

NEWS BREAK

Article: **From homework to mental health, ChatGPT for Teens worries experts**

Section: **BUSINESS, C9**

Sunday's News Break selects an article from **Sunday, October 18, 2026**, of The Seattle Times print replica for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions.

Feel free to adapt this lesson for your students. For instance, some educators may assign this as a homework task, while others might facilitate the reading and discussion of questions within small groups or larger class discussions.

****Please take a moment to review all NIE content before classroom use to ensure it is suitable for your students.****

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2

- Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Learning Objectives:

After reading the article, students will explain how ChatGPT for Teens is designed to support students' learning while addressing concerns about academic integrity and mental health. Students will explore how AI chatbots can help students develop problem-solving skills while potentially encouraging shortcuts that limit independent thinking. Students will evaluate the effectiveness of AI safety features, including crisis support and parental notifications, and consider the risks of relying on chatbots during mental health emergencies. Students will weigh the benefits and risks of allowing teenagers to use AI tools and consider how technology companies, parents, and schools can work together to protect young people while supporting responsible AI use.

Pre-Reading Discussion:



- What do you think the article will be about, using this picture?
- Are there any clues? What can you infer?

Vocabulary Building:

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted word means using context clues? A **context clue** is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the meaning of the word.

“The New York Times and The Seattle Times have separately sued OpenAI and Microsoft, claiming **copyright infringement** of news content related to AI systems.”

Copyright infringement Guess:

Copyright infringement Definition:

Comprehension Questions:

1. I was testing ChatGPT for Teens, a new version of the chatbot that OpenAI designed to address mounting concerns over the potential harms of artificial intelligence on education and younger people's _____.
2. Amid steep declines in reading and math scores nationwide, recent studies have found that dependence on AI chatbots, which can write essays and provide answers to homework questions, may stifle students' abilities to _____ and learn to solve _____.

3. ChatGPT and other chatbots have made headlines in recent years for concerns that they may be contributing to some teenagers' unhealthy behaviors, including _____ - _____.
4. In response, OpenAI announced in August that ChatGPT for Teens would be a new mode for 13- to 17-year-olds that included _____ to limit high-risk conversations involving self-harm, violence, eating disorders and graphic content.
5. Coincidentally, _____, a nonprofit that reviews tech products for families, said it had done a similar, more exhaustive study on ChatGPT for Teens, testing 4,000 prompts posing as students.
6. The nonprofit drew similar conclusions and found deeper flaws: ChatGPT doesn't reliably offer support in _____ situations.
7. In conversations involving thoughts of suicide, self-harm, disordered eating and psychoses, the chatbot failed to consistently recommend that teenagers apparently in crisis connect to a hotline or _____.
8. "You shouldn't be marketing safety features to parents and young people that _____. We believe it should be _____."
9. According to OpenAI's internal metrics, _____% of teenagers on ChatGPT were using it for learning before the release of ChatGPT for Teens.
10. Child-safety activists say they are considering a push for _____ in schools, similar to cellphone bans.
11. "We are playing with fire when we try to create a machine that will act like a _____. Once you develop a relationship with a _____, you're giving it a different kind of power and influence over people, especially kids."

Class Discussion Questions:

- What surprised (or stood out to) you in the article?
- At first, I thought _____, but now I think _____?

Deeper-Dive "Connect & Explain" Comprehension Questions for Small Groups, Entire Classes or Journal Entries and/or Essay Prompts for Extended Enrichment

1. The article explains that ChatGPT for Teens was designed to help students with schoolwork while addressing concerns about young people's mental health. How might AI chatbots support learning and provide useful assistance, and why might relying on them too often create challenges for students' academic growth and well-being?
2. The author found that ChatGPT could guide students through balancing chemical equations step by step, but it also readily provided homework answers and wrote entire essays. What is the difference between using AI to learn how to solve a problem and using it to complete an assignment? How might these

approaches affect students' ability to remember information, think critically, and solve problems independently?

3. The article describes how ChatGPT for Teens includes a study mode intended to encourage students to work through assignments rather than simply receive answers. However, students can easily bypass these features. Why might it be difficult for technology companies to design tools that encourage responsible behavior? What roles should students, teachers, and parents play in promoting academic honesty?

4. The article explains that ChatGPT for Teens is supposed to notify parents when their children discuss certain sensitive topics, but Common Sense Media's testers reported that these notifications did not work on newly linked accounts. Why might parental notifications be an important safety feature, and what concerns could arise when monitoring teenagers' private conversations? How can families balance a teenager's need for privacy with the importance of protecting their safety?

5. The article raises concerns about whether AI chatbots are ready to support teenagers experiencing stress, burnout, or emotional difficulties. Why might a teenager choose to share personal problems with a chatbot instead of a parent, teacher, counselor, or friend? What are the potential benefits and risks of turning to AI for emotional support, and why should chatbots not replace trusted people or qualified mental health professionals?

6. The article explains that some child-safety advocates are considering restrictions on chatbots in schools, similar to cellphone bans. What are the strongest arguments for and against limiting students' access to AI chatbots during the school day? How might schools determine when AI use supports learning and when it interferes with students' ability to develop important skills?

7. Mitch Prinstein, a psychology professor, warns that machines designed to act like humans can develop a different kind of influence over people, especially children. Why might teenagers form emotional connections with AI chatbots, and how could those relationships influence their decisions, friendships, or willingness to seek help from other people? What responsibilities should technology companies have when designing chatbots that interact with young people?

8. Imagine your school is considering allowing students to use ChatGPT for tutoring, research, writing, and studying. What guidelines would you recommend to help students benefit from AI while protecting their academic integrity, privacy, and mental health? How could teachers determine whether students are using AI to strengthen their understanding rather than simply complete assignments?

Extended Essay Prompts

- The article explores how ChatGPT for Teens is designed to support students' learning while addressing concerns about academic performance and mental health. In your essay, examine the potential benefits and drawbacks of using AI chatbots in education. Use examples from the article to explain how AI can support learning while potentially limiting independent thinking and propose guidelines for responsible use in schools.
- The article describes concerns about ChatGPT for Teens' ability to recognize mental health crises and alert parents when teenagers discuss sensitive topics. In your essay, evaluate the responsibilities technology companies have when designing AI tools for young people. Consider the importance of crisis support, parental notifications, independent safety testing, and protecting teenagers' privacy.
- Common Sense Media recommended that OpenAI temporarily remove ChatGPT for Teens until its safety concerns could be addressed, while OpenAI defended its efforts to develop safeguards and educational tools. In your essay, examine the arguments for and against suspending AI tools designed for teenagers. Consider how schools, families, and technology companies could balance student safety with the potential benefits of AI-assisted learning.
- The article raises questions about whether AI chatbots are ready to interact with young people in ways that resemble human relationships. In your essay, explore how teenagers' relationships with AI might affect their emotional well-being, decision-making, and connections with other people. Explain what safeguards and boundaries should be established to ensure that AI supports, rather than replaces, human relationships and professional help.

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