



Real Educational Advantages of Artificial Intelligence

by Nick Gaehde

(NAPS)—Artificial Intelligence (AI) has arrived in the classroom, and it's here to stay. Surprising as it may seem to some parents and teachers, that's good news. AI can revolutionize how teachers teach while supporting student learning. AI-powered educational tools can offer personalized learning experiences and analyze data on student performance. They can also automate repetitive tasks, provide instant feedback, and do so much more.

AI Won't Replace Teachers

Right now, the job of "teacher" encompasses far more than simply providing instruction to students. AI can play a crucial role in supporting teachers with ancillary responsibilities, alleviating their workload and granting them more time to dedicate to the quintessential aspect of their profession—delivering effective instruction. However, it's essential to recognize that fostering a safe and inclusive environment where students feel seen, valued, and understood is equally vital in the realm of education. While AI can assist in various facets of teaching, it cannot replace the human element required to cultivate social-emotional awareness and address the fundamental needs of students. Teachers' capacity to create such a nurturing environment is intrinsic to their role and directly impacts the effectiveness of instruction. Thus, while AI can complement teachers' efforts, it cannot supplant the interpersonal connections and empathetic understanding they bring to the classroom.

How to Empower HI (Human Intelligence) with AI

According to a Forbes survey, 60% of teacher respondents have integrated artificial intelligence into their classrooms to improve and streamline their daily teaching responsibilities—and 55% said they've seen improved educational outcomes from these integrations.

One problem, we've seen in classrooms, has been the reliance on periodic benchmark assessments and state testing which only gives teachers data on student performance about three times a year. This can create data gaps for teachers between tests. Many have turned to Lexia's patented Assessment Without Testing AI technology (machine learning), which provides educators ongoing progress-monitoring data and visibility for each student—where they are doing well and where they might need additional support—that is essential to differentiate instruction. This empowers teachers to focus on what matters most: Delivering the right instruction at the right time.

Looking Ahead

While classrooms are filled with new technology every year, the importance of a knowledgeable teacher to harness the power of that technology and guide student growth will always be necessary. Jen Russ, a New Jersey public school teacher with 17 years of experience in English lan-



AI plus HI (human intelligence) equals improved outcomes. It's not just technology for its own sake.

guage arts from grades 5–12 in general and special education, sees opportunity for AI to be leveraged in the classroom.

"My favorite use of AI so far has been using it to draft essay and narrative exemplars for kids," said Russ in a CNBC article. "I'll ask ChatGPT, 'Write me a persuasive essay on a topic in the voice of a typical 5th grader.' If I want kids to analyze it, I can ask the AI to add specific types of errors."

While Russ believes there's potential for AI to reduce certain burdens for teachers, she doesn't believe it will compensate for reduced funding. For example, she uses a computer program in her classroom, Lexia PowerUp, that uses AI to close individual literacy gaps.

"It does the job about as well as a computer can possibly do. That said, it still relies on a teacher interpreting data and meeting one-to-one with a student." As Carl Hooker, educational speaker and consultant, said, "[Students] don't remember the worksheets, they don't remember the spelling tests. They don't remember the math homework. They remember diving into passion-based projects and using technology to guide that."

One of the most rewarding aspects of integrating technology into products is increasing targeted instruction among students by:

- Leveraging students' strengths and effectively scaffolding instruction;
- Encouraging children to use digital tools to collaborate, create, and solve problems;
- Sharing diverse curricula that include all learners' cultures and engage their interest.

Instructional Technology in Action Research tells us that 95% of all students have the capacity to learn to read when teacher-led instruction and evidence-based curricula align with the science of reading. Always-on diagnostics happening in the background without stopping to test seamlessly provides multiple asynchronous and synchronous learning opportunities that adapt to individual students to keep them in their zone of proximal development—the place between where a student can achieve alone and where they need assistance.

• Mr. Gaehde is the president of Lexia and a lifelong literacy advocate. Learn more at lexialearning.com.