### PROMPT ENGINEERING FOR STUDENTS

# A FOR GOOD

A quick, practical guide for students to get the most out of AI tools.

# What is Prompt Engineering?

Prompt engineering is just a fancy way of saying "asking questions well." You can get heaps of value from AI just by talking to it in natural language. But the clearer and more structured your input, the better the output you'll get. Phrase to remember: **Garbage in, garbage out.** 

Framing prompts is about learning how to define a problem clearly — a great life skill.

#### The Mindset

When using AI, approach it with:

- Curiosity explore ideas and ask "what if?" or consider another perspective
- Critical thinking question answers, check accuracy and explain workings
- Creativity experiment with different ways of asking or try image generation
- lteration refine your prompts until you get what you need

#### **Prompt Building Blocks**

Students can mix and match these blocks when writing prompts:

- Role: "Act as a science teacher" / "Act as a friendly coach"
- Task: "Explain Pythagoras' theorem" / "Create 5 guiz guestions"
- Context: "For Year 9" / "I'm preparing for an exam next week"
- Limitations: "Keep it under 150 words" / "Use bullet points only"
- Format: "Make a table" / "Write as a poem"
- Reasoning: "Show your steps" / "List pros and cons"

#### **Guardrails for Students**

- ✓ Use AI for practice, brainstorming, and feedback
- Always check answers with a teacher, textbook, or other reliable source
- ✓ Be specific about what you want
- ✓ Use AI to go much deeper on a topic quickly by asking more questions
- X Don't copy-paste answers into assignments
- X Don't enter personal or sensitive information
- Prompt engineering is just good questioning. Better questions = better answers

SEE OUR OTHER GUIDES: <u>PROMPT ENGINEERING FOR TEACHERS</u> AND <u>FREE AI TOOLS FOR TEACHERS</u>

### **EXAMPLES**

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# English / Writing

Vague:

"Help me write an essay about climate change."

## Better Prompt:

"Act as a writing coach. Ask me 3 questions to help me plan a persuasive essay on why schools should reduce waste.

- After I answer, suggest 2 possible ways I could structure my essay.
- Give me one question to reflect on my argument."

#### ÷ Maths

Vague:

"Explain algebra."

#### Better Prompt:

"You are a Year 9 maths tutor. Ask me how I would start solving 2x + 3 = 11."

- If I get stuck, give me a small hint, not the whole answer.
- After I try, give me 2 new practice problems and check my working."

# Science

Vague:

"Tell me about gravity."

#### Better Prompt:

"Act as a science teacher. Ask me what I already know about gravity.

- Then give me one everyday example to think about.
- Test me with 2 true-or-false questions, and tell me if I'm right."

# History / Social Studies

Vague:

"Summarise World War II."

#### Better Prompt:

"Act as a Year 10 history tutor. Give me 3 guiding questions to help me research the causes of World War II.

- After I respond, suggest where I could look for reliable information.
- Ask me to connect one event to another to show cause and effect."

### **EXAMPLES**

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# Music

#### Vague:

"Teach me about chords."

#### Better Prompt:

"You are a beginner guitar teacher. Ask me to describe the sound of a major chord and a minor chord after I play them.

- Give me one listening exercise: suggest a popular song and ask me if it sounds major or minor.
- Then tell me if I'm correct."

# Coding

#### Vague:

"Show me Python."

#### Better Prompt:

"Act as a coding coach. Give me a simple Python task: write a loop that counts from 1 to 5.

- Wait for me to try it.
- If I make a mistake, highlight the error and give me a hint to fix it.
- At the end, ask me how I could change the loop to count backwards."

# Spanish (or other languages)

#### Vague:

"Teach me Spanish."

#### Better Prompt:

"You are my Spanish speaking partner. Ask me 5 simple questions about my hobbies, one at a time.

- If I make a mistake, correct me gently and explain why.
- Give me one new word or phrase to use in my next answer."

#### PROMPT ENGINEERING FUN

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# **Prompts**

#### **Ureative Writing**

- "Write the beginning of a story about a dragon who wants to be a chef. Ask me what the dragon should cook next."
- "Make a silly poem about my pet [insert pet] being the president of New Zealand."

## Art & Imagination (image tools if available)

- "Draw a classroom where all the teachers are superheroes."
- "Show me a picture of a T-rex riding a skateboard at the beach."

# Music & Rhythm

• "Write a funny song about why homework sometimes disappears."

#### Social Studies

- "Pretend you're a time traveller. Ask me where I want to go, then describe what I'd see there."
- "Act like you're Captain Cook's parrot. Tell me what you saw on the ship."

#### Science Play

- "Explain the water cycle using emojis only."
- "Make up a superhero whose powers are gravity and magnetism. Ask me to name them."

# Languages

- "Teach me 5 funny Spanish phrases to use in a school cafeteria."
- "Pretend you're a shopkeeper in Mexico. Ask me what I want to buy."

# 🎉 Tips for Keeping it Fun

- Mix learning and play Encourage kids to use AI for silly, imaginative prompts as well as serious study.
- Try challenges Example: "Explain fractions in 20 words or less" or "Summarise today's lesson in rap lyrics."
- 🬟 Make it interactive Tell AI to ask them questions, not just give answers.
- ★ Experiment with formats Poems, comics, tables, songs, stories, quizzes, emoji-only explanations.
- Share & compare Have students read each other's Al-generated poems or jokes and vote on the funniest or most creative.
- ← The key: Al should feel like a playful study buddy, not a shortcut. Fun builds confidence, and confidence builds skills.