



Chat GPT: Questions and Possibilities for Our Writing Futures

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Chat GPT & Writing

- What is Chat GPT?
- How is it affecting writing instruction?
- What technological responses to it have emerged?
- What pedagogical responses are being developed?
- Freewrite and Discussion
- Paths Forward; Resources; Research
- Coming Attractions: May 22 Monday Morning Workshop

ChatGPT (Generative Pretrained Transformer)

AI text generator or large language model (LLM) created by the company OpenAI, released November 30, 2022. Largely funded by Microsoft.

Mimics human language; it is not sentient.

Digital assistant (products Alexa & Siri; Bing search engine).

Trained on hundreds of terabytes scraped from the web.

More user-friendly version of GPT-3, which has been available since 2020.

Open-source, Google, and Meta LLMs exist

<https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt>

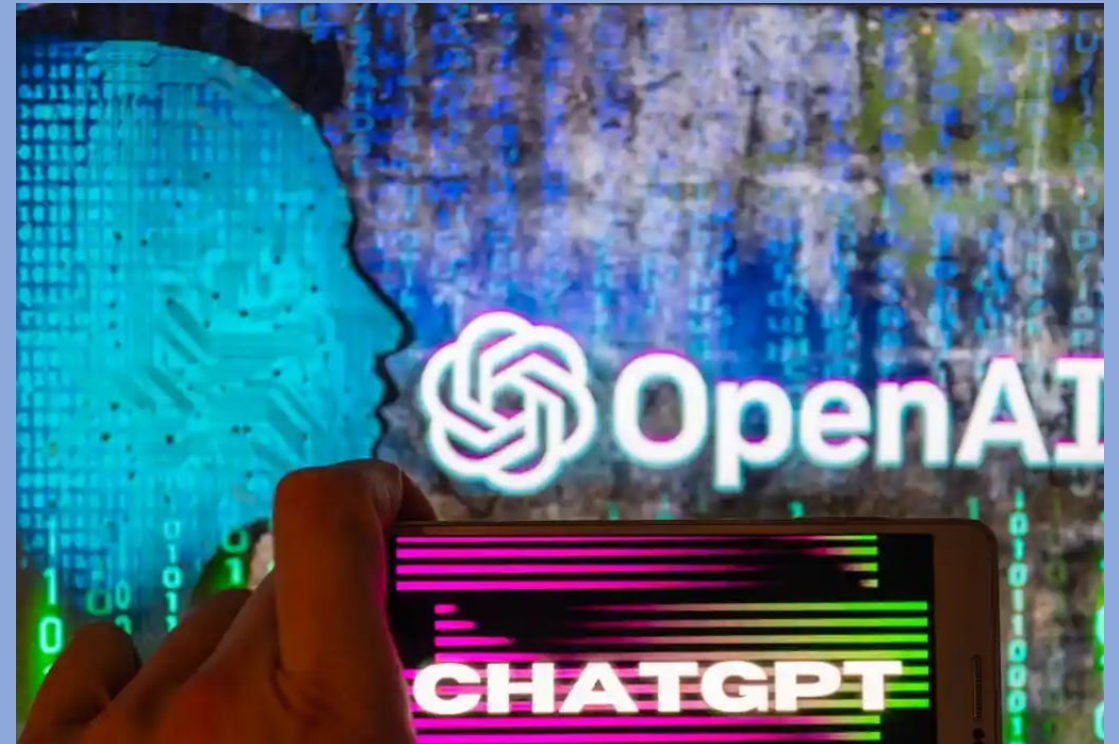
Introducing ChatGPT

We've trained a model called ChatGPT which interacts in a conversational way. The dialogue format makes it possible for ChatGPT to answer followup questions, admit its mistakes, challenge incorrect premises, and reject inappropriate requests.

[Try ChatGPT ↗](#)[Read about ChatGPT Plus](#)

What Do Users Do?

- Ask for a written response, up to 2000 words.
- Describe length, style, requirements.
- Repeat a request and get different results.



New York Times



Write a

bitter valentine ▾

to your therapist ▾

in the style of

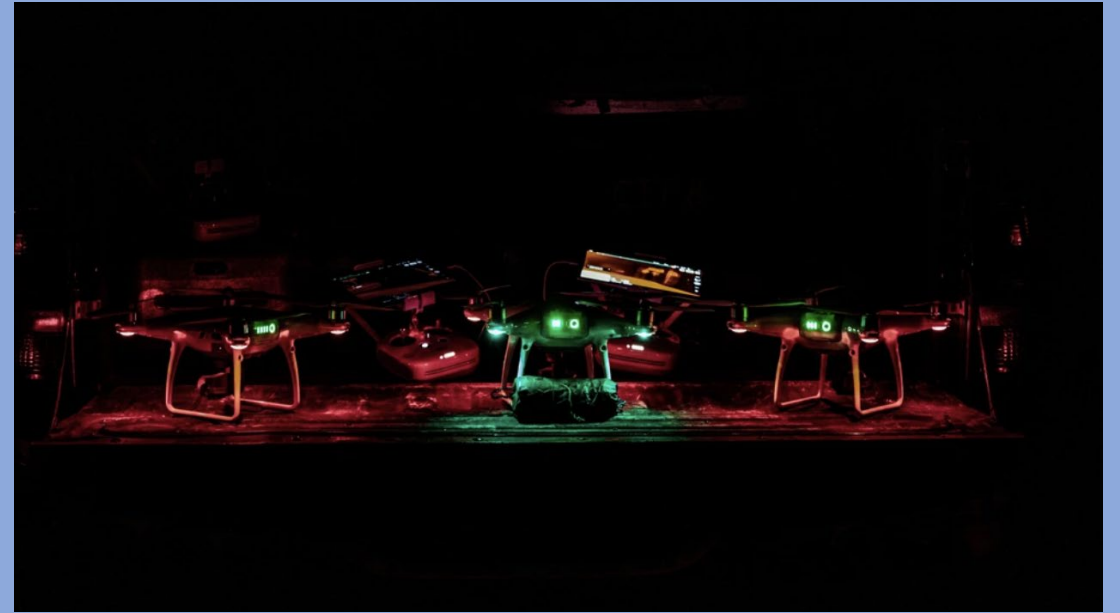
a Yelp review ▾

ChatGPT, do your thing!



Pentagon Announces Counter-Drone Task Force Feb. 8, 2023

"The article that follows was generated by OpenAI's ChatGPT. No endorsement is intended. The use of AI to generate this story emphasizes U.S. Army Central's commitment to using emerging technologies and innovation in a challenging and ever-changing operational environment."



Vanderbilt Apologizes

Officials sent consoling message to students following Michigan State mass shootings.

E-Mail noted it was a ChatGPT paraphrase.

"While we believe in the message and inclusivity expressed in the email, using ChatGPT to generate communications on behalf of our community in a time of sorrow and in response to a tragedy contradicts the values that characterize Peabody College." –Dean Nicole Joseph



What Can It Do?

- Compose poems, plays, stories, music & other texts
- Create syllabi & rubrics
- Evaluate written work
- Suggest revisions
- Outline Presentations, Projects
- Write code
- Imitate styles
- Write grammatically correct prose

Practical Limitations

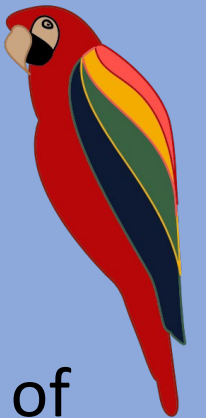
*Sometimes "at capacity" and cannot accept requests

*Knowledge base stops at 2021

*Requires user's phone number

Larger Limitations

- Trained on texts that carry biases of the internet: male, whiteness, wealth. Women=housework; Men=science
- Makes errors of reasoning and facts
- Fabricates sources at times ("hallucinations")
- No understanding of world outside of language: contradictions, lack of logic ("stochastic parrot")
- Cannot evaluate creativity, originality
- Does not understand sarcasm, figurative language
- Chat GPT Plus (\$20/month) an advantage for those who can afford it



New York City Schools Block Access



What About Chat GPT Detectors?

AI detectors/classifiers seem great! (Or at least helpful...)

- Free
- (Most) don't require an account
- Cut and paste text or upload a document
- There's a bunch of them!

But...

There are some potential problems with using classifiers to detect AI-generated writing:

- Sharing writing is an act of trust and vulnerability
- Assuming anything but academic integrity risks damaging the power of the Honor Code
- Classifiers aren't reliable or consistent

Wheaton Experiment with Classifiers

In an attempt to understand what the detectors/classifiers could do, I ran samples of each of my students' most recent writing assignment through four different ChatGPT detectors:

- **DetectGPT** (Stanford University)
 - <https://detectgpt.ericmitchell.ai/>
- **ChatGPTZeroX** (Edward Tian, Princeton University)
 - <https://gptzero.me/>
- **OpenAI GPT-2 Text Output Detector Demo**
 - <https://openai-openai-detector.hf.space/>
- **OpenAI Text Classifier**
 - <https://platform.openai.com/ai-text-classifier>

Wheaton Experiment with Classifiers Results

...could charitably be called “inconsistent.”

- The classifiers are optimized for different lengths of text
- They didn't agree with each other
- There was no pattern to agreement/disagreement
- No single classifier/detector was more or less likely to determine that a given sample was AI generated
- The most common result was “somewhat likely”

Comp Scholar Anna Mills

Presentation by Anna Mills, licensed [CC BY-NC-SA](#)

Critical AI
literacy?
Yes,
please!

We can start by introducing the concept of statistically generated text and dispelling any notion that AI is sentient, authoritative, or neutral. Teach students to watch for problems in AI outputs.

A Wheaton Experiment in Advanced Writing



in 750 words, write a personal essay about some aspect of digital life. The essay should be about an event that you experienced. It might reach back in time (for example, the first time you used a cell phone); it might focus on several smaller events connected by a thread (such as encounters with the filters of Meta); it might explore a conflicted relationship with a digital technology (the demons and angels of your video games). The essay should use images (think of the five senses) and may use dialogue. As you draft, consider elements such as setting (when and where is this happening) and character (real people; feel free to change names as you see fit). Do not try to tie up everything with a neat bow, quick resolution or happy ending, but do make a point.



The hum of my laptop's fan filled the small room as I scrolled through my Instagram feed. Each photo was carefully curated, the colors bright and saturated, the composition perfect. I couldn't help but feel envious of the lives of those I followed: their exotic travels, their flawless appearances, their endless adventures.



But then something shifted. The photos that once seemed like perfect snapshots of life now felt staged and artificial. The more I scrolled, the more I realized how much of our digital lives are constructed and curated, carefully edited to present a certain image to the world. And while I was certainly complicit in this culture of digital perfection, it was starting to feel

Regenerate response

Wheaton Students Respond to Chat GPT

Before Knowing It was ChatGPT

- It doesn't make sense.
- It's missing something.
- It sounds generic.
- It's vague.
- Is this Chat GPT?

After Authorship Was Revealed

It's just piling on examples.

It has no soul!

The conclusion is ridiculous.

How might ChatGPT work in your course?

Consider the Tools Relative to Your Course

What are the cognitive tasks students need to perform without AI assistance?

When should students rely on AI assistance?

Where can an AI aid facilitate a better outcome?

Are new rubrics and assignment descriptions needed?

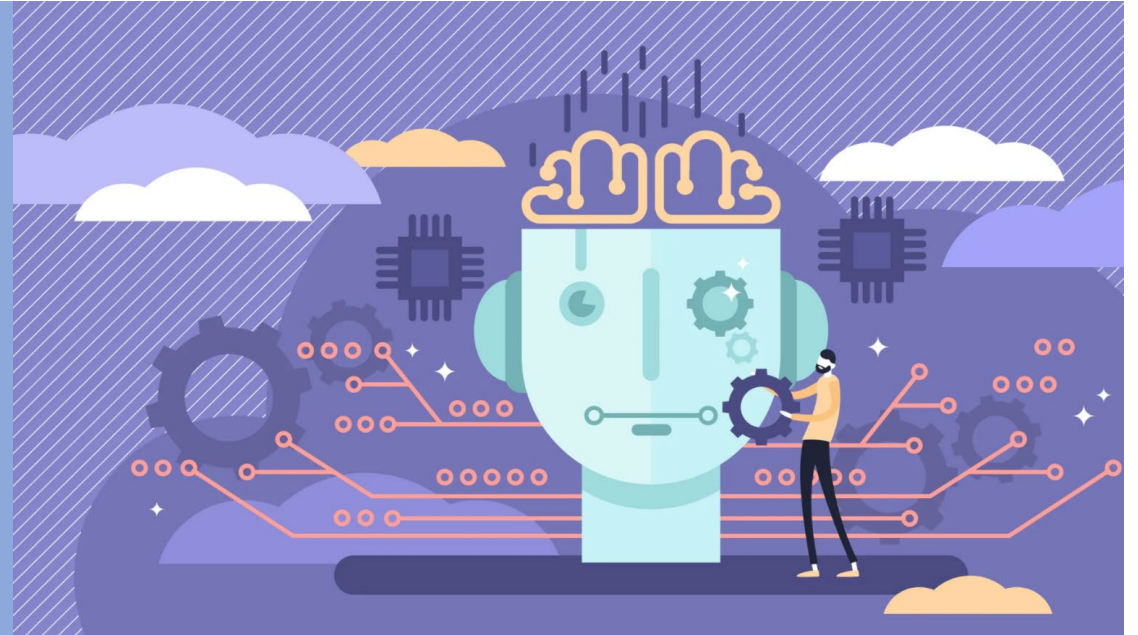
Will you add an AI writing code of conduct to your syllabus?

Ask Yourself

How does bias play out in your area within the model?

What does the ChatGPT text look like relative to how your students usually write?

How can you use these tools to enhance teaching methods?



Critical A.I. Literacy

- Invite students to get to know the shortcomings of CHATGPT through close reading.
- Design an activity so it supports other core learning outcomes such as summary and critical assessment.
- Encourage students to reflect on what they can understand, judge, and articulate that ChatGPT can't. (Yet).

Include Students in the Conversation

Talk with students about instructions, rules, and expectations.

Provide this information on course websites and syllabi and repeat it in class.

Connect with colleagues, too.



Using Chat GPT as a tool in our classes.

Some educators have had great success using Chat GPT as a way to enhance their class experience.

“Eli Snyder, a special-education teacher in Colorado wanted to play basketball with his students. He had questions: How could he adapt the game for a child with cerebral palsy? And how could he help his students with autism play a highly stimulating activity? Chat GPT had answers.”

source: *New York Times*

- Snyder found it helpful to receive a detailed response filled with ideas—without him having to google and go to multiple sites.**
- He liked that it saved him time and inspired him.**
- “It’s been revolutionary. What used to take me an hour now takes me five minutes.”**

Let's Brainstorm!

What are ways you think you could use Chat GPT as a tool to enhance your teaching?

For some that may look like:

- **Rethinking your syllabi**
- **Reimagining lessons**
- **Creating new and inspired approaches**

What ideas come to mind for you?



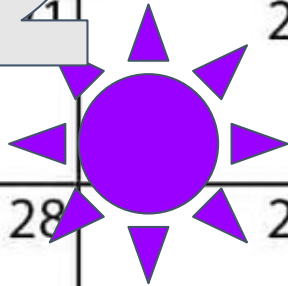
Freewrite

Art by Giuliano Cucco from [*Before I Grew Up*](#)
by John Miller

MAY 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3

9:00 AM
May 22



National Opportunities

Opportunities to Engage and Participate

- Comment in the margins and [read others' comments](#) on articles on AI text in education with [Hypothesis](#). Tag your comments [ChatGPTedu](#) and [Altextedu](#).
- Comment on the [sample experimental essays](#).
- Join the listserv [AIGeneratorsandTeachingWriting](#).
- [Share your own found or created examples of AI-generated essays](#).
- Suggest [additional resources, questions, or strategies](#) for teaching policies and practices.
- Add to the [list of strategies to mitigate harm](#) involved with AI-generated writing.

The resources collected here serve as catalysts for inquiry, discussion and collaborative research as we respond to this major change in the kind of writing assistance available to our students.

WAC Clearinghouse: <https://wac.colostate.edu/repository/collections/ai-text-generators-and-teaching-writing-starting-points-for-inquiry/>