

Op-ed writing with AI

Why?	
Writing op-eds, or argumentative opinion articles, can be a great way for students to practice backing up their opinions with facts and reasoning. Often, one of the most challenging parts of op-ed writing can be acknowledging and responding to an opposing point of view, or counterargument. In this lesson, an AI chatbot like ChatGPT will provide that opposing view. This lesson is designed to compliment existing lessons or units on argumentative writing. Students should be familiar with writing thesis statements, main arguments and sub-arguments, and the basic structure of a persuasive article.	
Materials Needed	Time needed
Computer with internet access	Approximately 1.5 hours (can be split between multiple class periods)
Objectives	
Students will be able to... - Draft a clear thesis statement - Analyze and critique an AI-written op-ed article - Craft a well-structured op-ed article, responding to arguments generated by AI	
Key Concepts & Vocabulary	
- Op-ed: An opinion article, arguing a viewpoint, typically written by those who aren't the official editors of the publication. - Artificial intelligence: Simulation of human intelligence in machines that are programmed to think and act like humans. - Chatbot: a type of artificial intelligence that is programmed to create output that sounds like human writing - Thesis statement: A concise summary of the main point or claim of an essay or research paper. - Counterargument: An opposing argument to a main claim. - Any specifics of persuasive writing that you will focus on (claim, data, warrant; call to action; sub-arguments, etc)	
Lesson	
- Idea Generation (15 minutes) - Introduction: Explain to students that an op-ed is an opinion piece typically written by outside contributors and not the newspaper's editors.	

The main purpose of an op-ed is to offer an opinion on current events or social issues.

- b. Activity: Ask students to brainstorm and jot down topics based on current events or ongoing social issues they care about.
- c. Discussion: Have a few students share their topics and why they chose them.

2. Drafting a Thesis Statement (15 minutes)

- a. Guidance: Remind students of your guidelines on the components of a good thesis statement (i.e. main argument and 2-3 sub-arguments). Also, remind them that their main claim **MUST** be an argument that someone could **DISAGREE** with.
- b. Activity: Students select their chosen topic and draft a thesis statement.
- c. Pair Share: Students share their thesis statements with a partner for feedback and revisions.

3. AI Opposing Op-Ed (20 minutes)

- a. Introduction: Introduce students to the concept of using AI, like ChatGPT, to generate content. Explain that they will be using AI to craft an op-ed that argues the opposing view of their thesis statements.
- b. Sample Prompt: Provide students with a structured prompt for generating the AI article. Make sure to include any details on the format and structure that you will require students to include in their own writing:
 - i. “Write an argumentative article that argues the opposite opinion of this thesis statement: [insert thesis statement here]. The article should include a main argument, 2-3 sub-arguments, follow the “claim, data, warrant” framework, and end with a call to action.”
- c. Activity: Students input their thesis statements into ChatGPT or another chatbot using the provided prompt to generate an opposing op-ed.

4. Analyzing the AI Draft (20 minutes)

- a. Guidance: Remind students to critically analyze the content rather than focus on the novelty of AI-written content.
- b. Questions for Analysis: Have students answer the following:
 - i. Did the chatbot make a well-reasoned argument?
 - ii. What is the AI’s thesis statement? Identify the main argument and sub-arguments.
 - iii. What did the chatbot do well/not so well? Think about the structure, flow, clarity, and persuasiveness of the article.
 - iv. Did the chatbot’s argument change your opinion about the topic?
- c. Discussion: Facilitate a group discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of AI-generated articles.

5. Responding to AI (30 minutes)

- a. Guidance: If a student's opinion changed after reading the AI's article, give them a chance to re-work their thesis statements.
 - b. Activity: Students draft their own op-ed articles in response to the arguments made by the AI. Students can incorporate the AI's argument as a counterargument in their article (teachers should decide if students should be allowed to quote or reference the AI's writing).
 - c. Pair Share: Students share their response op-eds with a partner for feedback.
6. Conclusion and Reflection (10 minutes)
- a. Discussion: Reflect on the process of writing, analyzing AI content, and responding.
 - b. Homework/Extension: Ask students to refine their response op-ed for submission or presentation in the next class.

Tips and ideas

- Because this lesson asks students to write about social issues and current events, there might be some sensitive topics chosen. Make sure to double check thesis statements to make sure that students won't be asking AI to argue a hurtful point.
- Try out the chatbot [Claude](#). Because it is trained to be more restrained and unbiased in its responses, it could be the ideal tool for an assignment like this.