

Big Idea: I AM the “I” in AI – by Chelsea Attwell & Lori De Angelis

Using the [UNESCO definition of artificial intelligence](#) as a foundation, this series of lessons introduces Kindergarten students to AI in a developmentally appropriate and empowering way. The focus is on helping students understand that *they* are the “I” in AI—they bring the ideas, imagination, and decisions. AI is simply a tool that helps them create their image. Through drawing and co-creating images with AI, students begin to recognize patterns in language that help them create what they want. For example, they use descriptive words to build vocabulary related to *colour, shape* and *size*. This complements their mathematical thinking as they compare size and other attributes. Most importantly, students develop a sense of agency and autonomy. They learn that they are in control of their ideas and creations, and that technology supports their thinking. Technology responds to their words and thinking. It brings agency because their ideas have value and can help produce something through the use of language, critical thinking skills and persistence.

Culminating Task:

Students will create an imaginary pet by combining two animals and use descriptive language with AI tools to generate an image, demonstrating that their ideas and word choices shape the final outcome.

Connections to Overall Expectations in the Ontario Kindergarten Curriculum (2026)

Strand: Foundations of Language and Mathematics

- A1. Oral and Non-Verbal Communication: communicate orally and non-verbally
- A4. Expressing Ideas and Creating Texts: create texts using foundational language knowledge and skills
- A7. Patterns and Relationships: investigate repeating patterns

Strand: Problem Solving and Innovating

- B11. Coding Skills: use foundational coding concepts and skills

Strand: Self-Regulation and Well-Being

- C14. Social Skills: identify and use social skills in play and other contexts
- C15. Self-Regulation: demonstrate independence, self-regulation, and a willingness to take on responsibility

Strand: Belonging and Contributing

- D25. Exploring and Creating Art: explore and create a variety of art forms, including dance, drama, music, and visual arts

Connections to Media Literacy Key Concepts

1. Media construct reality
2. Media construct versions of reality
3. Audiences negotiate meaning
7. Form and content are closely related in each medium
8. Each medium has a unique aesthetic form

Assessment:

Educators can use their professional judgement when assessing and evaluating this task.

<https://www.dcp.edu.gov.on.ca/en/curriculum/kindergarten/grades/jk-sk/context/assessment-learning>

Lesson Details

Lesson 1 (Diagnostic):

What is AI?

Learning Outcome(s): Students and educators will work together to check in with the children about what they might already know and/or wonder about AI.

Learning Goal: We are exploring what AI means to us. We are sharing our questions or thoughts about AI.

Learning Experience:

What is AI? Or use words such as what is ChatGPT? Do you know what it is? Do you know who uses it? What do you think it is used for?
Educators record the responses.

	Materials: • Chart paper to record responses
Lesson 2	Learning Outcome(s): Students will learn about the importance of using descriptive words to describe an image. This skill is required when using AI prompts for image generation.
	Learning Goal: I can look carefully at a picture and describe what I can see by talking about the details. (See Slide #1 for learning goal.) Learning Experience: Tell students that <i>sometimes (teacher name) can't find something so (I) describe where the item might be in the classroom (e.g., (another teacher's name) could not find the tape so I say the tape is in the tall cupboard above the sink in a clear container).</i> Show students the picture on Slide # 2. Tell students we are going to look carefully at a picture and describe the details that we notice. "Let's try it together." (students describe the image). Remind students to use descriptive language (e.g., furry, small, kitten, black, white, yarn etc.). You could also print the picture and write the description on chart paper with "labels" or sticky notes. This might be helpful for future reference.
	Materials: • Chart paper to record responses • Slides # 1 and # 2 • Sticky notes for labels
Lesson 3	Learning Outcome(s): Students will learn about the importance of using descriptive words to describe an image. This skill is required when using AI prompts for image generation.
	Learning Goal: I can look carefully at a picture and describe what I can see by talking about the details. See Slide # 1. Learning Experience: Tell students that, now that they have used descriptive words to describe the image (on Slide # 2), they will use these descriptive words to help you draw a picture of the cat with the yarn. Tell students you will not look at the original picture. Remind students to use descriptive language (e.g., furry, small, kitten, black, white, yarn etc.). When you are done, discuss the image with the children. If something is "missing" discuss why this happened. What descriptive words were left out?

	What might we include to change the picture to make it include what we want? Materials: • Chart paper for drawing and slides • Chart paper with pictures and descriptive labels from previous learning experience (optional)
Lesson 3.1 *This is an extension of Lesson 3	Learning Outcome(s): Students will begin to recognize the importance of the “I” in AI and how their use of descriptive words and attention to detail matter when generating images with an AI tool. Learning Goal: We are learning to use an AI tool to generate a picture that we create. We are learning that our ideas are important when creating images with AI. Learning Experience: In this lesson, students will learn about AI through the use of an AI tool. Tell students we are now going to place our image description (from the previous learning experience) in an AI tool supported by your district. “Last time, you used words to tell me what to draw. Now we are going to see what happens when we give those words to an AI tool. Will it create the same picture? What might be different?” After the image is created, you can engage in a conversation with your students to compare and contrast the images. What do they like about the image? What do they dislike? Is there something missing? What would they change about the image? Did AI make a mistake? Students might also enjoy going back and changing the image a few times to get it exactly right. Ask students to reflect on how their ideas mattered in creating the image. *You may want to refer to the Media Triangle for question prompts to support the discussion with the students. Materials: • Chart paper with pictures and labels on the description (optional) from previous learning experience • AI Tool for image generation supported by your district • Media Triangle (optional) • Image from Slide # 2 to refer to
Lesson 3.2	Learning Outcome(s): In this lesson, students will co-create a definition of AI with the educator.
	Learning Goal: We are learning to explain what AI is. Learning Experience: Now that students have used AI, you can ask them to co-create a definition of AI with you. You can say to the children: “We

	used AI to create a picture. How would you explain what AI can do? Let's work together to make a definition or a sentence explaining what AI is."
	Materials: • Chart paper to record the AI definition
Lesson 4	Learning Outcome(s): Students will explore the notion that they might combine two different animals to make a new animal. This will build children's background knowledge and help them apply their knowledge of descriptive language to create their own animal. Learning Goal: I can watch a video and notice how two animals are mixed to make one new animal. See Slide # 7. Learning Experience: Show this video to students about hybrid animals. Tell students that after we watch the video about combining two different animals, we are going to create our own animal. As children watch the video, STOP and NOTICE the names of the animals and the characteristics of the animals that make them a hybrid animal. Ask students to co-create a list with the educator, explaining what makes a hybrid animal (e.g., <i>combines two animals, has some characteristics of both animals, has a name that combines the names of the two animals</i>) Materials: • Slides with Video Link (Slide 7) • Chart paper to record responses
Lesson 5	Learning Outcome(s): In this lesson, children will draw their own animal by combining two animals. Learning Goal: I can make and draw a new animal by combining two animals. Learning Experience: After watching the video about hybrid animals, ask children to make their own animal. Brainstorm a few animals that they might be interested in (e.g., fish, cat, dog, hamster, mouse, raccoon). Ask them to think about animals they have seen in their community. The educator might want to break up this lesson and begin by brainstorming a list of animals, using pictures. Then ask children to draw their hybrid animal (the educator may want to create a sample with the children prior to starting this). Remind the children to add LOTS of detail to their drawing (e.g., fur, ears - what type of ears - pointy, paws, fins, etc). As an alternative to drawing, the children may choose to use loose parts to represent their animal. You could provide materials such as cotton balls, fuzzy material, felt, pipe-cleaners, sticks.

	Note: if children created their animal with loose parts the educator may want to use a non-personal device to capture a photograph of the child's creation.
	Materials • Slides • Chart paper with animals list • Sample animal that the educator(s) might want to draw • Loose parts • Non-personal device to capture a photograph
Lesson 6 *This lesson may be broken into two parts	Learning Outcome(s): In this lesson students will share the animal that they made or drew and describe it in detail.
	Learning Goal: I can use words to describe in detail the animal that I made. See Slide # 8 Learning Experience: Students will share their drawings or loose part creations. A few children can share their drawings in large or small groups). They will describe their drawing in detail. Explain that the children's descriptions will be used to tell the AI tool what to create. Encourage them to think carefully about which details are most important to include. The educator may choose to co-create success criteria with the children to help them describe their animal. A list of words might be generated (e.g., furry, tall, short, small, paws). The educator might choose to showcase two drawings and annotate them with descriptive drawings details. Educators may choose to work with children in smaller groups and transcribe on a google doc (or slides) the descriptions of their drawings.
	Materials • Loose Parts • Sharing their drawings from previous lesson (lesson #5) • Showcase two students' work to label and annotate with their description • Word bank of descriptive words
Lesson 7:	Learning Outcome: In this lesson the children will use an AI tool (supported by the school district) to create their AI-generated animal.
	Learning Goal: We can use our descriptive language skills with AI to create our animals.

	Learning Experience: The educator will likely complete this task in small groups with the children. After the children create their animals, encourage the children to share their AI-generated animal with the class community and facilitate a discussion about the differences between the AI-generated animal they created with drawing (or loose parts). Educators may choose to highlight the following points in their discussion with the students: -Discuss how many times the children revised their AI-generated images; this helps them understand that media messages are constructed and they have agency in creating the images -What they like or dislike about their image -How they made their image -Educators may want to refer to these Media Triangles and modify the prompts: Media Triangle for production, Media Triangle with prompts
	Materials: • Loose Parts • Sharing their drawings from previous lesson (lesson # 5) • Showcase two students' work to label and annotate with their description • List of word bank for descriptive words