June 2, 2021 | By **Judi Fusco** and **Pati Ruiz**

The reality of AI integration into classrooms is closer than ever. With companies like Google planning to invest *Already had invested and embedded AI into all of its products*more into how AI is integrated into the classroom, millions of teachers across all subject areas could be impacted in just a few short years. As an educator, understanding AI and its ethical implications is critical to making sure the new technologies introduced to classrooms ultimately help your students.

What should educators know about AI? This post provides an introduction and a set of resources to learn more about AI going forward.

What is AI?

The term "AI" is tossed around a lot and it's hard to get computer scientists and experts to agree on a simple definition, but most will agree with this: AI lets machines make decisions and predictions. Some AI developers aim to make systems that can do things, like prepare food better and faster than humans, to replace the work of humans; while others want to make an AI system to work with and help humans. We have the latter view as we believe teachers are essential to education, and that AI should be used to better support them. For example, when a teacher has students use Grammarly to improve their writing, **they're using AI**. The teacher is still there and the students could benefit from both the feedback from the AI system and the teacher.

One of the reasons why it's hard to define AI is that it does different things and it takes many types of technologies and methods to create an AI system. AI

systems need to be able to perceive, represent what they perceive in data, reason about it, and make decisions.

There are many ways AI works, but all of them involve using data. Data are units of information about people or objects that can be used by AI technologies. **[AI systems are trained](#)** with data. It is important to note that the data used to train AI systems can be biased for several reasons—sometimes because it is historical data that does not reflect what the world is actually like today. Getting unbiased data is a very hard problem that many are working to solve, but we are not there yet.

What questions should educators ask about AI?

Technology often comes with ethical implications and AI is no different. There are several questions educators should ask and investigate before they adopt a product into a classroom, including:

- Was the AI system designed for classroom use or other situations?

- What data was used when the system was trained?

- What is the company's model for the data it collects? Will the data collected by the system ever be sold? Will it only be used for only the purpose specified? Can you identify my students from the data?

- How was the AI system tested and what groups of people were included during the testing process?

- When the AI fails, how does it fail, and what are the consequences?

- How am I included? Do I or the system interact with students, and can I give feedback to the system or override the decisions?

When adopting AI for a whole school or district, there are many things to consider. **The Ethical Framework for AI in Education**, developed by The Institute for Ethical Al in Education, can be a good starting point for educators to review when they are selecting and adopting AI tools for use.

Where can educators go to learn more?

Here's a list of resources to learn more about AI:

- •Blog post: Links to 3 Webinars on AI and the Future of Learning

- •Blog post: AI or Intelligence Augmentation for Education?

- •Organization: AI4ALL

- •Organization: The Artificial Intelligence (AI) for K-12 initiative (AI4K12)

- •Book: You Look Like A Thing And I Love You: How Artificial Intelligence Works and Why It's Making the World a Weirder Place by Janelle Shane

- •Report: AI and the Future of Learning: Expert Panel Report

- •Stories: On Culturally Responsive Artificial Intelligence

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