

Using GenAI as educators

Process >

Prompts

Beyond
“Prompt Engineering”

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Having a list of prompts can be handy, but it's just as important to understand the key processes behind using Large Language Model based tech like ChatGPT

1. Start with process, not pre-determined prompts.

Instead of stock prompts, begin a dialogue knowing what you need to accomplish and let the exchange develop in natural language.

2. Use file uploads to give context.

Upload curriculum documents, transcripts, datasets or images so the model can "see" what you are working with. This removes the need for lengthy explanations and makes tasks faster.

3. Use image recognition to translate visual to text.

Photographs of handwritten notes, whiteboards, work or can be transcribed and organised with a single instruction. Multimodal PDFs containing charts or maps are equally accessible.

4. Enable the model's internet connection.

ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot and others can pull current information and cite sources. Use search when you need fresh info, but verify results and watch for irrelevant or spurious links.

5. Treat code execution as a digital Swiss-Army knife.

Large language models can write and run Python and other code to create spreadsheets, convert files, build slideshows and more. If a task is code-friendly, the model can probably automate it.

6. Use reasoning models for complex work.

Models like OpenAI's o3 and "deep research" refine their own answers, making them well suited to curriculum mapping, resourcing and other multi-step tasks where the first draft isn't enough.

Combine approaches

A typical session might involve uploading a syllabus, asking the model to identify media-literacy outcomes, having it fetch recent policy documents online, and finishing with a code-generated slide deck, without any "prompt engineering".

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