

DEBATING

Artificial Intelligence Debate

Lesson Overview:

In this lesson, students critically explore the statement “AI is making us smarter.” Through a provocation, real-world scenarios and a structured debate, students consider different perspectives on how artificial intelligence may influence learning, thinking and problem-solving. Students develop arguments, use examples to support their reasoning and listen respectfully to opposing viewpoints before reflecting on whether their thinking has changed.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- consider different perspectives about the impact of artificial intelligence
- explain how AI may support or influence learning and thinking
- develop arguments using relevant examples and reasoning
- communicate a position clearly and respectfully
- listen to opposing arguments and reflect on whether new information changes their thinking.

Key Words:

Artificial intelligence (AI), debate, affirmative, negative, argument, evidence, perspective, critical thinking.

Lesson Resources:

[Lesson Slides](#), Public Speaking Tips from Fadzai, student workbook or paper, pencils.

Curriculum Links

English

- Use interaction skills to contribute to discussions, clarify and build on the ideas of others, and respond using appropriate language and evidence ([AC9E5LA01](#)/[AC9E6LA01](#))

General Capabilities

Critical and Creative Thinking

- Analyse information and different perspectives, develop reasoned arguments and reflect on ideas and conclusions.

Digital Literacy

- Critically consider how digital technologies, including AI, can support learning and influence the way people access information, think and solve problems.

LESSON SLIDES

Introduce:

- Watch Marty & Fadzai's provocation video (Slide 3).
- Display the statement: “**AI is making us smarter.**”
- Students position themselves along an Agree–Disagree continuum according to their initial opinion.
- Invite students to briefly justify where they have positioned themselves.
- Discuss:
 - What might it mean for AI to make us “smarter”?
 - How might AI help us learn or solve problems?
 - Could using AI ever make us think less for ourselves?
- Explain that there are different perspectives on the impact of AI and that the purpose of the debate is to explore these perspectives rather than simply “win”.

Explore:

Students...

- investigate two AI scenarios, considering when AI might support thinking and when it might replace thinking
- use the scenarios and their own ideas to consider the statement: “**AI is making us smarter.**”
- work in assigned debate roles:
 - Affirmative: explore how AI can support learning, thinking and problem-solving
 - Negative: explore how relying on AI may reduce independent thinking and learning
 - Observers: listen for strong arguments, clear examples and respectful language
- develop 2–3 supporting arguments and prepare a short opening statement
- participate in a structured class debate.

Optional: Watch [Public Speaking Tips from Fadzai](#) before the debate.

Reflect:

- Students reflect on the debate individually or with a partner:
 - Did your opinion change? Why or why not?
 - What was one argument you agreed with?
 - What was one idea that challenged your thinking?

Exit Ticket:

- “One thing people should consider when using AI to help them learn is...”