

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts for one-third of the total essay section score.)

The very recent advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) programs, such as ChatGPT, have sparked a change in how people create and disseminate different forms of academic content. While some posit serious ethical apprehensions as to the ways AI obscures the lines between what can be created by people versus what should be created by AI, others see it as a natural progression of technology in the classroom.

Write an essay that synthesizes material from at least three of the sources and develops your position on the extent to which AI programs such as ChatGPT should or should not play a role in education.

Carefully read the following six sources, including the introductory information for each source.

- Source A (Tufekci)
- Source B (Columbia)
- Source C (AP Press)
- Source D (Industry4)
- Source E (NYU)
- Source F (Greene)

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible position.
- Select and use evidence from at least three of the provided sources to support your line of reasoning. Indicate clearly the sources used through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. Sources may be cited as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the description in parentheses.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

Source A

What Would Plato Say About ChatGPT?

Dec. 15, 2022

By [Zeynep Tufekci](#)

Opinion Columnist

Plato mourned the invention of the alphabet, worried that the use of text would threaten traditional memory-based arts of rhetoric. In his “Dialogues,” [arguing through the voice of Thamus, the Egyptian king of the gods](#), Plato claimed the use of this more modern technology would create “forgetfulness in the learners’ souls, because they will not use their memories,” that it would impart “not truth but only the semblance of truth” and that those who adopt it would “appear to be omniscient and will generally know nothing,” with “the show of wisdom without the reality.”

If Plato were alive today, would he say similar things about ChatGPT?

ChatGPT, a conversational artificial intelligence program released recently by OpenAI, isn’t just another entry in the artificial intelligence hype cycle. It’s a significant advancement that can produce articles in response to open-ended questions that are comparable to good high school essays.

It is in high schools and even college where some of ChatGPT’s most interesting and troubling aspects will become clear.

Essay writing is most often assigned not because the result has much value — proud parents putting good grades on the fridge aside — but because the process teaches crucial skills: researching a topic, judging claims, synthesizing knowledge and expressing it in a clear, coherent and persuasive manner. Those skills will be even more important because of advances in A.I.

When I asked ChatGPT a range of questions — about the ethical challenges faced by journalists who work with hacked materials, the necessity of cryptocurrency regulation, the possibility of democratic backsliding in the United States — the answers were cogent, well reasoned and clear. It’s also interactive: I could ask for more details or request changes.

But then, on trickier topics or more complicated concepts, ChatGPT sometimes gave highly plausible answers that were flat-out wrong — something its creators warn about in their disclaimers.

Unless you already knew the answer or were an expert in the field, you could be subjected to a high-quality intellectual snow job.

You would face, as Plato predicted, “the show of wisdom without the reality.”

All this, however, doesn’t mean ChatGPT — or similar tools, because it’s not the only one of its kind — can’t be a useful tool in education.

Schools have already been dealing with the internet’s wealth of knowledge, along with its lies, misleading claims and essay mills.

Teachers could assign a complicated topic and allow students to use such tools as part of their research. Assessing the veracity and reliability of these A.I.-generated notes and using them to create an essay would be done in the classroom, with guidance and instruction from teachers. The goal would be to increase the quality and the complexity of the argument.

In schools with fewer resources, some students may end up turning in A.I.-produced essays without obtaining useful skills or really knowing what they have written. “Not truth but only the semblance of truth,” as Plato said.

Some school officials may treat this as a problem of merely plagiarism detection and expand the use of draconian surveillance systems. During the pandemic, many students were forced to take tests or write essays under the gaze of an automated eye-tracking system or on a locked-down computer to prevent cheating.

In a fruitless arms race against conversational A.I., automated plagiarism software may become supercharged, making school more punitive for monitored students. Worse, such systems will inevitably produce some false accusations, which damage trust and may even stymie the prospects of promising students.

Educational approaches that treat students like enemies may teach students to hate or subvert the controls. That's not a recipe for human betterment.

Why rely on it at all, then?

At a minimum, because it will soon transform many occupations. The right approach when faced with transformative technologies is to figure out how to use them for the betterment of humanity.

Plato erred by thinking that memory itself is a goal, rather than a means for people to have facts at their call so they can make better analyses and arguments. The Greeks developed many techniques to memorize poems like the "Odyssey," with its more than 12,000 lines. Why bother to force this if you can have it all written down in books?

As Plato was wrong to fear the written word as the enemy, we would be wrong to think we should resist a process that allows us to gather information more easily.

As societies responded to previous technological advances, like mechanization, by eventually enacting a public safety net, a shorter workweek and a minimum wage, we will also need policies that allow more people to live with dignity as a basic right, even if their skills have been superseded. With so much more wealth generated now, we could unleash our imagination even more, expanding free time and better working conditions for more people.

The way forward is not to just lament supplanted skills, as Plato did, but also to recognize that as more complex skills become essential, our society must equitably educate people to develop them. And then it always goes back to the basics. Value people as people, not just as bundles of skills.

And that isn't something ChatGPT can tell us how to do.

Source B

ChatGPT Should Not Exist

Dec 14, 2022

By [David Golumbia](#)

Every month it seems we are greeted by news of the launch of yet another artificial intelligence tool that simulates human creativity. These tools are usually lumped together under the heading of Generative AI. The latest is [ChatGPT](#), a text-producing engine that generates remarkably human-sounding English. There are many reasons to be very concerned about Generative AI. But some of the major questions surrounding it need to be asked more publicly. When we look at the justifications developers give for pursuing these projects, we find them embracing a profound nihilism on the one hand, and offering no coherent reason for being on the other.

As they have with other Generative AI programs like [DALL-E](#) and [Stable Diffusion](#), creators have raised alarms about the technology. Some of their worries have to do with replacing their jobs — jobs which, it should be noted, are generally among the kinds of work that people enjoy doing and, presuming they are properly compensated, derive significant satisfaction from doing. Some have to do with consumers of the simulated product confusing it with work by human beings. Some have to do with students and others substituting the AI product when human work is required, especially in [higher education](#).

Other objections have been raised by researchers looking into racial and other forms of bias. Many prior text-based Generative AI projects have almost immediately started spewing racist and misogynistic messages, emerging from the vast amounts of web-based bigoted data on which their models have been trained. Researchers quickly uncovered that ChatGPT is using some fairly blunt filters to prevent bias — filters that can be bypassed with “simple tricks” that are “superficially masked.”

While some bias concerns might be addressed by improving the software, creativity concerns are only likely to be exacerbated as software like ChatGPT gets better. Creators and educators might say that ChatGPT should not exist at all, even if it could be freed from bias altogether.

It is hard on the other hand to see what Generative AI is supposed to be good for. Most of the apologies for the technology refer to it as a kind of toy, something fun to play around with. That’s true. ChatGPT is fun. So are many of the other projects. But fun is not a compelling reason to produce something that is intended to harm us, and has a proven record of being able to harm us. Lots of destructive things are also fun.

AI projects, like much of digital technology, need to be regulated far more heavily than they currently are. The ideology of “[permissionless innovation](#)” so cherished by tech leaders is antidemocratic to its core. But in this case there is something even more plain. ChatGPT and other Generative AI programs should not exist. They are not the kinds of things that someone who cares about human life would build. Nobody who understood the stakes of asserting that our lives are meaningless would participate in such an endeavor. That OpenAI and other projects like it insist on pursuing this line of research over the strong objections of so many of us who do care about human meaning only shows their own embrace of nihilism.

Source C

What Is ChatGPT and Why Are Schools Blocking It?

Ask the new artificial intelligence tool ChatGPT to write an essay about the cause of the American Civil War and you can watch it churn out a persuasive term paper in a matter of seconds

By [Associated Press](#)

Jan. 6, 2023

Ask the new artificial intelligence tool ChatGPT to write an essay about the cause of the [American Civil War](#) and you can watch it churn out a persuasive term paper in a matter of seconds.

That's one reason why New York City school officials this week started blocking the impressive but controversial writing tool that can generate paragraphs of human-like text.

The decision by the largest U.S. school district to restrict the ChatGPT website on school devices and networks could have ripple effects on other schools, and teachers scrambling to figure out how to prevent cheating. The creators of ChatGPT say they're also looking for ways to detect misuse.

The free tool has been around for just five weeks but is already raising tough questions about the future of AI in education, the tech industry and a host of professions.

WHAT IS CHATGPT?

ChatGPT is part of a [new generation of AI systems](#) that can converse, generate readable text on demand and even produce novel images and video based on what they've learned from a vast database of digital books, online writings and other media.

Millions of people have played with it over the past month, using it to write silly poems or songs, to try to trick it into making mistakes, or for more practical purposes such as helping compose an email. All of those queries are also helping it get smarter.

WHAT ARE THE PITFALLS?

As with similar systems, ChatGPT can generate convincing prose, but that doesn't mean what it says is factual or logical.

Its launch came with little guidance for how to use it, other than a promise that ChatGPT will admit when it's wrong, challenge "incorrect premises" and reject requests meant to generate offensive answers. Since then, however, its popularity has led its creators to try to lower some people's expectations.

"ChatGPT is incredibly limited, but good enough at some things to create a misleading impression of greatness," OpenAI CEO Sam Altman said on Twitter in December.

Altman added that "it's a mistake to be relying on it for anything important right now."

"It's a preview of progress; we have lots of work to do on robustness and truthfulness."

CAN IT BE USED FOR WRITING SCHOOL PAPERS?

This is what ChatGPT said when The Associated Press asked it to answer that question in all caps from the perspective of a principal shouting a brief message through a school's PA system:

"DO NOT USE CHATGPT OR ANY OTHER AUTOMATED WRITING TOOL FOR SCHOOL PAPERS. THIS IS CHEATING AND WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. IF YOU ARE CAUGHT USING CHATGPT OR ANY OTHER AUTOMATED WRITING TOOL FOR SCHOOL PAPERS, THERE WILL BE SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES."

But when asked to answer the same question on its own, ChatGPT offered this more measured warning: "As a general rule, it is not appropriate to use ChatGPT or any other automated writing tool for school papers, as it is considered cheating and does not benefit the student in the long run."

WHAT DO SCHOOLS SAY?

Many school districts are still scrambling to figure out how to set policies on if and how it can be used.

The New York City education department said Thursday that it's restricting access on school networks and devices because it's worried about negative impacts on student learning, as well as "concerns regarding the safety and accuracy of content."

But there's no stopping a student from accessing ChatGPT from a personal phone or computer at home.

"While the tool may be able to provide quick and easy answers to questions, it does not build critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, which are essential for academic and lifelong success," said schools spokesperson Jenna Lyle.

HUMAN OR AI?

"To determine if something was written by a human or an AI, you can look for the absence of personal experiences or emotions, check for inconsistency in writing style, and watch for the use of filler words or repetitive phrases. These may be signs that the text was generated by an AI."

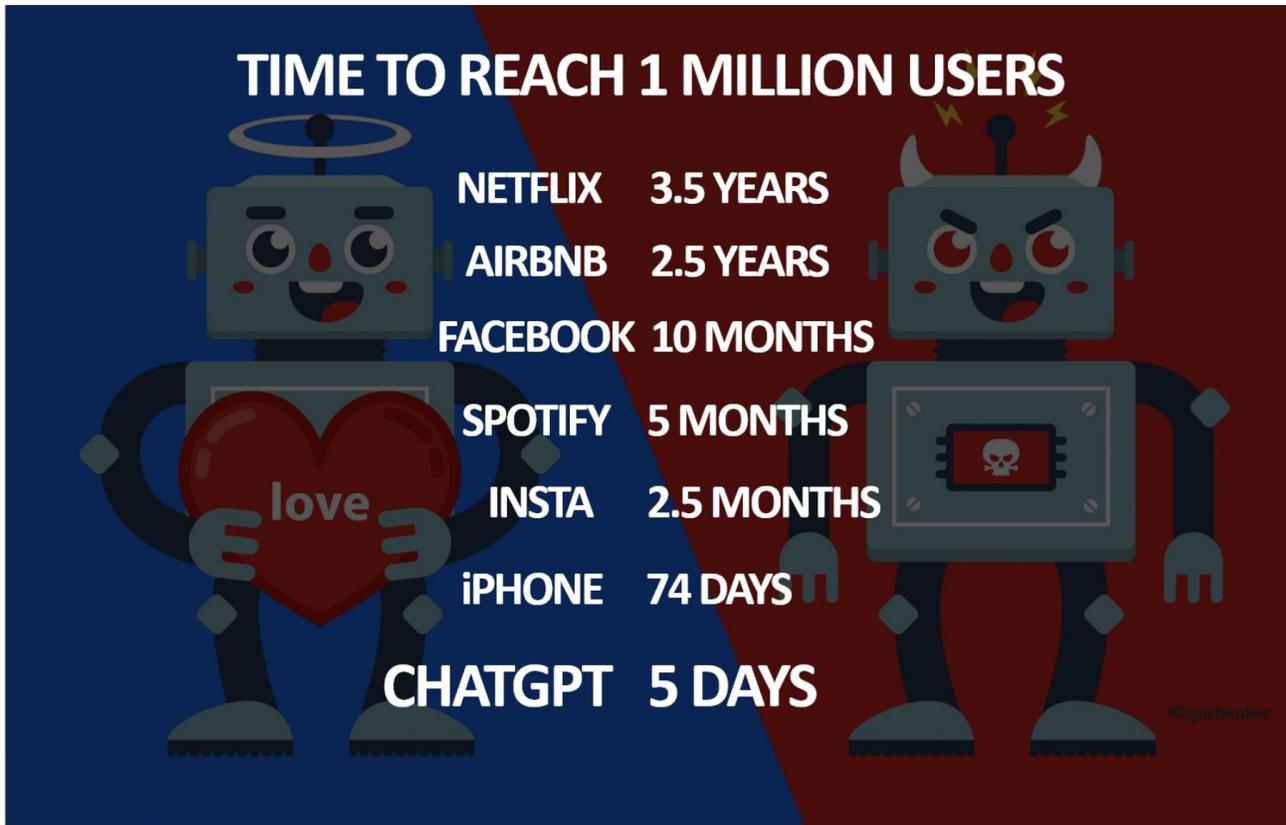
That's what ChatGPT told an AP reporter when asked how to tell the difference.

OpenAI said in a human-written statement this week that it plans to work with educators as it learns from how people are experimenting with ChatGPT in the real world.

"We don't want ChatGPT to be used for misleading purposes in schools or anywhere else, so we're already developing mitigations to help anyone identify text generated by that system," the company said.

Source D

By Industry4



Source E

*excerpted from the **Academic Integrity Policy for Students at NYU***

This policy sets forth core principles and standards with respect to academic integrity for students at New York University. Each school at New York University may establish its own detailed supplemental guidelines for academic integrity, consistent with its own culture, and consistent with the University-wide general guidelines described in this document.

At NYU, a commitment to excellence, fairness, honesty, and respect within and outside the classroom is essential to maintaining the integrity of our community. By accepting membership in this community, students take responsibility for demonstrating these values in their own conduct and for recognizing and supporting these values in others.

In pursuing these goals, NYU expects and requires its students to adhere to the highest standards of scholarship, research and academic conduct. Violations may result in failure on a particular assignment, failure in a course, suspension or expulsion from the University, or other penalties.

Faculty are expected to guide students in understanding other people's ideas, in developing and clarifying their own thinking, and in using and conscientiously acknowledging resources - an increasingly complex endeavor given the current environment of widely available and continually emerging electronic resources. In addition, students come to NYU from diverse educational contexts and may have understandings regarding academic expectations that differ from those at NYU:

1. Plagiarism: presenting others' work without adequate acknowledgement of its source, as though it were one's own.

Plagiarism is a form of fraud. We all stand on the shoulders of others, and we must give credit to the creators of the works that we incorporate into products that we call our own. Some examples of plagiarism:

- a sequence of words incorporated without quotation marks
- an unacknowledged passage paraphrased from another's work
- the use of ideas, sound recordings, computer data or images created by others as though it were one's own

Source F

No, ChatGPT Is Not The End Of High School English. But Here's The Useful Tool It Offers Teachers.

[Peter Greene](#)

December 11, 2022

Folks have been lining up to take Open AI's new [ChatbotGPT](#) for a spin (in fact, as I type this, the chatbot is inaccessible due to high demand). Reactions are largely positive and impressed, though some border on the apocalyptic. In one week, the Atlantic has declared both the [death of the college essay](#) and the [end of high school English](#).

Well, let's hold on for a second.

Many versions of the college essay may well be dead; that's [not a bad thing](#), for reasons we'll get into. English class (which I taught for 39 years) is not dead; however, some teachers may need to do a bit of soul searching.

ChatGPT does represent [a serious step forward](#) and seems to have finally brought algorithmic language composition out of [the uncanny valley](#) where it has been stuck for years. But it still has some serious limits.

Language production algorithms are like linguistic weather predictions. Your weather forecast comes from a simple process: check current conditions, search a vast library of previous conditions, answer the question "When conditions have been like this, or sort of like this, in the past, what happened next?"

The growing strength of the GPT family has been an increasingly large library of "conditions" aka pieces of writing accessible on the internet. It is the predictive text of your google search bar times a gazillion. It is a selective mash-up of everything that has ever been fed into it.

Many teachers have been handing the chatbot some of their favorite assignments and reporting that the algorithm produces serviceable results. Lots of us have thrown assignments involving comparing and contrasting two works of literature, and it can do it, sort of.

I suspect that test runs with ChatGPT depend in part on the richness of the prompt given, which in turn makes me wonder how rich and detailed the prompts given by the cheating high school students that we're all imagining and fretting about might be. If they put a great degree of thought into designing a prompt, would that not mean that they were doing something involving real learning?

I used bare bones prompts, the way most students would likely describe them, and what I got in return were pretty mediocre essays. They might be good enough to save a student from failing, but I don't see anyone rocketing to the valedictorian spot on the back of algorithm-constructed essays.

ChatGPT should kill a certain type of writing, of which the college admission essay is one conspicuous example.

Pushed by the rise of rubrics and standardized test essays, high school writing instruction has drifted in the direction of performative faux writing. The five-paragraph essay is a perfect example of writing in which a student is expected to perform adherence to a composition algorithm, rather than develop an essay by starting with ideas and working out how best to express them. Too often student are expected to follow a formula, to reliably mediocre results.

Well, nothing follows a formula and an algorithm better than a computer program. But if software can now reliably produce mediocre performances of "writing," then why bother teaching students to do it? Drop the formula essays.

Which brings us to the best teacher use of ChatGPT.

ChatGPT is an excellent prompt tester.

Think you've come up with a good writing prompt? Feed it to the chatbot. If it can come up with an essay that you would consider a good piece of work, then that prompt should be refined, reworked, or simply scrapped.

Sure, your students might not use the software to cheat (particularly if its capacity is not increased). But if you have come up with an assignment that can be satisfactorily completed by computer software, why bother assigning it to a human being?

ChatGPT doesn't mark the end of high school English class, but it can mark the end of formulaic, mediocre writing performance as a goal for students and teachers. That end is long overdue, and if ChatGPT hastens that end, then that is good news.