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Level 3

## Are AI teachers a good idea?

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Are AI teachers a good idea?

**Some people think AI doesn't belong in the classroom.**

Would you like to be taught by a robot or a computer? This year, 20 GCSE students at David Game College in London are being taught science, maths, English and computer science by AI instead of human teachers. Pupils have lessons designed for them based on their individual needs. There is no robot at the front of the class, just AI programs on pupils' computers and virtual reality headsets. Human learning coaches are also in classrooms to lend a hand, if needed. Online learning using AI isn't new. For example, the language learning app Duolingo uses it to create lessons. However, some people think using AI to teach pupils is a step too far and that students need human interaction in their lessons. What do you think? Are AI teachers a good idea?

**Yes – AI can improve learning**

AI can make lots of complex calculations very quickly, allowing it to pinpoint gaps in a child's learning and fill them. AI teachers can focus on individuals and help them with subjects they find difficult – something that human teachers could struggle to do in a big class. Besides, AI has already been used to improve online learning and it's already used in schools to support teachers with things like lesson plans. Why not take it a step further and use it in teaching? It would save schools money that could be invested elsewhere, such as buying art materials or sports equipment. Also, the UK has a shortage of secondary school teachers, especially for subjects like computers and languages. Why not let AI teachers fill the gap?

**No – pupils will lose out**

A human teacher has unique knowledge, experience and opinions, whereas AI is only as good as the information it learns. Also, how well can AI teach creative subjects such as art and drama, which encourage students to come up with new ideas? Last year, the UK Government said AI could not replace the relationship that teachers have with their pupils. Surely AI would struggle to capture a student's imagination? Or encourage them to try again if they don't reach their goals? Teachers can also help pupils with their emotions and important issues such as bullying. If lots of teachers are replaced by AI, pupils won't have as many trusted adults to talk to when they are worried about something.

**What you need to know**

• Artificial intelligence (AI) is technology that makes it possible for a computer to learn from experience and perform tasks that usually require human intelligence. • AI already affects the way we live. It's used in online searches, digital maps and many other everyday tools, and it is becoming even more advanced. • This month, a school in London is due to begin lessons for GCSE students that will be taught by AI platforms. • A digital AI teacher called Will has taught primary school children in New Zealand, and millions of students in China use AI to assist their learning.

Scan the QR code to vote in the debate

LAST WEEK'S POLL

Last week we asked if more nuclear power is a good idea. Most of you said no, because the radioactive waste it produces can be dangerous for thousands of years.

## YES

### Three reasons why AI teachers are a good idea

1 AI teachers can focus on individual pupils' needs and help them understand subjects they struggle with. This is hard for human teachers in a large classroom with lots of children. 2 AI technology is already used in lesson planning, so why not use it for teaching too – it would save schools money. 3 There is a shortage of secondary school teachers in the UK – AI teachers could be used to fill this gap.

## NO

### Three reasons why AI teachers are not a good idea

1 AI is only as good as the information it learns. It can't replace a human teacher – especially not when it comes to creative subjects like art or drama. 2 However clever AI is, it can't connect with pupils or inspire children to work hard and reach their goals. 3 Teachers don't just teach, they manage emotions and deal with bullying. Pupils could lose focus or get upset if real teachers aren't around.

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Now that you've read a bit more about it, tell us what you think by voting in our poll at [theweekjunior.co.uk/polls](https://theweekjunior.co.uk/polls). Vote YES if you think AI teachers are a good idea, or NO if you don't. We'll publish the results next week.

The aim of the **Big debate** page is to present two sides of an issue fairly and objectively, in order to stimulate discussion and allow our readers to make up their minds. The views on the page do not reflect those of The Week Junior, and the page is not funded by third parties.

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