

AI in the Classroom: Teacher Quick Start Guide

Welcome to the future of lesson planning!

The rise of AI doesn't mean more work—it means smarter work. This guide cuts through the hype to provide essential, state-compliant rules for using tools like ChatGPT and Google Gemini effectively.

A Human-Centered Approach

1. **Saves You Time:** Instantly differentiate texts and draft lesson plans.
2. **Keeps You Compliant:** Follows strict Data Privacy and AI Literacy principles.
3. **Teaches Students to Think:** Shifts instruction from "what did you write?" to "what did you learn?"

What is AI? (In Plain English)

AI uses patterns in data to make predictions, create content, or suggest solutions. Think of it like a helpful assistant that speeds up your work—it does not replace your judgment, expertise, or relationships with students

Safe & Responsible Use: State Policy-Aligned Essentials

To align with the strongest state guidance on data privacy and ethics, follow these core rules:

1. **Data Privacy First:** NEVER enter student names, grades, or personal information (PII) to ensure FERPA/COPPA compliance.
2. **Human Oversight:** Double-check all outputs. Treat AI as a draft, not the final answer, as it can generate false or biased info.
3. **Transparency:** Clearly define what constitutes academic dishonesty and be open about when AI is used in lessons.
4. **Model Digital Citizenship:** Teach students the guiding principle: "AI supports thinking, it doesn't replace it."

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The 3 Rules for Teachers: The Instructional Shift

RULE	RATIONALE (WHY THIS MATTERS)
1. Treat all AI work as a first draft.	Ensures the final product involves human reflection, editing, and unique perspective.
2. Verify everything.	Mandates that students learn to evaluate AI's biases and limitations regarding accuracy.
3. Be Ethical (and Specific).	Promotes AI literacy by teaching effective prompting and ethical boundaries.

Top AI Tools (Free for Teachers)

TOOL	CORE STRENGTH	KEY FREE FEATURES
Brisk Teaching	Seamless Workflow Integration	Chrome extension that works directly inside Google Docs, Slides, YouTube, and PDFs for easy use. Features include targeted feedback, text leveling, and automated resource creation.
Your Way Learning	Instructional & Admin Support	Pre-built tools for standards-aligned content and administrative tasks.

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MORE Free AI Tools for Teachers...

TOOL	CORE STRENGTH	KEY FREE FEATURES
Diffit	Differentiation & Resource Leveling	Instantly adapts any text or topic to any reading level from grades 3–12.
MagicSchool.ai	Lesson Prep & Time Saving	Full premium access (Magic Write, templates) provided free for K-12 educators.
ChatGPT / Gemini	"All-in-One" Options	Great for quick drafting, brainstorming, and general idea generation.

Practical Strategies: Focus on Efficiency & Equity

TASK AREA	HOW TO USE AI	EXAMPLE PROMPT
Differentiation	Simplify texts or create tiered vocabulary lists.	"Rewrite this article at a 5th-grade reading level."
Lesson Planning	Draft outlines, objectives, or warm-ups.	"Create a 3-day lesson outline for teaching fractions."

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MORE Practical Strategies...

TASK AREA	HOW TO USE AI	EXAMPLE PROMPT
Assessment	Generate quiz questions or draft rubric criteria.	"Generate 5 multiple-choice questions on X that assess analysis."
Communication	Draft parent emails or meeting points.	"Draft an email about a field trip permission slip."

Practical Strategies: Focus on Student Learning & Agency

TASK AREA	HOW TO USE AI	EXAMPLE PROMPT
AI as a Tutor	Explain concepts in multiple ways (Personalized Learning).	"Explain the Pythagorean theorem using a pizza analogy."
Initial Feedback	Get first-round feedback on writing (Revision Process).	"In my body paragraphs, is my textual evidence strong enough?"
Learning Models	Refine answers using specific frameworks (GRASP).	"Apply GRASP (Goal, Role, Situation, Product) to refine this answer."