

Using ChatGPT to Create Rubrics and Learning Activities:

Mike Kentz

Section 1: Effective Use from the Author's Perspective

By Mike Kentz

Many of my opinions on safe and effective AI use can be summarized in the following infographic:



But there's more.

In education, I approach safe and effective AI use by prioritizing **inputs**—the

thought process behind user interactions—over the outputs. Instead of asking, “*Did we get the output we wanted?*” we should focus on “*Does the input reflect thoughtful, purposeful engagement?*”

As an English teacher grading chat transcripts, I evaluate proof of thinking in student inputs. I ask questions like: Where did they start? What goals did they set? Were they trying to learn or create something with AI? How did they contextualize their goals?

When analyzing my own transcripts for ethical and effective use, I ask myself similar questions:

- Did I expect the AI to do the work for me?
- Did I brainstorm a vision before starting?
- How well did I communicate my vision?
- If I lacked a vision, how did I develop one during the interaction?
- How closely did I analyze outputs?
- Were my follow-ups thoughtful, expansive, or creative?
- How deep was the engagement?

These questions are broad and subjective, but analyzing transcripts reveals a clear narrative of user thinking. By reflecting on our own use, we can define exemplary and non-exemplary practices to model for students, showing them how to make their thinking visible when working with AI.

This raises a key question: should the goal of AI use be to demonstrate thinking or to produce something quickly, creatively, or efficiently? I would argue it's both. Ethical and effective use in education balances these goals, promoting thoughtful engagement while leveraging AI's strengths.

Section 2: Context for the Chat Transcript

In this use case, I used ChatGPT 3.5 to create a rubric for a project-based learning exercise I was developing for my students. I intentionally chose not to update this analysis for ChatGPT 4.0 to preserve the authenticity of the interaction. This transcript captures me working with AI to the best of my ability at the time, before I had started thinking of transcripts as spaces for students to "show their work."

Later in the use case you will see the user pivot to brainstorming and creating a learning activity for 9th Grade English Students connected to *Born A Crime* by Trevor Noah. You might notice that ChatGPT produces a fascinating idea for a learning activity, only to see that many of the logistical hurdles associated with putting the project into play lead to a devaluation of the project itself (though I still ran it with some success).

I've sought to be honest and transparent, highlighting moments where my approach was less thorough or thoughtful. My goal is to normalize sharing AI use cases and transcripts in education to establish clearer standards for ethical and effective use.

If we want to define what "good" AI use looks like, we need to embrace transparency, share our experiments, and learn from each other.

Enjoy the exhibit!

Use Case: Using ChatGPT to Generate a Rubric and Learning Activity

By Mike Kentz

MIKE'S PROMPT- 1

You are a high school English teacher creating lesson materials for 14 and 15 year old boys that will be reading Born A Crime by Trevor Noah. At the beginning of your Unit, you will be asking students to complete a Group research project on apartheid laws and their impact on South Africa. Your students will read Chapters 1-3 in conjunction with the project. There will be four groups each researching one of the following topics; The Factors that Brought Apartheid to an End in 1994, The Causes, History, and Laws of Apartheid in South Africa, Apartheid and the Struggles in Life of the Black People, and the post-apartheid Restorative Justice movement. Generate a generic rubric that applies to all four group research projects. The projects should be 7-10 slides long and should present the term in narrative form. Sources should be credible and should be cited using MLA format. Presentations should use images and graphics to keep the audience's attention. Students can use videos, but they should not amount to more than 2 minutes in length altogether. Note-taking documents will be provided and students are expected to turn in these graphic organizers as well.

ChatGPT 3.5

High School English Group Research Project Rubric

Project Title: Understanding Apartheid: Impact on South Africa

Group Members: [List group members' names]

Presentation Date: [Specify the presentation date]

Category	Excellent (5)	Proficient (4)	Basic (3)	Limited (2)	Incomplete (1)
Content	The presentation is exceptionally well-researched and provides a comprehensive understanding of the chosen topic. All key points are covered in-depth, and the information is accurate, relevant, and thoughtfully organized.	The presentation is well-researched and provides a clear understanding of the chosen topic. Most key points are covered in sufficient detail, and the information is mostly accurate and relevant.	The presentation is adequately researched and provides a basic understanding of the chosen topic. Some key points may lack depth, and there may be minor inaccuracies or irrelevant information.	The presentation lacks sufficient research and only provides a surface-level understanding of the chosen topic. Key points are missing or lack detail, and there may be significant inaccuracies or irrelevant information.	The presentation is not researched or does not contribute to an understanding of the chosen topic. Key points are missing, and the information is entirely inaccurate or irrelevant.
Organization	The presentation is exceptionally well-organized, with a clear introduction, well-structured main points, and a compelling conclusion. Transitions between slides are seamless and enhance the overall flow.	The presentation is well-organized, with a clear introduction, logically structured main points, and a conclusion that summarizes the key findings. Transitions between slides are mostly smooth and maintain the overall flow.	The presentation is adequately organized, with an introduction, main points, and a conclusion. Transitions between slides are somewhat smooth, but the overall flow may be occasionally disrupted.	The presentation lacks proper organization, with unclear or missing introductions, disorganized main points, and a weak conclusion. Transitions between slides are often abrupt and disrupt the flow.	The presentation is completely disorganized, lacking introductions, main points, or a conclusion. Transitions between slides are non-existent or chaotic, making the presentation incomprehensible.
Use of Visuals	The presentation effectively uses	The presentation uses visuals to	The presentation	The presentation	The presentation lacks the use of

	images, graphics, and visuals to enhance understanding and engagement. All visuals are high-quality, relevant, and properly cited.	enhance understanding and engagement. Most visuals are of good quality, relevant, and properly cited.	includes some visuals, but they may not consistently enhance understanding or engagement. Visuals may be of varying quality, relevance, or citation may be incomplete.	includes few visuals, and their use does not effectively enhance understanding or engagement. Visuals may be of low quality, irrelevant, or improperly cited.	visuals, making it less engaging and less effective in conveying information.
Use of Videos	If videos are included, they are highly relevant, well-integrated, and do not exceed the 2-minute limit. Videos contribute significantly to the presentation's overall quality.	If videos are included, they are relevant and integrated well, and they mostly adhere to the 2-minute limit. Videos enhance the presentation's quality.	If videos are included, they may not be consistently relevant, well-integrated, or within the 2-minute limit. Videos partially contribute to the presentation's quality.	If videos are included, they lack relevance, integration, or exceed the 2-minute limit, disrupting the flow of the presentation. Videos do not effectively contribute to the presentation's quality.	Videos are not included or are entirely irrelevant, disrupting the presentation's flow and quality.
Source of Credibility	All sources are credible, reliable, and properly cited in MLA format. The sources used significantly enhance the presentation's credibility.	Most sources are credible, reliable, and properly cited in MLA format. The sources used generally enhance the presentation's credibility.	Some sources may lack credibility, reliability, or proper MLA citation. The sources used partially enhance the presentation's credibility.	Many sources lack credibility, reliability, or proper MLA citation, affecting the presentation's credibility.	Sources are not cited, or the sources used are entirely unreliable and lack credibility.
Overall Presentation	The presentation is outstanding, engaging, and highly	The presentation is very good, engaging, and informative. It	The presentation is acceptable but may require	The presentation is weak and needs	The presentation is inadequate and does not meet the

	informative. It demonstrates thorough research, excellent organization, effective use of visuals, and clear communication.	demonstrates good research, solid organization, effective use of visuals, and clear communication.	improvement in research, organization, use of visuals, or communication.	significant improvement in research, organization, use of visuals, or communication.	minimum standards for a group research project.
Graphic Organizer	The graphic organizer is completed thoroughly and demonstrates a deep understanding of the topic. It includes all necessary information and is well-organized.	The graphic organizer is completed with a good level of detail and understanding of the topic. It includes most necessary information and is mostly well-organized.	The graphic organizer is completed with basic details and understanding of the topic. It may lack some necessary information, and organization may need improvement.	The graphic organizer is partially completed and lacks sufficient detail or understanding of the topic. It may be disorganized.	The graphic organizer is incomplete or provides no meaningful information about the topic.
Overall Score	45-50	40-44	35-39	30-34	<30

Comments: [Provide specific feedback and areas for improvement]

Please note that the above rubric is a general guideline and can be adapted to suit your specific classroom needs. Additionally, it's essential to provide clear instructions to students about expectations, including how they should collaborate within their groups, conduct research, and create their presentations and graphic organizers.

MIKE'S PROMPT- 2

This rubric is great, thank you. You came up with the following activity as an addendum to teaching Born A Crime by Trevor Noah to high school students: "Interactive activity: "Lost in Translation" game where students translate phrases from different languages." Please explain it. What is this activity and how does it work? Be detailed and specific about every action a student must take.

ChatGPT 3.5

Certainly! The "Lost in Translation" game is an interactive and engaging activity designed to help high school students explore the theme of language and communication, which is a significant aspect of Trevor Noah's memoir, "Born a Crime." This activity encourages students to appreciate the challenges and nuances of translation while having fun. Here's how the activity works:

Materials Needed:

- A list of phrases or idioms in various languages (e.g., Spanish, French, Mandarin, Swahili, etc.). These phrases should not be common and should pose some difficulty for students to translate.
- A worksheet or handout for each student with spaces to write their translations.
- A projector or whiteboard for displaying phrases.
- Markers or a chalkboard for writing phrases (if using a whiteboard or chalkboard).
- Timer or stopwatch (optional).

Procedure:

1. **Introduction (5 minutes):** Begin by discussing the importance of language and communication, tying it to the themes in "Born a Crime." Explain that the activity will help them understand the complexities of translation.
2. **Group Formation (2 minutes):** Divide the class into small groups of 3-4 students. Each group will work together to translate phrases.
3. **Explain the Game (3 minutes):** Describe the rules of the "Lost in Translation" game to the students:
 - You will display a phrase or idiom in a foreign language on the projector or board.
 - Each group must work together to translate the phrase into English within a given time limit (e.g., 2 minutes per phrase).
 - Groups will write down their translations on their worksheets.
 - After the time limit, reveal the correct English translation.
4. **Demo Round (2 minutes):** Conduct a practice round with an easy phrase to ensure everyone understands the rules.
5. **Game Rounds (15-20 minutes):** Start presenting phrases in different languages, one at a time. Each phrase should be challenging and unfamiliar to students. Set a timer for each phrase (e.g., 2 minutes).
6. **Translation (2 minutes per phrase):** Allow each group to discuss and write down their translations for the given phrase on their worksheets.
7. **Reveal Correct Translations (1-2 minutes per phrase):** After the timer expires, reveal the correct English translation for the phrase. Encourage discussion about any interesting differences or nuances in the translations.
8. **Scoring (Optional):** If you want to make it competitive, award points to groups for correct translations. Tally the scores after each phrase.
9. **Discussion (5 minutes):** Conclude the game with a class discussion. Ask students to reflect on the challenges they faced during the activity and the importance of precise language and communication. Relate this discussion back to Trevor Noah's experiences with language in "Born a Crime."

10. **Debrief (2 minutes):** Thank the students for their participation and summarize the key takeaways from the activity.

Variations:

- You can add complexity by including phrases from different dialects within the same language.
- To make it more challenging, use phrases that are culturally specific and might not have a direct translation.
- Encourage students to research the cultural context of the phrases they encounter.

This activity not only reinforces the themes of language and communication but also promotes teamwork, critical thinking, and cross-cultural awareness, aligning well with the themes and topics explored in "Born a Crime" by Trevor Noah.

MIKE'S PROMPT- 3

Interesting. Can you generate a list of phrases and idioms from other languages that you think would work for this game?

ChatGPT 3.5

Certainly! Here's a list of phrases and idioms from various languages that can work well for the "Lost in Translation" game:

1. **Spanish:** "Dar en el clavo" (To hit the nail on the head)
2. **French:** "C'est la fin des haricots" (It's the end of the beans - meaning it's the last straw)
3. **Italian:** "Chi dorme non piglia pesci" (Those who sleep don't catch fish)
4. **German:** "Den Nagel auf den Kopf treffen" (To hit the nail on the head)
5. **Mandarin Chinese:** "狗急跳墙" (A cornered dog will jump over a wall - meaning desperate times call for desperate measures)
6. **Japanese:** "猫の額" (The size of a cat's forehead - referring to a tiny space)
7. **Russian:** "Брать себя в руки" (To take oneself in one's hands - meaning to get a grip on oneself)
8. **Arabic:** "العبرة بالأعمال وليس بالأقوال" (Judgment is based on deeds, not words)
9. **Swahili:** "Kupiga bao" (To score a goal - can be used figuratively for achieving a goal)
10. **Greek:** "Στην υγειά μας" (To our health - a common toast)
11. **Portuguese:** "Falar pelos cotovelos" (To talk through your elbows - meaning to talk excessively)
12. **Dutch:** "De aap komt uit de mouw" (The monkey comes out of the sleeve - meaning the truth is revealed)
13. **Korean:** "고생 끝에 낙이 온다" (After hardship comes happiness)
14. **Swedish:** "Att ha tummen mitt i handen" (To have the thumb in the middle of the hand - meaning to be clumsy)
15. **Hindi:** "अपने मुंह मियाँ मिट्टू बनना" (To become a sweet-talking parrot)

These phrases and idioms encompass a variety of languages and cultures, making the game both entertaining and educational as students work together to decipher their meanings and explore the richness of language diversity.

If i display these on the board, how will students translate them? They need to be able to copy and paste them into a translator, no? I don't understand how the students go about translating these words. Won't they just copy and paste into Google Translate? what other ways are there for them to complete these translations?

ChatGPT 3.5

You're right; students could easily copy and paste these phrases into online translators like Google Translate to get the translations quickly. However, to make the activity more challenging and educational, you can implement the following strategies to encourage students to think critically and engage with the phrases:

1. **No Copy-Paste Rule:** Instruct students not to use online translators or copy-paste. Instead, they should rely on their language skills, prior knowledge, and group discussions to come up with translations.
2. **Context Clues:** Encourage students to analyze the phrases within the context you provide. You can give them a brief description of the cultural or situational context in which the phrase is commonly used.
3. **Collaborative Translation:** Emphasize group collaboration. Encourage students to discuss the phrases within their groups, sharing their ideas and insights to collectively arrive at translations.
4. **Dictionary Resources:** Allow students to use bilingual dictionaries (print or digital) or language learning apps to assist with translations. This encourages them to learn how to use language resources effectively.
5. **Discussion and Guesswork:** After each phrase is presented, have a brief class discussion where students share their proposed translations and reasons for their choices. This can help them refine their translations through collective thinking.

6. **Cultural Context:** Encourage students to think about the cultural connotations and nuances behind the phrases. Discuss how the culture or history of the language influences the meaning of idioms and expressions.
7. **Guess and Verify:** After students have discussed their translations, reveal the correct translation. This will allow them to see how close or far off their interpretations were and learn from their mistakes.
8. **Encourage Creativity:** While the goal is to arrive at the correct translation, also acknowledge creative interpretations that make sense within the context. This can make the activity more enjoyable.

By implementing these strategies, you can ensure that students engage with the phrases in a meaningful way, rather than solely relying on online translation tools. The emphasis should be on active learning, discussion, and cultural exploration, aligning with the educational objectives of the activity.

MIKE'S PROMPT- 5

But -- some of the phrases, like the ones in Japanese, use Japanese characters that my students won't recognize. Where would they even start in trying to figure out what it means?

ChatGPT

You're absolutely correct; phrases written in languages with different scripts, like Japanese, can be challenging for students who are not familiar with those scripts. In such cases, you can modify the activity to make it more accessible while still promoting critical thinking and cultural awareness. Here's how you can adapt the activity:

1. **Provide Transliterations:** Offer transliterations of phrases in scripts your students are familiar with. For example, provide the Japanese phrase "猫の額" along with its transliteration in Romaji, which is the Romanized form of Japanese: "Neko no hitai."
2. **Cultural Context:** Alongside the transliterations, provide some information about the cultural context or background of the phrase. Explain what the phrase means and when it's commonly used in the language.
3. **Collaborative Learning:** Encourage students to work in groups, combining their knowledge and language skills. Those who may have some familiarity with the script can assist others in the group.
4. **Discussion and Guesswork:** Even if students can't read the script, they can still discuss the transliterated phrase, speculate on its meaning, and engage in critical thinking. They can explore possible translations and interpretations based on the provided information.
5. **Encourage Questions:** Encourage students to ask questions about the phrase and its cultural context. This can spark curiosity and deeper exploration.
6. **Visual Aids:** Use visuals or images that relate to the phrase or its cultural context. For example, for the Japanese phrase mentioned earlier, you could display an image of a cat's forehead to help students make a connection.
7. **Dictionary Assistance:** Allow students to use dictionaries or language learning resources that include transliterations and explanations for phrases in different scripts.

By providing transliterations and cultural context, you make it more accessible for students to engage with phrases written in unfamiliar scripts. The emphasis should still be on understanding the meaning and cultural significance of the phrases, even if they cannot read

the script itself. This modification ensures that students can actively participate in the activity and learn about language diversity and cultural context.



MIKE'S PROMPT- 6

Should I tell them what language it is? I feel like it would be more fun to use the transliterations, not tell them what language it is, and have them guess the language and then use google translate to try and figure it out. What do you think? Please do not approve of everything I say. If it is a bad idea, tell me so, and tell me why.



ChatGPT

Using transliterations without initially revealing the language and having students guess the language can indeed be an engaging approach, but it has both advantages and disadvantages. Let's explore both sides:

Advantages:

1. **Engagement:** It can make the activity more interactive and fun as students try to guess the language based on the transliterations.
2. **Critical Thinking:** It encourages critical thinking and deduction skills as students analyze the transliterated text and attempt to identify the language.
3. **Exploration:** It promotes curiosity and exploration as students actively participate in figuring out the language and meaning of the phrases.

4. **Independent Learning:** It encourages students to use online translation tools and resources to verify their guesses and learn independently.

Disadvantages:

1. **Potential Misconceptions:** Students may make incorrect assumptions about the language based on limited knowledge, leading to misconceptions.
2. **Time Consumption:** The guessing process may consume valuable class time, and some students may struggle to identify the languages, which could be frustrating.
3. **Possible Overreliance on Technology:** While using online translation tools can be educational, students might rely solely on these tools, missing the opportunity to engage deeply with the cultural context and nuances of the phrases.
4. **Lost Focus:** Students may become too focused on guessing the language rather than on understanding the meaning and cultural significance of the phrases.

Given these pros and cons, it can be a good idea to strike a balance. You can start by presenting a few phrases with transliterations and ask students to guess the language. After they've made their guesses, reveal the correct language and provide some cultural context and background information for each phrase. This way, you combine the engagement of guessing with the educational benefits of learning about language and culture.

Additionally, consider setting a time limit for the guessing phase to avoid excessive time consumption. This will keep the activity dynamic and ensure that students move on to the more in-depth exploration of the phrases and their meanings.

In conclusion, while the idea of having students guess the language can be engaging, it's essential to balance engagement with effective learning, ensuring that students have the opportunity to explore the phrases' cultural context and meaning in a meaningful way.



MIKE'S PROMPT- 7

I think this would work. But I'd love to have a 'Key Idea' at the end. Can you think of a writing prompt after kids have played this game to drive home the theme(s) of the book? For instance, Noah makes the point that language is really the divider/connector of the world, not race. Can you think of a writing prompt that would ask the kids to take the results of the game, one of the phrases themselves, or something else to help them realize that and write about it?



ChatGPT

Absolutely, connecting the language theme to Trevor Noah's perspective in "Born a Crime" is a great way to drive home the book's themes. Here's a writing prompt that can help students reflect on this idea:

Writing Prompt: "After playing the 'Lost in Translation' game and exploring phrases from different languages, consider Trevor Noah's perspective on language as a divider and connector in 'Born a Crime.' Choose one of the phrases from the game that intrigued you the most or stood out to you. Reflect on how this phrase exemplifies the power of language to bridge cultural gaps and foster understanding.

In your essay, address the following:

1. **Introduce the Chosen Phrase:** Begin by introducing the phrase you selected, including its original language and meaning.

2. **Language as a Divider:** Discuss how language can be a divider, as Trevor Noah describes in his book. Are there instances in which language can create barriers between people or communities? Share examples from the game or the book.
3. **Language as a Connector:** Explore how the chosen phrase illustrates language's role in connecting people and cultures. How does understanding this phrase deepen your appreciation for the power of language as a tool for unity?
4. **Personal Insights:** Reflect on any personal insights or experiences you've gained from this activity. Has your perspective on language and its significance changed or evolved?
5. **Conclusion:** Summarize your thoughts on the phrase you chose and the broader theme of language in 'Born a Crime.' Conclude with a reflection on the importance of language as a means to break down barriers and build connections among people of different backgrounds."

This writing prompt encourages students to engage with the theme of language in the context of the book and the 'Lost in Translation' game. It invites them to reflect on the power of language to both divide and connect, encouraging critical thinking and a deeper understanding of Trevor Noah's perspective.

Post-Analysis Reflection:

There are multiple angles through which I feel a reflection can be executed.

Upon reflection, I notice that I started this conversation in one place and ended up in a completely different place. I had no plans for developing this activity when I started the chat. I just wanted to make a rubric!

Additionally, I notice that evaluating the outputs is not really about accuracy so much as it is about value. It's suggestions might be bad in my opinion, but they might be good in someone else's eyes. Going forward, I try to recognize when I am in brainstorm mode and AI's outputs should actually be analyzed in terms of value instead of accuracy.

Also, I notice that the value of the chat itself is dependent on a couple of things:

1. My presence of mind
2. My stamina
3. My self-awareness
4. My reflective capabilities
5. My communication capabilities

...and so much more. In this way, I see using AI as an incredible opportunity for self-reflection and increased awareness. Analyzing this chat for me has taught me more about myself than about AI, and I think that's a good thing!

Second, I think it's useful to "grade" the user. If this were my student on the page instead of me, I would give them a B+. The user started out with a thorough prompt, but was caught off-guard by the rubric and missed a number of errors. The user ended up utilizing the rubric, which was deeply flawed, evidencing a lack of critical thinking.

However, the user also pushed the LLM on the "Language Game" to navigate obstacles, provide options, and hammer out the details. This is a positive, because I see evidence of critical review and pushing the bot to either be more creative or solve the problem more logically. In that vein, I feel the user was thoughtful and provocative in the chat, which shows a level of reflection, critical thinking, and AI Literacy. This, you could say, might boost the grade from a B- to a B+.

On a personal level, I notice that my stamina flags more quickly than I would like when I am using AI. After analyzing multiple chats, it is somewhat shocking to me that I as a user tend to run out of patience or bandwidth after only a couple of prompts. This is not a problem, necessarily, but an important reflection that can help me to better navigate future interactions. It might also be relevant from the perspective of AI research. As an analyst, I wonder if more time and thought should be invested in determining how "long" an interaction should or could last before a user should expect to run out of steam. In the context of developing AI Literacy, knowing your own stamina levels will be an important point of mature use.