Strategies for Using GenAI

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Consider the following student uses of GenAI to assist them in their learning:

More Examples

Expand or condense text

Expand bullet points to actual text or condense longer text into shorter text (e.g., condense text into bullet points). A related function is to use AI to summarize the key points from a text, including academic articles.

Brainstorm / Generate ideas

AI can be a useful starting point for students working to identify questions, topics, themes or arguments. A generative AI tool can also be asked to provide counter arguments for a student-generated idea, that the student then needs to account for in their own work.

Find sources or references

This is a capability where you have to be extra careful. As we know, generative AI tools can "hallucinate" sources that do not exist. Generative AI tools that are integrated in search engines generally perform better at this task. Regardless of the tool used, it's good practice to verify that any sources identified actually exist.

Identify and analyze data

AI tools can analyze different datasets and structure tables with information based on inputted text or data samples with specific parameters offered.

Interact with spreadsheets

Generative AI tools like Copilot can easily read the .csv format. You can extract a CSV file and give it to Copilot to work with based on certain specifications (e.g., give me an overview of what's in this CSV file and provide some insights into the information provided), as well as output a CSV file.

Code with natural language prompts

Complete partially written code with suggestions, or translate code from one programming language to another.

With all of these uses it's important to remind students that what the generative AI tool generates may have hallucinations or biases. Students should be reminded to review and evaluate the output from the generative AI tool to ensure its accuracy and evaluate its effectiveness.

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