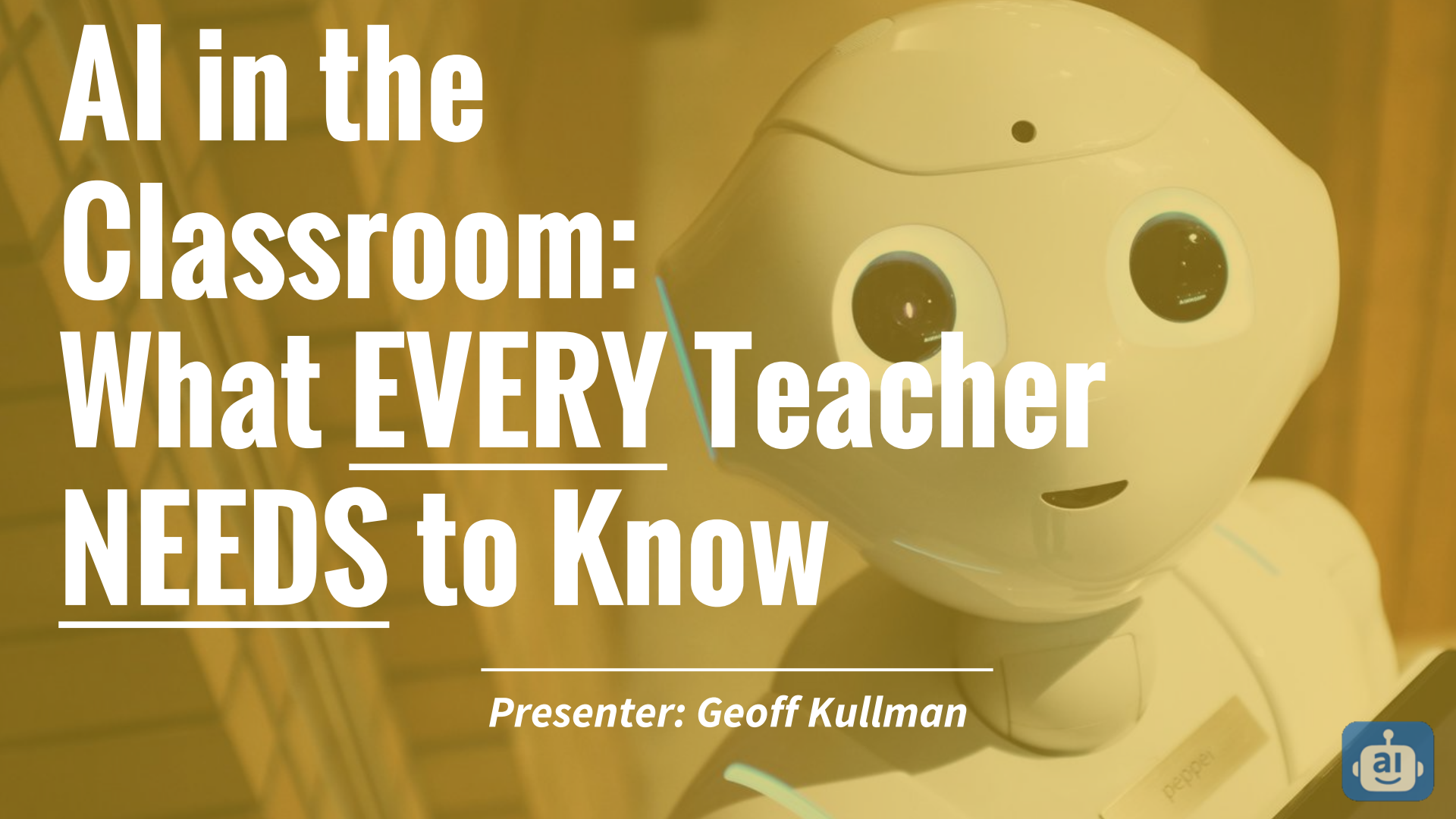
AI in the Classroom: What EVERY Teacher NEEDS to Know



Presenter: Geoff Kullman

Who Am I?

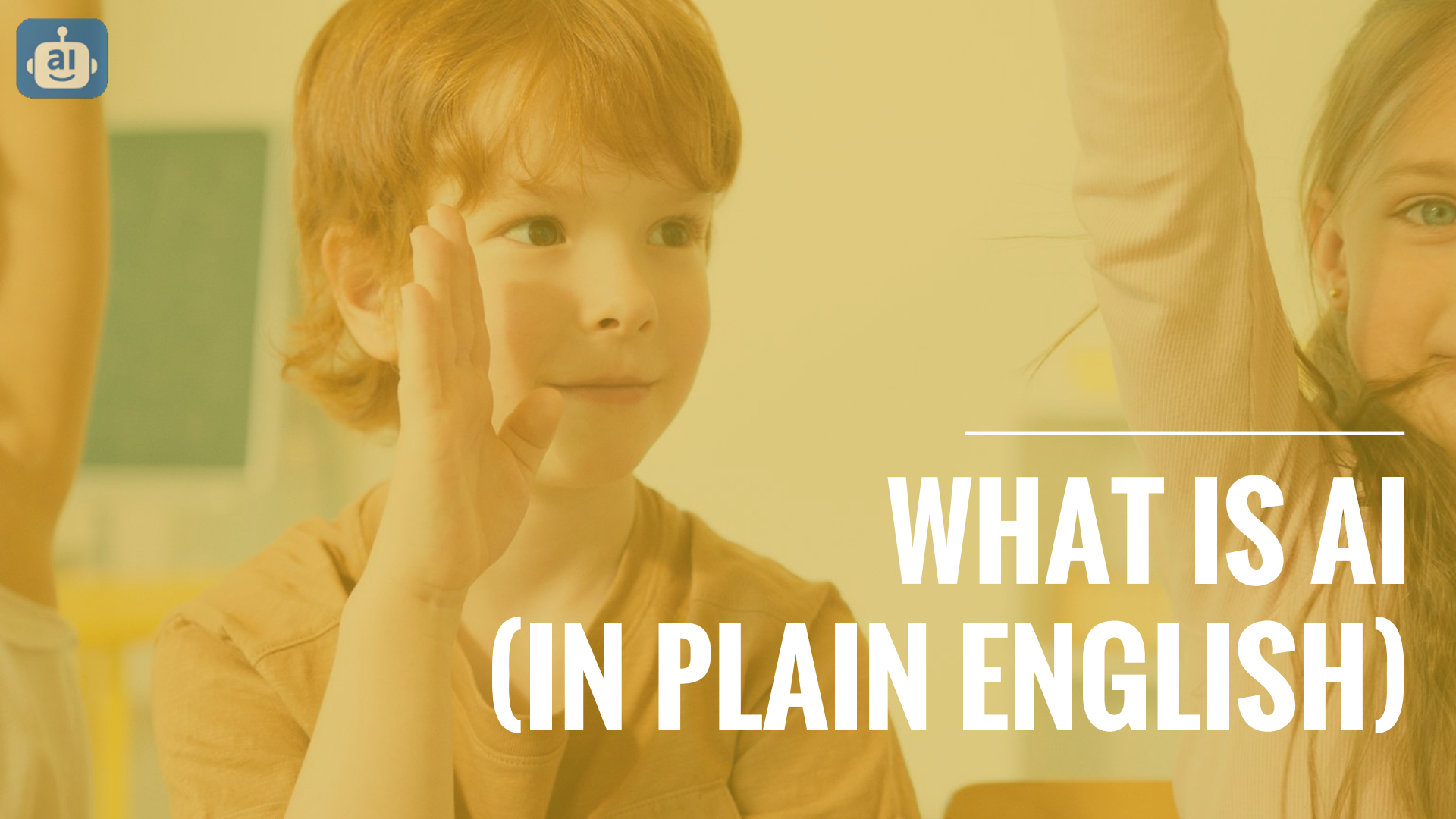
(…and Why You Might Care!)

Geoff Kullman

- *High-level copywriter for a decade*
- *Worked with some amazing clients*
- *…until 2023!*
- *But I WON in 2010…*

Our Outline

1. Welcome ← you are HERE
2. What is AI (in plain English)
3. What's changing in education because of AI
4. Practical classroom uses for teachers
5. Student use: what teachers are already facing
6. Risks, limitations, and red flags
7. Assessments, academic integrity, and more
8. Talking to students (and parents) about AI
9. What every teacher should do next…
10. Q&A ← you are HERE



WHAT IS AI (IN PLAIN ENGLISH)

What is AI?

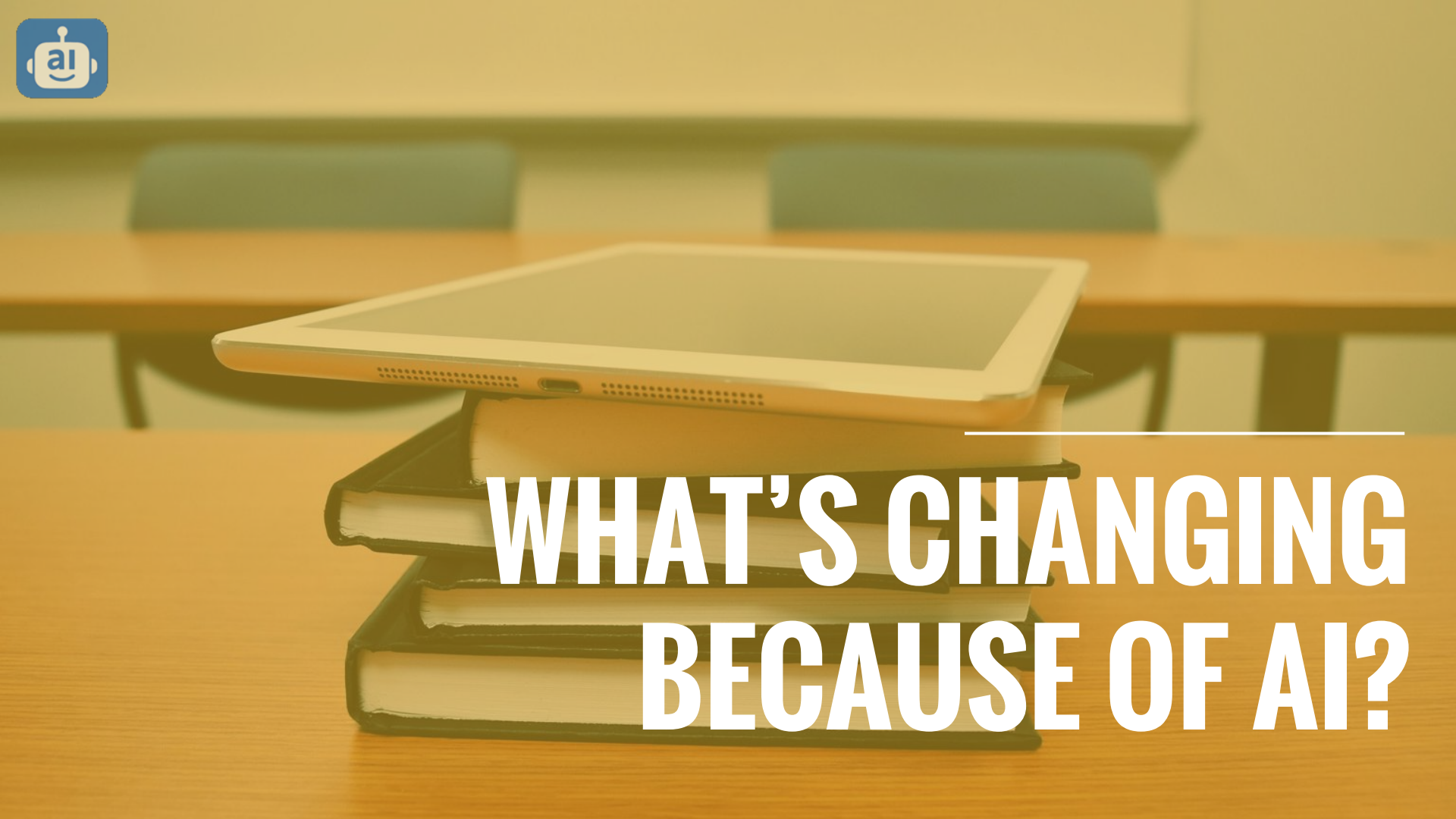
- Before we decide what to do with AI, we need a clear picture of what it actually is.
- AI is a tool that predicts, generates, sorts, and suggests
  - *Text*
  - *Images*
  - *Summaries*
  - *Recommendations*
  - *Classifications*
- December 2022, podcast episode of my conversation w/ Austin Distel @ Jarvis (Jasper)*
  - Bots scraped the entire internet to learn language patterns, phrases, facts, etc.
  - In many ways, early AI is simply a parrot
- AI is NOT magic… trained on data, trained to organize effectively, sophisticated “telephone”

What is A

- AI isn't new… we've seen it for decades
  - *Autocomplete in emails or texts*
  - *Grammar and spell check on documents*
  - *Netflix/YouTube recommendations*
  - *Spam filters*
  - *Voice assistants*
  - *Playing against the "computer" (since the 80's)*
- What AI tools do you already use? ← **ANSWER!**
- Generative AI creates new content
  - *Writes text* – "write me a 500-word essay about X"
  - *Creates images* – "show me an image of me standing next to Gre
  - *Summarizes text* – "what does this paragraph mean?"
  - *Suggests activities* – "what should my family do this weekend?"
  - *Generates examples* – "create a sample shopping list (or weekly family menu)"
- Generative (discriminative) AI doesn't just repeat info, it uses what it knows to create new responses
  - Opposite is called "predictive AI" – analyzes & learns to predict future outcomes w/ high accuracy

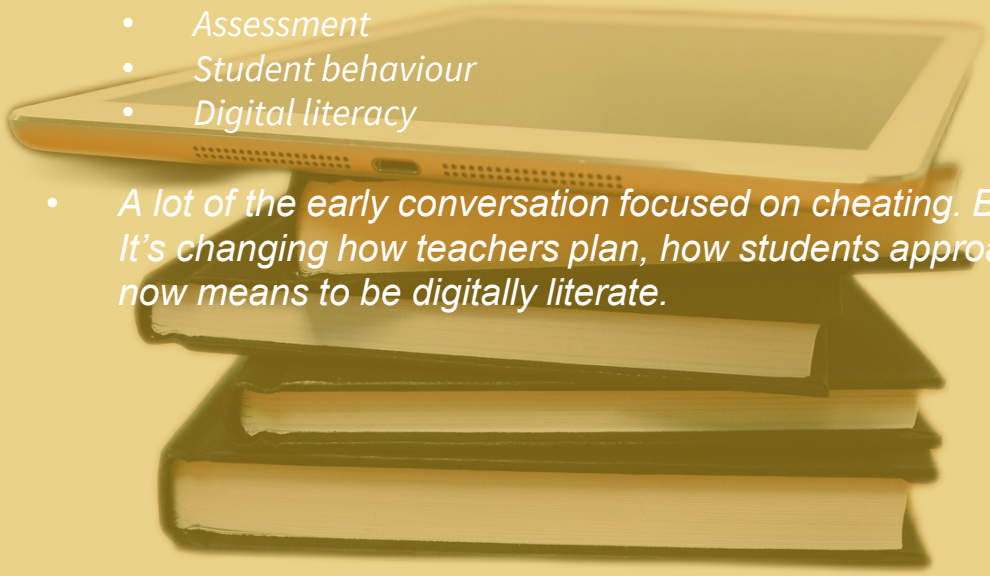
What is AI?

- What AI is not
  - *It is not a human brain*
  - *It is not always accurate*
  - *It is not always truthful or ethical on its own*
  - *It does not know your students, your classroom, or your context*
- AI often sounds confident and polished (but *polished* is not the same as *correct*)
  - *Lawyers getting caught citing case law that doesn't exist*
  - *Students getting caught citing references that don't exist*
  - *Hallucinations – not from bad information, but because it's looking to create plausible language*
    - *AI is trying to produce the most likely answer, not a verified one*
    - *Newer models (GPT 5.4) are less likely to hallucinate, but still not perfect*
- These hallucinations can still…
  - Spread misinformation
  - Create false confidence
  - Waste teacher time
  - Mislead students who trust too much


WHAT'S CHANGING
BECAUSE OF AI?

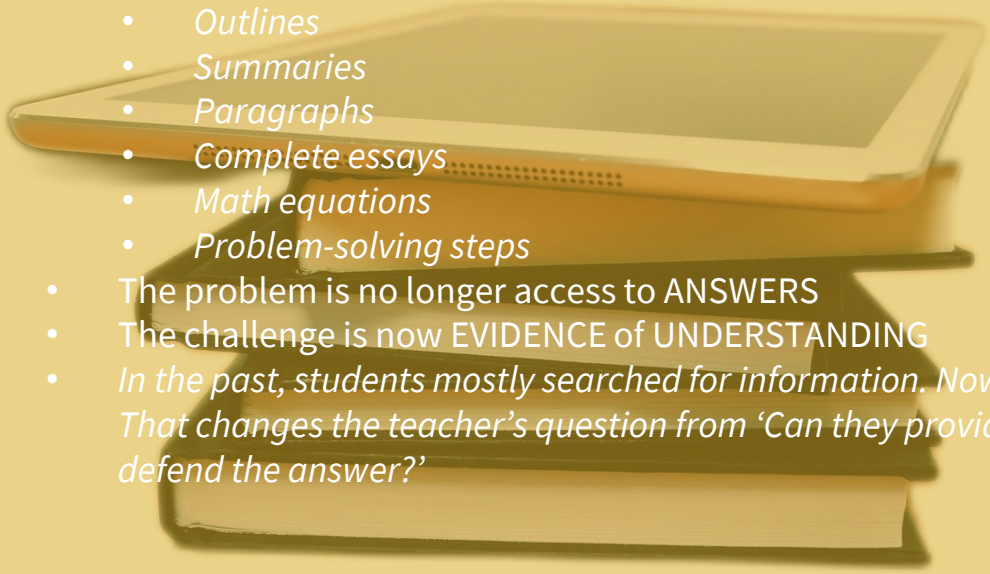
What's Changing?

- AI is changing more than student work
  - *Teaching*
  - *Assessment*
  - *Student behaviour*
  - *Digital literacy*



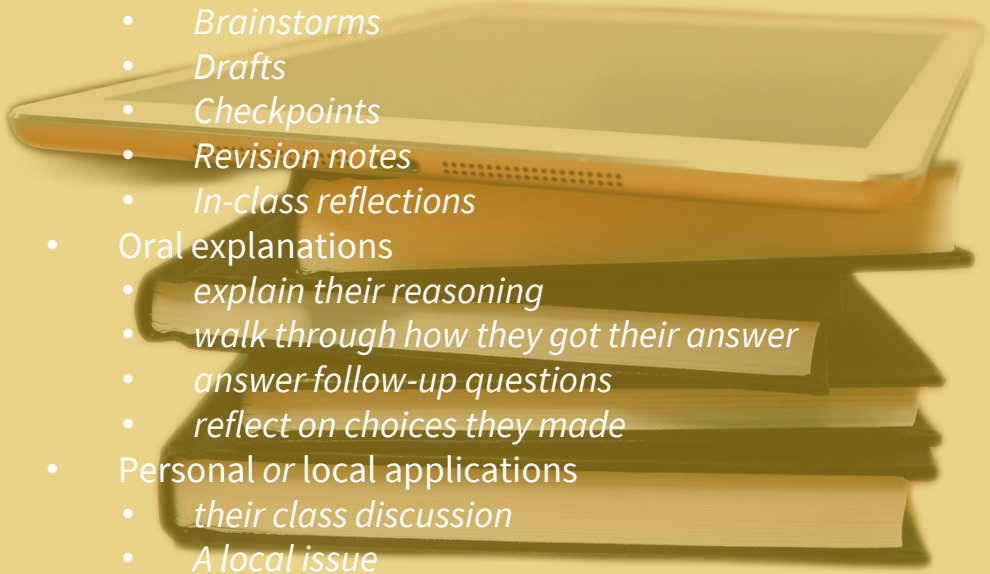
- *A lot of the early conversation focused on cheating. But AI is affecting much more than assignments. It's changing how teachers plan, how students approach work, how we assess learning, and what it now means to be digitally literate.*

What's Changing?



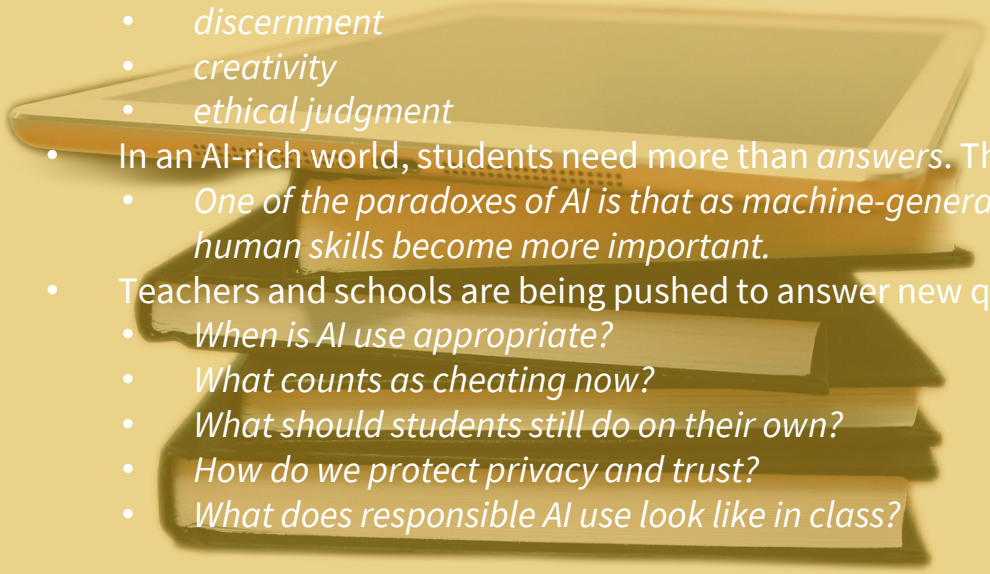
- Students now have a *thinking* shortcut
- AI can now generate…
  - *Outlines*
  - *Summaries*
  - *Paragraphs*
  - *Complete essays*
  - *Math equations*
  - *Problem-solving steps*
- The problem is no longer access to ANSWERS
- The challenge is now EVIDENCE of UNDERSTANDING
- *In the past, students mostly searched for information. Now they can generate polished responses in seconds. That changes the teacher's question from 'Can they provide the answer?' to 'Can they think, explain, apply, and defend the answer?'*

What's Changing?



- We need to assess the PROCESS more than the final PRODUCT
  - *Outlines*
  - *Brainstorms*
  - *Drafts*
  - *Checkpoints*
  - *Revision notes*
  - *In-class reflections*
- Oral explanations
  - *explain their reasoning*
  - *walk through how they got their answer*
  - *answer follow-up questions*
  - *reflect on choices they made*
- Personal *or* local applications
  - *their class discussion*
  - *A local issue*
  - *a recent lab or activity*
  - *a specific text discussed in class*

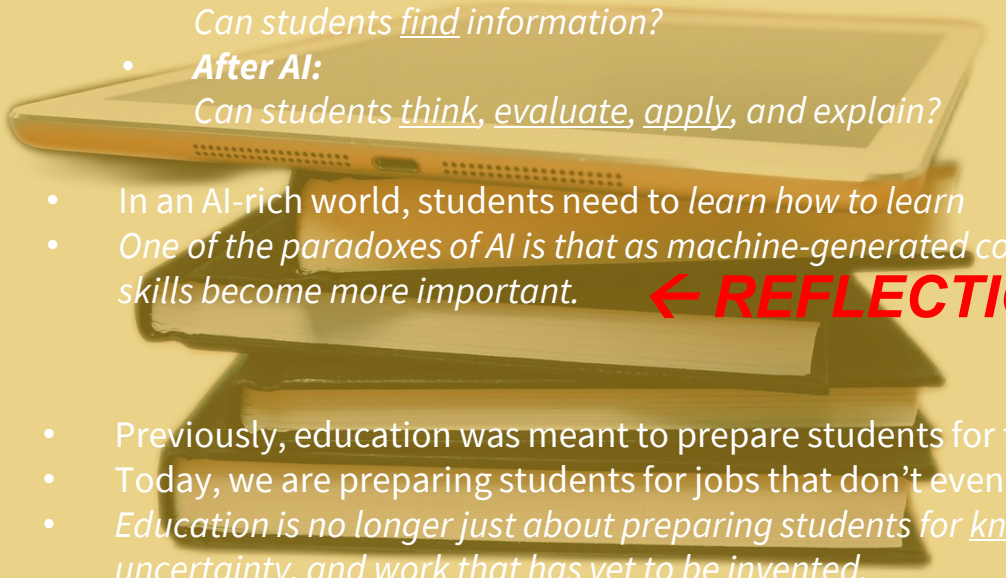
What's Changing?



- AI raises the value of *human* judgment
  - *critical thinking*
  - *discernment*
  - *creativity*
  - *ethical judgment*
- In an AI-rich world, students need more than *answers*. They need *judgment*.
  - *One of the paradoxes of AI is that as machine-generated content becomes easier to produce, deeply human skills become more important.*
- Teachers and schools are being pushed to answer new questions
  - *When is AI use appropriate?*
  - *What counts as cheating now?*
  - *What should students still do on their own?*
  - *How do we protect privacy and trust?*
  - *What does responsible AI use look like in class?*

- *AI is not only giving us new tools. It's forcing schools to make new* judgment *calls. And many educators are being asked to make those calls before policy has fully caught up.*

What's Changing?



- The BIG Shift
  - ***Before AI:***
    Can students find information?
  - ***After AI:***
    Can students think, evaluate, apply, and explain?

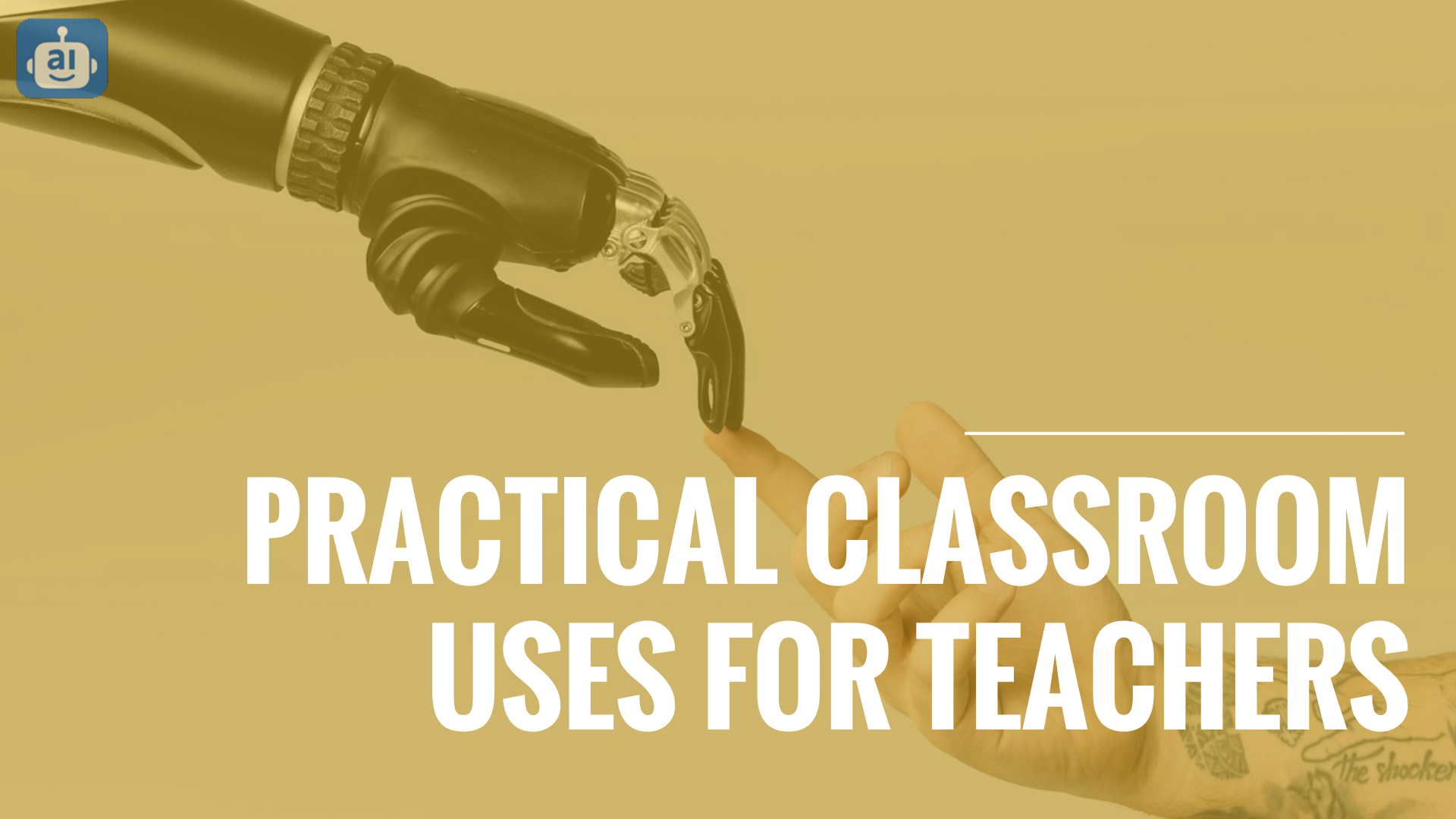
- In an AI-rich world, students need to *learn how to learn*
- *One of the paradoxes of AI is that as machine-generated content becomes easier to produce, deeply human skills become more important.* ← **REFLECTION**

- Previously, education was meant to prepare students for their future career (learning how to learn)
- Today, we are preparing students for jobs that don't even exist… yet
- *Education is no longer just about preparing students for known careers. It must also prepare them for change, uncertainty, and work that has yet to be invented.*

What's Changing?

- So… if AI is changing the classroom *this* much, where can it actually be *useful* in the classroom?

THOUGHTS?



PRACTICAL CLASSROOM USES FOR TEACHERS

Practical Uses

- Where AI can actually help…
- AI is best used as a *support* tool, not a *substitute* teacher
  - ***Helpful for:***
    - Drafting
    - Brainstorming / organizing
    - Adapting
    - generating options / ideas
  - ***Not a replacement for:***
    - professional judgment
    - student relationships
    - classroom context
    - ethical decisions
    - final approval

  - The sweet spot for AI is not replacing teachers. It's reducing friction around repetitive or first-draft work.

Practical Uses

- We're going to look at practical AI uses in 3 primary BUCKETS
  - BUCKET 1: Planning Support
    - AI can help teachers get past the "blank page" faster…
      - *brainstorm lesson ideas*
      - *generate hooks or warm-ups*
      - *create discussion questions*
      - *draft rubrics*
      - *suggest examples at different levels*
      - *simplify or extend a concept*

- One of the easiest ways teachers can use AI is in planning. Not to hand over lesson design entirely, but to generate a strong starting point.
  - *We've already done this for years; we just called them "Lesson Plan books"*

Practical Uses

- BUCKET 2: Differentiation & Accessibility
  - AI can help make content accessible… without starting from scratch every time:
    - *rewriting directions more simply*
    - *creating sentence starters*
    - *generating exemplars*
    - *offering alternative explanations*
    - *supporting translation or vocabulary scaffolds*

- This is one of the most promising areas. Teachers already know differentiation matters, but it takes time. AI can help produce multiple versions of the same material much faster.
  - *Copy/paste your lesson plan into an AI tool and have it translate it to Korean or simpler English, or a side-by-side translated version**

Practical Uses

- BUCKET 3: Communication & admin support
  - AI can draft… teacher needs to always review!
    - *parent emails**
    - *weekly updates*
    - *newsletter blurbs*
    - *TTOC plans*
    - *quiz questions*
    - *feedback comment banks* – you're already buying them on TPT anyway!
    - *checklists and templates*

- This is often where teachers feel the most immediate time savings — not because AI is doing the hard relational work, but because it helps with first drafts and repetitive wording.

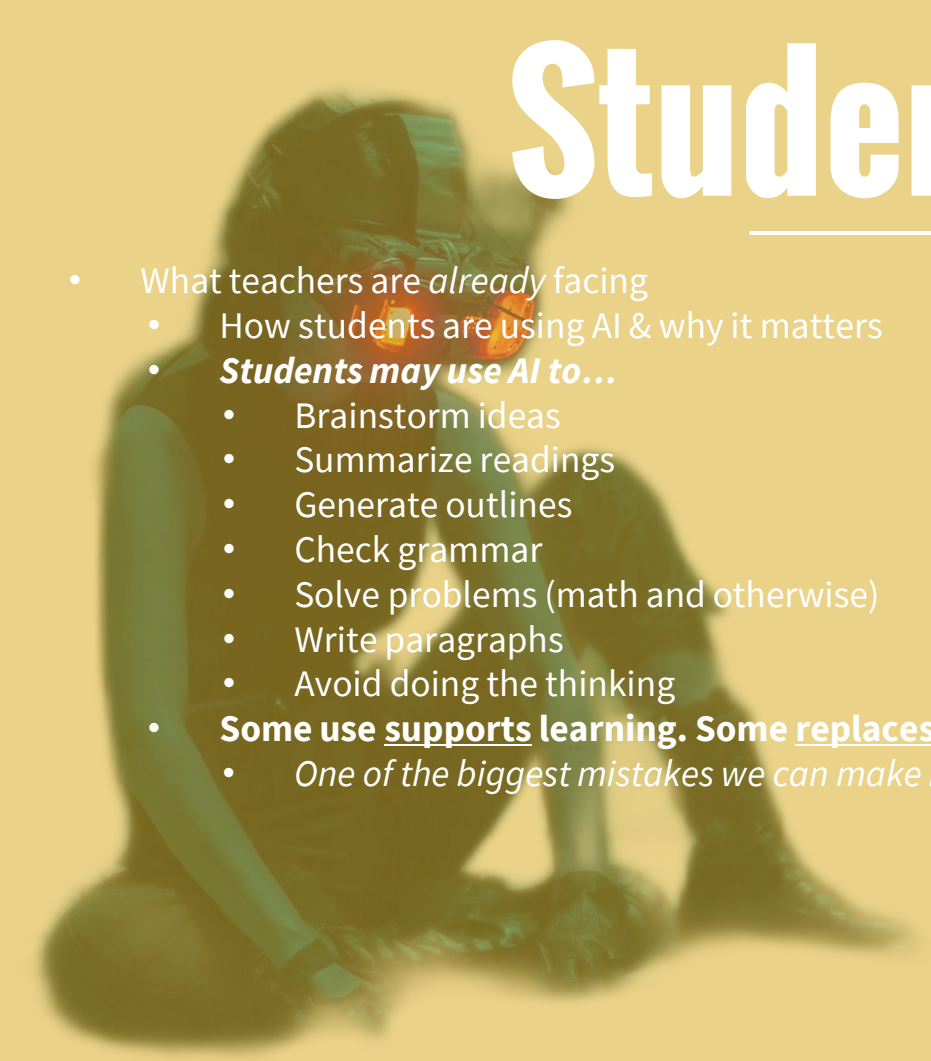
**Remember to leave out student names and use district-approved tools where possible*

Practical Uses

- What this can look like in real life…
  - **Instead of:** spending 45 minutes drafting a parent email
    Try: asking AI for a warm, clear first draft
  - **Instead of:** building 3 reading levels from scratch
    Try: adapting one teacher-created version for support and extension
  - **Instead of:** staring at a blank planning page for hours
    Try: generating a lesson outline to revise and personalize
- **The biggest gain is often not that AI does everything. It's that it gets you moving faster.**
  - *Again, remember to use district-approved AI tools & follow district AI rules where possible*
- Use AI where the risk is *low* and the time savings are *real*
  - *Lower risk uses:*
    - Brainstorming
    - Rewording
    - Summarizing
    - Generating options
    - Crafting drafts
  - *Higher risk uses:*
    - grading complex student thinking alone
    - sensitive parent communication
    - behaviour/discipline decisions
    - IEP-related wording
    - mental health concerns

STUDENT USE: TOMORROW'S CLASSROOM... TODAY!

Student Uses



- What teachers are *already* facing
  - How students are using AI & why it matters
  - ***Students may use AI to…***
    - Brainstorm ideas
    - Summarize readings
    - Generate outlines
    - Check grammar
    - Solve problems (math and otherwise)
    - Write paragraphs
    - Avoid doing the thinking
  - **Some use supports learning. Some replaces it.**
    - *One of the biggest mistakes we can make is treating all student AI use as the same. It isn't.*

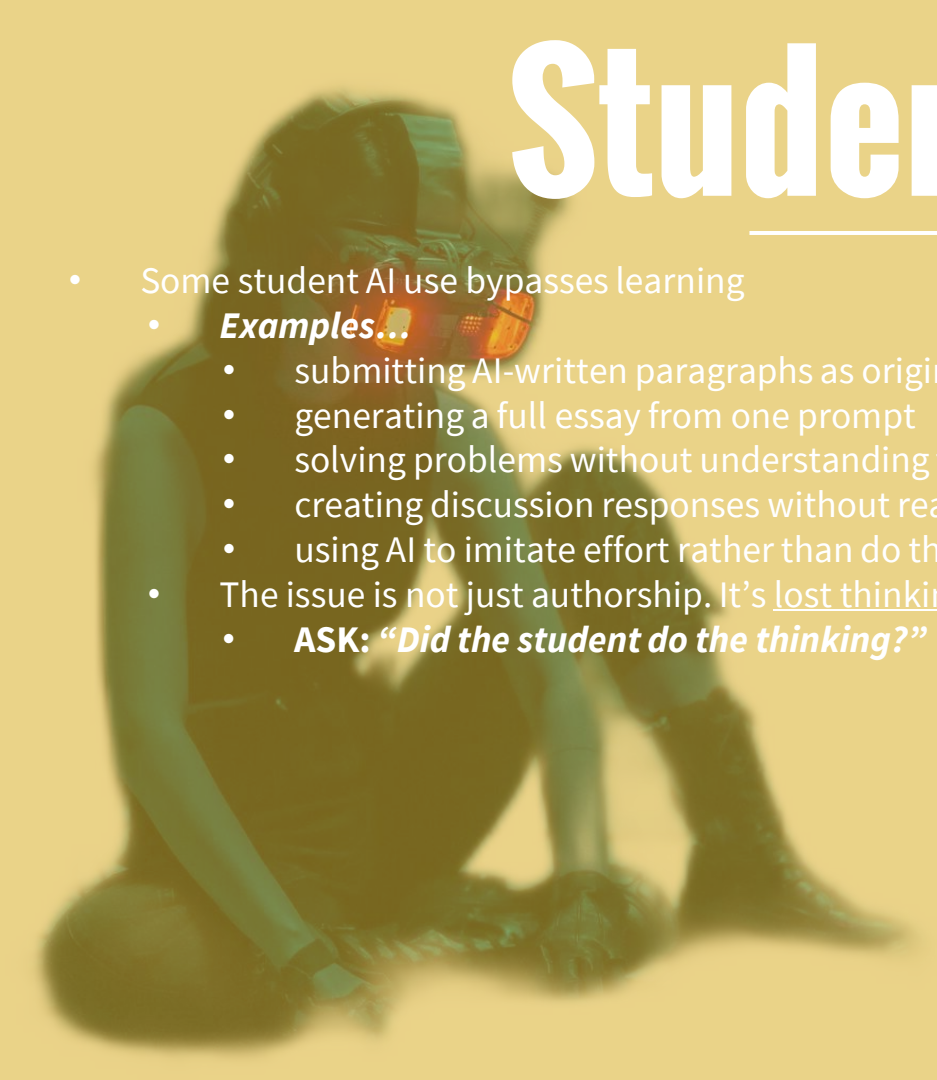
Student Uses

- Not all student AI use is the same

Supportive Helps a student get unstuck *Examples:* • *explain a concept more simply* • *define vocabulary* • *translate instructions*	**Collaborative** Helps a student develop or refine ideas *Examples:* • *brainstorm possible topics* • *suggest stronger wording* • *help organize an outline*
Substitutive Does the thinking or writing for the student *Examples:* • *writes the paragraph* • *solves the problem* • *generates the response*	**Deceptive** Hides authorship or bypasses learning entirely *Examples:* • *submits AI work as original* • *uses AI without disclosure* • *pretends the thinking was theirs*

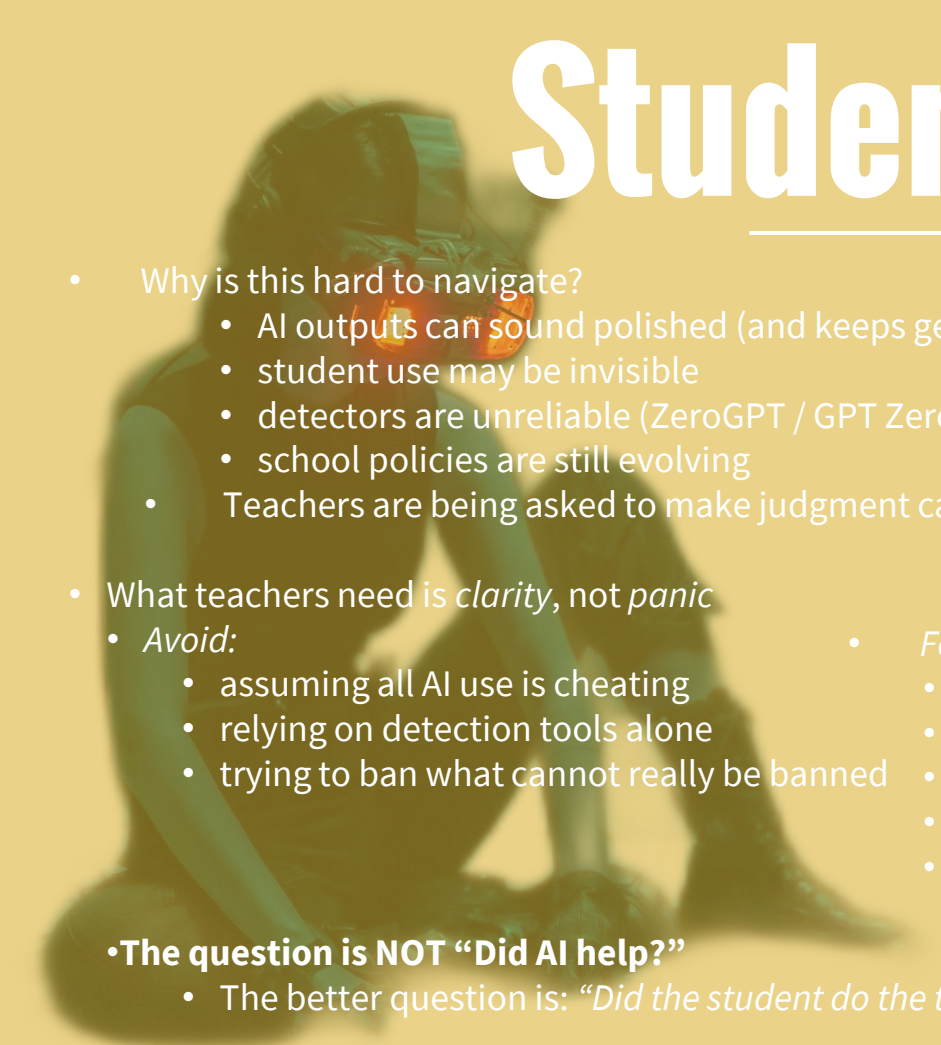
- **The key question**: Did the *student* do the *thinking*?

Student Uses



- Some student AI use bypasses learning
  - ***Examples…***
    - submitting AI-written paragraphs as original work
    - generating a full essay from one prompt
    - solving problems without understanding them
    - creating discussion responses without reading
    - using AI to imitate effort rather than do the work
  - The issue is not just authorship. It's lost thinking.
    - **ASK: *"Did the student do the thinking?"***

Student Uses



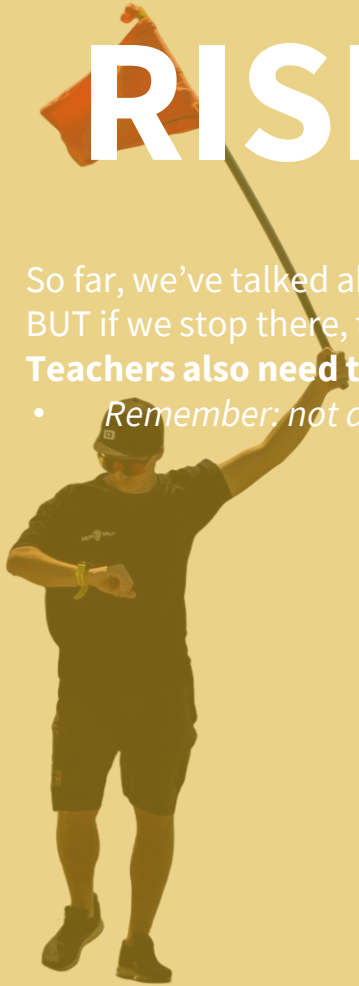
- Why is this hard to navigate?
  - AI outputs can sound polished (and keeps getting better)
  - student use may be invisible
  - detectors are unreliable (ZeroGPT / GPT Zero / TurnItIn)
  - school policies are still evolving
- Teachers are being asked to make judgment calls in a moving landscape.

- What teachers need is *clarity*, not *panic*
  - *Avoid:*
    - assuming all AI use is cheating
    - relying on detection tools alone
    - trying to ban what cannot really be banned
  - *Focus on:*
    - clear expectations
    - visible thinking
    - transparent use
    - better task design
    - professional judgment

- **The question is NOT "Did AI help?"**
  - The better question is: *"Did the student do the thinking?"*

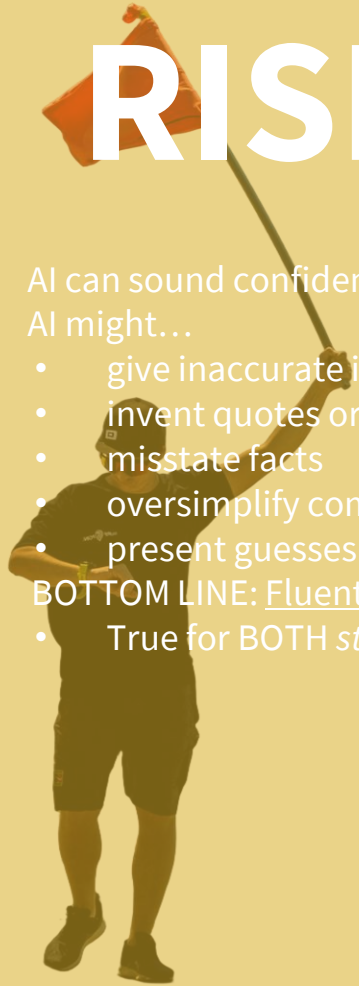
RISKS, LIMITATIONS & RED FLAGS

RISKS vs. REWARDS



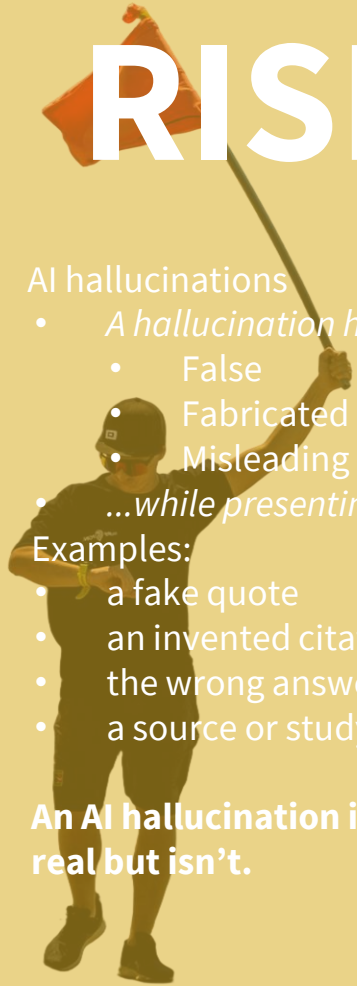
- So far, we've talked about what AI is, what's changing, and where it can be useful.
- BUT if we stop there, the picture is incomplete.
- **Teachers also need to understand where AI can mislead, oversimplify, or create new problems.**
  - *Remember: not all AI usage is bad, harmful, or cheating.*

RISKS vs. REWARDS



- AI can sound confident and still be wrong
- AI might…
  - give inaccurate information
  - invent quotes or citations
  - misstate facts
  - oversimplify complex ideas
  - present guesses as answers
- BOTTOM LINE: Fluent does not always mean factual.
  - True for BOTH *students* and *teachers!*

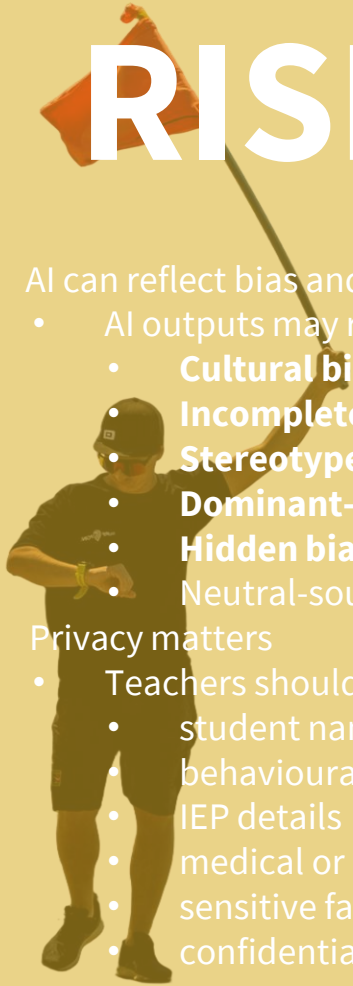
RISKS vs. REWARDS



- AI hallucinations
  - *A hallucination happens when AI generates information that is:*
    - False
    - Fabricated
    - Misleading
  - *...while presenting it as if it were true.*
- Examples:
  - a fake quote
  - an invented citation
  - the wrong answer stated confidently
  - a source or study that does not exist

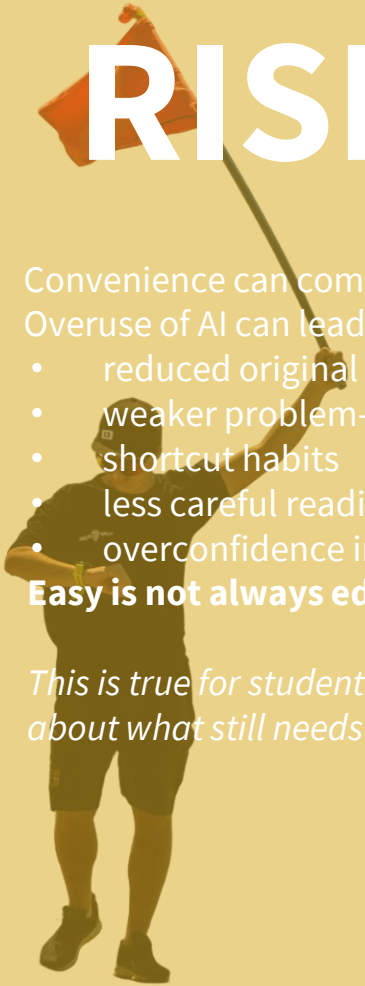
- **An AI hallucination is not just a typo or a small mistake. It's when the AI creates something that sounds real but isn't.**

RISKS vs. REWARDS



- AI can reflect bias and blind spots
  - AI outputs may reflect:
    - **Cultural bias** — assumes one cultural norm is “normal”
    - **Incomplete perspectives** — leaves out important voices or viewpoints
    - **Stereotypes** — repeats familiar gender, racial, or social assumptions
    - **Dominant-language assumptions** — sounds fluent but may not be accessible for multilingual learners
    - **Hidden bias in training data** — reflects patterns and imbalances in the material AI learned from
    - Neutral-sounding output is not always neutral.
- Privacy matters
  - Teachers should be cautious about entering:
    - student names
    - behavioural incidents
    - IEP details
    - medical or mental health information
    - sensitive family situations
    - confidential school information

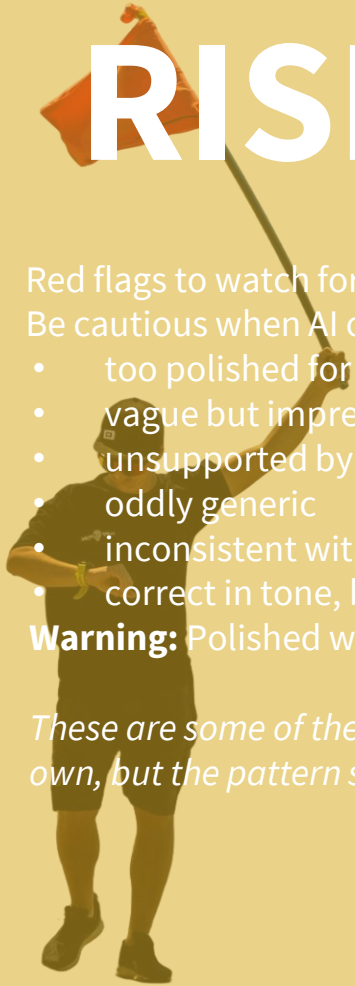
RISKS vs. REWARDS



- Convenience can come at a cost
- Overuse of AI can lead to:
  - reduced original thinking
  - weaker problem-solving stamina
  - shortcut habits
  - less careful reading
  - overconfidence in weak answers
- **Easy is not always educational!**

- *This is true for students, but also for teachers. When a tool makes thinking easier to skip, we have to be intentional about what still needs human effort.*

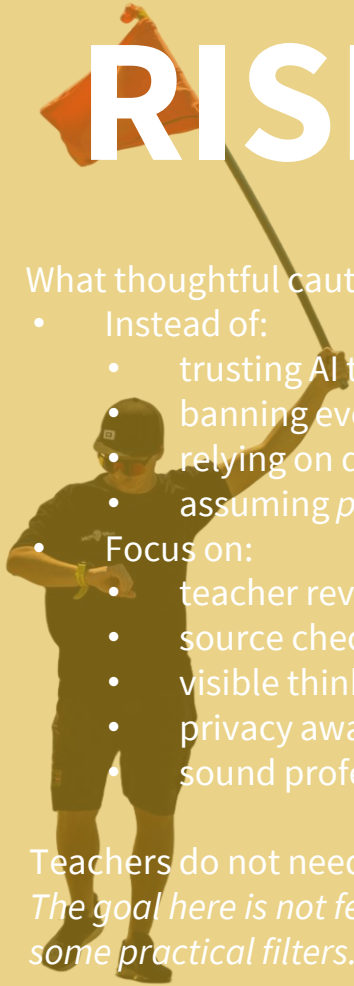
RISKS vs. REWARDS



- Red flags to watch for...
- Be cautious when AI output is:
  - too polished for the student
  - vague but impressive-sounding
  - unsupported by real sources
  - oddly generic
  - inconsistent with what the student can explain
  - correct in tone, but thin in reasoning
- **Warning:** Polished work is not always authentic work.

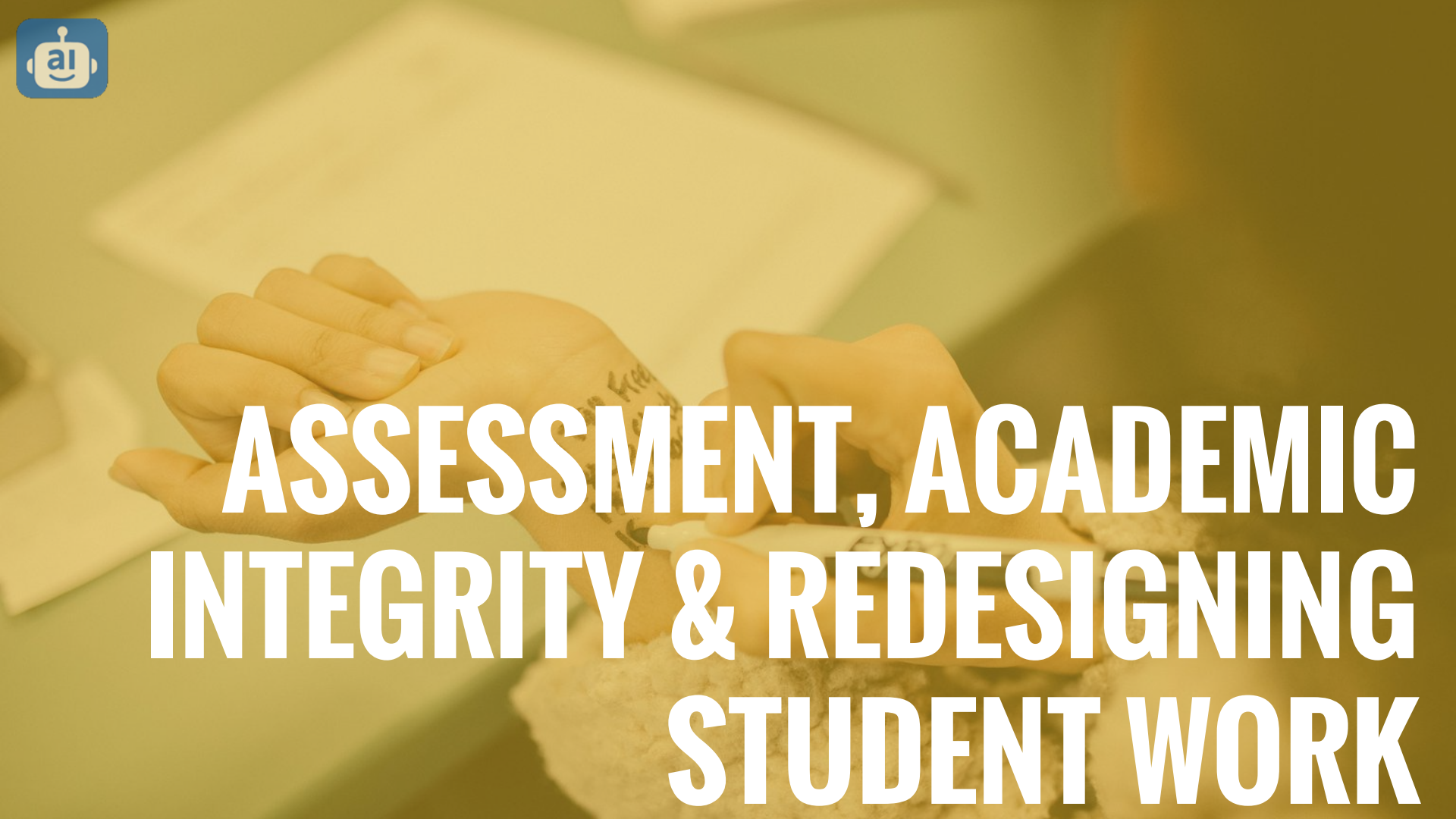
- *These are some of the practical things that signal teachers may notice. None of them proves anything on their own, but the pattern should prompt closer attention.*

RISKS vs. REWARDS



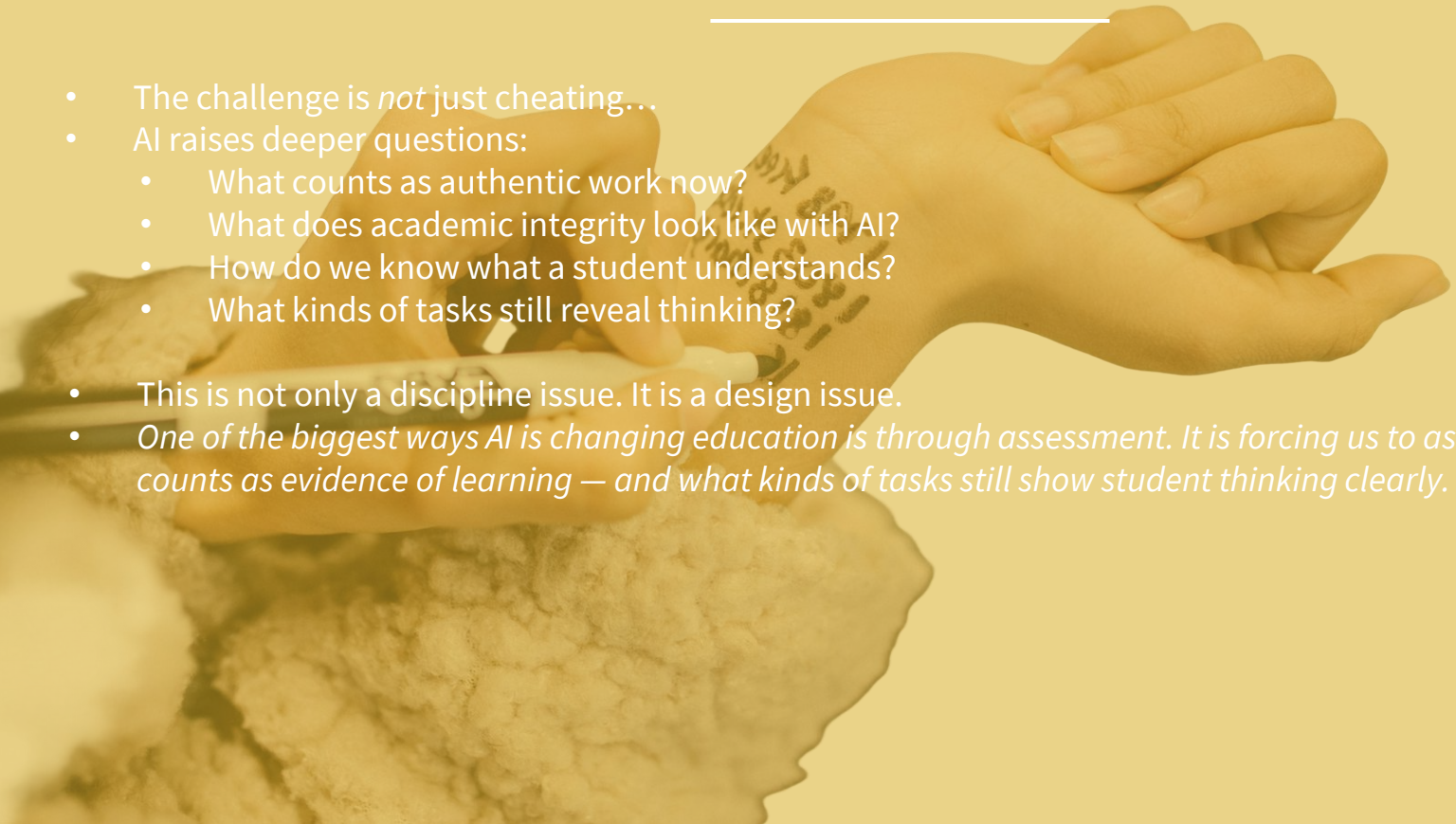
- What thoughtful caution looks like…
  - Instead of:
    - trusting AI too quickly
    - banning everything automatically
    - relying on detectors
    - assuming *polished* means *true*
  - Focus on:
    - teacher review
    - source checking
    - visible thinking
    - privacy awareness
    - sound professional judgment

- Teachers do not need to *panic*. They need to *discern*.
- *The goal here is not fear. It's wise caution. Teachers don't need to know everything about AI, but they do need some practical filters.*



ASSESSMENT, ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & REDESIGNING STUDENT WORK

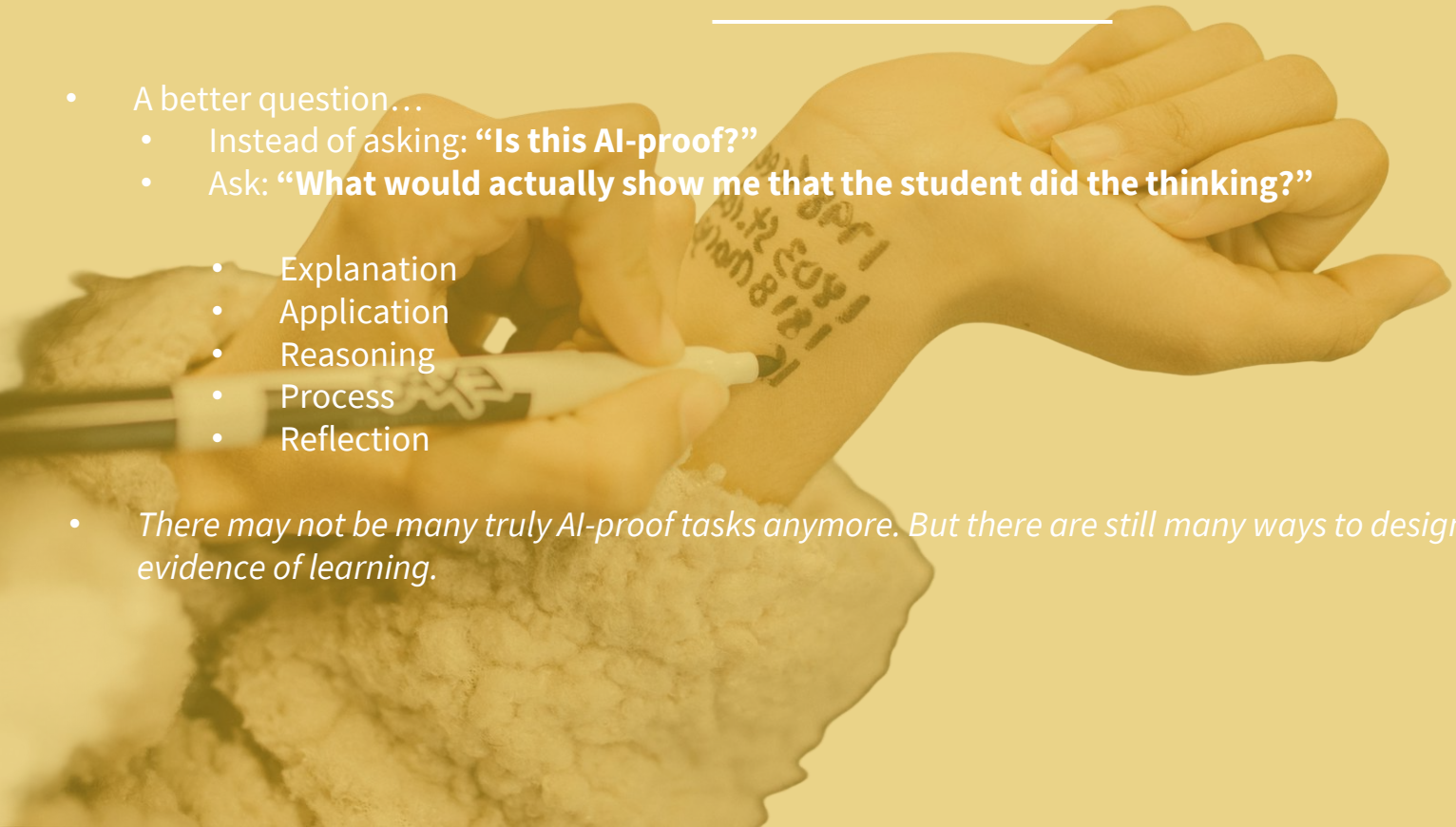
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY



- The challenge is *not* just cheating…
- AI raises deeper questions:
  - What counts as authentic work now?
  - What does academic integrity look like with AI?
  - How do we know what a student understands?
  - What kinds of tasks still reveal thinking?

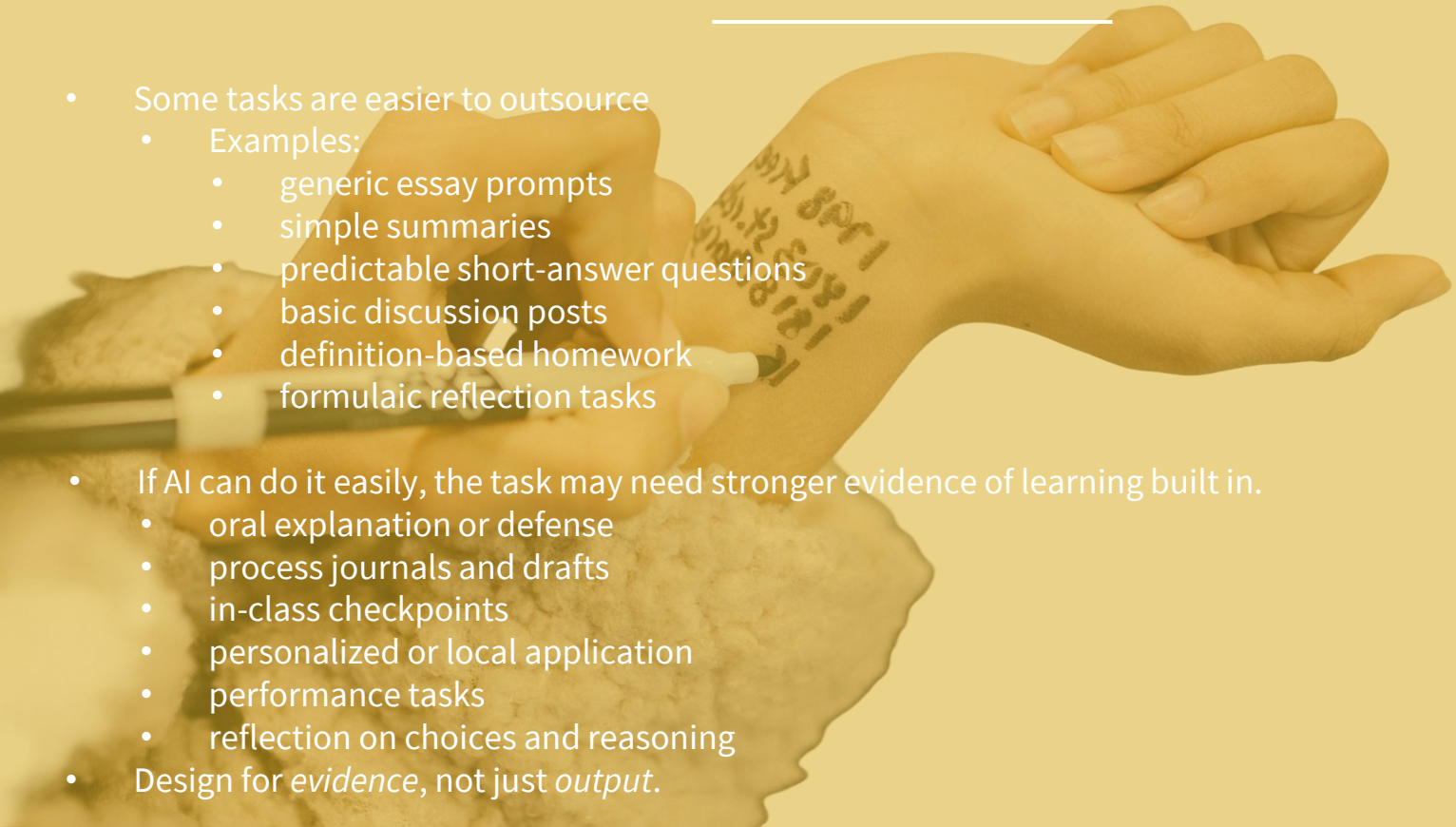
- This is not only a discipline issue. It is a design issue.
- *One of the biggest ways AI is changing education is through assessment. It is forcing us to ask what really counts as evidence of learning — and what kinds of tasks still show student thinking clearly.*

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY



- A better question…
  - Instead of asking: **“Is this AI-proof?”**
  - Ask: **“What would actually show me that the student did the thinking?”**
    - Explanation
    - Application
    - Reasoning
    - Process
    - Reflection
- *There may not be many truly AI-proof tasks anymore. But there are still many ways to design for stronger evidence of learning.*

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY



- Some tasks are easier to outsource
  - Examples:
    - generic essay prompts
    - simple summaries
    - predictable short-answer questions
    - basic discussion posts
    - definition-based homework
    - formulaic reflection tasks

- If AI can do it easily, the task may need stronger evidence of learning built in.
  - oral explanation or defense
  - process journals and drafts
  - in-class checkpoints
  - personalized or local application
  - performance tasks
  - reflection on choices and reasoning
- Design for *evidence*, not just *output*.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

- How teachers can redesign familiar tasks
  - *Instead of:*
    - a generic essay
    - a simple summary
    - a take-home response with no process
    - a polished final product only
  - *Consider this:*
    - oral follow-up questions
    - class-specific application
    - draft checkpoints
    - reflection on how the work was developed
    - explanation of choices made
    - in-class planning or retrieval
- *The goal is not to throw out everything teachers already do. It is to add design features that make student thinking more visible.*

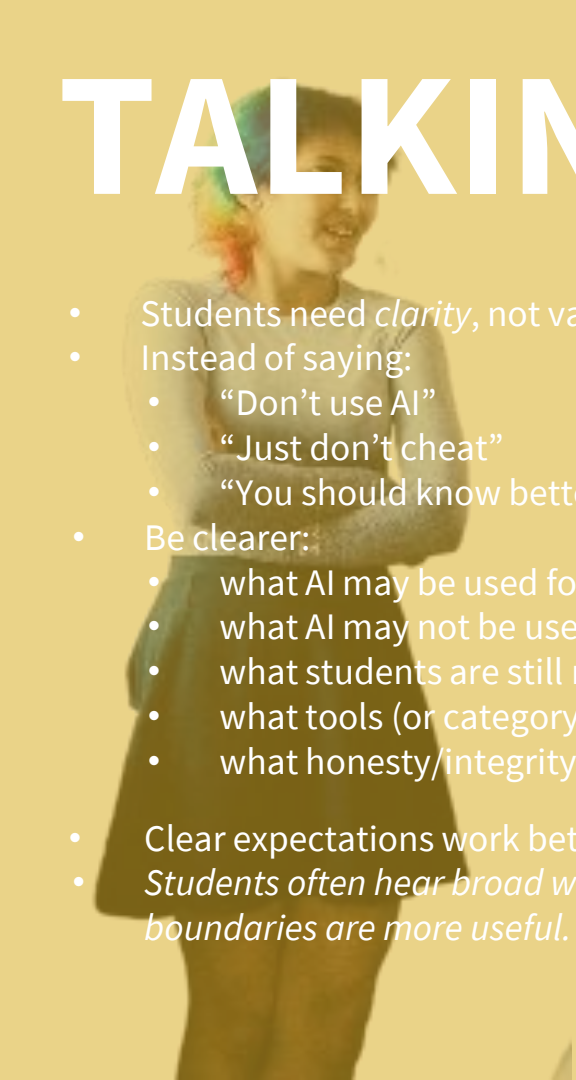
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

- Academic integrity still matters
- Students still need to:
  - be honest about what they did
  - represent their own thinking accurately
  - follow class expectations
  - take responsibility for final work
  - explain and defend their learning
- AI does not remove the need for honesty, responsibility, or authorship.

- *AI changes the tools available, but it does NOT cancel academic integrity. If anything, it makes clear expectations even more important.*

TALKING TO STUDENTS (AND PARENTS) ABOUT AI

TALKING TO STUDENTS



- Students need *clarity*, not vague *warnings*
- Instead of saying:
  - “Don’t use AI”
  - “Just don’t cheat”
  - “You should know better”
- Be clearer:
  - what AI may be used for
  - what AI may not be used for
  - what students are still responsible for
  - what tools (or category of tools) are allowable
  - what honesty/integrity looks like in this class

- Clear expectations work better than vague fear.
- *Students often hear broad warnings, but broad warnings don’t always help them make better decisions. Clear boundaries are more useful.*

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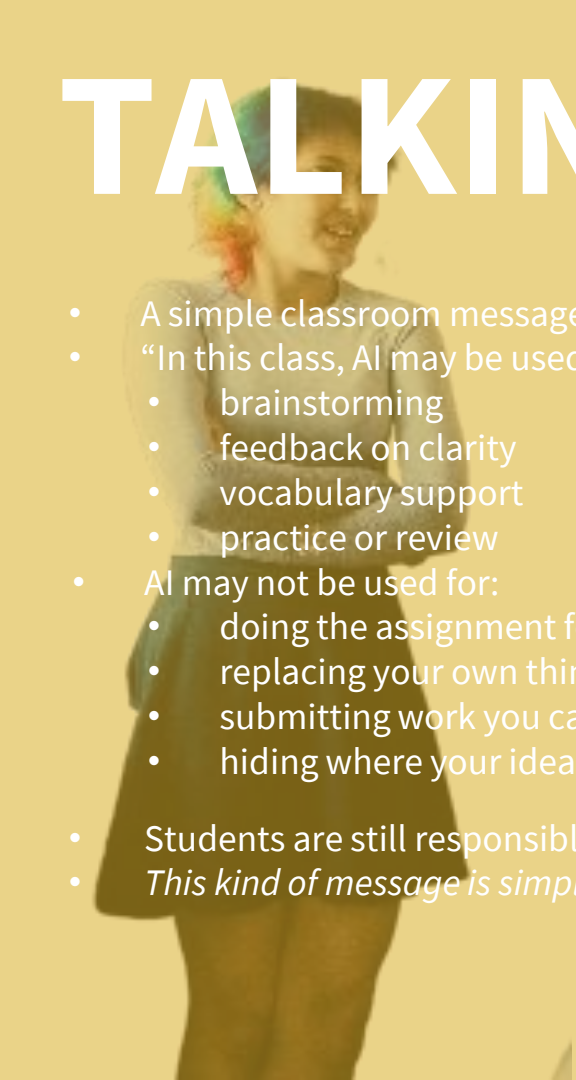

- A simple classroom message
- “In this class, AI may be used for…
  - brainstorming
  - feedback on clarity
  - vocabulary support
  - practice or review
- AI may not be used for:
  - doing the assignment for you
  - replacing your own thinking
  - submitting work you cannot explain
  - hiding where your ideas came from”

- Students are still responsible for their final work.
- *This kind of message is simple, direct, and easy to adapt by grade level or subject.*

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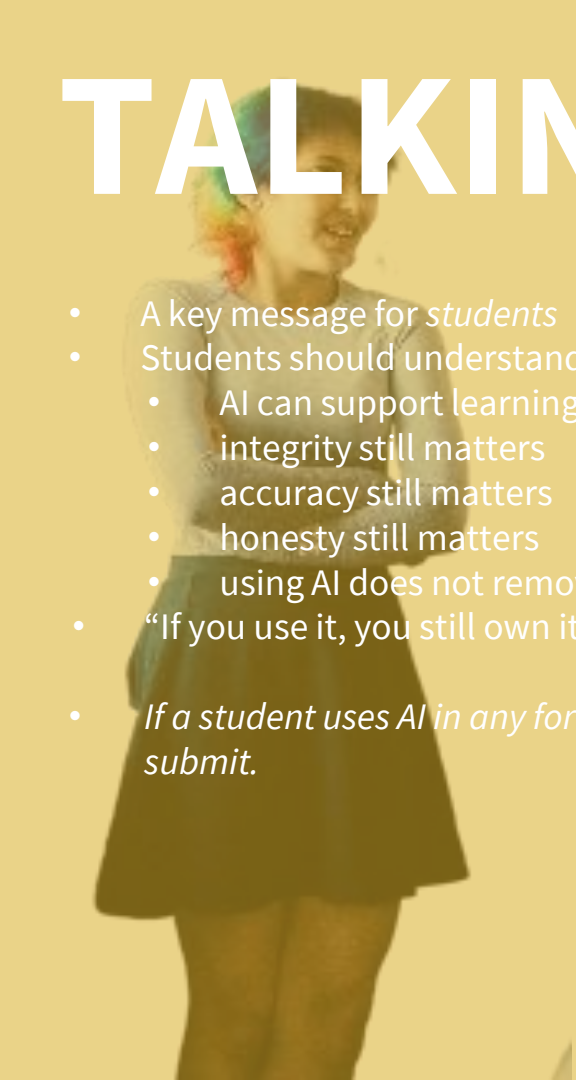

- A key message for *students*
- Students should understand:
  - AI can support learning, but not replace it
  - integrity still matters
  - accuracy still matters
  - honesty still matters
  - using AI does not remove responsibility
- “If you use it, you still own it!”

- *If a student uses AI in any form, they are still responsible for the truth, quality, and integrity of what they submit.*

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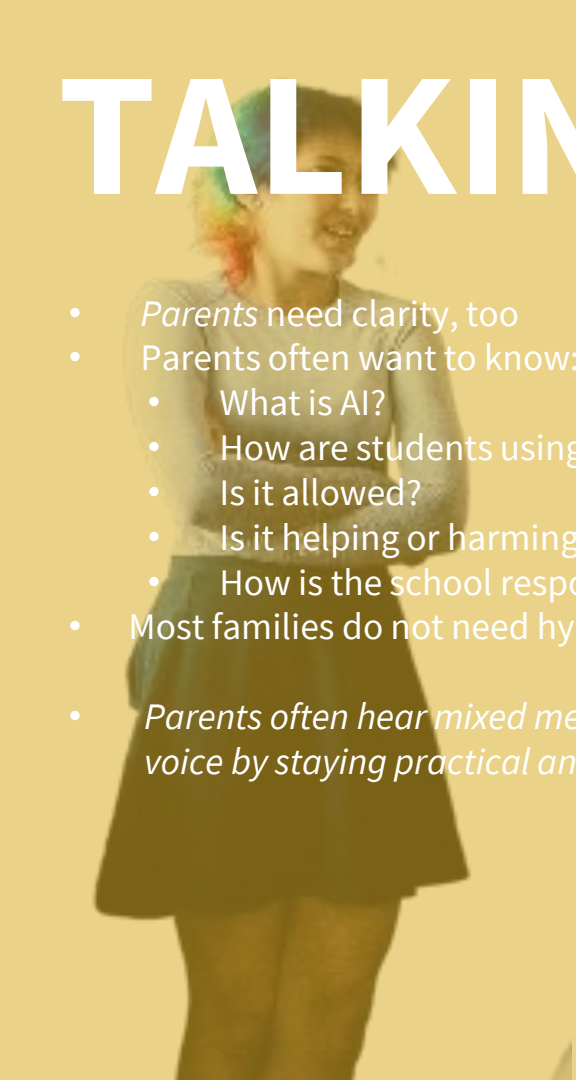

- *Parents* need clarity, too
- Parents often want to know:
  - What is AI?
  - How are students using it?
  - Is it allowed?
  - Is it helping or harming learning?
  - How is the school responding?
- Most families do not need hype or fear. They need clear, practical information.

- *Parents often hear mixed messages in the media, online, or from other families. Teachers can be a calming voice by staying practical and clear.*

TALKING TO STUDENTS

- **A simple parent-facing explanation:**
  AI tools are becoming more common in education and in students' lives. In our classroom, we are focusing on responsible use. That means students may use AI for limited support in some situations, but not as a replacement for their own thinking, learning, or honesty. Students are always responsible for the work they submit.
- Responsible use is a better frame than total panic or total freedom.
- This gives parents a balanced message: neither "we're banning everything" nor "anything goes."

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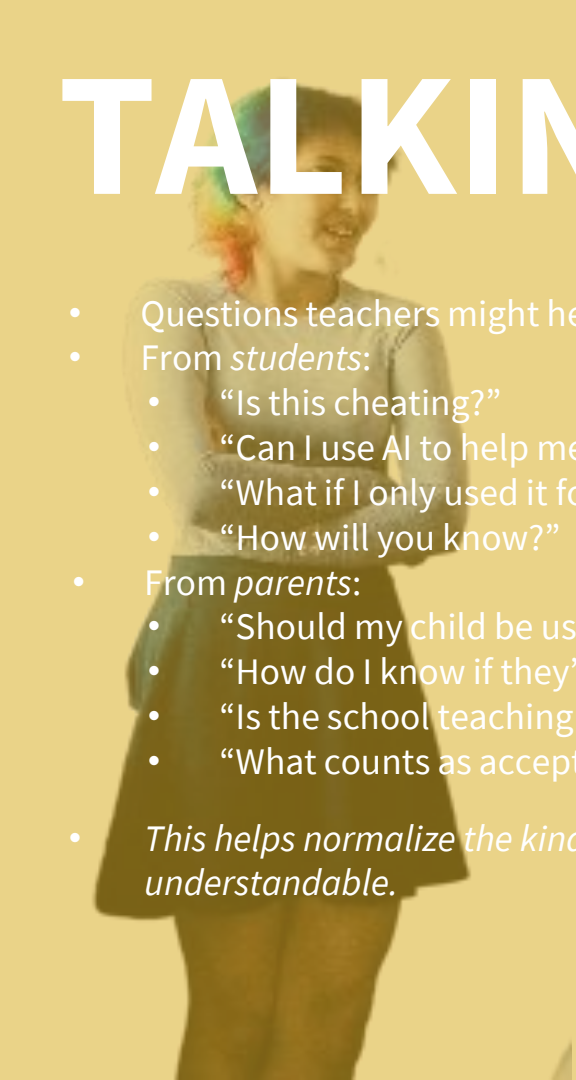
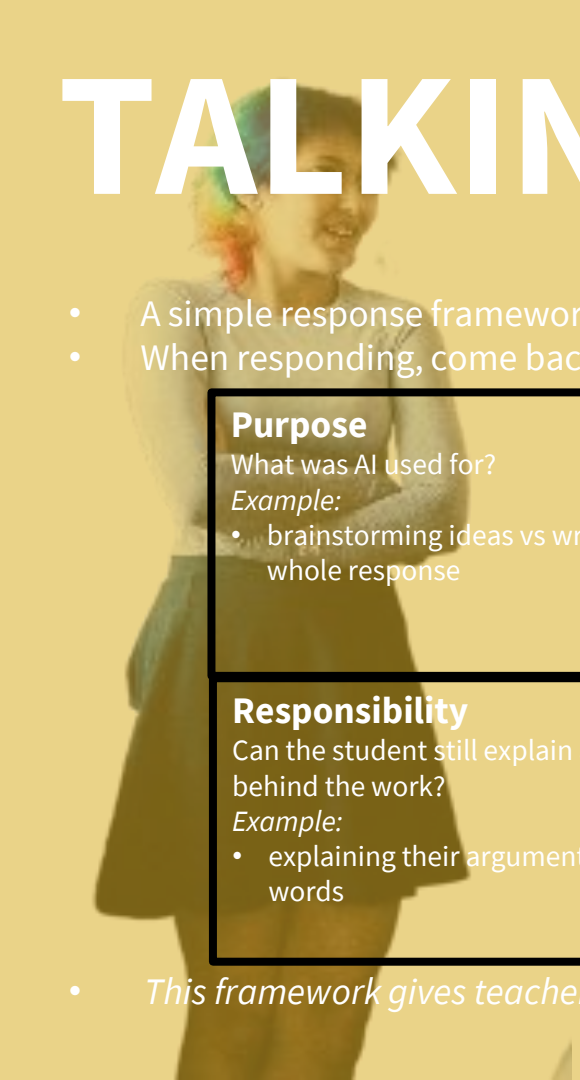


- Questions teachers might hear…
- From *students*:
  - “Is this cheating?”
  - “Can I use AI to help me start?”
  - “What if I only used it for ideas?”
  - “How will you know?”
- From *parents*:
  - “Should my child be using AI at all?”
  - “How do I know if they’re relying on it too much?”
  - “Is the school teaching responsible use?”
  - “What counts as acceptable?”

- *This helps normalize the kinds of questions teachers are already likely to hear — and shows that confusion is understandable.*

TALKING TO STUDENTS



- A simple response framework:
- When responding, come back to 4 ideas…

Purpose What was AI used for? *Example:* • brainstorming ideas vs writing the whole response	**Transparency** Was the use honest and disclosed? *Example:* • "I used AI to help me organize my outline"
Responsibility Can the student still explain and stand behind the work? *Example:* • explaining their argument in their own words	**Learning** Did the AI support learning or replace it? *Example:* • clarifying vocabulary vs answering every question for them

- *This framework gives teachers a way to talk about AI use without reducing everything to yes or no.*

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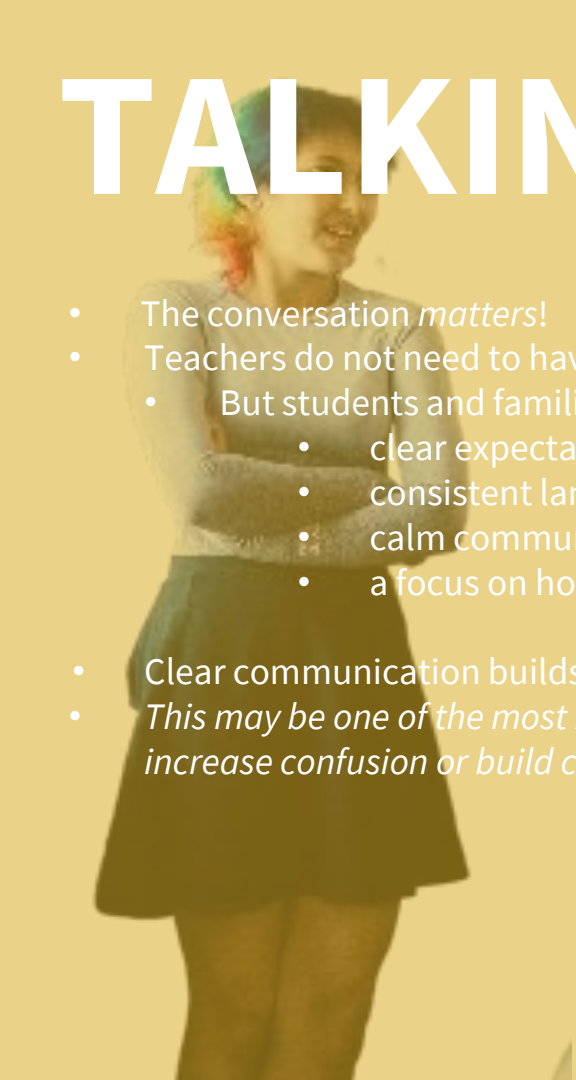
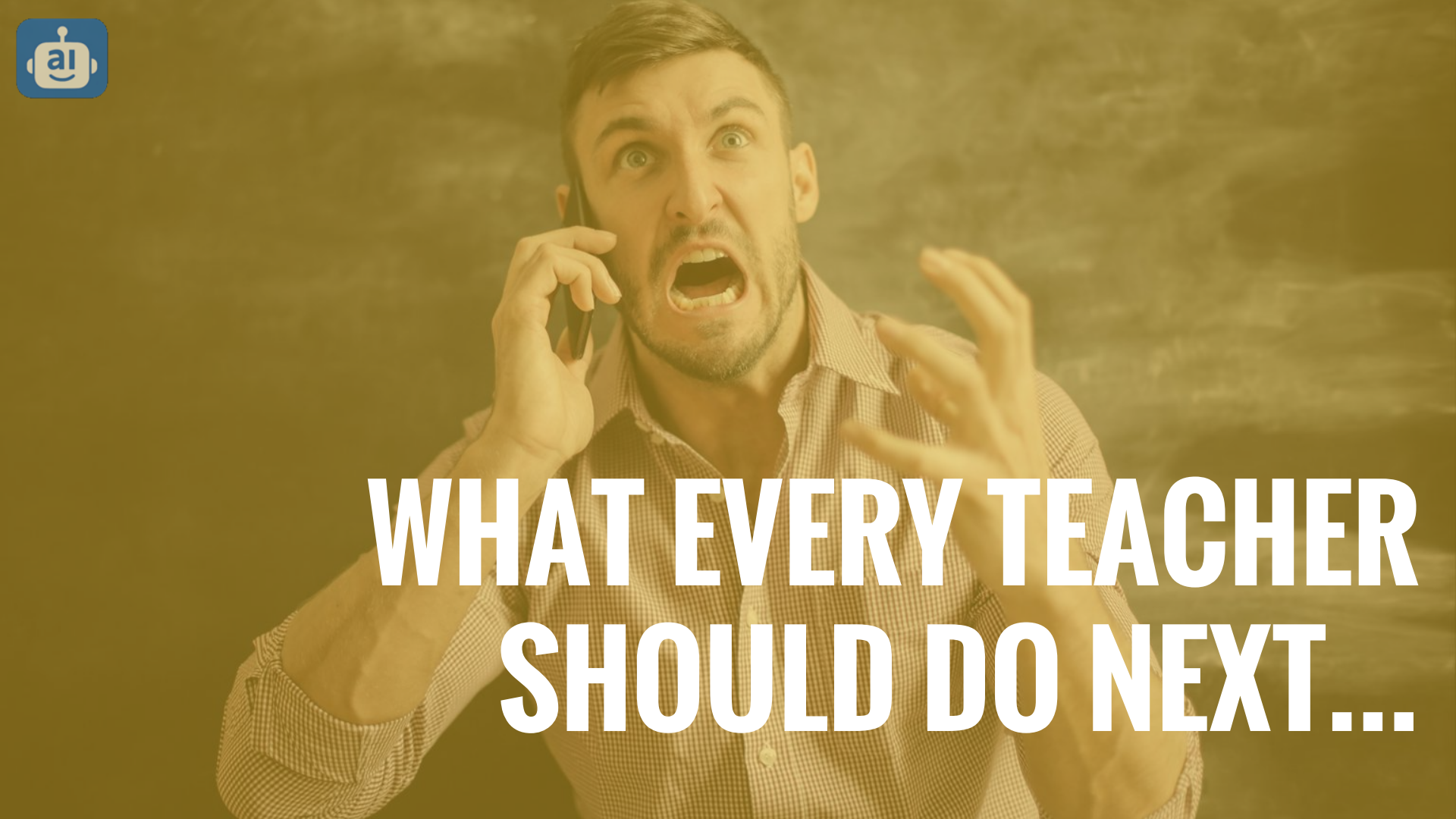


- The conversation *matters*!
- Teachers do not need to have every answer.
  - But students and families do need:
    - clear expectations
    - consistent language
    - calm communication
    - a focus on honesty, learning, and responsibility

- Clear communication builds trust.
- *This may be one of the most important practical takeaways in the seminar: the way we talk about AI can either increase confusion or build confidence.*


WHAT EVERY TEACHER
SHOULD DO NEXT...

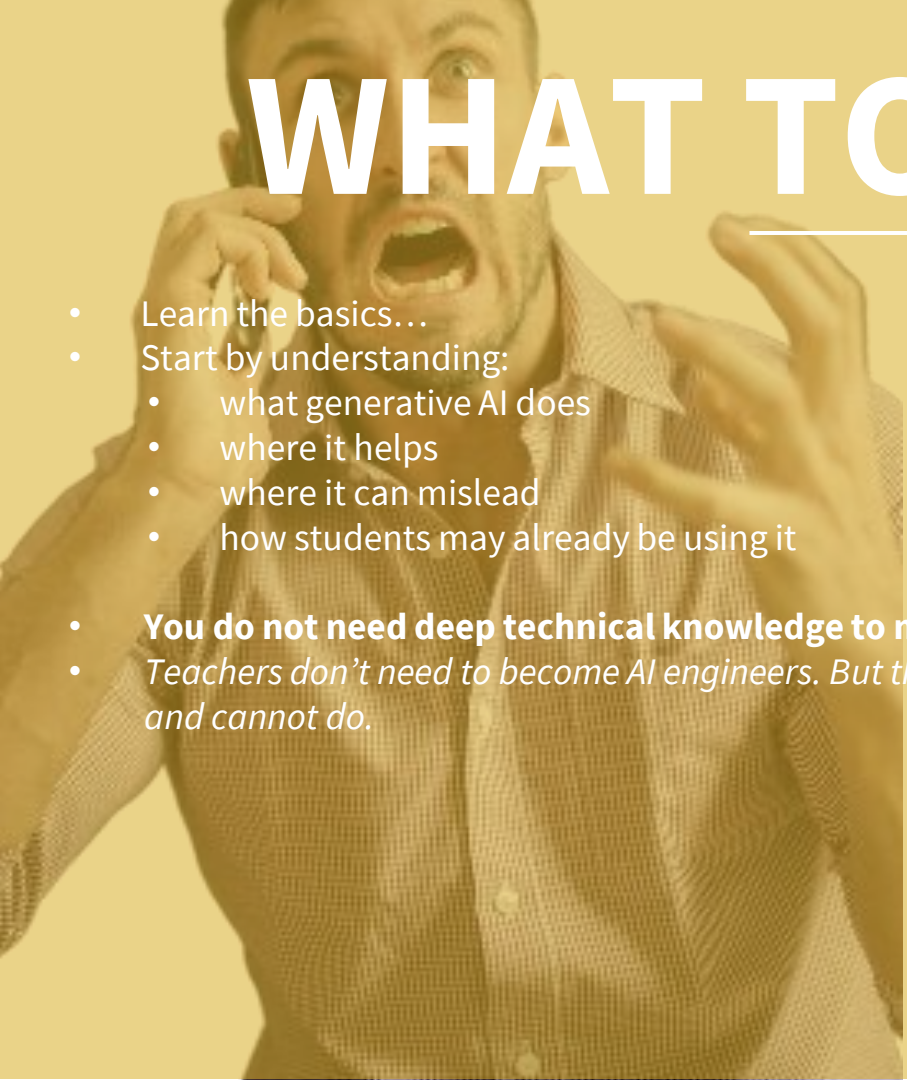
WHAT TO DO NEXT

- You do not need to know everything about AI
- You do not need to:
  - become an AI expert
  - use/know every tool
  - rewrite every lesson plan
  - solve every policy question on your own… today!

- instead, focus on:
  - understanding the basics
  - using sound judgment
  - trying one or two practical moves
  - staying clear about learning goals

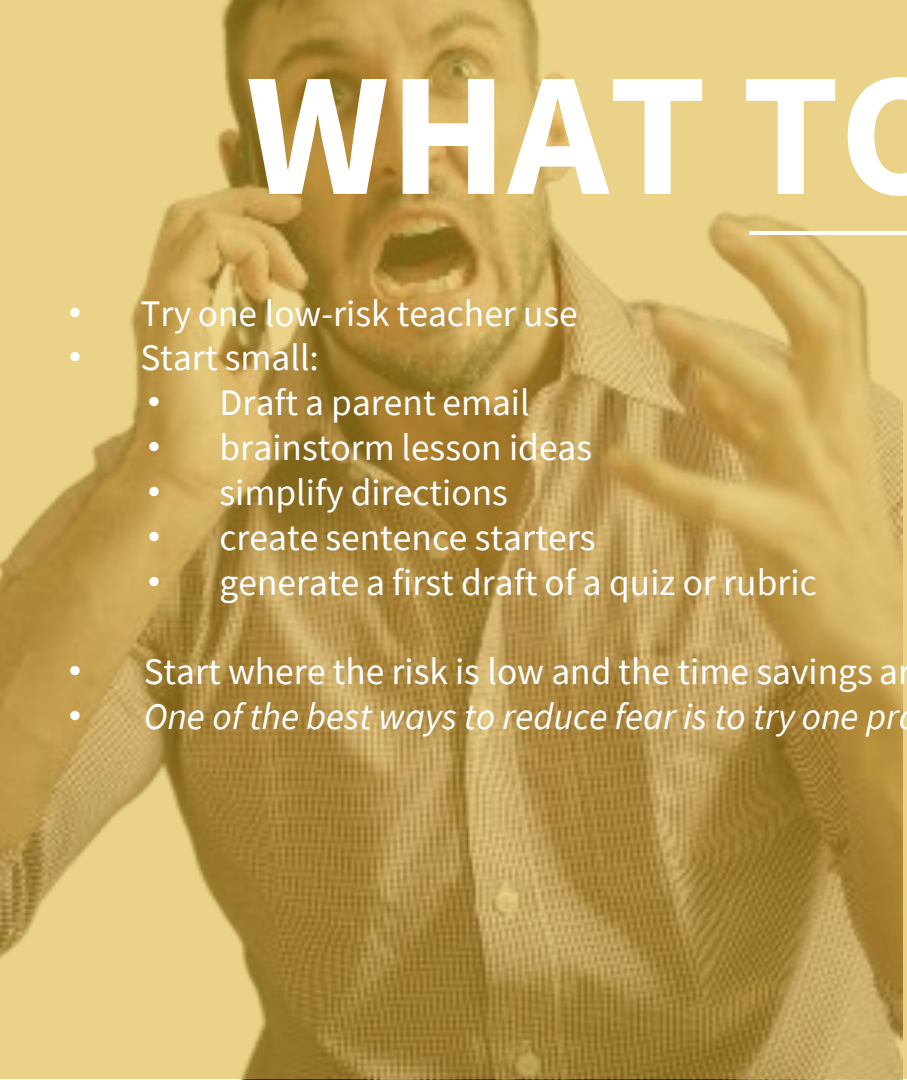
- **The goal is not mastery. It's readiness.**
- *The expectation should not be "know everything." It should be "be prepared enough to respond wisely."*

WHAT TO DO NEXT



- Learn the basics…
- Start by understanding:
  - what generative AI does
  - where it helps
  - where it can mislead
  - how students may already be using it

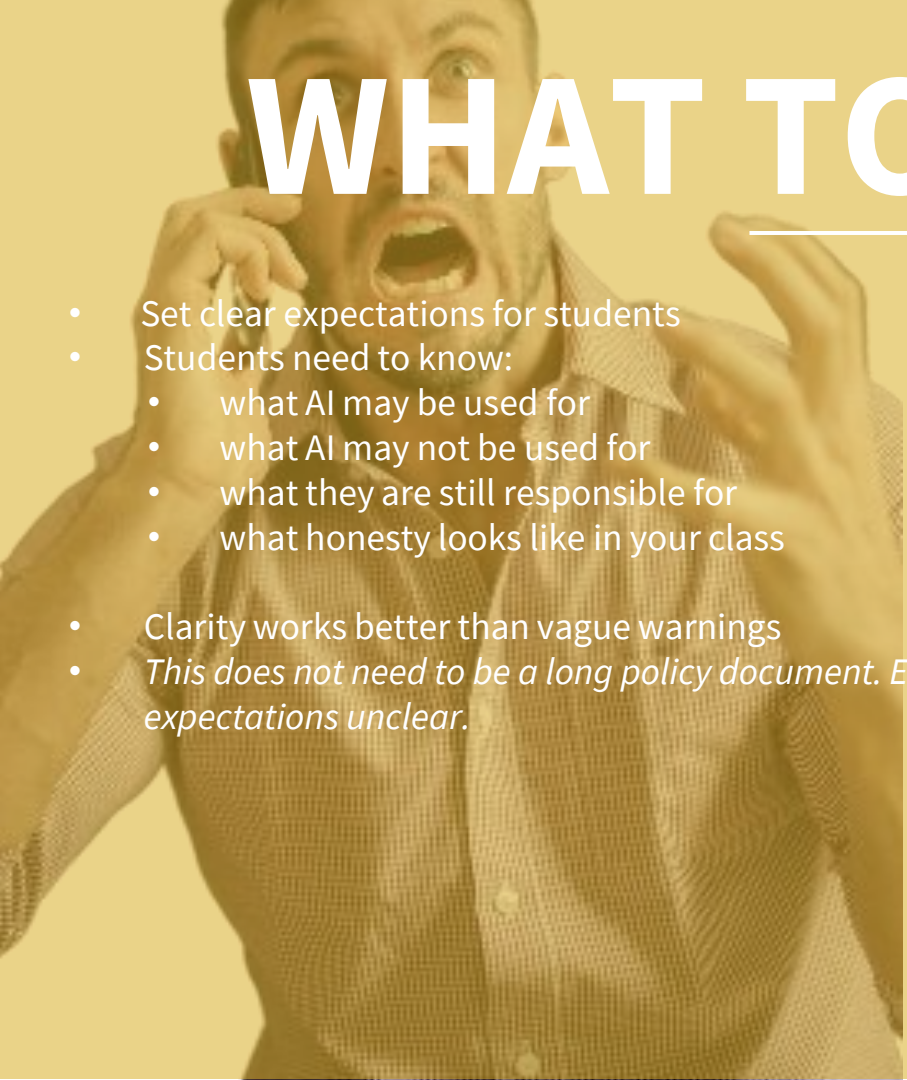
- **You do not need deep technical knowledge to make good classroom decisions**
- *Teachers don't need to become AI engineers. But they do need a basic mental model of what these tools can and cannot do.*



WHAT TO DO NEXT

- Try one low-risk teacher use
- Start small:
  - Draft a parent email
  - brainstorm lesson ideas
  - simplify directions
  - create sentence starters
  - generate a first draft of a quiz or rubric

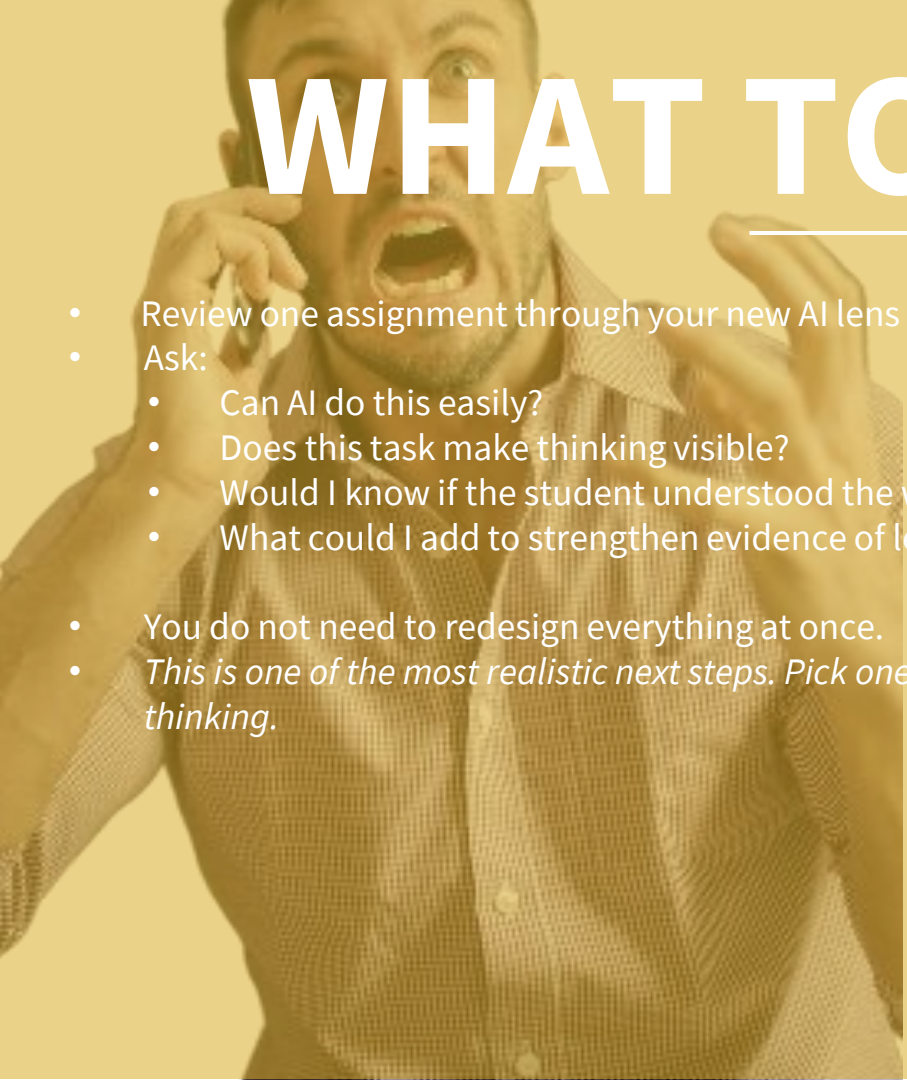
- Start where the risk is low and the time savings are real
- *One of the best ways to reduce fear is to try one practical, low-stakes use and see what it actually feels like.*



WHAT TO DO NEXT

- Set clear expectations for students
- Students need to know:
  - what AI may be used for
  - what AI may not be used for
  - what they are still responsible for
  - what honesty looks like in your class

- Clarity works better than vague warnings
- *This does not need to be a long policy document. Even a simple classroom statement is better than leaving expectations unclear.*

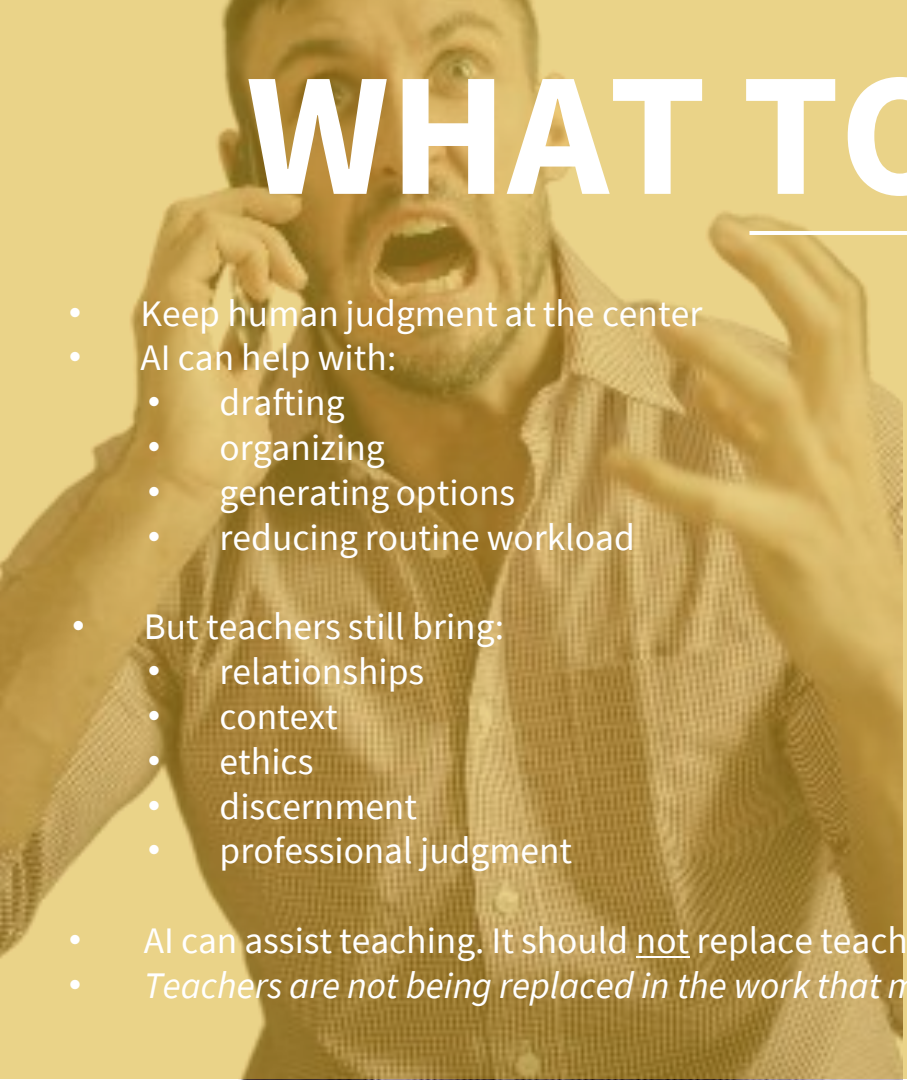


WHAT TO DO NEXT

- Review one assignment through your new AI lens
- Ask:
  - Can AI do this easily?
  - Does this task make thinking visible?
  - Would I know if the student understood the work?
  - What could I add to strengthen evidence of learning?

- You do not need to redesign everything at once.
- *This is one of the most realistic next steps. Pick one assignment and look at it through the lens of visible thinking.*

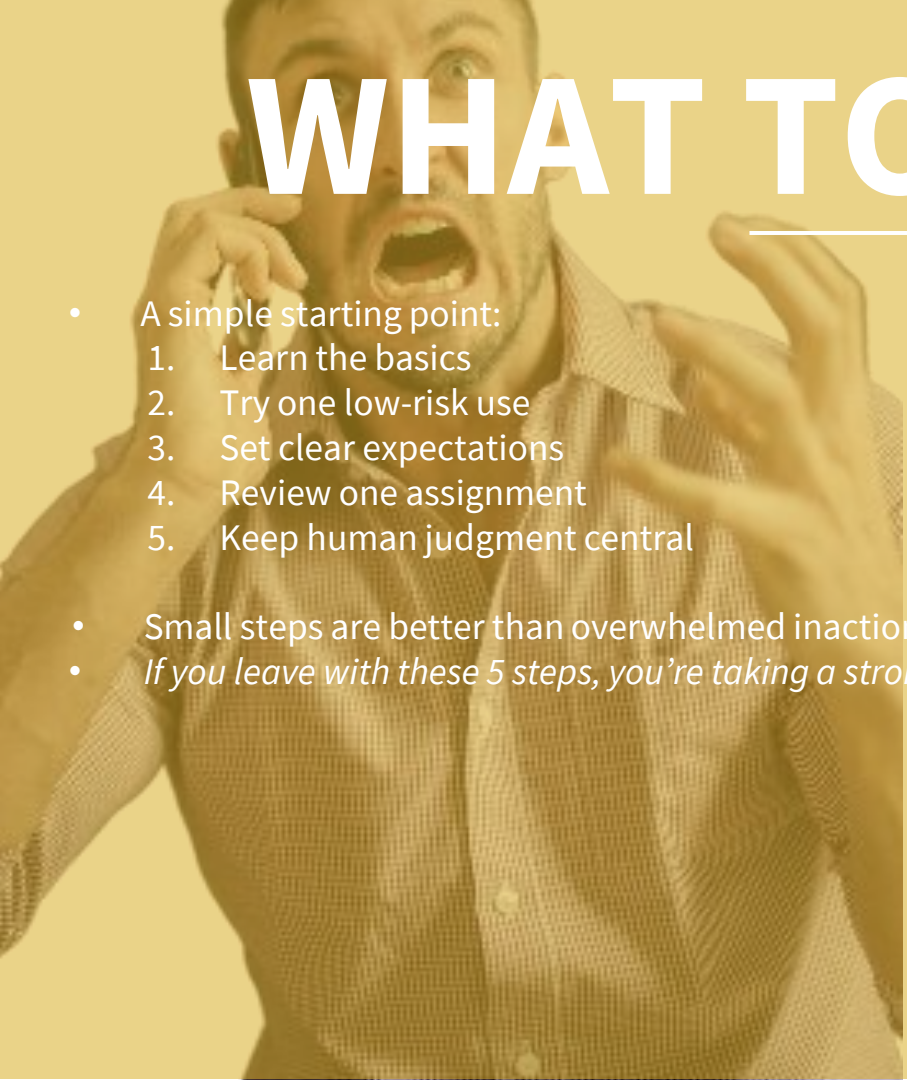
WHAT TO DO NEXT



- Keep human judgment at the center
- AI can help with:
  - drafting
  - organizing
  - generating options
  - reducing routine workload

- But teachers still bring:
  - relationships
  - context
  - ethics
  - discernment
  - professional judgment

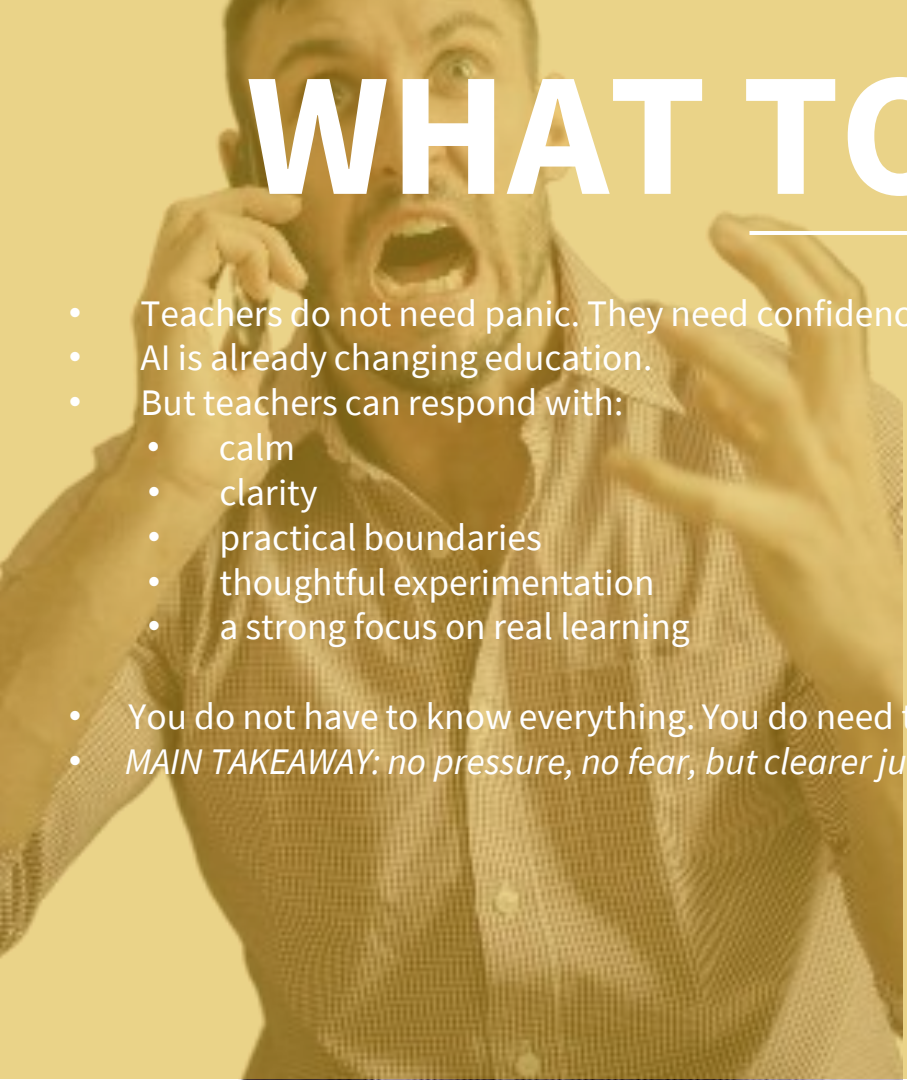
- AI can assist teaching. It should not replace teacher judgment.
- *Teachers are not being replaced in the work that matters most.*



WHAT TO DO NEXT

- A simple starting point:
  1. Learn the basics
  2. Try one low-risk use
  3. Set clear expectations
  4. Review one assignment
  5. Keep human judgment central

- Small steps are better than overwhelmed inaction
- *If you leave with these 5 steps, you're taking a strong step forward!*



WHAT TO DO NEXT

- Teachers do not need panic. They need confidence, clarity, and judgment.
- AI is already changing education.
- But teachers can respond with:
  - calm
  - clarity
  - practical boundaries
  - thoughtful experimentation
  - a strong focus on real learning

- You do not have to know everything. You do need to know what matters most.
- *MAIN TAKEAWAY: no pressure, no fear, but clearer judgment and a workable next step.*


Q&A