



WITH AI  
GENERATED  
ART!

# Professors at Play

# AI PlayBook

A Micro  
Publication

BY DAVID THOMAS AND LISA FORBES

# PROFESSORS AT PLAY AI PLAYBOOK

DAVID THOMAS & LISA FORBES

PROFESSORS  
PUBLICATIONS **at Play**  
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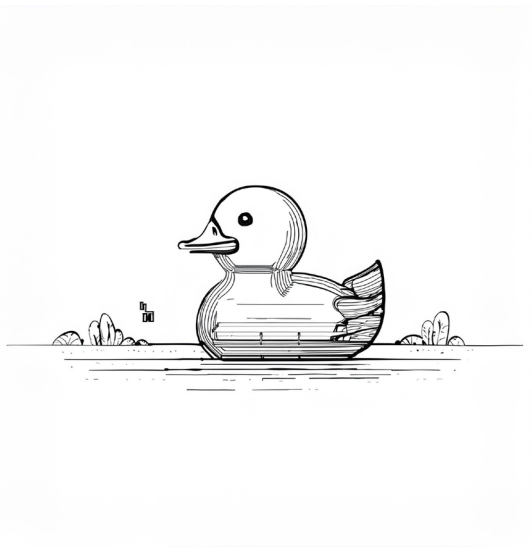
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*This book is dedicated to all the robots who helped us  
research and create this book.*

*The cover and illustrations were generated by Adobe  
Fireworks. The layout, while done by hand in Adobe  
InDesign, benefited from intelligent auto styles, powered by  
the great machine in the sky. Pretty cool.*

*And, of course, endless thanks to all the playful professors  
who inspire us to to continue researching play and playing in  
our classrooms.*



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## INTRO

# DON'T RUN FROM THE FUN: A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO PLAYFUL AI IN THE CLASSROOM

Artificial Intelligence—you know, AI—can be intimidating. But it's comin' in hot, and it's not going away. Right now, the conversation around teaching and AI in the academy tends toward nervousness about students not doing their own work or fretting the long-term impacts on the faculty role. We see an opportunity to lean into all AI offers, mix in a little play, and let it become one of our trusty, playful sidekicks. In this book, we provide some ideas and examples of how to play with AI in your teaching. “You can have fun with AI?” you ask. We are going to find out. Because nothing new stays scary for long once you decide you will play with it.

At the same time, we acknowledge AI is reshaping our academic landscape. Issues range from plagiarism detection and evaluating student work to AI's use as a digital tutor and AI-assisted student success analytics. It's stressful and daunting. Ethical concerns loom as large as bright and shiny new opportunities. It's all moving so fast that a natural instinct is to jump out of the way or dismiss this as the latest academic tech fad and return to our PowerPoint slides and test banks. But might we suggest that going into ostrich mode and avoiding AI altogether isn't productive or realistic? If we avoid it, it won't just go away. It will be there when we lift our heads out of the sand. Worse, AI becomes even more sophisticated and complex while we wait for it to disappear. As much as we may not want to, leaning into AI is an important thing to do.

Our approach to AI combines research, creativity, and play in equal measure. If AI has made the world “wibbly-wobbly, timey-wimey” (to quote Doctor Who's



catch-all explanation for stuff he doesn't want to explain), then what a great time for play. If AI pushes us into a volatile educational environment that seems awfully fluid, ambiguous and uncertain, then play provides a perfect response. We live in challenging, changing times, and play provides an evolutionary adaptation perfectly suited to all this flux. Play helps us tackle complex problems with creativity and resilience. As Professors at Play, we have not met an uncertainty that didn't benefit from a little playfulness.

So, here we go.

The first step is to get more familiar with AI. The more we learn about how AI fits into our classes, understand how students perceive it, and provide better career guidance by having fun with these digital tools, the more informed our future approach to AI will be. You're welcome to write urgent policies attempting to control the technology. But maybe we should start by being curious, creative, and experimental and see what happens when we approach the new tech with an open mind. Play defangs the fearsome AI monster and reveals much about its limits and potential.

We see lots of reasons to feel wary of AI. It handles tasks that we, as professors, once had a monopoly on—summarizing complex topics, providing detailed feedback on student work, and offering seemingly useful insights on almost anything. AI can make us feel redundant or like we are easily replaceable. Or maybe we have become complacent to some degree, and AI simply reminds us that we have something special to offer. We're not ready to be automated out of a job just yet.

In that sense, AI is a wake-up call to lean into our expertise, training, and unique human abilities to judge, evaluate, and create experiences in partnership with those AI bots. Instead of fearing AI will take our jobs, we should focus on the aspects of our work that AI cannot replicate. That leads us right to play. Because as much fun as we can have with AI, we make the playfulness work. As we experiment with having a little fun with these tools, introduce some novelty into our classes, and share it with our students, we normalize a key idea about these new technologies: They can do a lot, but it is up to us to decide what AI means. Let the robots handle the dull work. Let's embrace AI and use play to transform the dullness of AI into a playful, human output.

At Professors at Play, we believe in the power of playful pedagogy, which AI isn't particularly good at. Play is unique, vulnerable, and deeply human. AI is not human, and its creative outputs are limited. You can see this quickly by

asking the latest version of ChatGPT to suggest ways to make a chemistry exam more fun. Here's what it came up with:

- ✓ Interactive Stations: Set up different stations around the classroom, each with a unique chemistry challenge or experiment. Students move from station to station, completing tasks and answering related questions.
- ✓ Escape Room Theme: Transform the exam into an escape room challenge where students solve chemistry-related puzzles to "escape" or reach the end.
- ✓ Chemistry Bingo: Create bingo cards with various chemistry terms, formulas, and concepts. Students mark off squares as they answer questions correctly.
- ✓ Story-Based Questions: Frame exam questions within an interesting narrative. For example, students might help a character solve a mystery by answering chemistry questions.
- ✓ Multimedia Integration: Incorporate videos, animations, and interactive simulations into the exam.

Not bad, AI. But the suggestions are general and a bit predictable. The suggestions also miss some more novel, human, and creative ideas. Here's our take after about 3 minutes of brainstorming:

- ✓ Hold the test outside the classroom, on the quad or at a coffee shop.
- ✓ Ask absurd questions, like making up names for chemicals, but have students use chemistry principles to solve the problems.
- ✓ Print the quiz on rainbow paper.
- ✓ Hand out Pixie Stix with the tests.
- ✓ Give students a chance to yell out one question they want answered.
- ✓ Take a dance break in the middle of the test.
- ✓ The professor wears a dinosaur costume during the exam.
- ✓ Play disco music when students enter the classroom.
- ✓ Give each student the answer to one question on the exam five minutes before the test.
- ✓ Have cookies and punch when students arrive.

AI can generate general advice, but human experts must make it actionable and engaging. Specific advice is more fun and uniquely human.

## THE BASICS

Ready to give it a try? This book is a starting point. We hope you find a tool or two or a technique or two that gets your creative mind whirring. We want this little tome to inspire you to find your AI muse and invigorate your classroom with AI-connected play. Along these lines, we think a few principles will help as you learn the strange and wonderful ways of AI:

- ✓ Try everything first. If it's fun for you, you can guide students through it later.
- ✓ Join the students in discovery. Assign AI tasks and explore together.
- ✓ Debrief. Discuss what worked and what didn't, and intentionally surface the opportunities and limits of AI.
- ✓ Encourage transparency. Be clear about AI usage expectations and documentation.
- ✓ Have fun. Use AI to make yourself laugh and learn.

In 1954 Norbert Wiener introduced the world at large to the notion of cybernetics--a unique combination of people and machines working together. Wiener saw a future where people and machines would work together as partners in a larger whole, rather than merely as a user with a tool. And he ended his prophetic essay with a warning:

You all know the story. The fisherman opens a bottle which he has found on the shore, and a genie appears. The genie threatens him with vengeance for his own imprisonment. The fisherman talks the genie back into the bottle. Gentlemen, when we get into trouble with the machine, we cannot talk the machine back into the bottle.”

Wiener would not be surprised by the developments we see in contemporary AI. As a result, his wisdom rings true today. We can't put the AI genie back in the bottle. AI is here to stay and most likely will get even more powerful and effect change in ways we have not even imagined just yet. But we can humanize, understand, and come to terms with AI through play. By playing with AI, we grow more playful, whole and adaptable in a world that technology will undoubtedly reshape. We can't put the genie back in the bottle, but we can learn to play with it.

Or, as AI would say when asked to summarize this introduction in a sentence:

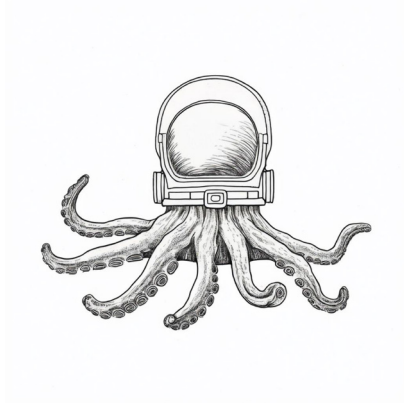
“This book encourages educators to embrace AI playfully and creatively to enhance teaching and learning, leveraging human creativity and judgment to make AI a beneficial tool rather than a threat.”

Or, as we would say in plain old, human-generated prose:

This book provides tools and ideas to inspire playful pedagogy.

Oh, and by the time you read this, there may be better tools or more fun ways to use them. Keep exploring.

David Thomas and Lisa Forbes  
Stardate Summer of 2024.



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Wiener, Norbert. *Men, Machines, and the World About*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1954.

## AI TOOLS

We have collected a sampling, a mere smattering, of the interesting things happening in AI. Consider this a quick tour of AI we have encountered that we see some playful potential in.



## **Why All The Ducks?**

Professors at Play's mascot is the noble octopus. We find it an exotic, creative, and playful creature. But when it comes to AI-generated graphics of an octopus, let's just say it struggles with all those arms. When we decided to illustrate this book with AI images, we had a choice—deal with AI and its challenging arms or pick something else. That's how we ended up with ducks.

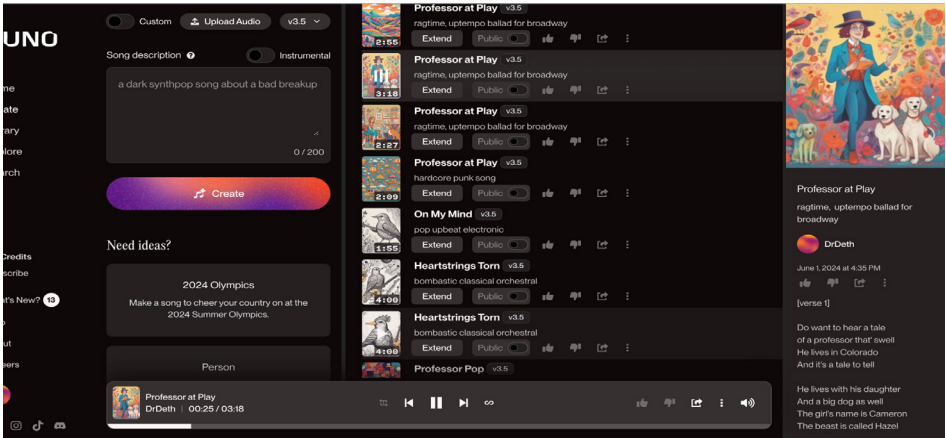
## **OK, OK. Why the Ducks?**

At our Professors at Play events, we often run an activity called Duck Hunt, where people hide little plastic ducks and then go look for them. It's fun, and piles of tiny plastic ducks now have an association with Professors at Play. And what better way to represent playing with AI than a friendly little duck? Really, that's all there is to it. We like tiny toy ducks!

# MAKE MUSIC

A robot that writes music and lyrics

<https://suno.com/>



## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

AI can do a lot of things. It can answer questions, carry on conversations, and produce weird images. But music? Surely it's not creative enough to write a catchy tune?

Suno is one of a growing number of tools that combine the magic of AI with the magic of music. Type in a description, genre and even lyrics and within seconds, this tool crafts perfectly enjoyable tunes with a chorus, verses, and a bridge all in place.

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

Nothing is quite as rote and dull as the start of class personal introduction, whether online or in the classroom. Tell us your name and a little bit about why you took this class. This pattern of boredom invites students to phone in their answers. And while plenty of wonderful prompts make the standard class introduction more engaging, what about asking your class to break into song?

The steps are simple. Ask students to go to [Suno.com](https://suno.com), type in some lyrics that introduce themselves and describe a musical style. Once they land on something satisfactory, have them post the results to a class discussion.

Piano Afro Swing? Algarve Hawaiian? Bigband Ambient House? You name it, Suno can create it. Cheeky Professor Pop About A Boring Lecture? Yup. We made that up, and Suno created a song:

*Sitting in the lecture hall  
Eyes glazed over / hear the call  
Dr. Uptight's voice so slow  
Monotone makes my brain go*

The algorithm is that good, and the song is catchy.

You can have all kinds of fun testing genre descriptions and lyric suggestions. But it gets even better when you submit your lyrics. If you feel the creative urge, type up some song lyrics. They don't even have to rhyme; the AI will sort it out. Or, try dropping your song suggestion into ChatGPT first and then editing the results. How about, "ChatGPT, write me a pirate chanty about how awesome it is to learn chemistry."

*Hoist the sails and set the course,  
For chemistry's our mighty force!  
With flasks and beakers, we'll explore,  
The wonders of the lab and more!*

You get the idea. From here, you can modify, personalize and improve.

Musical class intros provide a fun introduction to AI and a playful way for students to express their creativity. Not only will you learn a little about their tastes in music, but by asking for a musical introduction, you will unlock some creativity and encourage greater self-disclosure and vulnerability.

We've tried this, and it's an awesome way to get students to share safely and easily.

And why stop there? Feel free to make musical introductions for everything from your lectures to the final exam.

## PRICING

A free basic tier lets you make ten songs a day. Premium plans start at \$96 annually and allow for more song creations and the ability to use your masterpieces in commercial contexts.



# ANIMATE DRAWINGS

Animate your hand-drawn sketches

<https://sketch.metademolab.com/canvas>



Lisa running across the soccer field!

## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

Animated cartoons are cool. Making them is a time-consuming and highly technical art unless you add a little AI.

This charming website lets you take a simple drawing and quickly animate it. Within a minute, you can draw a stick figure of yourself and then animate the static drawing walking, waving, dancing and more. The results are immediate, charming and fun.

The software steps you through an easy process of isolating your drawing, mapping the character's arms, legs and eyes to a pre-established armature and then letting the machine figure out how to redraw the original drawing in all the poses necessary to bring your creation to life. While this feels pretty lightweight in terms of other AI projects, the playful and childlike nature of the demonstration is perfect for showing how AI thrives on automating mundane tasks.

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

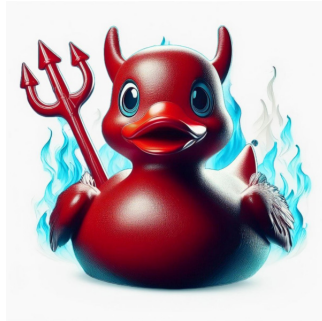
A tool like this begs to be used in an online class. Have students sketch and animate little avatars to post to an intro discussion. Or use a cast of animated characters to spice up your lecture slides. Since the animations are so easy to make, using them to sprinkle a little play in otherwise less-than-playful places makes a lot of sense to us.

## PRICING

Free! And you can download and save your creations to use any way you like.

### Note About Weird (and Inappropriate) AI

If you are used to using ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini or the many tools that rely on their software, you'd be protected, more or less, from really weird AI. And by weird, we mean offensive, hateful, obscene or just unpleasant AI. Yes, people have tried to get AI to give them love advice from Hitler and likely have asked AI how to make a bomb. It won't. There are guardrails built in.



But the internet, being what it is, presents plenty of places that have put together AIs that don't have so many built-in rules. Sometimes, perfectly good AI is mixed in with more questionable bots. One big area where this gets fuzzy is in the case of chatbots. So, while a Nintendo's Mario AI chatbot is a fun and friendly, the site that hosts it also hosts a wide variety of other digital personas. Some of these personas are benign, but some push the envelope. For example, finding "virtual girlfriends" or other companion bots that cater to more prurient interests are not hard to find. Our point here is to encourage you to do some due diligence before sending students to a site with many different AI tools. Also, spend time educating them about the appropriate use of AI.

# REWRITE PROSE

Make something long-winded, short

<https://hemingwayapp.com/>

**Hemingway** Editor

File Pro ✖ Fix Grammar Pro ✖ Rewrite Pro Paragraph ▾ B I ↻

Fix Writing With AI ↗

## Hemingway App makes your writing concise and correct.

Course Overview

This course covers the roots of Western philosophy. It includes Thales and Heraclitus.

*Hemingway Editor Plus*  
Rewrites wordy sentences for you.

## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

We didn't mean to become wordy, pedantic writers. We just got suckered into the idea that words matter so more words must matter more. Or, as Steven Pinker so eloquently wrote: Academics stink at writing. (<https://www.chronicle.com/article/why-academics-stink-at-writing/?sra=true>)

Fortunately, a growing number of AI tools have emerged to act as over-the-shoulder coaches, helping improve our prose. For example, we are big fans of Grammarly, an AI-powered tool that checks for spelling mistakes and grammar and, most of all, nitpicks every little thing in our sentences, making them easier to read.

In the same vein, Hemmingway is a tool inspired by the force and brevity of the great Earnest Hemmingway, helping us get to the point. For example, we created a normal-sounding course description for a philosophy class that reads:

“This course explores the origins and development of Western philosophy through the works and ideas of the Pre-Socratic philosophers. We will examine the contributions of thinkers such as Thales, Anaximander, Heraclitus, Parmenides, and others, focusing on their metaphysical, epistemological, and cosmological theories. The course aims to provide an understanding of how these early philosophers laid the groundwork for classical Greek philosophy and Western thought.”

With a little prompting, Hemingway got it down to:

“This course covers the roots of Western philosophy. It includes Thales and Heraclitus.”

And like every good writing coach, Hemingway is also quick with the editor’s pen when it comes to spelling and grammar and will even help you make your style more friendly or confident if needed.

(As a side note, you can do most of these things in ChatGPT. Hemingway just streamlines the process and makes the corrections much more visible.)

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

Why not send your course syllabus, reading materials and assignment descriptions to an AI editor? How much fun could you have Hemmingway-izing your more complex writing? The results could be fun on their own and, in many cases, provide simple summaries. Challenge yourself to make that 10-page syllabus into a snappy page of cutting prose.

Or ask your students to run their writing through an AI summarizer. Explain the brilliance of Hemmingway’s lean prose, then ask them to summarize those 10-page term papers into a couple of sentences. Not only will this give students a playful way to interact with AI and see what it can do, but it also can help students detect issues with their writing. Does the AI summary get to the main point they wanted to get across? If not, maybe it’s time for a rewrite! If the robot can’t find your main point in a longer essay, maybe the essay needs work.

## PRICING

A free trial and some functionality are available without a plan. Full plans start at \$100 per year.

# GENERATE QR CODES

Create colorful QR Codes

<https://qrx.codes/>



## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

Who would have guessed that QR codes would still exist? When they came out, the idea of replacing “google.com” with an app on your phone and a complicated process of taking a picture of a weird graphic seemed like a lot of work to get to a search page. These days, long, complicated URLs appended with all kinds of tracking information make the QR code an awfully nice tool.

Plenty of sites will happily turn your weblinks into boxy graphics that your phone can magically translate into links to websites. So, do we need another one? With the help of AI, the answer is a resounding, “Why not?”

Let the robots of AI take your URL and do a little graphical magic to make your codes look, well, more weird. In the example above, the QR code sort of looks like a playground and will take you to the Professors at Play website

That QR code has some pizzazz. Dare we say, more fun?

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

If you already use QR codes in your class, this tool is a fun way to create visual variety with the codes you already have. If you have not been seduced into the world of QR codes, use this tool to play:

- ✓ Create a QR code that leads to a relevant website in your class and add it to your Zoom background. See how long it is before students figure it out.
- ✓ Use QR codes on lecture slides that link to relevant notes and other resources.
- ✓ Encourage students to use this tool to create QR codes for any class presentations they might have, linking to a source page or other research,
- ✓ Make cool-looking codes and scatter them throughout your course, in your LMS, in your syllabus and on your assignment worksheets. Link to fun websites, relevant material, or maybe just Rick Roll your class!

## PRICING

Free, with a few limitations. You can only generate 10 codes per day and the codes route through the QRX site. For \$20 a month you can generate unlimited codes with instant redirects.

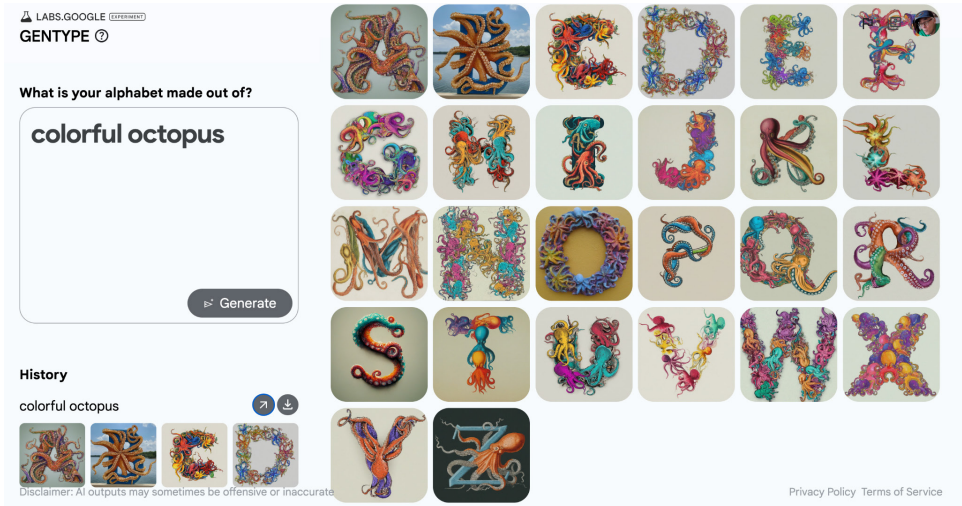
If you want a completely free, and slightly less user-friendly generator, try:

<https://huggingface.co/spaces/huggingface-projects/QR-code-AI-art-generator>

# ILLUMINATE MANUSCRIPTS

Generate illustrated alphabets

<https://labs.google/gentype>



## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

AI can spin dreams out of words or at least make cool images from written prompts.

Google's Gentype tool combines the power of generative AI image creation with typography to create visually interesting alphabets. Think of the illuminated manuscripts of antiquity, with their highly decorated first letters, and you will get the idea.

We generated a custom Professors at Play alphabet based on the octopus, but you can customize it to your needs. Maybe you are an architect and need an alphabet that looks like buildings. Or perhaps you are a chemistry professor, and letters made of those cool chemical spheres are more to your taste. As with most AI, the sky's the limit.

Keep in mind that the 26 letters it generates are individual graphics, so you need to plan on saving all those files. The good news is if AI generates a clunker letter (what's going on, W?), you can easily regenerate that letter.

Remember to save your files! We found that while playing with the tool, it had a bad habit of not saving our work or getting stuck, and we had to regenerate the whole alphabet. In any case, the tool creates playful alphabets that remind you of children's books, filled with whimsical letters meant to teach you your ABCs.

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

We might sound like a broken record, but why not spice up your syllabus (Illuminated Syllabus, anyone?) Do the same for your slides. Fancy graphical letters also make a fun activity for any discussion assignment. Have students generate their names in an intro assignment. Or ask them to create evocative and visual titles for their next paper. Asking students to think about how they would visually represent themselves, their ideas, and their work in terms of a graphical alphabet simultaneously pulls the assignment away from deadly serious classwork and engages a playfully creative mindset.

For bonus points, have them reflect on why they chose the design they ended up with.

Double bonus points if you use the letter images to generate a tattoo design and get it inked on your body.

MATH 4 LIFE, anyone?

## PRICING

Free. But you will have to log in with a Google account.



# MAKE SLIDES

Instantly create “lectures”  
<http://gamma.app>

**Introduction to Architectural History**

Architectural history is the study of the evolution of buildings and their styles over time. The history of architecture is often studied in conjunction with the social, economic, and political contexts that shaped it.

by David Thomas

**The Folly Tradition**

A folly is a structure built for purely aesthetic or decorative purposes. Follies are often whimsical and eccentric, and they are a testament to the creativity of their creators.

**Whimsical**  
Follies are often designed to be visually striking and unusual, with intricate details and playful elements.

**Eccentric**  
Follies are often built in unusual locations or with unconventional materials, and they may incorporate unexpected features or designs.

**Decorative**  
Follies are primarily intended to enhance the landscape or to serve as a focal point in a garden or park.

**Origins of the Folly**

- Renaissance**  
Renaissance architects built extravagant villas and gardens, often with decorative structures.
- Medieval Period**  
Follies became popular in medieval Europe as decorative elements in gardens and parks.
- Renaissance & Baroque Periods**  
The Renaissance and the Baroque periods saw a resurgence of interest in follies, as they were incorporated into religious and palatial structures.
- 18th & 19th Centuries**  
The 18th and 19th centuries saw a revival of interest in follies, with many structures built in rural and urban settings.

**Prominent Folly Examples**

Some of the most famous follies include the Strawberry Hill House in England, the Château de Fontainebleau in France, and the Petit Trianon in France.

**Strawberry Hill House**  
A Gothic Revival masterpiece, built by Horace Walpole in the 18th century, known for its dramatic towers and intricate details.

**Château de Fontainebleau**  
A grand palace built by King Francis I in the 16th century, featuring a whimsical "Folly of the Renaissance," a charming tower built for the king's mistress.

**Petit Trianon**  
A charming Neoclassical palace built for Queen Marie Antoinette in the 18th century, with a whimsical "Hameau" (hamlet) nearby, designed to evoke a rustic setting.

## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

We've all been there. Class prep. While it can be fun to think through how to summarize volumes of accumulated knowledge in a structured form for the benefit of students, it also remains a daunting task. Until now. Why not let AI help out? Gamma.ai does something remarkable. The tool generates PowerPoint slides from your written notes or even a simple prompt. That's right. You can ask a robot to not only outline your lecture but go ahead and make the slides.

Fortunately, you can go in and edit what it creates. So, the final say remains in your hands. But the mere fact that AI can almost instantaneously generate lecture material is frightening and awfully tempting. The tool generates an outline of content, populates each slide with text and images and then makes the whole thing look nice. It's like having a GPT who just happens to be an all-knowing imp. Whether the outputs meet your exact academic needs or not, the promise and the peril of tools like this are hard to ignore.

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

How do you put a tool like this to work in a class? Your first stop is showing students how it works. Fire up your computer, explain the tool, generate your first lecture in front of the class and then deliver at least the first half-dozen slides. Why not? Students use AI in their schoolwork, so why not show them that turnabout is fair play? Seriously, give the students a glimpse into the future where the professor generates content out of AI, the students respond with AI and finally, AI reviews and grades everything. Is this the shared future you and your students want? By showing them the tool up front, you create a chance to have a meaningful dialog about the appropriate use of AI.

Once your class is on the same page, encourage them to use the tool if they need help creating a class presentation. Or, more fun, assign them the task of creating a ridiculous lecture using the tool. Depending on your disciple, here are some example prompts:

- ✓ What do the Flintstones tell us about ancient life?
- ✓ What are the chances of a novel life form starting on your dirty home sponge?
- ✓ If you travel back in time and accidentally run over your dad, what happens to the present?
- ✓ And, how much wood could a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?

Engaging students in absurd AI will teach them about the power of the tools but also playfully point out its limitations.

## PRICING

A free plan gets you started. But to unlock the tool for more than play, you will need to pay, starting at \$8 a month for a base subscription.

# ANIMATE IMAGES

Turn simple photographs into playful animations  
<https://viggle.ai/>



We dropped an image of David hosting an event in a very nice tux into Viggle and asked the tool to recreate him in place of a professional wrestler walking into the ring. Now David has a walk-on video ready to share with students!

## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

Have you ever looked at a still image on your phone and thought--wow, I wish I could make the person in this shot dance? You haven't? Maybe Viggle will change your mind. This easy-to-use tool lets you take a still image of a person and then animate it. You can choose from various templates: clips of other people moving and dancing. Once AI has done its magic, you have the person from the still in motion, mirroring the action from the reference video.

And if that wasn't cool enough, you can supply both the character and the motion. Get a picture of Grandma and have one of her grandchildren bust out The Floss. Put them together, and now Gran showcases some serious junior-high moves.

The tool is a fun and silly demonstration of how good AI is getting at manipulating video.

Viggle also comes in iOS and Android flavors for those who want to do AI motion remixing on the fly.

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

In addition to getting students talking about the future of video fakery, Viggle is just a lot of fun. Why not change up class introductions and ask every student to introduce themselves with a dance created in Viggle? Just don't forget to drop a little of your professorial pretentiousness to make your own silly dance.

History professors might have fun slipping themselves into famous videos of the past or asking students to perform a little media manipulation. Why not see what historical revisionism students could do for fun, then ask them how they would have handled history differently?

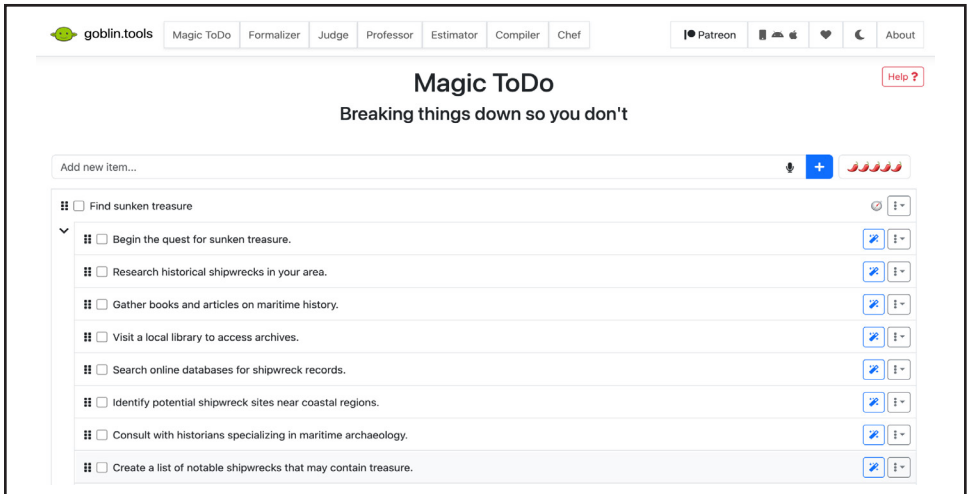
## PRICING

Basic use is free, with paid monthly plans starting at \$9.99.

# GENERATE A TO-DO LIST

Checklists, on demand

<https://goblin.tools/>



## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

If you are a list person, you will love this site. If you wish you were a list maker, you are really going to love this site. If you don't think you are into lists, this site will seduce you. Under the covers, the tool offers a pretty simple solution to a common need. The Goblin Tools AI leans into the strength of generative AI to break processes down and make lists of to-do. The twist is this site is all about brevity and clarity.

The creators say they built the tools to help people with sensory processing issues and those who have difficulty figuring out how to map out and achieve goals. But playing with this software will tell you that we could all use some help.

Whether your goal is a simple, "How do I clean my house or book a trip to Germany?" or perhaps the more exotic, "How do I find a sunken treasure?" Goblin mines the AI world brain to give you the steps.

Sure, there is no real wizardry here. The steps it generates are the things you could figure out on your own if you took the time and had the expertise. But this AI makes it clear that anything you want to do can live as a set of discrete and clear steps, a bunch of orderly checkboxes you can tick off as you progress toward your goals.

Just as much fun, the Goblin site also has tools for turning your spicy thoughts into more formal ones, a judging tool that helps you assess the sentiment of a block of text, a professor tool who, not surprisingly, explains things to you, an estimator tool that gives you a sense of how long something will take, a compiler tool which organizes your messy brain dump into something orderly and a chef tool, who can turn your random pantry into a dinner. What does this look like in practice? Some possibilities include:

- ✓ Figuring out the steps to run for President of the U.S.
- ✓ Coming up with a classy way to ask to turn in a late assignment
- ✓ Making sense of an assignment written in a syllabus
- ✓ Estimating how long it will actually take to become the President
- ✓ Cleaning up a semester's worth of notes into a suitable summary
- ✓ Figuring out what you can make with a package of top ramen, a can of sliced olives, an old biscuit, an ear of corn and a little bit of mayonnaise (The answer to that one is: Ramen Olive Salad for 2)

Not only does this tool present a powerful use case for what AI is good at, but this site can actually help you get through another overwhelming day.

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

First and foremost, introduce this to your students to help them with your class. Encourage them to use the Golbin to improve their class experience:

- ✓ Make a to-do for how to best study
- ✓ Check their discussion posts to make sure they are tonally appropriate
- ✓ Ask the tool to summarize complex concepts
- ✓ Check that what students write down as class notes makes sense
- ✓ Use as a general organizer for balancing out all the demands of life and work and school

Beyond that, this is a wonderful tool for play. Create icebreakers that challenge students to create the most absurd processes (finding Bigfoot versus proving aliens exist). Create an Iron (Student) Chef contest where they use AI to recommend recipes made from ingredients they have at home and make the meals. And more. Goblin Tools is a site filled with more.

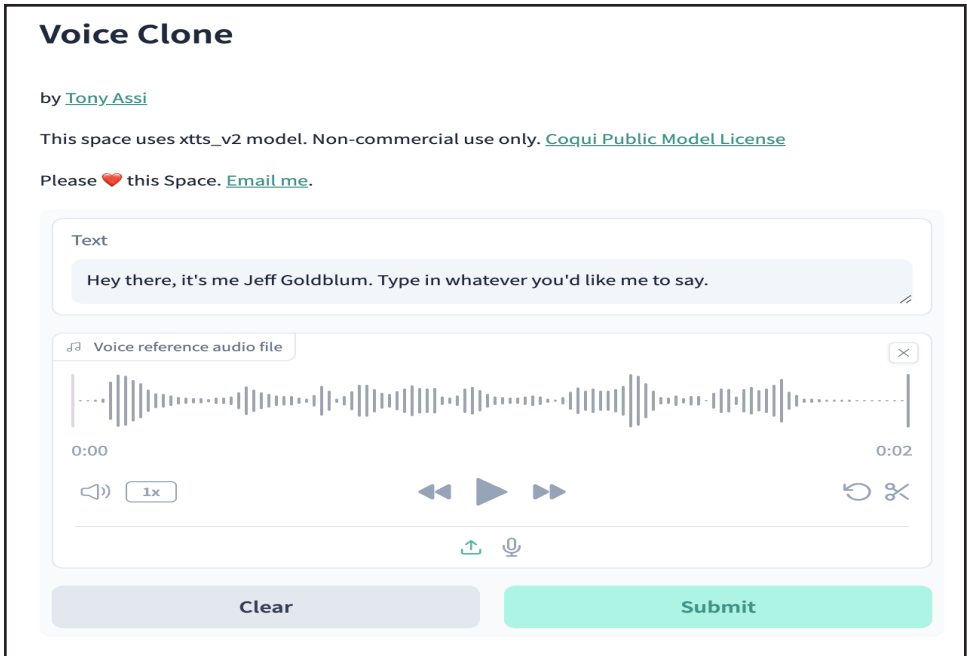
## PRICING

Free!

# SIMULATE A VOICE

Read text in any voice

<https://huggingface.co/spaces/tonyassi/voice-clone>



## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

One area that AI has gotten freakishly good at is turning typed text into a human-sounding voice. This functionality provides a real boon for machines reading text messages and emails in the car or for vision-impaired folks who can now listen to much more natural-sounding machine-read text-to-audio.

What's next? How about the ability to take increasingly short snippets of audio and clone any voice? The Voice Clone tool allows you to input a short bit of audio as a reference and then have text read in that voice. As a demonstration, the site includes reference clips from Judy Garland as Dorothy of Oz, Marlon Brando as The Godfather, Paris Hilton, Megan Fox and Jeff Goldblum, for some reason. Fortunately, you can also upload your audio files and create text-to-speech in any style you like. A good place to start is hitting the record button and talking a bit into the microphone. That's right; you can digitize your voice and then have the robot read whatever you like in your voice. Creepy or cool?

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

Once again, AI can make class introductions more fun. We mean, who hasn't always wanted the great Jeff Goldblum to introduce a class:

"Folks, I know a thing or two about science since I have played a scientist in many movies, and let me tell you, this science class is going to something else."

Encourage students to pick a famous person, upload a short clip of them talking and then post an AI-generated celebrity intro.

And be sure to use this tool as an opportunity to discuss deep fakes. Playing with putting words into someone's mouth is one thing. Doing it in earnest is another.

## ALSO

If you have a more serious need for custom text-to-audio, check out:

<https://www.camb.ai/>

This commercial site would be a great place to start if, for example, you decide to use AI to help you podcast your magnum opus without all the trouble of reading it yourself. The tool can also translate text and read it in another language, so that's pretty cool, too.

## PRICING

Free, but you will need to log into the, also free, Hugging Face platform.



# FIND PLACES

Geolocate images

<https://geospy.ai/>



📍 City: Klamath  
🗺️ State: California  
🇺🇸 Country: United States

## Explanation

The image shows a wooden carving of Bigfoot, a popular symbol of the Pacific Northwest. The sign above the carving says "LEGEND" which is a common theme in the area. The image also shows a sign that says "WARNING! 24 HOUR VIDEO SURVEILLANCE" which is a common sign in tourist areas. Based on these clues, the image was likely taken in Klamath, California.

[📍 Open in Maps](#)

[📄 Copy Coordinates](#)

## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

Utilizing AI's awesome pattern recognition power, Geospy plays a global game of--Where am I? Upload a picture, and using cues and clues in the image, the software guesstimates where you are. Upload a picture of Sleeping Beauty's Castle in Disneyland, and it will nail it. Upload a picture of you and your dog on a walk in your neighborhood, and....um, well, it's not going to be quite as precise. But in our tests, it still knew what city we were in. Wow. So, just to be sure, we took a picture of the grass (and maybe some weeds?) in the front yard. This time? It knows we live in Denver!

The creepy factor of an AI that can generalize facts from an image effectively enough to reasonably guess where the photo was taken is a bit high. Then again, this is the world we live in, and we might as well play with it.

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

On the off chance you teach a geography or urban planning class, the applications are obvious. Go geo-hunting! Upload a picture and see where the images map. Try to trick the algorithm by submitting pictures of Little Sweden in your town or that Bonsai Tree you have been caring for in your living room. Test to see what the AI sees and teach students to look for similar clues.

In an online class, ask students to take a picture from their front doorstep, post it to a getting-to-know-you thread and see if the robot can figure out where everyone is from.

Playing with software this easy and interesting in any subject or discipline raises questions. It's up to you to map it back to the inquiry you work to develop in your students. And like most of the examples presented in this book, Geospy is a great chance to talk about the dark side of AI. Are we happy with software that knows where we live from a social media post of the snow on our driveway, where we ate dinner by a tree in the background or where we vacationed by the presence of a non-descript lawn in the shot? We can have some fun figuring that out together.

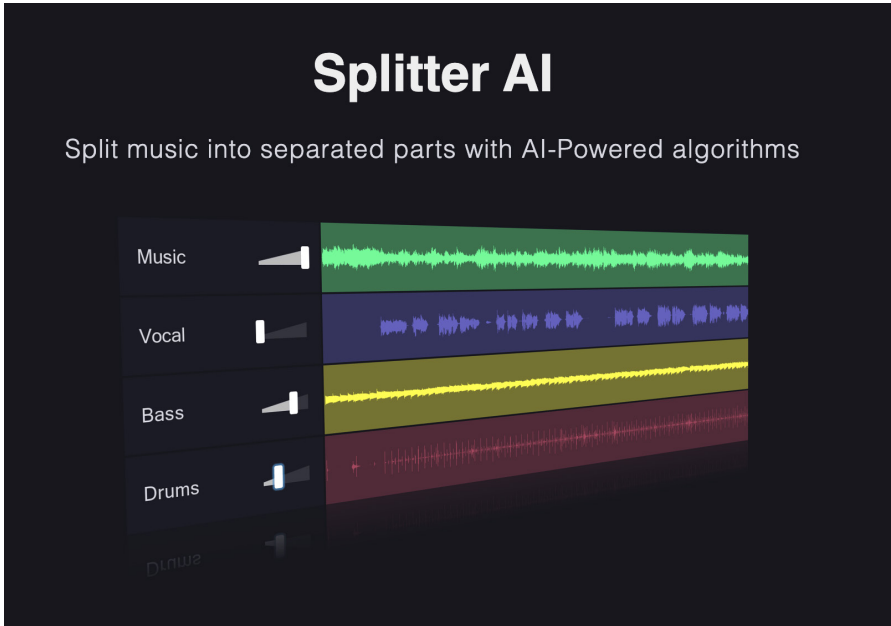
## PRICING

Free!

# TAKE APART A SONG

Make your own karaoke

<https://vocalremover.org/splitter-ai>



## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

This multipurpose site features several interesting and useful music tools. One of the most fun is an AI-powered gadget that takes a song from your computer and breaks it into vocals, music, drums and bass. Why would you do such a thing to a perfectly good song? Once the splitting up is complete, you can turn up or down the various tracks to achieve the perfect karaoke track. No need to mess with second-rate karaoke renditions of your favorite songs when you can just strip the vocals right off the song yourself. Now, you can be a star, filling in the missing vocals. For bonus points, if you are handy with an instrument, peel off the drums and bass and drop in your own beats.

The site can adjust the key or beat-per-minute of any song you upload. For instance, if you want to take a mid-tempo ballad by Taylor Swift, bring it up to 120 bpm, lower the key to something suitable for a tenor, and boom, you have your next dance club hit. (And yes, we did this and the results are AMAZING).

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

Taking apart songs can be a lot of fun. But unless you teach a music class, the utility of a site like this might not be obvious. Then again, an AI tool that can quickly and easily disassemble music into its constituent parts is a playful door opener to all kinds of interesting and ethical questions. Is it OK to take a pop masterpiece and pull the vocals off? Did the artist ever intend for you to hear her singing, isolated from the rest of the music? And what happens when you strip out the vocals and re-record your own Weird AI-style parody of the song for your class? Speaking of which, how about an assignment where you ask students to rewrite the lyrics of a set of karaoked songs you provide but make the content relevant to studying for the final exam? You can have a lot of fun and learn plenty pulling songs apart.

## PRICING

Free, but the site does ask for donations and throttles uploads if you use it too often.

# MAKE A COMIC BOOK

Make wierd comics in a range of styles

<https://huggingface.co/spaces/jbilcke-hf/ai-comic-factory>



A page generated from the prompt: Dr. Fun comes to bring joy to the college lecture hall.



## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

Holy technology, Batman! AI can create comics! At least, sort of. This experimental AI does a decent job of turning short prompts into something like a story and then populating a comic page with art, captions and dialog in various styles. From classic 1950s American comics to modern anime, the robot quickly creates something that passes as a comic. Settings to turn on and off captions and speech bubbles allow you to further customize the scenes, creating opportunities to co-create meaningful sequential art.

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

One easy way to use the Comic Factory would be to invite students to replace the usual course intro with a short intro comic book page. Tell the students to turn off captions and thought bubbles and let the tool generate the page of art. Then, students can take that page of art into PowerPoint or Google Slides and add their narrative.

Since the tool has some trouble generating fully coherent content from page to page and panel to panel, it's best to think of this platform as a tool for inspiring creativity. Or, maybe, after showing students the limits of AI when it comes to making comics, ask them to create their own, the old-fashioned way with paper and pencils!

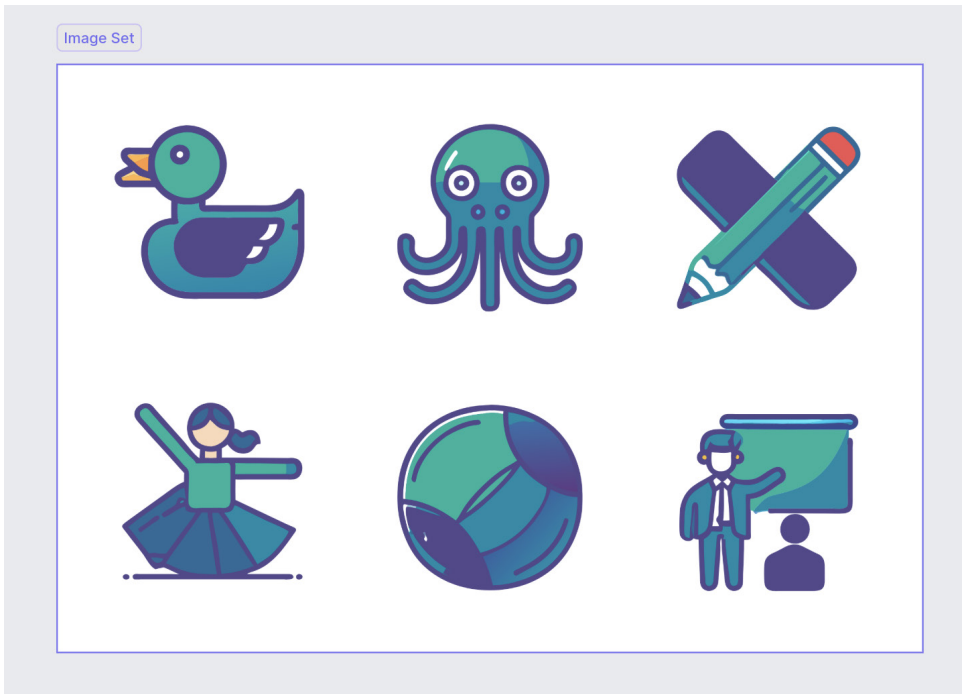
## PRICING

Free, but you will need to log into the, also free, Hugging Face platform.



# CREATE ICONS

Generate scalable graphics  
<https://app.recraft.ai/>



## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

By now we have all played with AI image generators. “Draw me a picture of Bigfoot rescuing a group of Canadian senior citizens from quicksand...” and so on. Recraft comes into the picture with the ability to generate vector graphics in various interesting styles. Most AI image generators create raster graphics, meaning if you try to scale them up to any size larger than the original, you will get a blurry, pixelated image. But with vector graphics, you can scale to your heart’s content.

When you create a graphic in Recraft and export it, you can scale up that image for a T-shirt or the side of a hot air balloon if you like. Another property of the vector format is that you can quickly recolor an image. Because vector graphics have discrete color areas, you can easily swap out one color for another. Another neat trick up Recraft’s sleeve is its ability to make mockups. Want to see what your design would look like on a coffee mug or a hat? The tool makes that as easy as drag and drop.

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

Ever wish you had a neat set of icons for your class? Maybe you want to visually call out specific things in your syllabus--important dates, assignment details or key points? Perhaps you'd like to spruce up those deadly boring pages in your LMS with some colorful images to help students quickly see things like-- "On the test," "Need to know," or "Interesting side note." Recraft offers easy, AI-generated options to create icon sets. You also might ask students to generate their own icons for notes or assignments. Another idea is to have students create their personal logo for the class. Let students show a little personality with this powerful and easy-to-use tool.

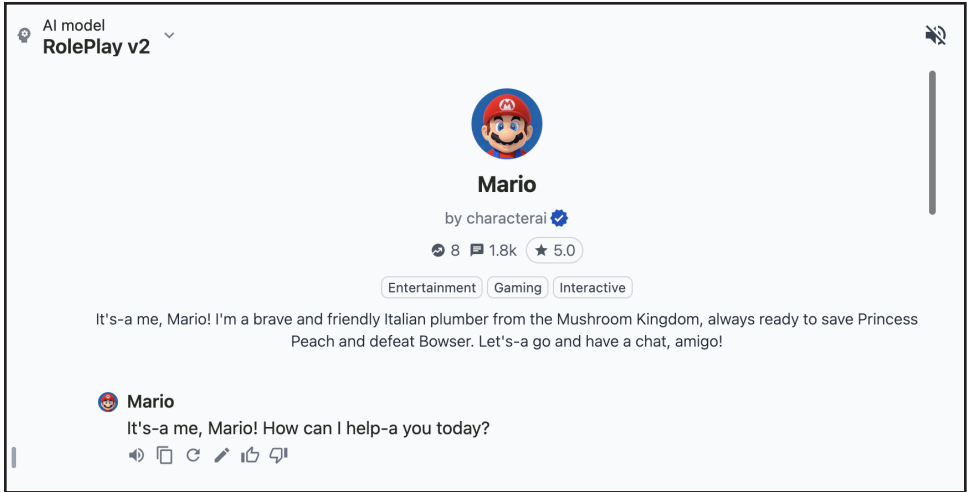
## PRICING

Free, but: You can use the tool all you like. Your images are both public and owned by Recraft. If you want to own your work and make them private, you will need to pay \$20 per month.



# TALK TO MARIO

Chat with Nintendo's famous mascot  
<https://miniapps.ai/mario#/>



## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

ChatGPT does a good job of pretending to be famous people from the past or fiction. Want to have a conversation with Willy Wonka about a business question or Margret Thatcher on the state of world politics? Chatting with different personas and gaining insight into how they might see the world can be a lot of fun and often quite educational.

Or you can enjoy talking to a custom-crafted version of Nintendo's Mario. Thanks to this AI, you can chat with a plumbing hero about your class and your teaching strategies or even help you come up with exam questions. Yes, talking to cartoon characters about something as serious as teaching is more than a little absurd. Or is it? Here's a snippet of what the adventurous plumber had to say when we asked him how to keep students engaged in a class:

"Engaging students is-a like rescuing Princess Peach from Bowser's castle - you gotta know the right moves, and make it-a a thrill! laughs First, you got to understand your students' interests, amico. I mean, think of what they love about the Mushroom Kingdom - the power-ups, the pipes, the stars! Use those things to make learning exciting and challenging. Break it down into smaller tasks, so they can feel like they're progressing through a level."

Gold star, Mario.

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

Teaching can be a lonely activity. Until you invite your favorite AI pals to class. Ask AI Mario to provide playful weekly intros for your class or to sum up the key things you will cover in the upcoming week. If that gets boring, go over to Chat GPT and invite Socrates the next week and Elsa from Frozen the week after. These whimsical summaries could go a long way toward getting students to actually read the course materials. Taking in the content from famous fictional and real characters can add a dose of engagement that might otherwise be missing.

Of course, if you are dealing with a subject matter where talking to past sources makes sense, then by all means, bring in the AI. Ask Charlie Chaplin about creativity, Attila the Hun about leadership or Lord Kelvin about science. Maybe ask Laura Ingles Wilder for some advice on grit and succeeding at school to share with students. And if the free-wheeling nature of ChatGPT doesn't suit you, there are specialized tools (although they cost money) like Hello History (<https://www.hellohistory.ai/>). This app gives you a mobile-friendly interface for talking to great names in history and literature.

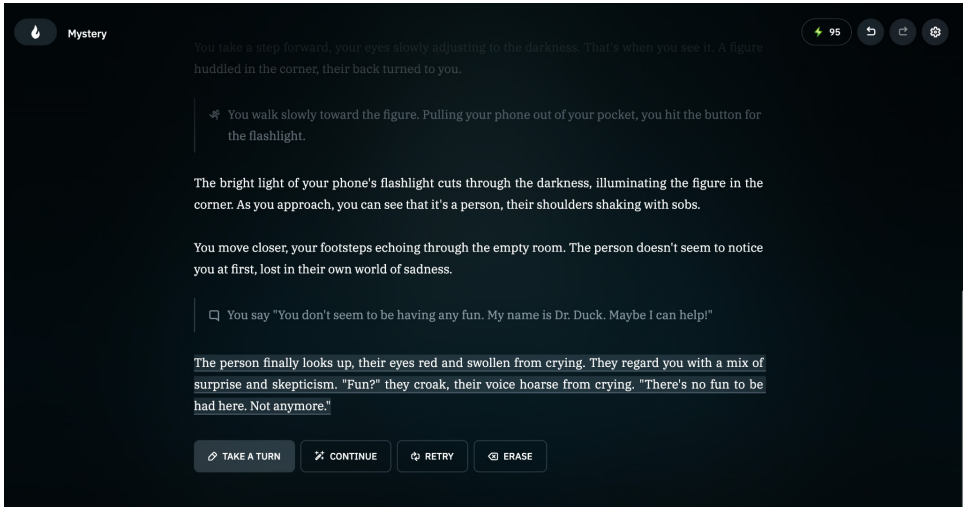
## PRICING

Mario is free

# TELL A STORY

Be the star of your own interactive story

<https://play.aidungeon.com/>



## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

Have you ever asked your AI to tell you a story? This amusing pastime remains a sweet spot for LLMs. You can provide a setting, background, and characters, and the GPT will spin a tale. Best of all, you can interact with the story, play along as a character, and help shape the adventure.

That's the premise of AI Dungeon. This site dedicates itself to providing easy-to-use tools to let you play interactive text-based adventures. Even on the free level, you can jump right into an adventure that someone else has designed-- plugging in the starting details--characters, settings and theme. Or you can craft your own. "It was a dark and stormy night...filled with zombies!" What happens next is up to you. With multiplayer capabilities, you can invite others to collaborate with your AI storyteller to create even more wide-ranging adventures.

Keep in mind that the AI starts in safe mode. But the site is populated with plenty of playable adventures that require a change in the safety settings to "mature." Yes, there's plenty of romance novel-grade storytelling happening on the site.

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

For fun, set up an adventure at the beginning of class and then play through the serial storytelling week after week of class. Invite the students to vote on possible actions and see where the tale travels. We ran the robot through the paces with a mystery adventure, prompting the AI with:

“You are Dr. Duck, a brand new professor at Normal University in a very normal town. You’ve arrived with your hopes high. But you soon discover something is missing. Someone has stolen all the fun out of higher education, and it’s up to you to find it!”

The story quickly dove into the action, introducing strange and mysterious characters and events. All in good fun, the story could provide a fun way to start each class and encourage students to co-create with you and each other.

While the AI has some set genres, you can modify them as much as you care to spend the time inventing characters and settings and stringing them together in a way that makes sense to the robot. If you want your story set in fantasy, science fiction or mystery settings, then a short prompt is all you need to get the narrative started. And the content is entirely up to you. You are also free to invent historical scenarios, challenge students to come up with a scientific solution to the zombie outbreak or deal with tricky management issues between the orcs and elves in your fantasy candy shop. The domains of possibility are as wide open as the disciplines that make up our universities and colleges.

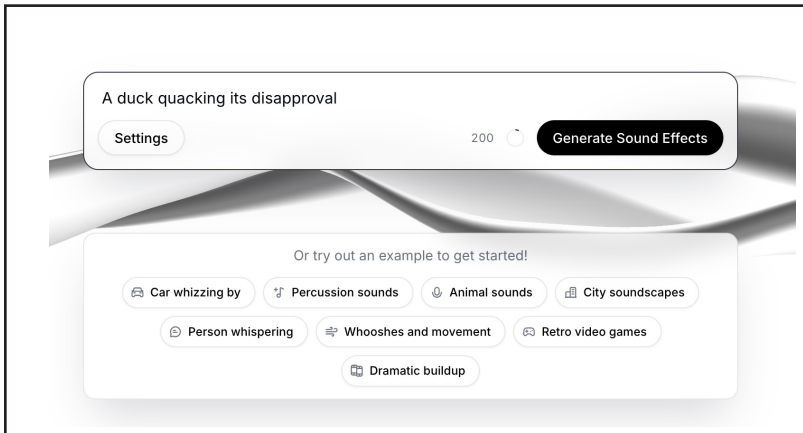
## PRICING

The free account includes everything you need to get started. A tier of premium accounts, from \$10 a month up to \$50, will meet most any storytelling need.

# GENERATE SOUND EFFECTS

All the sounds you need courtesy of AI

<https://elevenlabs.io/app/sound-effects/generate>



## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

This site features a bunch of different AI-based audio manipulation and creation tools. It has tools that let you turn text into realistic speech, tools that let you clone your voice so that you can have a robot read the text in your voice, and a neat piece of software that can isolate voice in an otherwise noisy soundtrack. But what we came here for are the sound effects. Describe a sound in text, and the software will try to turn it into an effect. Want to hear the sound of a pillow factory exploding? OK. A trombone underwater? Why not? An angry duck? Quack! Not every prompt generates a truly useful sound effect, though. Fortunately, the site also has an extensive catalog of pre-made sounds. So, whatever sound you need, they seem to have you covered--bing, bam, boom.

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

Any class that uses multimedia assignments will find immediate value in this site. Finding the right sound effect in a few clicks can really speed up the creative process. (For example, do you want to hear our story of searching for hours for the sound of a slide projector advancing?) Going further, we think a little professorial creativity is in order here. Why not add sound effects to your lecture? A little applause here, a gasp there, maybe a rim shot or the roar of the crowd there is just what you need to keep those PowerPoints humming.

## PRICING

Basic sound effect generation and downloads are free.



## WHERE DO YOU FIND THIS STUFF?

AI seems to be everywhere these days. So, in a sense, it's pretty easy to find the latest and greatest new tool. But we do have some favorite places to look for playful AI.

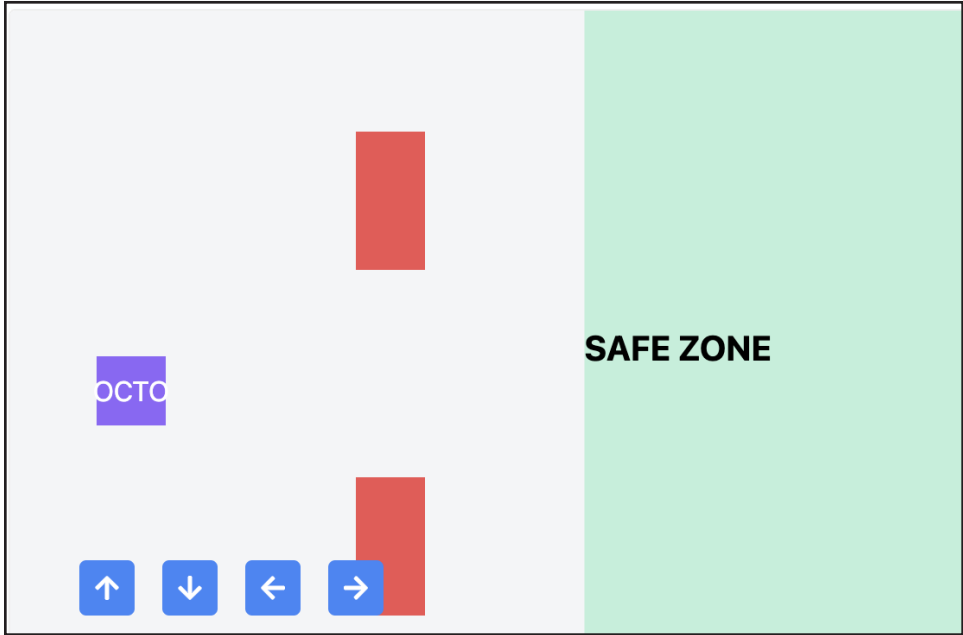
- ✓ **Matty McTech** (<https://www.instagram.com/setupspawn>). With an endless stream of interesting tips, tricks and deadpan humor, Matty seems to find the coolest AI gadgets long before anyone else.
- ✓ **Futurepedia** (<https://www.futurepedia.io/>) This site offers a comprehensive list of AI tools. It's up to you to identify more fun uses of some of the less-than-fun tools!
- ✓ **Hugging Face** (<https://huggingface.co/>) is a massive AI community that helps connect people and technology. While it can take a little exploring, the Hugging Face Spaces offers a wonderland of AI tech to explore.

# BUILD AN APP

Write software by drawing pictures

<https://sketch2app.io/>

It ma



It may not be pretty, but this is a functional app

## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

This novel combination of things AI is good at--scrutinizing pictures and writing code--makes for an awesome demonstration of its power. Draw a simple diagram or illustration of a computer program you'd like to create and show it to your webcam. The AI--first writes out what it thinks you want it to do, then sets about writing the code to make your program a reality. Want to create a simple Frogger game? Just draw what you have in mind and let the software do the work. We made a very simple game about an octopus trying to cross a busy road to reach a safe zone. It only took a few minutes, and the results were impressive, considering how little the computer had to work with.

The finished files are executable code. You can run the code in the browser window and see your masterpiece execute in real-time. You can also copy the code and use it later in another environment. It's real code, and it's yours to use and update as you see fit.

## HOW TO USE IT IN CLASS

If you are a computer science professor, showing students a tool like this can lead to great conversations about what AI is good at and where it can help a new programmer. But the real fun will come from classes that don't necessarily teach technology skills. Working with students without any real programming background, have them create little games and fun widgets. Draw programs to upload files, turn photos into black and white or build little organizers and quiz tools for use in class. And more. If you can draw it, AI can likely program it.

Using AI to build simple demos is a perfectly playful way to dabble with the awesome power of the technology.

## PRICING

A limited trial lets you play with the software to get a feel for it. When we tried it, it worked for less than a day. But you can buy credits starting at \$25 to keep playing. Language on the site indicates there are special offers for educators.



# THE WONDERS OF CHATGPT

The OG of mass market chat AI

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

ChatGPT has endless playful applications. The only real limitations are the limits of our creativity. Below, we share some fun ways we have used ChatGPT in teaching and professional work.

## WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT MATTERS

When most people think of AI, they usually think of ChatGPT (sorry, Claude, Gemini, Meta AI, Perplexity and the rest). ChatGPT's artificial intelligence-powered chatbot drove the initial popularity of natural language AI interactions. Now, we are familiar with ChatGPT's ability to engage in conversations, answer questions, and generate a variety of content. The ChatGPT website brags that it can perform tasks like:

- ✓ Solving math equations
- ✓ Translating languages
- ✓ Debugging code
- ✓ Writing poems or stories
- ✓ Classifying things
- ✓ Summarizing documents
- ✓ Critiquing writing
- ✓ Creating reference pages

But what about the play? We have notes.

## PLAYFUL WAYS TO USE CHATGPT

### Explore Playful Teaching Ideas

ChatGPT has endless possibilities. You can ask it to provide general ideas for play or playful teaching. You might ask: "What are some playful ideas for teaching adults?" or "What are some playful and creative ideas for designing a lecture?" or "What are playful ideas to get my students engaged and connected?" A lot of the ideas that ChatGPT will generate might be kinda dumb. So don't be afraid to ask for additional ideas if you don't like the first set it generates. Sometimes, we look at the not-quite-right list it generates and use it as a starting point. Might there be an idea that sparks another idea for you? Use ChatGPT's ideas and your playful, creative brain to mold them into something useful.

## Play-a-fy Your Syllabus

Let's be honest: syllabi are incredibly dry and boring. Like, stab a pen in our eyes boring. We know universities and colleges have certain requirements, templates, and things that we must adhere to as faculty, so policy ties our hands in some ways. It might not be wise to change the wording of the university policies and land acknowledgments. But it might be okay to change the wording of your expectations of the course, participation, grading and assignments. If you have a little flexibility, making the wording more human and playful might be a great way to set a more playful tone at the start of your course. We copy and paste syllabus sections into ChatGPT and ask it to make the wording more playful. It still says the same thing, but just not as formal. Some people prefer being formal, especially at the start of a course, to ensure students respect them. We value establishing a more humanistic and warm learning environment, so we utilize a human and playful tone.

## Generate a Playful Professional Bio

Here is an example of one of our favorite outputs from ChatGPT. We once gave a keynote address for a small group, and they wanted a bio. Professional bios are so stuffy and way too formal. How does that create any sense of knowing a person? Why not add some play? After running the standard bio through ChatGPT and asking to make it more playful, here is a short snippet of what it produced: "Meet Dr. Lisa Forbes, the whimsical advocate of play and counseling! She is an Assistant Clinical Professor at the University of Colorado Denver, and she brings joy to the serious business of counseling. Lisa is a Licensed Professional Counselor and a Registered Play Therapist. But wait, there's more! With a PhD in mischief and a knack for the unusual, Lisa co-founded a global network called Professors at Play, which is a group on a mission to sprinkle a bit of fun into teaching. Whether it's teaching adults with the power of play or studying the serious science of play itself, or conducting play therapy sessions with small humans, Lisa's here for all things play." Much better.

## Make Jokes Related to Your Content

We like to find ways to bring in a little humor and levity throughout a class. Humor is a great way to invite play and create connections with students. Sometimes, we make jokes as they pop into our heads, but sometimes, we have something planned out. Be warned, the jokes that ChatGPT makes are 99% awful. So you might have to ask it over and over to produce more until you find one that is okay. We use these jokes by presenting them as really bad dad jokes. So, the humor is not about how funny the joke itself is but it's humorous how BAD the joke is. Like, check it out. During one class on counseling children and adolescents, ChatGPT generated this thematic joke. Look how dad-joke bad it is:

*Knock knock. Who's there?*

*Justin.*

*Justin who?*

*Justin time for some teenage adventures and fun!*

...Bruh... but the students laughed because it was so bad. Some silliness, some fun. Why not?

## Create QR Codes

Earlier in this book, we list a tool for creating playful QR codes. That route might be better, but remember how many things ChatGPT can do, including generating QR codes! Just copy and paste a website and ask it to create a QR code. You can ask it to make it a different shape or color. That's all we have to say about that. When you know, you know.

## Make Assignments More Playful/Creative

You know what else is dry and boring? Traditional and typical assignments. Again, you might not be free to change your course or syllabus too much, but maybe you do. Or maybe you just don't care and will change it anyway. Play rebels, unite! You can take the description of an assignment and copy and paste it into ChatGPT and ask it to make it more playful. You can keep the assignment the same and simply adjust the wording to make it more playful, or you can ask ChatGPT to come up with ideas to alter the assignment to make it more playful, dynamic, or unique. Give it a shot.

## Develop Playful Case Studies

Let's face it: typical case studies are, well, boring. (See a theme in education?). The human brain pays more attention to things that are novel and unexpected. So, if all our case studies are about Jane Doe with a typical story, it is less interesting, less motivating, and less likely to elicit exciting and creative outputs. Let ChatGPT help. You can copy and paste a typical case study into Chat and ask it to make it more playful or turn it into a Disney character story or children's book character. Sometimes, when case studies exist outside reality, they grab students' attention and free them from limiting expectations and inside-the-box thinking.

## Encourage Chat to Write Student Assignments

A major concern among educators is students cheating with ChatGPT. Sometimes, we waste a lot of energy trying to prevent something like this when we can just lean into the technology- swim with the current, not against it. If we give it a go and utilize the technology, our concerns about cheating might dissipate. If we worry a student will copy and paste an assignment description into ChatGPT to write their assignment, why don't we just let them? Of course, that wouldn't be what we grade. Instead, we ask them to

take the output of an assignment from ChatGPT and turn their assignment into a critical analysis of how well ChatGPT did in completing the assignment. This approach might not seem all that playful in a childlike sense, but play is not just fooling around. Play can also be playing with ideas and norms to create something new.

## Plan Playful Connection-Formers for the Start of Class

In the first edition of the Professors at Play PlayBook, we described different types of play and ways to incorporate play into your classroom. An important approach to play that contributes significantly to harnessing its power and process is utilizing connection-former activities (often known as icebreakers). When connection-former activities are cliché or expected, they start to feel obligatory--forced fun. The power comes when connection-formers are unexpected, novel, and actually fun. Check out the first PlayBook for more ideas, but you can also give it a shot to see what ideas ChatGPT generates.

## Play with Different Lingo and Tone

Do you have weekly announcements or messages you send or say to your students? Why not play around with the lingo and tone to make it more fun? You can type out the announcement as you regularly would, but then you can copy and paste it into Chat and ask it to make it have the tone and lingo of \_\_\_\_\_. Fill in the blank with anything. It could be a “totally rad surfer dude” in the tone and lingo of a Storm Trooper or Australian teenager. Each week, your students might find it fun to see what new voice the message will carry.

## Generate Puzzles

Want to whip up a quick word search puzzle? ChatGPT can do that in a snap. It can also help generate crosswords and other kinds of puzzles. Want a Mad Lib? The robot can help. You can either create a story and ask it to turn it into a Mad Lib or just give it the theme and let it do the work for you. Just ask ChatGPT what kinds of puzzles it knows how to make, and you will get a list that includes acrostics, cryptograms, word ladders, riddles and more.

## NOW WHAT?

AI might seem a bit scary at first, but it's also a golden chance to shake up teaching with some fun and creativity. Instead of running for the hills, let's lean into it and use AI to amp up what we do best in the classroom. By mixing in a little play, we can turn AI from something intimidating into something that makes learning even more awesome—for both us and our students. This book is just the beginning, packed with ideas to help you dive into AI without losing the spark that makes teaching exciting. So, go ahead, play around with it, stay curious, and most of all, have a blast! And be sure to share what you learn. We all love an invitation to play.

## ABOUT PROFESSORS AT PLAY

Professors at Play is a global community of like-minded professors interested in transforming higher education through the lens of play. The group was founded in 2019 by Lisa Forbes, a mental health professor and David Thomas, an architecture professor. Together, they have grown the Professors at Play platform into a creative community of teachers who continue to invent and invest in the power of play in their work. You can find out more and join in the fun at [professorsatplay.org](https://professorsatplay.org)

### Professors at Play PlayBook

What? You mean there are other PlayBooks beyond the AI PlayBook? Yes indeed! In 2022, we released the Professors at Play PlayBook, a collection of techniques from over 70 faculty members worldwide. You can find that and download a free copy:

<https://press.etc.cmu.edu/books/professors-play-playbook>.

Next up: The Professors at Play ONLINE PlayBook, a collection of fun techniques for the online classroom.

## ABOUT PLAY STORY PRESS

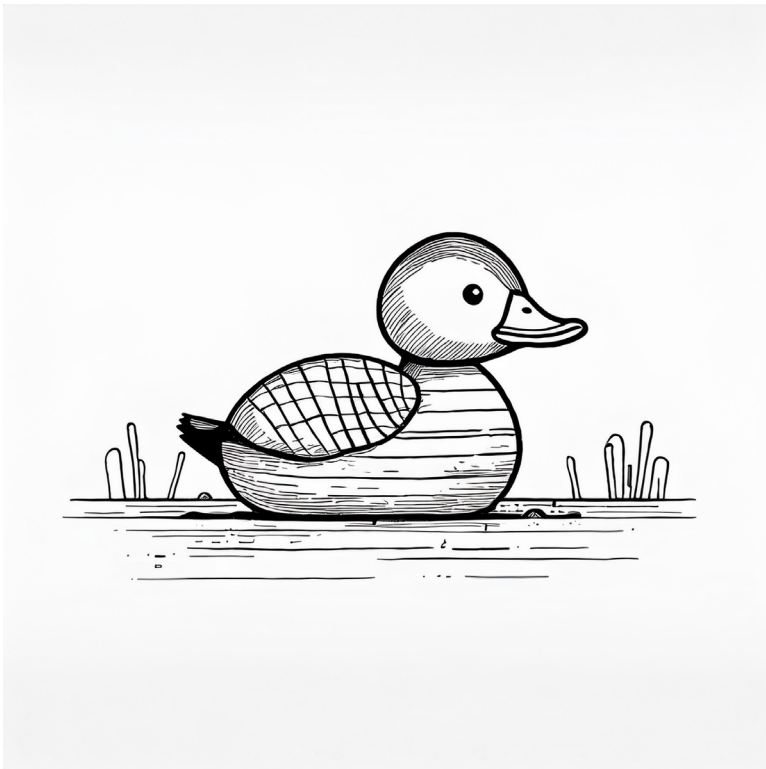
<https://playstorypress.org/about/>

Play Story Press™ is an open community publishing consortium of/by/for the field and our community. It is a diamond open-access academic publishing initiative in which contributors retain all their intellectual property. We work with our contributors in as timely a manner as possible so that we can share ideas that have impact and significance in our society

Play Story Press is a culmination of 20 years of open-access publishing and collaborating with the community. Our founders started ETC Press in 2005 as an experimental open-access academic publishing imprint, and our success was a direct result of all the quality work written by our community. Inspired by this, Play Story Press is evolving to focus more on the community and field. The consortium comprises an exceptional group of partner organizations that will work together, shaping and supporting Play Story Press for the field and community.

Publishing with Play Story Press is a friendly, supportive and constructive process focused on encouraging the growth of quality scholarship in this field. Play Story Press is committed to publishing three types of work: peer-reviewed work (research-based books, textbooks, academic journals, conference proceedings), general audience work (trade nonfiction, singles, Well Played singles), and research and white papers. The common thread among these is a focus on issues related to stories and play as they are applied across various fields.

The concepts of story and play are broad and diverse—from entertainment and narrative to media studies and social studies, games and technology to health and enjoyment, education and learning to design and development, and more. Our authors come from a range of backgrounds. Some are traditional academics. Some are practitioners. And some work in between. Their ability to write about the impact of play and story and their significance in society ties them all together.



Professors at Play and Publications at Play  
present a fun introduction to artificial  
intelligence in the classroom. This collection  
of resources and ideas looks to demystify the  
role of AI in education through the lens of  
play. If AI is going to happen, let's have some  
fun with it!

