday for our full-length podcast, Unpacking Education, where we're joined by exceptional guests and explore education topics that are important to you. Thanks for listening. Take care, and thanks for all you do. You make a difference.