

Veya's AI Adventures

The Mystery of the Missing Stop

BOOK 1

Dr Akshi Kumar



VEYA'S AI ADVENTURES

Book 1: *The Mystery of the Missing Stop*

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**One missed
bus stop.**



**One curious
girl.**

One missed bus stop.

One curious girl.

One mystery waiting to be solved.

Join Veya as she follows the clues, discovers how AI learns from patterns and data, and finds out how curiosity can help make technology work better for everyone.





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Dear Parents and Teachers,

Welcome to Veya's AI Adventures.

Artificial Intelligence is becoming part of children's everyday lives. From voice assistants and search engines to games, videos and classroom tools, AI is already shaping how children learn, communicate and explore the world.

But **AI literacy is about much more than understanding technology**. It is about helping children become curious, thoughtful and responsible problem-solvers who know how to ask questions about the technology around them.

This book introduces AI through **storytelling, exploration and everyday experiences** rather than technical language. Instead of teaching children how to code, it encourages them to notice patterns, ask questions, think critically and discover an important idea:

AI is built by people, and people make important choices about how it is designed, tested and used.

As you read together, pause and talk about Veya's discoveries. Ask **children** what they noticed, what they might do differently, whose needs should be considered, or how technology could help people in their own community.

There isn't always one right answer. Each conversation is an opportunity to build **confidence, creativity, curiosity and critical thinking.**

I hope this book helps children see AI not as something mysterious, but as something they can understand, question and use thoughtfully.

Thank you for joining Veya on her first adventure.

I hope it inspires the next generation to stay curious, ask better questions, and help build a future where technology works better for everyone.

With best wishes,

Dr Akshi Kumar



Welcome, AI Explorer!

Recommended for ages 8–12

Before you start your adventure, there's something important to know.

You do not need to be a computer expert.

You do not need to know how to code.

You do not need to know anything about Artificial Intelligence.

All you need is:

- ✓ A curious mind
- ✓ A good imagination
- ✓ A willingness to ask questions
- ✓ A pencil (for your missions!)
- ✓ A smile

As you read, you'll solve mysteries, collect badges, explore how AI learns, and discover **how AI works, why it can make mistakes, and how to use it wisely.**

Remember...

The world's greatest inventors didn't start with all the answers.

They started by asking questions.

Sometimes, just one little word can begin a big adventure:

“Why?”

So...

Open your mind.

Keep your pencil ready.

And get ready for your very first mission.

Adventure awaits!



MEET THE CHARACTERS



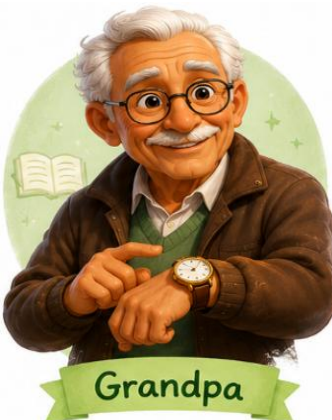
Age: 11

Favourite Thing: Asking questions that nobody else thinks to ask.

Always Carries: A blue notebook for writing ideas, observations and clues.

Superpower: She notices patterns and keeps looking for clues when something doesn't make sense.

Veya Says: *"Every big idea begins with one small question."*

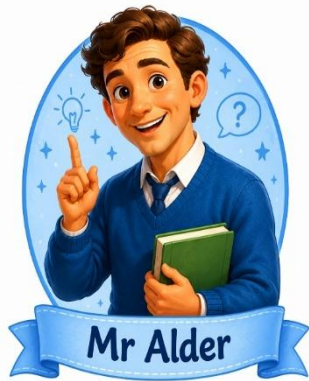


Favourite Thing: Spending time with Veya and encouraging her curiosity.

Always Carries: His watch and plenty of stories.

Superpower: He reminds Veya that you're never too old or too young to keep learning.

Grandpa Says: *"Never stop asking questions."*



Job: Teacher

Favourite Thing: Helping children think in new ways.

Superpower: He asks questions that help his students think differently and stay curious.

Mr Alder Says: *"Great thinkers don't know all the answers. They ask better questions."*



Job: AI Engineer

Favourite Thing: Designing technology that helps people every day.

Superpower: She makes big AI ideas simple and helps children understand how AI learns from data and examples.

Dr Sonia Says: *"The best AI doesn't replace people. It helps them."*



Every adventure needs another explorer.

This time... **that's YOU!**

As you read, you'll become an **AI Explorer**, solving mysteries, collecting badges and discovering **how AI works**, **why it can make mistakes**, and **how to use it wisely**.

Are you ready? **Let's begin!**



This isn't just a story.

It's an adventure where **you become part of the team!**

Throughout the book, you'll find activities to help you **explore AI, ask questions and think like Veya.**

Today's AI Mission

Discover the question you'll explore in each mission.

Story Adventure

Read Veya's story and follow the clues.

Veya's Notebook

Pause and write down your own ideas, observations and discoveries.

Think Like Veya

Look at the problem from a new angle.

What would you do?

AI Detective Mission

Explore the world around you and put your new ideas into practice.

AI Explorer

Discover a new AI idea in each learning mission.

By the end of the book, you'll understand **six important AI ideas**.

Badge Unlocked

Complete each learning mission to earn a new AI badge.

Mission Complete!

Celebrate what you've discovered before moving on.

AI Level Up!

Watch your AI knowledge grow as you unlock new ideas throughout the book.

Remember...

There are no wrong questions.

The best explorers stay curious, check what they discover and keep asking why.



Every great explorer earns badges by learning new skills.

As you complete each learning mission, **colour in, tick or place a sticker** on the badges below.

Want your own badges?

(Print and cut out your AI badges from the badge sheet at the back of the book.)

Can you collect all six?



Pattern Spotter



Curious Researcher



Prediction Detective



AI Trainer



Fairness Finder



Smart Checker

PART ONE

The Mystery

Mission 1 — 8:12

Discovering Patterns

Today's AI Mission

Can you discover why Veya and Grandpa missed their bus stop?

Mission Goal: Look carefully for clues. Great AI engineers begin by noticing patterns.

The Number 18 bus was supposed to arrive at **8:12**.

It always did.

Every weekday morning, the city followed its own rhythm.

The baker opened the shop.

The traffic lights changed from red to green.

Children hurried to school.

And the Number 18 bus arrived at exactly 8:12.

Veya loved **patterns**.

Patterns made the world feel steady. They helped people know what to expect.



But that morning, the pattern began to change.

At 8:11, Grandpa looked at his watch.

At 8:12, he looked again.

At 8:13, the digital display flickered.

8:12 – Due

Then...

8:12 – Delayed

A moment later...

8:12 – 2 mins



Grandpa frowned.

“It keeps changing its mind,” he said.

Veya looked at the display.

“Maybe it's looking at what's happening on the road,” she said.

The numbers changed again.

Veya wondered how the bus knew what time to show.

It felt almost like taking a tiny peek into the future.

The bus finally arrived.

Hissssss...



The doors slid open.

Warm air drifted outside.

Veya and Grandpa climbed aboard.



Inside, the heater rattled softly.

Someone's headphones leaked tiny bursts of music.

A toddler cried near the front.

A student yawned, still half asleep.

The doors closed.

The bus rolled away.

A few minutes later...

A voice echoed through the speakers.

Flat.

Fast.

Mechanical.

“Next stop, Station Road.”

Veya just managed to hear it.

Grandpa leaned closer.

“What did it say?”

“Station Road,” Veya whispered.

He smiled and nodded.



Three stops later...

the announcement came again.

But this time...

the engine roared.

Metal clattered beneath the floor.

The bus bounced over a pothole.

“Next stop, Maple Avenue.”

The announcement disappeared into the noise.

body moved.

The bus slowed.

It stopped.

Then it pulled away again.



Veya's heart dropped.

"Grandpa..."

"That was our stop."

He blinked.

"Was it?"

"Yes."

For just a moment...

Grandpa looked unsure.

He had trusted the
announcement to help him.

But this time, it hadn't. He looked out of the window and sighed.

"I couldn't hear it clearly."

Veya looked up at the speaker above the driver's seat.

The announcement had played.

But why had it been so hard for Grandpa to hear?

Was it the voice?

The noise?

The timing?

Or something else?

Veya didn't know.

Not yet.

But she was going to find out.





Veya's Notebook

Today's Question

Why couldn't everyone hear the bus announcement clearly?

Things I noticed

- ☒ The bus engine was loud.
- ☒ Grandpa couldn't hear the announcement clearly.
- ☒ The announcement only played once.
- ☒ There was a lot of noise inside the bus.

 **What other clue did you notice?**



Think Like Veya

Imagine you're designing the bus announcement.

What would you change?

- ☐ Speak more slowly.
- ☐ Make it louder.
- ☐ Repeat important announcements.
- ☐ Show the stop name on a screen.
- ☐ Wait until the bus is quieter.

My own idea:

AI Detective Mission

Become a **Pattern Spotter!**

Look around you today.

Can you find **three patterns**?

- ☐ Something that happens every morning.
- ☐ Something that happens at school.
- ☐ Something that happens at home.

Patterns are everywhere.

Finding them helps us understand how things usually happen.



AI Explorer

New AI Word



Pattern

- A pattern is something that happens again and again.
- Patterns help us notice what usually happens and when something changes.
- AI can look for patterns in information to help make predictions or decisions.



Badge Unlocked



Pattern Spotter

Great AI engineers notice patterns and ask questions when something changes.



Mission Complete!

Today you discovered...



Patterns help us notice what usually happens.



When a pattern changes, it can give us an important clue.

But Veya had a much bigger question...

Why had the announcement been so hard for Grandpa to hear?

AI Level Up!

Your AI Journey

-   **Pattern** — Mastered
-   **Data** — Coming Next
-   **Prediction** — Locked
-   **Training** — Locked
-   **Fairness** — Locked
-   **Testing** — Locked

Mission 2 — The Voice That Didn't Wait

How AI Learns from Data

Today's AI Mission

Can you discover how computers learn from data and what clues Veya might find?

Mission Goal: Follow Veya as she investigates the bus announcement and discovers how data helps AI learn.

They got off at the next stop and walked back towards Maple Avenue.
Grandpa walked more slowly than usual.



When they finally reached home, Veya held out her hand.

“Would you like some help?”

Grandpa smiled. *“I’m all right.”*

But his smile didn’t quite reach his eyes.

Veya knew he was only trying to stop her from worrying.

She couldn’t stop thinking about the bus.

Not because they had missed their stop...

but because she still didn’t know **why**.

That night, the announcement played over and over in her mind.

“Next stop, Maple Avenue.”

Too fast.

Too flat.

Too easy to miss.

Was it the voice?

The noise?

The timing?



Veya opened her laptop.

She needed more clues.

She typed her first question:

How do bus announcements work?

She expected a simple answer.

Instead, her screen filled with words she had never seen before.

Speech synthesis.

Machine learning.

Prediction systems.

Real-time data.

She frowned.

“That’s... a lot.”



She clicked another page.

Then another.

Slowly, some of the words began to make sense.

Some buses played recordings of real people.

Others could use computer-generated voices.

Some AI systems could learn patterns in words and sounds from lots of examples.

Veya stopped.

Examples?

Examples were **data**.



She typed another question:

How does AI learn from data?

The answer surprised her.

Many AI systems learn by finding patterns in data and examples.

She read the sentence twice.

Pictures could be data.

Numbers could be data.

Words could be data.

Sounds could be data too.

And different AI systems could learn different things from different kinds of data.



Veya looked back at her notebook.

She still didn't know why Grandpa had missed the announcement.

But now she knew something important.

If she wanted to understand what had happened...

she needed to understand what information the system used—and how it used it.

Veya smiled.

Not because she had found the answer.

Because she had found another clue.

She opened her blue notebook and wrote one word:

DATA.

Then underneath it:

What information helps technology work well for people?

For the first time, Veya wondered...

Could she find out?





Veya's Notebook

Today's Question

What kind of information can help AI learn?

Things I discovered

- ☒ AI learns from examples called **data**.
- ☒ Data can be words, sounds, pictures, numbers or videos.
- ☒ Different AI systems use different kinds of data.

 **What other kinds of data can you think of?**



Think Like Veya

Imagine you are teaching an AI to recognise different sounds.

What examples might you include?

- ☐ Different voices
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Traffic
- ☐ Animals
- ☐ Quiet sounds
- ☐ Loud sounds
- ☐ Sounds indoors
- ☐ Sounds outdoors

Why is it useful to have lots of different examples?

AI Detective Mission

Become a Data Detective!

Look around you.

Can you find examples of different kinds of data?

- ☐  A picture
- ☐  A number
- ☐  A word
- ☐  A sound
- ☐  A video

Now choose one.

What could an AI learn from it?



AI Explorer



New AI Word

Data

- **Data** is information that an AI can learn from or use.
- Data can include words, sounds, pictures, numbers and videos.



Badge Unlocked



Curious Researcher

Curious researchers ask questions, gather clues and look for evidence.



Mission Complete!

Today you discovered...



AI can learn from data.



Data can come in many different forms.



Different examples can help AI learn different patterns.

Veya now understood what **data** was.

But one question remained: *How does AI find patterns in all that information?*

On Monday, her teacher wrote two giant words on the classroom board:

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AI Level Up!

Your AI Journey

-   **Pattern** — Mastered
-   **Data** — Mastered
-   **Prediction** — Coming Next
-   **Training** — Locked
-   **Fairness** — Locked
-   **Testing** — Locked

PART TWO

How AI Learns

Mission 3 — Pattern Hunters

How AI Makes Predictions

Today's AI Mission

Can you discover how AI makes predictions?

Mission Goal: Learn how computers use past patterns and current information to make smart guesses about what might happen next.

Monday morning felt different.

Ever since the bus ride, Veya couldn't stop asking questions.

Everywhere she looked, she wondered,

"Is AI helping here too?"

As she walked into class, she noticed everyone talking at once.

"I heard AI is going to replace teachers," said Ben.

"My cousin says robots will do all our homework," laughed Maya.

Jay folded his arms.

"Next thing you know," he muttered, *"robots will be running the whole school."*

The class burst into laughter.

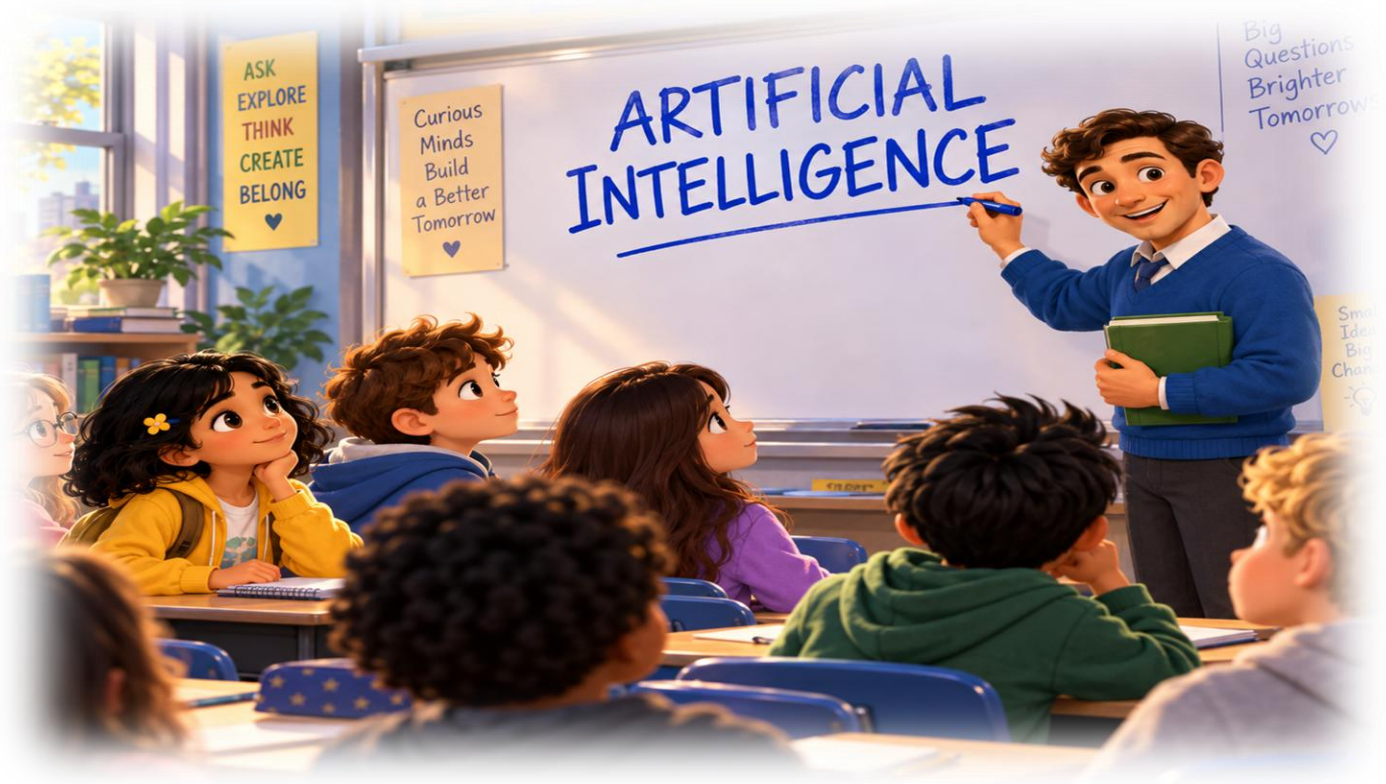


Just then, Mr Alder walked in.

Without saying a word, he picked up a blue marker.

Across the whiteboard, he wrote two enormous words:

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



The classroom became silent.

Mr Alder looked around the room.

"Before we begin," he said, "tell me what comes into your mind when you hear the words Artificial Intelligence."

Hands shot into the air.

"Robots!"

"Flying cars!"

"Talking computers!"

"A giant computer brain!"

Mr Alder smiled.

"Interesting ideas."

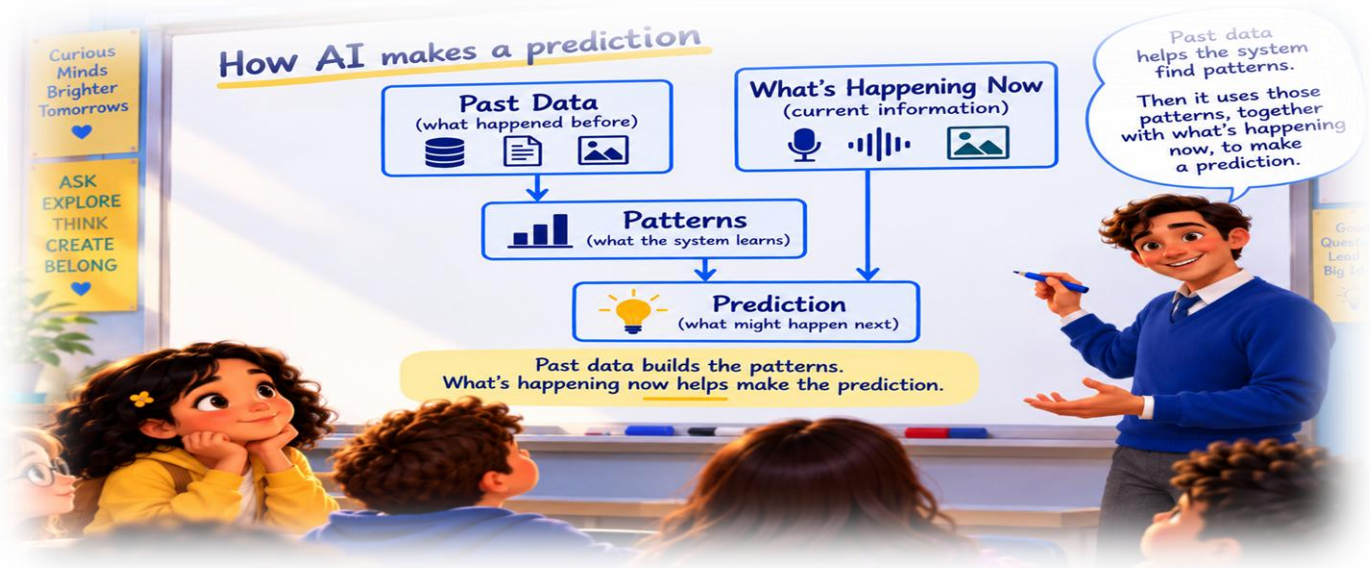
"But today, I'm going to show you something much simpler."

Instead of drawing a robot...

Mr Alder drew:

PAST DATA → PATTERNS

PATTERNS + WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW → PREDICTION



“AI doesn’t have magical powers,” he explained.

“It looks for patterns in what happened before.”

“It checks what is happening right now.”

“Then it makes its best guess about what might happen next.”

The bus display.

The changing arrival times.

The traffic.

Suddenly, she understood.

It wasn’t changing its mind.

It was updating its prediction!

And every time new information arrived...it could make a new one.

Her hand slowly went up.



“So... if AI only learns from a few examples...”

She paused.

“Could its predictions be wrong?”

Mr Alder stopped writing.

A smile spread across his face.

“That’s an excellent question.”

“The examples and information an AI uses can affect how well it works.”

“That’s exactly the kind of question AI engineers ask.”

Veya sat a little straighter.

AI engineers.

The words echoed inside her mind.

Engineers didn’t build magic.

They solved problems.

When the bell rang, everyone hurried out.

Everyone except Veya.

She walked slowly to Mr Alder’s desk.

“Sir?”

He looked up.

“Can anyone become an AI engineer?”

Mr Alder smiled.

“What do you think an engineer does?”

Veya thought for a moment.



“They fix problems?”

“They solve problems,” he replied.

“And anyone can learn to solve problems.”

Veya looked down.

“Even if they’re not the cleverest person in the class?”

“Of course.”

Veya tilted her head.

“Really?”

Mr Alder nodded.

“The best engineers aren’t the people who already know all the answers.”

“They’re the people who keep asking better questions.”

Veya smiled all the way home.



That weekend...

Veya caught the Number 18 bus again.

This time...she wasn't
travelling anywhere.

She was investigating.

Notebook?

Ready.

Pencil?

Ready.

Curiosity?

Definitely ready.

The bus pulled away.

Veya started her stopwatch.

"Next stop..."

Three seconds.

Sometimes two.

Never much longer.

Veya wrote it down.

She watched carefully.

An older man leaned forward to hear the speaker.

A little girl looked at her mum.

"What did it say?"



At another stop, the engine grew louder
just as the announcement began.

Veya wrote that down too.

Some passengers heard every word.

Others didn't.

Veya looked at her notebook.

Another clue.

That evening, she opened it again.

Across the top of the page, she
wrote:

Why are the announcements harder to hear sometimes?

Then she made a list.

- ☐ Is the bus noisier at some stops?
- ☐ Does the announcement always play at the same time?
- ☐ Would speaking more slowly help?
- ☐ Would repeating important announcements help?
- ☐ What else changes when people can't hear?

Veya tapped her pencil against the page.

Then she wrote one final question:

What if I could help improve it?





She stared at the words.

It sounded impossible.

She was only eleven.

She had never built anything more complicated than a volcano for the school science fair.

But maybe...

she didn't need to know the answer yet.

Maybe she just needed to keep looking for clues.

Someone had to ask the questions nobody else was asking.

Why couldn't that someone be her?



Veya's Notebook

Today's Discovery

AI can use **past patterns and current information** to make **predictions**.

Things I noticed

- ☒ Patterns can help AI make predictions.
- ☒ Predictions can change when new information arrives.
- ☒ Predictions are not always correct.

 **What pattern have you noticed this week?**

Think Like Veya

Imagine you are designing the **bus arrival display**.

What information would help it make better predictions?

- ☐ Where the bus is right now
- ☐ Traffic
- ☐ Weather
- ☐ Roadworks
- ☐ Busy school times
- ☐ Time of day

Something else:

AI Detective Mission

Become a Prediction Detective!

Choose something you can watch for two minutes.

It could be:

- ☐ Cars passing your house
- ☐ Birds in the garden
- ☐ People crossing the road
- ☐ Students in the playground

Before you watch, make a prediction:

I predict _____.

Now watch for two minutes and tell what actually happened.

Was your prediction close?

☐ Yes

☐ Not quite

What helped you make your prediction?

Patterns are everywhere.

The better we notice them...

the more clues we have about what might happen next.



AI Explorer



New AI Word

Prediction

- A **prediction** is a smart guess about what might happen next, based on patterns from the past and information about what is happening now.
- AI doesn't know the future.
- It uses information to make its best prediction, and that prediction can change when new information arrives.



Badge Unlocked



Prediction Detective

Great AI explorers look for patterns and use them to make thoughtful predictions.



Mission Complete!

Today you discovered...



AI can use patterns to make predictions.



Predictions can use past patterns and current information.



New information can change a prediction.

Veya had discovered how predictions worked.

But she still had questions.

Lots of them.

And very soon...

she would discover somewhere she could start looking for answers.

AI Level Up!

Your AI Journey

-   **Pattern** — Mastered
-   **Data** — Mastered
-   **Prediction** — Mastered
-   **Training** — Coming Next
-   **Fairness** — Locked
-   **Testing** — Locked

Mission 4 — AI Isn't Magic

Training AI with Examples

Today's AI Mission

Can you discover how people train AI using examples?

Mission Goal: Join Veya at the City Future Lab and discover how examples can help an AI learn to recognise patterns.

Veya had started thinking like an engineer.

She noticed problems.

She asked questions.

And now, she wanted to find out how things could be made better.

Then, one Monday morning, something on the school bulletin board caught her eye.

CITY FUTURE LAB

Veya stopped.

She stepped closer and read the notice again.



A Saturday workshop exploring how technology could make the city work better.

Veya thought of the Number 18 bus.

The noisy announcements.

Grandpa missing their stop.

And the question in her blue notebook:

What if I could help improve it?

Veya smiled.

By Saturday afternoon, she was ready.

Notebook?

Packed.

Pencils?

Packed.

Curiosity?

Definitely packed.



As she stood outside the library, butterflies fluttered in her stomach.
“What if everyone else already knows more than I do?” she wondered.
She took one deep breath.
Then another.



Finally, she pushed open the door.
The room looked nothing like Veya had imagined.
There were no giant robots.
No flashing machines.
No secret laboratories.
Instead...
there were long wooden tables.

Laptops.

Headphones.

Whiteboards filled with colourful sketches.

It looked more like a place for solving puzzles than building robots.

One poster caught Veya's eye immediately.

AI IS BUILT BY HUMANS



She read it twice.

Then smiled.

Maybe AI wasn't mysterious after all.

Maybe...

people built it one idea at a time.

At exactly four o'clock...the room became quiet.

A woman walked in.

She wore trainers, a white blazer and carried only a tablet.



She smiled.

“Hello, everyone. I’m Dr Sonia.”

“I help design intelligent transport systems for our city.”

Veya sat up straighter.

Transport.

Buses.

This wasn’t just another club.

This was connected to everything she had been wondering about.

Dr Sonia looked around the room.

“Let’s begin with a question.”

“Who thinks AI is about robots?”

Several hands went up. Veya hesitated.



Dr Sonia laughed kindly.

“I thought that too when I first started learning.”

Then she held up a microphone.

“Today, you’re going to explore a different kind of AI.”

The children leaned forward.

“This one works with sound.”

“It tries to recognise the words people say.”



Veya looked at the microphone.

This was different from the bus announcement.

On the bus, the system had spoken.

This system was trying to recognise speech.

But both showed Veya something important:

Technology could use information in different ways.

“Today,” Dr Sonia announced, “you’re going to help train it.”

The children looked at one another.

“Train it?”

Dr Sonia smiled.

“AI systems learn from examples.”

She tapped the screen.

Colourful wavy lines appeared.

“These are sound waves.”

“When we speak, our voices create patterns in sound.”

“When it hears a new voice, it uses those patterns to make its best guess about which word was spoken.”



She looked around the room.

“The system already has many examples. Today, we’re going to add a few more and see what happens.”

The children put on their headphones.

One by one, they spoke into their microphones.

“Stop.”

“Left.”

“Next.”

“Right.”

The system tried to recognise each word.

Then it was Veya’s turn.

She pressed the button.

“Stop.”

A little circle spun on the screen.

Then a word appeared:

TOP



The whole class laughed.

Even Veya laughed.

“I definitely didn’t say ‘top’!”

Dr Sonia smiled.

“Excellent.”

Everyone looked puzzled.

Veya blinked.

“Excellent? It got it wrong!”

“Exactly,” said Dr Sonia.

“And mistakes can give us useful clues.”

She pointed at the screen.

“They can show us where a system needs more examples, better training or more testing.”

Veya looked again at:

TOP



Something that had seemed like a silly mistake suddenly looked interesting.

It was a clue.

The children recorded more examples.

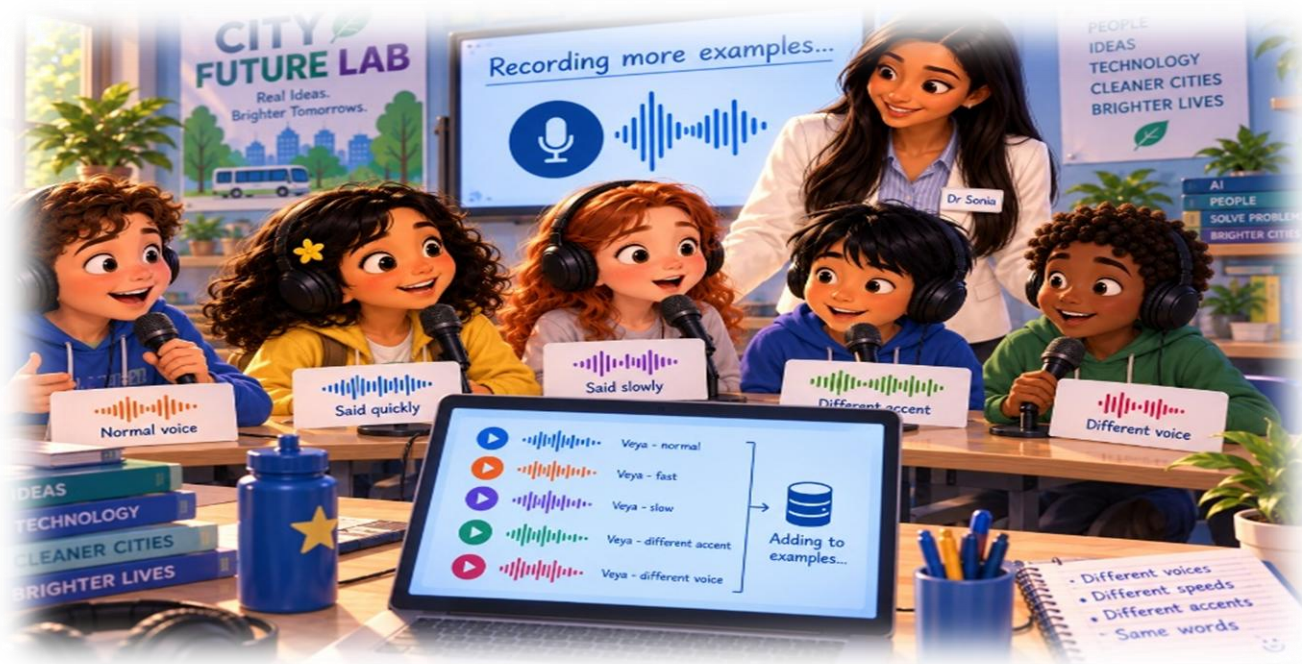
Different voices.

Different speeds.

Different ways of saying the same words.

Dr Sonia added the recordings to the activity's collection of examples.

Then she used the new examples to train the system again.



Then they tried again.

Veya pressed the button.

“Stop.”

A little circle spun.

Then the screen displayed:

STOP

Veya grinned.



But Dr Sonia raised one finger.

“One correct answer doesn’t mean our work is finished.”

Veya looked at her.

“Why not?”

“Because now we need to see if it works with voices it hasn’t heard before.”

Veya slowly nodded.

Training was about helping AI learn from examples.

But finding out whether it had really learned...

that would require testing.

She opened her blue notebook.

Under **DATA**, she wrote another word:

TRAINING

AI hadn't learned by magic.

People had chosen the examples.

People had helped train it.

And people would have to test whether it worked.





Veya's Notebook

Today's Discovery

Today I learned that people train AI using examples.

Things I noticed

- ☑ AI can learn patterns from examples.
- ☑ Mistakes can show us where an AI needs to improve.
- ☑ Different examples can help an AI learn different patterns.

 **What is something you've learned by practising?**



Think Like Veya

Imagine you're teaching a computer to recognise the word "**Hello.**"

How would you help it learn?

- ☐ Say it slowly.
- ☐ Say it quickly.
- ☐ Say it loudly.
- ☐ Say it quietly.
- ☐ Ask different people to say it.

My own idea:

AI Detective Mission

Become an AI Trainer!

Ask three family members or friends to say the same word.

Listen carefully.

What sounds different?

- ☐ Speed
- ☐ Loudness
- ☐ Accent
- ☐ Pitch
- ☐ Emotion

Every voice can sound different.

That's why a speech-recognition AI can benefit from many different examples during training.



AI Explorer



New AI Word

Training

- **Training** is the process of helping an AI system learn patterns from examples.
- During training, an AI looks for patterns in those examples.
- Useful and varied examples can help it work better when it encounters something new.



Badge Unlocked



AI Trainer

AI learns from examples chosen and prepared by people.



Mission Complete!

Today you discovered...



People train AI using examples.



AI can learn patterns from different examples.



Mistakes can give us useful clues about what needs improving.

But during the next lesson...

Veya noticed something strange.

The computer recognised some voices much better than others.

Why?

AI Level Up!

Your AI Journey

-   **Pattern** — Mastered
-   **Data** — Mastered
-   **Prediction** — Mastered
-   **Training** — Mastered
-   **Fairness** — Coming Next
-   **Testing** — Locked

Mission 5 — Who Gets Left Out?

Why Fairness Matters

Today's AI Mission

Can you discover why AI sometimes works well for some people but not for everyone?

Mission Goal: Learn why the examples used to train AI can affect how well it works for different people.

The following Saturday, Dr Sonia had a new challenge waiting.

“Last week,” she said, “you helped train the computer with some new examples.”

The class smiled proudly.

“Today, we’re going to see how well it works with different voices.”

Everyone leaned forward.

Dr Sonia pressed a button.

A voice played through the speakers.

“Stop.”

The computer answered almost instantly.

STOP

“Very good,” Dr Sonia said.

Then another voice played.



This one was quieter.

Older.

A little circle spun.

Then the screen displayed...

TOP

The room fell silent.

“Did the computer break?” Jay asked.

Dr Sonia shook her head.

“No. It just struggled with that example.”



She played another recording.

This time, it was a young child.

The computer guessed again.

Wrong.

Then a bus driver.

His recording had been made with traffic noise in the background.

Wrong again.

Veya frowned.

“It recognises some voices better than others.”

Dr Sonia nodded.

“Exactly.”

Dr Sonia opened the collection of training examples.

Hundreds of recordings filled the screen.



Most had been recorded by adults.

Most had been recorded indoors.

Most were clear and quiet.

“There aren’t many children,” Veya noticed.

“And only a few older voices,” added another student.

“What about voices recorded in noisy places?” Jay asked.

Dr Sonia nodded.

“Good question.”

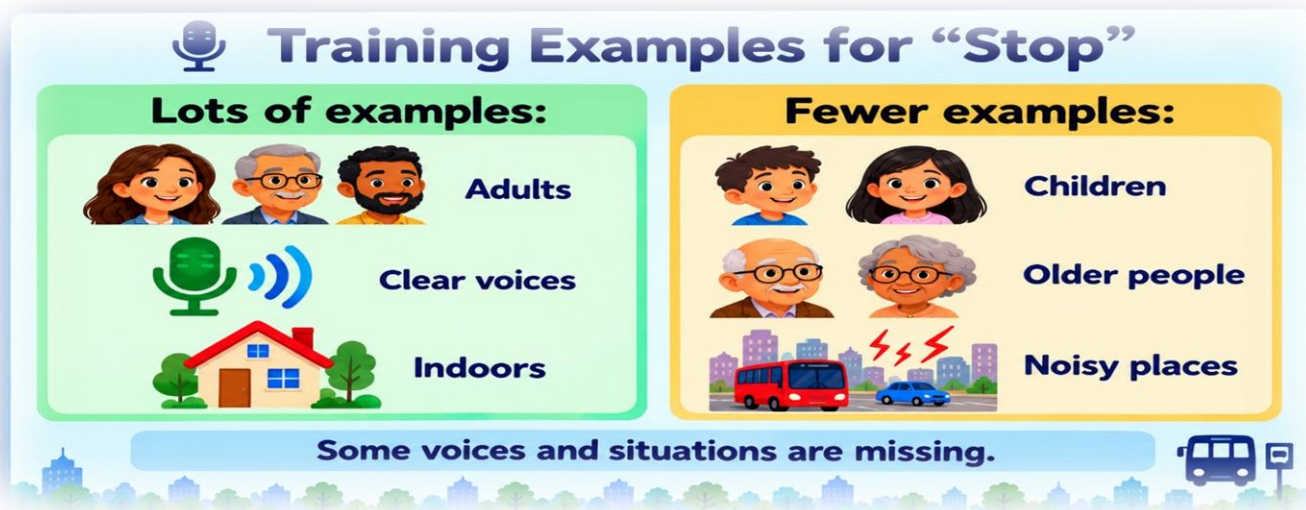
She looked around the room.

“AI learns patterns from the examples used during training.”

“If the examples don’t include enough variety...”

“...the system may struggle when it encounters something different.”

Veya stared at the recordings.



Different people.

Different voices.

Different places.

Who was included mattered.

And so did...

who was missing.

That was a new kind of clue.

The class spent the afternoon adding more examples to the collection.



Children.

Adults.

Older people.

Fast and slow voices.

Quiet and loud voices.

Recordings from quiet and noisy places.

Each one added more variety to the training examples.

Dr Sonia used the new examples to **train the system again**.

Then came the final test.

“We need a voice the system hasn’t heard before.”

An older volunteer stepped forward.

Her voice had not been used in training.

She leaned towards the microphone.

“Stop.”

A little circle spun.

Then...

STOP

The room burst into applause.

Veya grinned.

But Dr Sonia raised one finger.



“Remember, one successful test doesn’t mean the system will work perfectly for everyone.”

“It means we’ve learned something useful.”



Veya nodded.

They had added more variety.

They had tested with something new.

And the system had worked this time.

But there would always be more people... more voices... and more situations to test.

Veya looked at the screen.

Good AI wasn’t just about making technology work.

It was about thinking carefully about who it needed to work for.

Veya's Notebook



Today's Discovery

AI can work better when its training examples include different people and situations.

Things I noticed

- ☒ Different people speak differently.
- ☒ AI can benefit from varied examples during training.
- ☒ Missing information can lead to mistakes.

 **What other voices or situations might be useful to include?**

Think Like Veya

Imagine you're building an AI that recognises voices.

Who would you invite to help?

- ☐ Young children
- ☐ Teenagers
- ☐ Adults
- ☐ Older people
- ☐ People with different accents
- ☐ People speaking in noisy places
- ☐ Someone else:

Why is it important to include different kinds of voices?

AI Detective Mission

Become a Fairness Detective!

Look around your classroom, home or playground.

How many different voices can you hear?

Can you think of someone whose voice sounds different from yours?

Every person is unique.

Testing different voices can help us discover who a system works well for and where it may struggle.



AI Explorer



New AI Word

Fairness

Fairness means checking whether an AI system works well for different people and whether some people might be unfairly disadvantaged or left out.



Badge Unlocked



Fairness Finder

Good AI engineers ask: Who might this system be leaving out?



Mission Complete!

Today you discovered...



What an AI learns depends on the data and examples used to train it.



Missing examples can lead to mistakes.



Fairness means checking how well AI works for different people.

Veya had discovered why varied examples mattered.

But she had another question...

How do engineers know if an AI is ready to use?



AI Level Up!

Your AI Journey

-   **Pattern** — Mastered
-   **Data** — Mastered
-   **Prediction** — Mastered
-   **Training** — Mastered
-   **Fairness** — Mastered
-   **Testing** — Coming Next

PART THREE

Using AI Wisely

Mission 6 — Check Before You Trust

Checking AI's Answers

Today's AI Mission

Can you discover why we should check AI before we trust its answers?

Mission Goal: Learn why AI can make mistakes, why testing matters, and when people need to stay involved.

The following Saturday, Veya arrived at the City Future Lab with her blue notebook tucked under her arm.

Dr Sonia was waiting beside the whiteboard.

But there were no microphones.

No headphones.

No voice recordings.

Instead, three large cards sat on the table.

Dr Sonia turned them over one by one.

 **TEST IT**

 **CHECK IT**

 **ASK A HUMAN**



Veya leaned closer.

“Is this another experiment?”

Dr Sonia smiled.

“Something even more important.”

“Today, we’re going to learn what to do when AI gives us an answer.”

Jay looked confused.

“Don’t we just use the answer?”

Dr Sonia shook her head.

“Not always.”

She looked around the room.

“AI can be useful.”

“It can find patterns.”

“It can make predictions.”

“It can recognise things and create things.”

Then she paused.

“But AI can also be wrong.”

Veya thought about everything she had already seen.

TOP instead of STOP.

Predictions that changed when new information arrived.

A system that recognised some voices better than others.

AI could do impressive things.



But it wasn't perfect.

Dr Sonia picked up the first card.

 **TEST IT**



“What did we do after training our speech-recognition system?” she asked.

Veya knew this one.

“We tried it with a voice it hadn't heard before.”

“Exactly.”

Dr Sonia nodded.

“Training helps an AI learn from examples.”

“Testing helps us find out how well it works with something new.” She wrote:

TRAINING → LEARN

TESTING → CHECK

Veya copied the words into her notebook.

“So one correct answer isn't enough?”

“Exactly,” said Dr Sonia.

“Good testing tries different examples, different people and different situations.”

Veya thought about the noisy Number 18 bus.



The real world was certainly full of different situations.

“Some AI systems can also produce answers, text, pictures and other content.”

Dr Sonia picked up the second card.

CHECK IT

“Here’s a simple example,” she said.

On the screen appeared a simple question:

What is 6×7 ?

Underneath was an AI-generated answer:

48



Several children laughed.

“That's wrong!” said Jay.

“How do you know?” asked Dr Sonia.

“Because six times seven is forty-two.”

Dr Sonia smiled.

“And that's the important part.”

“An answer can sound confident and still be wrong.”

Veya stared at the screen.

That felt important.

AI didn't always wave a red flag when it made a mistake.

Sometimes...**the mistake could look just like an answer.**

“So we should check?” Veya asked.

“Especially when the answer matters,” said Dr Sonia.

Then Dr Sonia picked up the final card.

ASK A HUMAN

“Imagine an AI recommends a new song,” she said.

“And you don't like it.”

Jay shrugged.

“I choose another song.”

“Exactly.”





Then Dr Sonia continued.

“But what if you're unsure about something important?”

The room became quieter.

“Something about your health.”

“Your safety.”

“Something you don't understand at school.”

“Or a decision that could affect another person.”

Veya thought for a moment.

“Ask someone?”

Dr Sonia nodded.

“Yes.”

“AI can help us with information and ideas.”

“But when something important is at stake, people still matter.”

“A parent. A teacher. A doctor. An expert. Someone you trust.”

Veya wrote underneath the three cards:

AI CAN HELP.

Then:

PEOPLE STILL DECIDE.

She liked that.



Dr Sonia looked around the room.

“So, AI Explorers...”

“What do we do when AI gives us an answer?”

The children answered together.

“CHECK IT!”

“And when something important is at stake?”

“ASK A HUMAN!”

Dr Sonia smiled.

“Exactly.”



Veya looked down at everything she had written over the past few weeks.

PATTERN

DATA

PREDICTION

TRAINING

FAIRNESS

And now...

TESTING



They weren't separate ideas anymore.

They were all connected.

Data helped reveal patterns.
Patterns helped make predictions.
Training used examples.
Fairness asked who might be left out.
Testing helped find problems.
Veya closed her notebook.
Then she thought of Grandpa.
The Number 18.
The roaring engine.
The missed stop.
One mystery remained:
Why had Grandpa missed the announcement?
Veya opened a fresh page and wrote:
TEST IT.
FIND OUT WHAT CHANGED.
She smiled.
No more guessing. It was time to find out.





Veya's Notebook

Today's Discovery

AI can be useful but it can also make mistakes.

Good AI Explorers **check, ask questions and get help** when it matters.

Things I noticed

- ☒ Training and testing are different.
- ☒ AI can give an answer that sounds confident but is wrong.
- ☒ Important answers should be checked.

 **When would you check an AI answer?**

Think Like Veya

An AI gives you an answer.

What would you do?

 It recommends a song you don't like → **Try something else.**

 It gives you an answer for your homework → **Check the answer and understand it yourself.**

 It tells you something important about your health → **Ask a trusted adult or appropriate professional.**

 It predicts your bus will arrive in two minutes → **Remember: predictions can change when new information arrives.**

Veya's AI Checks

CHECK IT

Could the answer be wrong?

ASK A HUMAN

Is this important enough that a person should help?

How Engineers Test AI

Engineers test AI with new examples and different situations to find mistakes and see what needs improving.

AI Explorer

New AI Word

Testing

- **Testing** means checking how well an AI works with new examples and different situations.
- Testing helps people find mistakes, weaknesses and things that need improving.

Badge Unlocked

Smart Checker

Good AI Explorers don't just accept an answer. They check, ask questions and get help when it matters.

Mission Complete!

Today you discovered...

- ✓ Training helps AI learn; testing helps us check what it learned.
- ✓ AI can make mistakes, even when its answer sounds confident.
- ✓ Important AI answers should be checked.
- ✓ People should stay involved when decisions matter.

AI Level Up!

Your AI Journey

-   **Pattern — Mastered**
-   **Data — Mastered**
-   **Prediction — Mastered**
-   **Training — Mastered**
-   **Fairness — Mastered**
-   **Testing — Mastered**

Veya had learned six powerful ideas.

But her first question was still waiting.

Why had Grandpa missed their stop?

There was only one thing left to do.

Return to Number 18.

Mission 7 — Solving the Mystery

The Missing Stop

Veya's Final Mission

Can Veya discover why Grandpa missed their stop?

Mission Goal: Put everything Veya has learned into action: observe, test, check and find out what really happened.

A few days later, Veya was back on the Number 18.

Grandpa sat beside her.

But this time, Veya wasn't simply going somewhere.

She was investigating.

Her blue notebook was open on her lap.

At the top of a fresh page, she had written:

What changes when an announcement is hard to hear?



The bus pulled away.

Veya listened.

At the first stop, the bus was quiet.

“Next stop, Station Road.”

Clear.

Veya made a tick.

At the next stop, passengers were talking.

The announcement played again.

Veya could still hear it.

Another tick.

Then the bus turned onto a busy road.



The engine grew louder.

Metal rattled beneath the floor.

The bus slowed.

And just as the noise grew...

“Next stop, Maple Avenue.”

Part of the announcement disappeared
beneath the noise.

Veya's eyes widened.

There it was.

The same thing that had happened with
Grandpa.

She quickly wrote:

LOUD NOISE + ANNOUNCEMENT = HARDER TO HEAR

But Veya remembered what Dr Sonia had taught her.

One test wasn't enough.

So, she kept watching.

One stop.

Then another.

Sometimes the announcement played when the bus was quiet.

Sometimes it played when the engine was loud.

Sometimes other passengers were talking.

Sometimes several sounds happened at once.



Veya filled the page with ticks, crosses and questions.

Then she noticed something.

She circled one word:

TIMING

Maybe the problem wasn't simply the voice.

Maybe it wasn't Grandpa.

And maybe it didn't need **more AI**.

Maybe the announcement was sometimes playing at the wrong moment.

At the City Future Lab, Veya showed Dr Sonia her notebook.

“I think I found a clue.”

Dr Sonia looked carefully at Veya's observations.

“What did you notice?”

“The announcement is harder to hear when it plays at the same time as the loudest bus noises.”



Dr Sonia nodded.

“So what could we change?”

Veya thought.

“What if the announcement waited until the loudest noise had passed?”

Then another idea came.

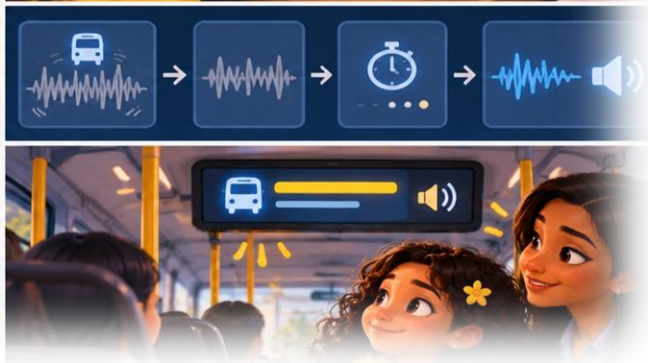
“And what if important stops were repeated?”

She pointed to her notebook.

“We could show the stop name clearly on a screen too.”

Dr Sonia smiled.

“Those are ideas we can test.”



Together, they made a simple prototype.

First came the noisy sounds of the bus.

Rumble.

Rattle.

Hiss.

They waited.

One second.

Two seconds.

Then the announcement played.

“Next stop, Maple Avenue.”

Clear.

A screen showed the stop name too.

Veya grinned.

Then she stopped herself.

One successful test...

wasn't enough.

So they tried again.

Different noise.

Different timing.

Different people.

Again.

And again.



Some ideas helped.

Others didn't.

Each test gave them another clue.

Finally, Dr Sonia looked at Veya.

"There's one more person I'd like to ask."

Veya already knew who.

Grandpa sat beside her for the final test.



The bus sounds began.

The engine rumbled.

The doors hissed.

Then the noise settled.

A moment later, the announcement played.

“Next stop, Maple Avenue.”

Grandpa looked at the screen.

Then at Veya.

A smile spread across his face.

“I heard every word.”

Veya grinned.



But what made her happiest wasn't making the technology more complicated.

She had found a simpler way to make it work better for people.

She had noticed a problem.

Asked questions.

Collected clues.

Tested her ideas.

And listened to the person who needed the technology to work.

Veya looked down at her blue notebook.

She had started with one question:

Why did Grandpa miss the stop?

Now she had found a likely cause and a way to make the system work better.



Sometimes the problem wasn't the person.

Sometimes it wasn't about adding more AI.

Sometimes the whole system simply needed to work better for the people using it.

Veya closed her notebook.

She smiled.

She had followed the clues, tested her ideas and found what she had been looking for.

The mystery of the missing stop was finally coming together.

And Veya had discovered something even bigger:

Good technology isn't just about what it can do.

It's about how well it works for people.

🌟 **FINAL MISSION COMPLETE!**

🏆 **MASTER AI EXPLORER**



Congratulations!

You followed the clues with Veya, asked questions, tested ideas and discovered six important AI concepts.

You have completed Book 1 of *Veya's AI Adventures*.

PRINT & COLLECT YOUR AI BADGES

Cut them out. Earn them as you complete each mission.

Collect all six!



VEYA'S AI EXPLORER GUIDE

Learn These AI Words

Congratulations, AI Explorer!

You've discovered **six important AI ideas** during your adventure with Veya.

Each one helped Veya **understand** a little more about how AI works and how people can use it thoughtfully.

Here's a quick guide to help you remember what you've discovered.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Artificial Intelligence, or AI, is technology designed to do tasks such as recognising patterns, working with language, making predictions and creating new content.

AI can do things that seem very clever, but it **doesn't think, feel or understand the world the way people do.**

AI systems use data and learned patterns, while people make important choices about how they are designed, trained, tested and used.

Example: AI can help a bus system use information about traffic and journeys to predict when a bus might arrive.

Pattern

A **pattern** is something that repeats or happens in a recognisable way.

AI can find patterns in information and use them to help make predictions or decisions.

Example: The Number 18 bus often arrives at around the same time each morning.

Data

Data is information that an AI system can learn from or use.

Data can include words, sounds, pictures, numbers and videos.

Example: A speech-recognition system can learn from examples of recorded voices.

Prediction

A **prediction** is a smart guess about what might happen next, based on patterns and available information.

AI can use patterns from past data together with current information to make predictions.

Example: A bus system can use information such as the bus's location and traffic conditions to predict when it might arrive.

■ Training

Training is the process of helping an AI system learn patterns from examples.

Useful and varied examples can help an AI work better when it encounters something new.

Example: At the City Future Lab, Veya and her classmates collected different voice recordings and used them as examples to train the speech-recognition system.

■ Fairness

Fairness means checking whether an AI system works well for different people and whether some people might be unfairly disadvantaged or left out.

Testing with different people and situations can help reveal where a system works well and where it may need improving.

Example: The class discovered that the speech-recognition system worked better with some voices than others, so they added more varied examples and continued testing.

■ Testing

Testing means checking how well an AI system works with new examples and in different situations.

Testing can reveal mistakes, weaknesses and things that need improving.

Example: The class tested the speech-recognition system with a voice it had not used during training to see how well it worked with something new.

Remember...

AI doesn't replace curiosity.

It gives us more reasons to be curious.

AI can be useful, but it can also make mistakes.

So, remember what Veya learned:

Ask questions.

Test it.

Check it.

Ask a human when it matters.

Keep exploring.

Keep asking questions.

And keep thinking for yourself.



AI IN YOUR WORLD

Can you spot what you've learned?

AI isn't only in Veya's adventure. You may meet it in everyday life too.



Unlocking a phone

AI can find **patterns** in images, like when some devices recognise a face.



Typing a message

Ever noticed your keyboard guessing what you might type next? AI can use patterns to **predict** what might come next.



Music and video recommendations

Some apps suggest songs or videos based on **patterns in what you've enjoyed before**.



Maps and journey times

Maps can use **past patterns and current information**, such as traffic, to predict how long a journey might take.



Voice assistants

Speech-recognition systems can learn patterns from examples of voices and sounds.

🌟 **Generative AI**

Some AI can create new text, pictures, music or other content based on patterns learned during training.

🔍 **Think Like Veya**

The next time you meet AI, become an **AI Detective** and ask:

- **What information is it using?**
- **What is it predicting or creating?**
- **Could it be wrong?**
- **Who might it work better or worse for?**
- **Should I check this?**
- **Do I need to ask a person?**

★ **Veya's Explorer Tip**

You don't need to know every answer.

Good AI Explorers know when to ask questions.

🔒 **And Remember...**

Your personal information belongs to you.

Before sharing private information with an AI, **check with a trusted adult.**

☀️ THE AI EXPLORER CHANT



Ask why. Look twice. Follow the clue.

Test it, check it, try something new.

AI can help, but the thinking starts with YOU.

Stay curious, Explorer, there's more you can do!



MY AI EXPLORER PLEDGE

I will stay curious.

I will ask questions.

I will think about who might be left out.

I will ask a trusted adult when something important is at stake.

I will use AI to help, not harm.

And I will keep learning, testing and improving.

AI Explorer: _____

COMING NEXT...

Another Veya AI Adventure

Veya has solved the mystery of the missing stop...

but her questions are only beginning.

One day, she watches AI create something in seconds.

Veya stares at the screen.

“But... how did it do that?”

A brand-new adventure into **Generative AI, prompts and creativity**
is coming soon.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Dr Akshi Kumar is a UK-based university academic, AI researcher, author and AI literacy advocate at Goldsmiths, University of London.

After nearly two decades of working in the field of AI, Akshi believes it is important to start AI literacy early. AI is already part of the world children are growing up in. While debates continue around its benefits, risks and place in our lives, she believes children first need the opportunity to understand it, question it and learn to use it thoughtfully.

She believes that what feels mysterious can also feel frightening. Understanding can replace some of that mystery with curiosity. And curiosity gives children the confidence to ask: *How does this work? Why did it do that? Should I trust this answer? Who might be affected?*

Her experiences as a researcher, teacher and mother inspired *Veya's AI Adventures*, turning big ideas about AI into stories that encourage children to stay curious and think for themselves.

AI literacy isn't about teaching children to love AI or fear it. It's about helping them understand it.

***Ask why. Explore. Think it through.
Let AI help, but the thinking starts with YOU!***

🧡 YOUR VOICE MATTERS

Did you enjoy exploring AI with Veya?

I'd love to hear from **young readers, parents and educators.**

What did you enjoy? What did you discover? What should Veya explore next?

 **Scan to Share Your Feedback**

Your ideas can help make Veya's next adventure even better.



Your Privacy

No names or email addresses are requested. Please don't include children's names or personal information. Testimonials are optional and shared only with permission.





AI can be useful.



AI can make mistakes.



Good explorers ask questions.

Join Veya as she discovers how AI learns from patterns, data and examples — and why testing, fairness and human thinking matter.

A story-led introduction to AI literacy for curious young minds.

For ages
8–12



Dr Akshi Kumar



akshikumar.ai

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