

Mystery AI in Education Hype Theater 3000

Project Description

In their public pedagogy project [Mystery AI Hype Theater 3000](#), “linguist Prof. Emily M. Bender and sociologist Dr. Alex Hanna break down the AI hype, separate fact from fiction, and science from bloviation. They’re joined by special guests and talk about everything, from machine consciousness to science fiction, to political economy to art made by machines.” Bender and Hanna have hosted a lot of important critical technology scholars, such as Dr. Safiya Noble on [AI overviews and Google advertising technology](#) and Dr. Chris Gilliard on [AI hype in higher education](#).

Our final project takes its inspiration from Mystery AI Hype Theater 3000. Working in a group of 2-3 people, you will critique thematically connected instances of AI hype, drawing on our course material and class discussions to call out the hype, point to the possibility, and leave your audience with a more nuanced understanding of how you believe AI can and cannot (and maybe should or should not) support teaching and learning in K-12 education. You will record yourselves in Zoom or another platform.

Possible multimedia for you to critique include:

- Popular media articles
- Academic articles
- Educational technology websites and press releases
- AI curricula from:
 - Teacher professional organizations ([CSTA](#), [NCTE](#), etc)
 - Technology company-produced materials (Google, Microsoft, etc)
- AI teaching frameworks and guidance
 - Examples: [UNESCO](#), [Chicago Public Schools](#), etc
- Keynote speeches
- Social media posts

Note: You can use a combination of genres. For example, you can group a popular media article, a press release from an ed-tech company, and a keynote speech. The important thing to remember is that each instance of AI hype must be clearly connected to your chosen organizing theme.

Project parts

Part I: Proposal (20%)

Due: November 25

Write a short proposal and include the following:

- 2-3 thematically connected instances of AI hype in K-12 education. Explain the theme you’re exploring and how your chosen items fit the theme.

- 4-6 readings or other media from the course that you will use in your analysis. For each reading or other media, share 2-3 sentences about how you plan to use it in your critique.

You will also present your proposal in class for additional feedback from your peers.

Part II: Recording (50%)

Due: December 4

- Record your group's critique. We recommend you watch a few episodes of Mystery AI Hype Theater 3000 to familiarize yourself with the format. For instance, you will not be reading your instances of AI hype word for word. Nor will you be reading from a script. However, you should have a clear sense of what you want to discuss going into the recording – while being open to riffing off each other in unexpected, productive ways. Your recording should be approximately 20-30 minutes. You should include explicit references to key ideas from course readings.

Part III: Reflection (30%)

Due: December 9

Question 1: Recommendations to a Superintendent

Imagine you receive an email from Dr. Angel Turner and Dr. Marcus Campbell. Dr. Turner is the superintendent of District 65 in Evanston and Skokie; District 65 includes students from kindergarten through eighth grade. Dr. Campbell is the superintendent of District 202 in Evanston and Skokie; District 202 includes students at Evanston Township High School. The email reads:

Hello,

I hope this email finds you well. We are requesting your assistance. We've been approached by a major technology company to pilot its generative AI tools with our teachers and students. The company has sent us the following:

Our transformational generative AI tools breathe new life into teaching and learning by helping educators and students create dynamic, personalized lessons and projects. We believe AI is the future, and we're invested in helping schools develop students into the thought leaders of tomorrow across government, science, business, the arts, and more. We've also taken to heart the wise words that with great power comes great responsibility. That's why we've partnered with a trusted non-profit and hired experienced educators to develop a robust AI literacy curriculum to ensure teachers and students use our generative AI tools safely and ethically. Our cutting-edge technology grants access to the tools and skills that we believe will shape a brighter future for us

all. Please let us know what questions we can answer and how we can best proceed with this exciting partnership.

What do you think we should do? What questions should we ask? What else should we know if we decide to enter into the pilot program? Your guidance is much appreciated!

Sincerely,

Dr. Angel Turner and Dr. Marcus Campbell

Provide a detailed response to Dr. Turner and Dr. Campbell, making sure to anchor your guidance in evidence and perspectives from the class readings and discussions.

Question 2: Your Relationship with AI and Generative AI

We've asked you to reflect on your relationship with AI and generative AI (GenAI) throughout the course. Now that we've come to the end of our time together, we're asking you to look back one last time. Start by rereading your very first journal entry assigned on September 25. Next, reread your answer to the second question on Mid-term II. Finally, given your previous responses and now taking into account our unit on policy, answer the following:

- How has your relationship with AI and generative AI evolved over the past 11 weeks? What readings, viewings, activities, guests, and/or discussions did you find most affected your understanding and perspectives on the use of AI/GenAI? Explain.

Your reflection should be:

- 12-point, Times New Roman font
- Double-spaced
- 300-500 (or so) words per question