

AI 101: A Teen-Friendly Introduction

Ring the Changes

- Teacher's Insights -

At a Glance

- 🕒 60 minutes
- 📖 A2, **B1**, B2
- 🎯 can, can't and will be able to, imperatives, technology vocabulary

Preparation

- 🕒 0-5 minutes
- Print one worksheet for each student.
- Print the Teacher's Insights or keep them at hand as they contain the answers to the exercises.

Exercise Summary

Kickoff: speaking intro on the AI apps students already use

Vocabulary Focus: match AI words to definitions (prompt, deepfake, hallucination...)

Myth or Fact: decide which common ideas about AI are true and which are myths

Reading: read what AI can and can't do in 2026 and what is coming soon, and answer questions

Grammar Focus: learn can, can't, could and will be able to and complete the sentences

Speaking: sort AI skills into can, can't and coming soon and talk about them

Prompt Lab: learn the four parts of a good prompt (imperatives) and make weak prompts better

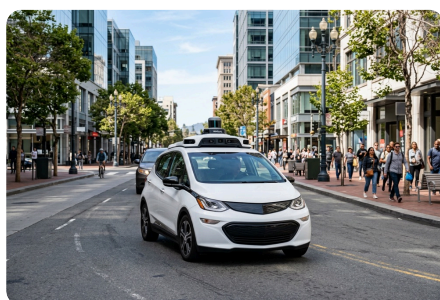
Two Truths and a Hallucination: fun filler game: spot the made-up fact, practising questions

Most teenagers already use AI, but few know how it really works. This AI 101 for 2026 covers what AI can do now, what people think it can do but it can't, and what is probably coming soon. Students learn the key words (prompt, deepfake, hallucination), practise can, can't and will be able to, and learn to write a good prompt, so they use AI to learn, not to skip the learning. For lower levels, take the reading one paragraph at a time.

Kickoff: Ask and answer the questions as a group.

① These questions introduce the topic and allow all students to arrive. Students who say they never use AI probably do, without noticing. Popular chatbots in 2026: ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Copilot and Meta AI.

1. Have you ever used an AI app or a chatbot? Which one? What for?
2. Has an AI ever given you an answer that was wrong or strange?
3. Do your teachers let you use AI for homework? What are the rules?
4. Have you ever seen a photo or a video online and later found out it was fake?
5. If you had a robot assistant for one day, what would you ask it to do?
6. Look at the pictures. Which of these can you already see in real life?
= all three exist in 2026, but driverless taxis work in only a few cities and home robots are still in tests



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Vocabulary Focus: Match the underlined words with the definitions.

① This activity introduces the vocabulary needed for the rest of the class. Let students guess the meaning from the context first. Point out that “make up” is a phrasal verb: *He made up a story. / He made it up.*

the question or instructions you type or say to an AI = prompt	to invent something that is not true = make up	a fake video, photo or voice made with AI that looks or sounds real = deepfake	to check that information is true by looking at other sources = fact-check
when an AI gives an answer that sounds true but is invented = hallucination	the huge amount of text, pictures and sound an AI learns from = training data	an AI that can do a task for you step by step, like filling in a form = AI agent	unfair, because it prefers one group of people or one opinion = biased

- My first prompt was too short, so the answer was really boring.
- The chatbot told me a famous singer was born in 1850. It was a hallucination!
- Everyone shared the video of the president dancing, but it was a deepfake.
- Before you put a fact from a chatbot in your essay, fact-check it.
- I asked the AI agent to compare prices for three phones and make a table.
- The AI learnt from millions of books and websites. That is its training data.
- If an AI learns from unfair examples, it can be biased too.
- I didn't know the answer, so I just made something up.

Myth or Fact: Read the sentences. Write M (myth) or F (fact).
Then, compare with a partner.

① This is the heart of the lesson. Let pairs argue before you give the answers, and ask “Why do you think so?” every time. The answers are true for the popular apps in 2026.

- AI is always right because it is a computer.
= M: it can make things up and still sound very sure
- A chatbot understands you and has feelings, like a person.
= M: it predicts words from patterns; it can sound kind, but it feels nothing
- AI checkers can always tell if your homework was written by AI.
= M: they often get it wrong, even on a student's own work, and more so in a second language
- A video of a famous person can be fake, even if it looks and sounds real.
= F: deepfakes
- What you type into a chatbot can be saved by the company.
= F: many companies keep chats, and some train their AI on them; check the settings
- AI just copies and pastes answers from the internet.
= M: it writes new text from patterns, which is why it can be wrong; some apps also search
- AI can be unfair to some groups of people.
= F: if its training data is biased
- If AI does your homework, you learn just as much.
= M: you learn by doing the thinking yourself

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Reading:

Read the text and answer the questions.

① Students can read it out loud, skim it and answer the questions first, or listen while you read. The “coming soon” paragraph is a prediction, and some of it already exists in a small way: a good discussion point.

AI in 2026: the real story

You hear about AI everywhere. Some people say it will change everything; others say it is all hype. Here is what you need to know before you start.

What AI can do now. Today’s chatbots can explain a maths problem step by step, turn your notes into a quiz, translate a message or give you ideas for a story. Many of them can also understand photos and your voice, so you can show them a plant and ask what it is, or just talk to them. Other AI tools can make pictures, songs and short videos from a few words. And new AI agents can do simple jobs on a computer for you, like filling in a form or comparing prices, but a person still needs to check their work.

What people think it can do, but it can’t. AI is not a machine that always tells the truth. It learns patterns from its training data and then predicts the next words, so it can make things up and still sound very sure. This is called a hallucination. AI also has no feelings. It can sound friendly and kind, but it doesn’t care about you the way a friend does. And it can’t do your learning for you: if AI writes your essay, you might get the grade, but you won’t get the skill.

What is coming soon. Nobody knows the future for sure, but experts think AI will be able to do a lot more in the next few years. Agents will probably be able to plan and book a whole holiday for you, from start to finish. Taxis with no driver, which already work in a few cities, will probably be in many more. AI might be able to make a whole film from a short description. And robots that help at home are being tested now, but they are still slow and very expensive.

So what should you do? Use AI like a clever friend who is sometimes wrong. Write good prompts, fact-check anything important, never share passwords or private photos, and always ask yourself: am I using this to learn, or to avoid learning?

1. Name three things chatbots can do now.
= e.g. explain maths, make a quiz from your notes, translate, understand photos and voices
2. What can AI agents do? What is the problem?
= simple jobs like filling in forms or comparing prices; a person must check their work
3. Why can AI make things up?
= it predicts the next words from patterns in its training data; it doesn’t check facts
4. Name two things AI will probably be able to do soon.
= e.g. book a whole holiday, drive taxis in more cities, make a whole film, help at home
5. What does “you might get the grade, but you won’t get the skill” mean?
= if AI does your work, you don’t learn how to do it yourself
6. Which of the four tips at the end do you think is the most important? Why?
= students’ own answers

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Grammar Focus:

Read the box.

Then, complete the sentences.

① The key point: “can” has no future form, so never “will can”, a mistake at every level. “Might be able to” is very useful for AI, because nobody is sure about the future.

can, could and will be able to

We use **can / can't** + verb for ability **now**: *AI can translate a message. It can't feel emotions.*

We use **could / couldn't** for ability in the **past**: *Ten years ago, chatbots couldn't write a whole essay.*

Can has no future form (never *will can*), so for the **future** we use **will be able to / won't be able to**: *Agents will be able to book a whole holiday.*

When we are not sure, we use **might be able to**: *AI might be able to make a whole film.*

1. Today, chatbots can explain a maths problem step by step.
2. AI can't feel happy or sad. It only sounds like it does.
3. Ten years ago, chatbots couldn't write a whole essay.
4. In a few years, AI tutors will be able to follow your progress all year.
5. Can you tell if a video is a deepfake? It's getting harder!
6. Home robots are slow now, but one day they will be able to tidy your bedroom.
7. When I was eight, I could name every player in my favourite team.

Speaking:

Can AI do these now? Write C (can), X (can't) or S (soon?).

Then, make sentences with can, can't or will be able to.

① There is room for discussion here, and that is the point. Driverless taxis already work in some cities in the US and China. Push students to explain: *I think AI will be able to tidy your room one day, because...*

write a poem about your cat = C	feel bored or lonely = X	make a song from a few words = C
always be right about facts = X	tidy your bedroom = S?	explain a maths problem step by step = C
know if your friend is lying in a message = X	copy someone's voice = C	make a whole film from a short description = S?
plan and book a whole holiday on its own = S?	drive a taxi with no driver = C, in some cities	love you back = X

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Prompt Lab:

Read the box.

Then, make the weak prompts better.

① This is the “AI training” part of the class. Good prompts use imperatives (Explain..., Give me..., Don't...), so practise them here. Pairs write better prompts in their notebooks and read them out; if phones are allowed, try a weak and a better prompt and compare the answers. Any prompt with the four parts is right.

The four parts of a good prompt

1. Who you are: *I'm 14 and I'm learning English (level B1).*

2. What you want (use an imperative): *Explain... / Write... / Give me... / Make a quiz...*

3. Details: *how long, how many, which topic: in five sentences / three examples*

4. Style: *in simple English / like a sports commentator / don't give me the answers yet*

Weak: *Help me with history.* Better: *I'm 14 and studying the French Revolution. Explain three causes in simple English, then give me five quiz questions. Don't give me the answers until I try.*

1. *Write about dogs.*
= e.g. *I'm 13. Write five funny sentences about my dog Max for a school blog.*
2. *Help me with English.*
= e.g. *I'm A2 in English. Ask me ten present perfect questions, one at a time, and correct me.*
3. *Make a birthday message.*
= e.g. *Write a funny birthday message for my friend Sara, who loves football, in under 30 words.*
4. *Tell me about volcanoes.*
= e.g. *I'm 15 with a science test on Friday. Explain how volcanoes erupt in five simple steps.*

Two Truths and a Hallucination:

Write three facts about yourself: two true and one made up. Your classmates ask questions to find the hallucination.

① This is a fun filler game for the end of the class. It practises questions and past tenses and reuses “hallucination” and “make up”. Give students two minutes to write; then each one reads their facts, the others ask up to three questions (*When did you...?*) and vote. Model it first with three facts about yourself.

Example: 1. *I have met a famous footballer.* 2. *I can't swim.* 3. *I once ate twelve pancakes for breakfast.*

Extra Speaking:

Ask and answer the questions if you have extra time.

1. Should schools let students use AI for homework? What rules would you make?
2. Is it OK to use AI to make a funny picture of a friend? What if they don't want you to?
3. Would you ever be friends with an AI? Why do you think some people are?
4. If an AI agent buys the wrong thing for you, whose fault is it?
5. Should songs made by AI be allowed in the music charts?