

Prompt Tennis • Variant A • WHO / WHAT / HOW

Turn a lazy prompt into a useful one.

Your mission: take the prompt most of us actually type — “help with maths” — and improve it in three moves. WHO. WHAT. HOW. Same AI tool. Much better answer.

Start the rally

Copy the AI prompt

YOUR RALLY SCORE

0 XP

Level 1: Ball Picker

Open AI tool

Run bad prompt

Add WHO

Add WHAT

How this game works

Prompt Tennis is simple. You hit one prompt to AI. AI hits an answer back. You hit another prompt to AI. AI hits an answer back. Three moves later, you can see the difference.

The point is not to memorise one maths prompt. The point is to learn a pattern you can use in any subject.

Add WHAT

Add HOW

Build your own

1 Open your court

Open ChatGPT or Claude. Either one works for this rally.

You do not need a paid account. You do not need a special tool. You only need one AI chat window and about 15 minutes.

THOUGHT BULB

A prompt is not a magic spell. It is closer to talking to a good teacher. The better you explain what you need, the better the help gets.

☐

I opened ChatGPT or Claude in a new tab.

2

Serve the bad prompt

Start with what most students actually type.

BAD PROMPT

help with maths

Copy bad prompt

Paste it into AI. Read the answer. It will probably help a little. But it will also be generic, because AI has no idea who you are, what you are stuck on, or how you want help.

CAUTION BOARD

If AI gives you a long answer that does not match your actual problem, do not blame AI immediately. First check the prompt. Usually, the prompt gave AI almost nothing to work with.

☐

I ran the bad prompt and noticed the answer was too general.

3 **Move 1: Add WHO**

Tell AI who is asking.

A Class 6 student, a Class 10 board student, and an engineering student all mean different things by “maths”. AI does not know which one you are unless you say it.

STEP 1 PROMPT — WHO

I'm a Class 10 CBSE student studying for boards — help with maths.

Copy WHO prompt

COACH NOTE

This answer should be slightly better. AI now knows your level. But it still does not know the exact problem.

☐

I added WHO and compared the new answer with the bad one.

4 Move 2: Add WHAT

Tell AI what you are actually stuck on.

“Maths” is not a problem. It is a whole planet. You need to name the exact thing that is confusing you.

STEP 2 PROMPT — WHO + WHAT

I'm a Class 10 CBSE student studying for boards. I don't understand solving quadratic equations by factorisation. Help me.

Copy WHAT prompt

WHAT SHOULD IMPROVE?

AI should stop giving random maths advice and start talking about quadratic equations. That is the rally getting sharper.

☐

I added WHAT and checked that the answer became more specific.

5 Move 3: Add HOW

Tell AI how you want the answer delivered.

This is the move most people skip. Do you want 5 steps? One example? Simple numbers? No jargon? Say it.

STEP 3 PROMPT — WHO + WHAT + HOW

I'm a Class 10 CBSE student studying for boards. I don't understand solving quadratic equations by factorisation. Explain it in 5 steps with one worked example using simple numbers. Plain English, no jargon.

Copy HOW prompt

THOUGHT BULB

“Plain English, no jargon” is not cheating. It is smart instruction. You are telling AI to teach, not perform.



I added HOW and saw the clearest answer of the rally.

6

Watch the rally

Same topic. Four prompts. Four different levels of usefulness.

Bad serve

help with maths

Too broad

AI gives a generic maths-help answer. Fine, but not very useful.

Move 1

I'm a Class 10 CBSE student studying for boards – help with maths.

Better level

AI now knows your class and exam context. Still not enough.

Move 2

I don't understand solving quadratic equations by factorisation.

Better target

AI now knows the exact topic. The answer should become focused.

Move 3

Explain it in 5 steps with one worked example using simple numbers. Plain English, no jargon.

Best delivery

AI now knows how to teach you. This is the reusable pattern.

WHY THIS WORKS

A prompt is a conversation. AI needs what a good teacher needs — who you are, what you're stuck on, and how you want help. Adding all three takes 30 seconds and saves five minutes.

7 **Copy this into AI to generate your Prompt Tennis answers**

This prompt asks AI to run the full rally and compare the outputs.

Use this when you want AI to help you create a Prompt Tennis piece from any lazy prompt. Replace the subject and problem with yours.

PRODUCTION PROMPT FOR CHATGPT OR CLAUDE

You are helping me create a Vanguard Scholar-style Prompt Tennis piece for a Grade 9 or Grade 10 student.

Task: Start with one lazy study prompt. Improve it in exactly 3 moves using the WHO / WHAT / HOW arc.

My subject: [write subject here]

My lazy prompt: [write the bad prompt here]

My exact problem: [write what I am stuck on here]

My preferred answer style: [example: 5 steps, one worked example, simple English, no jargon]

Create this:

1. BAD PROMPT — the lazy version.
2. STEP 1 — Add WHO: rewrite the prompt by adding who is asking and what level they are

at.

3. STEP 2 – Add WHAT: rewrite the prompt by adding the exact thing the student is stuck on.

4. STEP 3 – Add HOW: rewrite the prompt by adding how the answer should be delivered.

5. For each of the four prompts, give a short sample of what AI would likely answer.

6. After each answer, explain in one sentence why it is better or weaker than the previous one.

7. End with one paragraph called “Why this works”.

Rules:

- Use simple English.
- Do not use jargon.
- Do not give a full homework answer to submit.
- The final prompt must help me understand, not copy.
- Make each step visibly better than the one before. If a step is not clearly better, rebuild it.

Copy AI generation prompt

CAUTION BOARD

The AI output is your draft, not your final brain. Read each step. If Step 2 is not clearly better than Step 1, ask AI to rebuild the example.

8 **Build your own Prompt Tennis rally**

Now choose your subject and create your own WHO / WHAT / HOW arc.

Subject

Example: Science

Your lazy prompt

Example: help with chemistry

WHO are you?

Example: I am a Class 9 ICSE student

WHAT are you stuck on?

Example: I don't understand balancing chemical equations

HOW do you want help?

Example: Explain in 5 steps with one easy example

Your rally preview

Bad: [your lazy prompt]

Step 1 – WHO: [who you are] – [lazy prompt]

Step 2 – WHAT: [who you are]. [what you are stuck on]. Help me.

Step 3 – HOW: [who you are]. [what you are stuck on]. [how you want help].

☐

I built my own WHO / WHAT / HOW prompt rally.

9 Optional side quest: make the web page or card

Turn your prompt rally into something another student can learn from.

Your final output can be a Canva card, a WhatsApp image, a printed instruction card, or a tiny HTML page. Keep it clean. The prompt arc is the hero.

TINY HTML TEMPLATE FOR YOUR PROMPT TENNIS OUTPUT

```
<section style="font-family:Arial,sans-serif;max-width:800px;margin:0
auto;padding:24px;background:#FAFAF7;color:#1A1A1A;">
  <h1>Prompt Tennis: WHO / WHAT / HOW</h1>
  <p>Start with a lazy prompt. Improve it in three moves.</p>

  <h2>Bad Prompt</h2>
  <p><strong>[write your bad prompt]</strong></p>

  <h2>Step 1 – WHO</h2>
  <p>[add who is asking]</p>

  <h2>Step 2 – WHAT</h2>
  <p>[add what you are stuck on]</p>

  <h2>Step 3 – HOW</h2>
  <p>[add how you want the answer]</p>

  <h2>Why this works</h2>
  <p>AI needs what a good teacher needs: who you are, what you are stuck on, and how you
want help.</p>
</section>
```

Copy mini HTML

DESIGN RULE

Make it readable from across a school computer lab. Big text. Simple layout. One idea per section.

Final self-check

No marks. No submission. Just check whether the rally actually taught you something.

- ☐ Did each prompt become clearly better than the one before?
- ☐ Could a Class 9 student understand your final prompt?
- ☐ Does the final prompt help someone understand, not copy an answer?
- ☐ Did you save your improved prompt somewhere?

Your 5-minute finish

Save your improved prompt. Then try WHO / WHAT / HOW on your next AI question today.

Smart questions. Smarter answers. You, upgraded.

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Vanguard Scholar — Smart questions. Smarter answers. You, upgraded.

Made with care. No data collected.

Questions? Teachers and parents, write to us. Students, speak with your teacher or a grown-up first.