

Who Decides What AI Believes Is True?

A teacher-led discussion catalyst for Grades 9–12. Students interrogate an AI answer's origins: who wrote the source, who selected it, who shaped it, and who might be missing?

Teacher note

This is a balanced class discussion about authority, sources, and AI literacy. Keep examples school-safe and neutral: science, sports, language usage, school rules, historical timelines, or textbook-style facts.

Avoid political and religious examples. The goal is not to “win” a debate. The goal is to see that AI answers have a source-behind-the-source.

1 40-minute class flow

Teacher-led. Students discuss, question, and write a final rule.

0–5 min Hook

Show one AI answer and ask: “Where did this answer come from?”

5–15 min Live prompt

Ask AI to explain the source chain behind a fact.

15–30 min Class

debate

Students discuss whose voices AI may carry and whose it may miss.

30–40 min Decision

question

Class answers: who should decide what counts as true?

☐ Class understands today’s question: AI answers come from somewhere.

2 Teacher live prompt

Use this in ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, or Perplexity in front of the class.

Class-safe fact or claim to interrogate

Example: The water cycle includes evaporation, condensation, and precipitation.

COPY-PASTE LIVE PROMPT

When AI states this fact: "The water cycle includes evaporation, condensation, and precipitation.", where did it come from? Explain:

1. Who might have written the sources behind it?
2. Who might have chosen which sources were included?
3. Who might be left out?
4. What should a student check before trusting it?

Keep the example neutral and school-safe. Avoid politics and religion.

TEACHER MOVE

After AI answers, do not ask "Is the answer right?" first. Ask: **"What is the answer standing on?"**

☐

Class asked the source-behind-the-source question.

3 **Worked example: interrogate an AI answer**

Use a neutral school-safe example before students try their own.

SAMPLE AI ANSWER

“The water cycle includes evaporation, condensation, and precipitation. Water evaporates from oceans and lakes, forms clouds, and returns as rain.”

1

Who wrote it?

Textbook writers, science educators, websites, encyclopedia authors, curriculum writers.

2

Who chose it?

Search systems, AI training choices, dataset builders, ranking systems, tool designers.

3

Who is missing?

Local water problems, regional examples, indigenous/local knowledge, recent events, classroom-specific details.

4

What to check?

Textbook chapter, teacher explanation, diagram labels, local context if used in an assignment.

THOUGHT BULB

Even when an AI answer is broadly correct, it may still hide whose view shaped it and what context it leaves out.

- ☐ Class mapped who wrote, chose, and might be left out of an AI answer.

4 Page 3 escalation: who should decide?

Students now move from “where did it come from?” to “who should decide what counts as reliable?”

A

Experts?

They know the field deeply, but experts can disagree and may not know every local context.

B

Tool companies?

They design systems and safety rules, but they are not your teacher, textbook, or community.

C

Users and teachers?

They bring purpose, context, and judgement, but they still need evidence and humility.

Debate side 1

AI should rely mainly on expert and official sources.

Why this sounds reasonable: it reduces random misinformation.

Debate side 2

AI should show uncertainty and let users check sources.

Why this sounds reasonable: students learn judgement, not blind trust.

What to question: whose experts, which sources, and what happens to local knowledge?

What to question: will users actually check, and how should AI guide them?

TEACHER BOUNDARY

Keep examples neutral. Do not turn this into a political or religious debate. Use class-safe topics: textbooks, science concepts, sports facts, local history method, grammar rules, school-safe current examples.

☐ Class debated who should decide what counts as reliable for AI answers.

5 Discussion questions

Choose 3–5 depending on time and class level.

QUESTION BANK

1. When AI states a fact, what is the difference between “sounds true” and “is supported”?
2. Who might have written the source behind the source?
3. What kinds of knowledge might be missing from AI answers?
4. Should AI say “I’m not sure” more often? When?
5. What should a student check before using an AI answer in schoolwork?
6. Who should decide what counts as reliable: experts, teachers, tool builders, users, or all of them?

Class rule draft

Example: When AI gives a fact, we ask where it came from, who might be missing, and what source we should check before using it.

☐

Class drafted one rule for using AI facts responsibly.

6 **Four-page class kit preview**

Use this as a printable structure for the lesson.

Page 1 • Hook

AI answers have origins

Teacher shows an AI answer and asks: “Where did this answer come from?”

Students write one guess: textbook? website? expert? random internet text? training data?

Source-behind-the-source

Teacher runs the live prompt. Students identify who wrote, who selected, and who may be missing.

Key phrase: “What is the answer standing on?”

Who should decide?

Class debates authority: experts, teachers, tool builders, users, source evidence, and context.

Balanced stance: no single answer should be trusted without evidence and judgement.

My AI truth rule

Students complete: “Before I trust an AI fact, I will ask _____.”

Teacher collects or discusses 3 examples aloud.

7 Student exit ticket

End with one small action, not a lecture.

Before I trust an AI fact, I will ask...

Example: Who wrote the source behind this? What source can I check? Whose voice might be missing?

CLASS CLOSER

AI answers are not floating in the air. They carry sources, choices, gaps, and assumptions. Your job is to ask what the answer is standing on.

☐ Students completed the exit ticket.

Teacher wrap

Final board line: **“When AI states a fact, ask: where did it come from, who shaped it, and who might be missing?”**

☐ Class saw that AI answers have a source-behind-the-source.

☐ Class debated authority and reliability without drifting into forbidden topics.

☐ Class ended with one responsible AI fact-checking question.