



# **Sustainable AI in Library Instruction:**

## **Designing Sessions Grounded in the Minimal AI Approach**

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"Artificial Intelligence Inspired Graphite Drawing" by  
[CarlaOwen1 at Conway Highschool](#). On Artsonia.com.

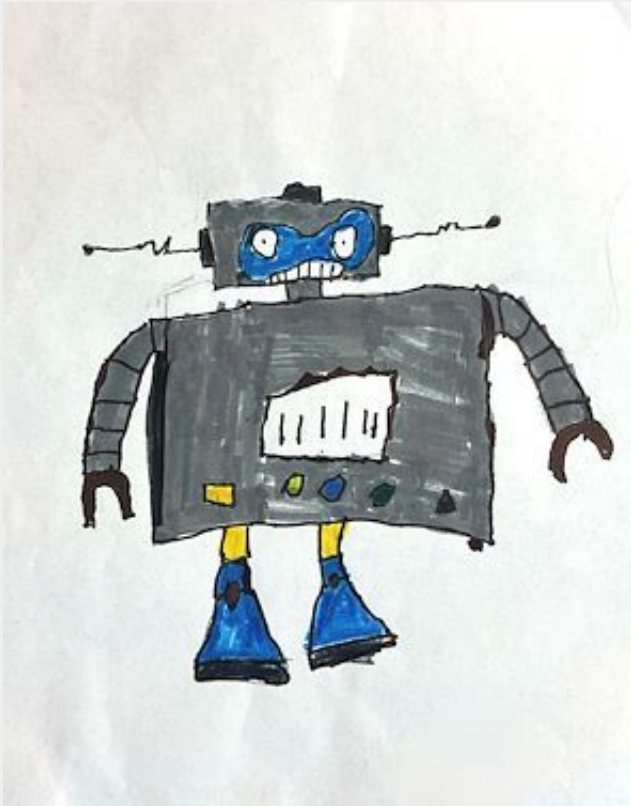


# About Us

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At the Digital Humanities Summer Institute 2024 in  
Antigonish, Nova Scotia

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“3rd Grade Robot Drawing” from  
[Mark Sander’s class at Gois  
Elementary on Artsonia.com](#)

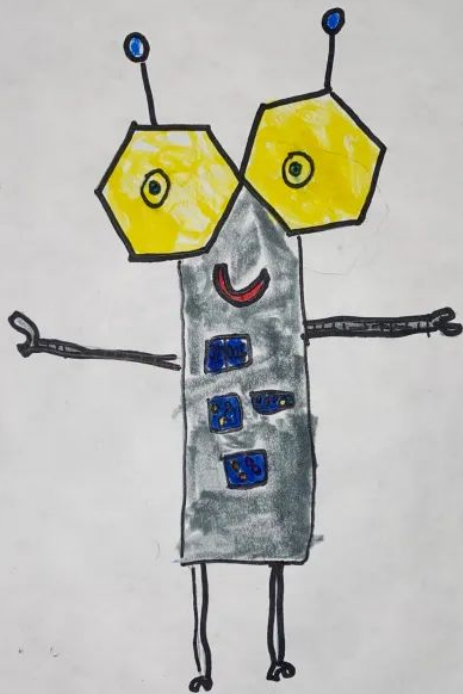
## My Experiences Dealing With AI

1. AI trainings
2. “No one will ever have to write a lit review again!”
3. Student questions (“which tool should I use?”)
4. Research project
5. Colleagues’ presentation

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“What effects do AI hype and AI personalization have on our ability to think critically and even clearly about these tools **when we are being besieged by everything** from relentless positivity, proclamations of inevitability, or visions of doom, all while being swayed by sycophantic chatbots that reaffirm everything we type?”

—*Sarah Morris, ITLWTLP 2026*



Not an expert.

“Robot.” Student art from [Art with Mrs. Fillmore’s Kindergarten Class](#).  
Posted on Artsonia.com.

Using AI makes you stupid and unable to think for yourself.

Did you use AI to cheat?

Ask AI what you don't understand, no one will know you didn't get it!

The tech bros are corrupt, horrible people and AI ruins the environment. But everyone uses it, even my mom.

Lonely?  
Talk to AI!

## Students experience a lot of different pressures regarding AI.

You have to be an expert in AI or you won't get a job!

You are **EXPECTED** to use AI in this class.

You **CANNOT** use AI for this class—in any way.

Use AI so you can do everything for class and still work full time.

Some ways students use AI for academic work (Marchese & Marchese (2026)):

- **Personalized learning tool**
  - simple language, interactive
- **Study tool**
  - create practice exercises, quizzes, study guides & summarize resources
- **Brainstorm/inspiration/background**
  - **Find resources (academic papers and data)**
- **Writing tool**
  - provide feedback on grammar, style, citations, and goals of assignment
  - create outline
  - complete sections of an assignment
  - complete entire assignments

## And they are using it.

- Kedzierski et al. (2025) surveyed  $\approx$  3,000 undergraduate students at CU Boulder in 2024 and found that **80% used AI at least once per week**
- UC Berkeley 2024 study (2026) of 95,000 students at 20 research universities found that  **$\frac{2}{3}$  of students used AI and 11% used it to “cheat”**
- A 2025 survey of 94,000 students at The California State University’s 22 campuses shows that **95% of student participants had used at least one AI tool and 80% had submitted AI generated work**

## Some questions we are struggling with:

- How can we incorporate AI literacy and ethical concerns into instruction sessions that are already too short?
- How can we advocate for a minimal AI approach to departmental faculty (and colleagues)? Especially those who are “all in”?



Drawing by Lucy, a student in Art with Mrs. Fillmore's 1st Grade Class. Posted on Artsonia.com.

"Fabricated citations in the biomedical literature have increased 12-fold in two years, according to an audit of nearly 2.5 million papers published as a letter to *The Lancet* today."

—Avery Orrall (2026) Retraction Watch

"AI generated content is optimized to be retrieved by publicly available academic search engines such as Google Scholar."

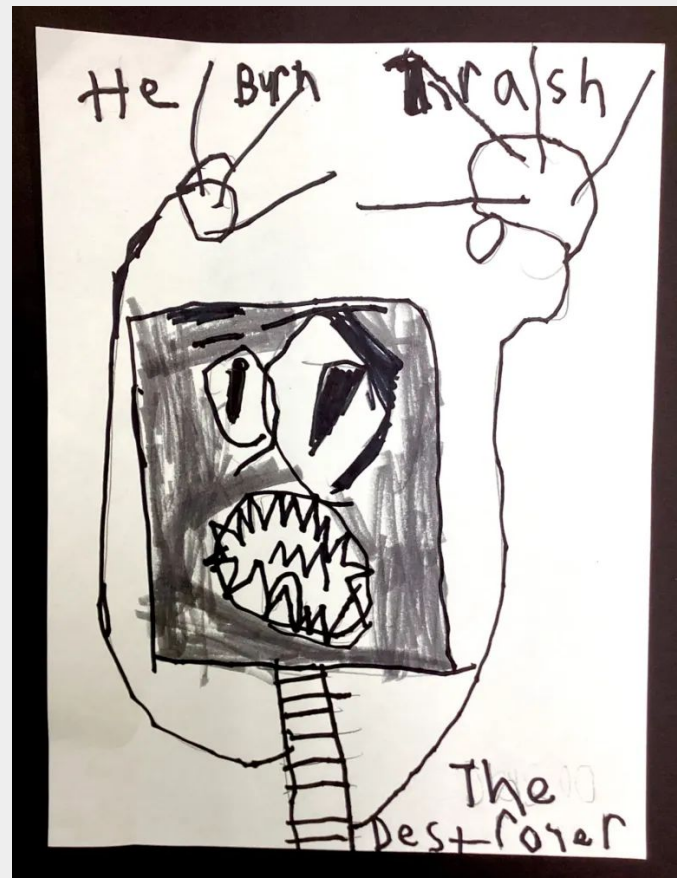
—Haider et al. 2024

Resource list (contribute if you like):

<http://bit.ly/4dWbVek>

Activity Google document:

<https://bit.ly/4uD0378>



“Draw your own machine/invention” project by a student in Art with Mrs. Fillmore’s 1st grade class

<http://bit.ly/4dWbVek>

## Friendly Chat (3 min)

What do you wish  
students understood  
about GenAI?

charles  
Helper 100'00



Helper 100'00 helps people that  
are hurt.

“Draw your own machine/invention”  
project by a student in  
Mrs. Fillmore’s 1st grade class

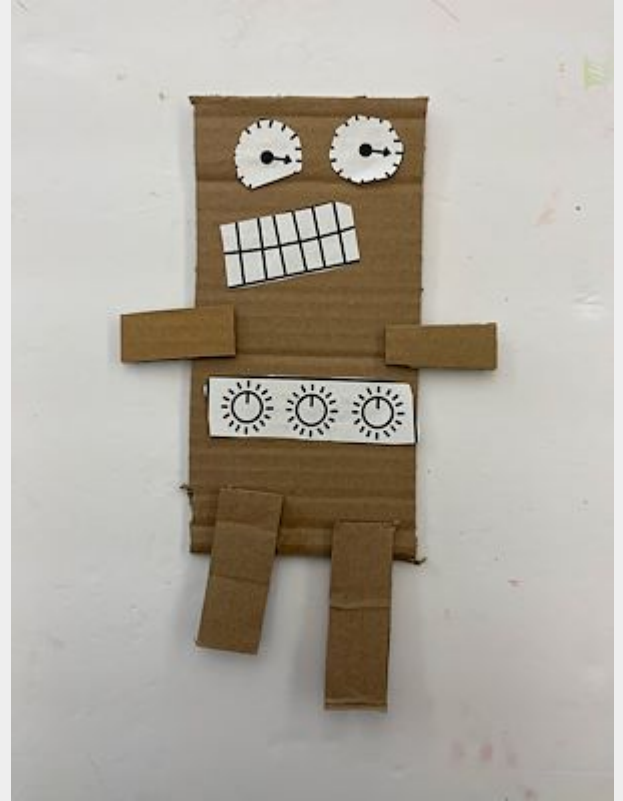
# Workshop Goals



Photograph: Stephanie Binkens. Conversations with Bina48. [Deyoung Museum Installation](#), 2014-2021.

- **Explore teaching AI literacy concepts using a minimal AI approach.**
- **Create a resource document to share our collective wisdom, experiences, and ideas.**

What is  
"minimal  
AI"?



# There is no established definition of "minimal AI".

AI Decolonial Manyfesto:

<https://manyfesto.ai/>

- Oppose the way AI upholds dominant power structures by creating "algorithmic truths" that uphold current patterns of domination

Mansouri & Bailey (2025):

- AI is "irredeemably harmful," and we have choices!
  - Tame it
  - Resist it
  - Dismantle it
  - Escape it
  - Smash it

**We are basing our general understanding on some of the principles of Minimal Computing.**



**Nickoal Eichmann-Kalwara**  
**Digital Humanities Librarian**



**Casey Fiesler**  
**Associate Professor**  
**Information Science**

# Descriptions of Minimal Computing

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“Minimal computing is...a mode of thinking about digital humanities praxis that resists the idea that “innovation” is defined by newness, scale, or scope.” (Risam & Gill, 2022)

“...minimal computing connotes digital humanities work undertaken in the context of some set of constraints. This could include lack of access to hardware or software, network capacity, technical education, or even a reliable power grid.” (Minimal Computing Working Group, 2022)

# Minimal Computing

...is an ethics-based framework in Digital Humanities that promotes the creation of DH projects with the most basic tools possible.

— Risam, R., & Gil, A. (2022).  
Introduction: The Questions of  
Minimal Computing. *Digital  
Humanities Quarterly*, 016(2).



Art 3 Technology Class: [drawing](#)  
by [Suzanne26](#); taught by Tanya  
Warborg-Kosla at Argyle High  
School. On [Artsonia.com](#).

**“Minimal Computing has served as both practice and a provocation in the Digital Humanities, asking us to consider what is necessary, what is sustainable, and what places agency back in the hands of humanists.”**

**– Gimena del Rio Riande, Digital Scholarship in the Americas Speaker Series at the Digital Scholarship Lab at the University of Texas, Austin on November 7th, 2025.**

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# Guiding Questions & Principles of Minimal Computing

1) “what do we need?”

2) “what do we have”

3) “what must we prioritize?”

4) “what are we willing to give up?”

- Concern for the environment
  - Electricity use
  - Disposing of everything “outdated”
- Protesting tech industry’s “new toys” approach (“technolust”)
- Taking control of project preservation and longevity

# A Minimal AI framework:

- Encourages students to consider sustainability and other impacts of the information tools/systems they use
- Focuses on fundamental information and AI literacy to create informed information users
- Addresses various problems with using AI tools for information discovery and encourages students to use the best tool/approach for academic work rather than using what is merely convenient.



AI generated image based on *The Temptation of St. Anthony* by Salvador Dali. By Megapencil, May 25, 2023.

# Activity: Part 1



From the NYT:  
Jason Allen's A.I.-generated work, "Théâtre D'opéra Spatial," took first place in the digital category at the Colorado State Fair.

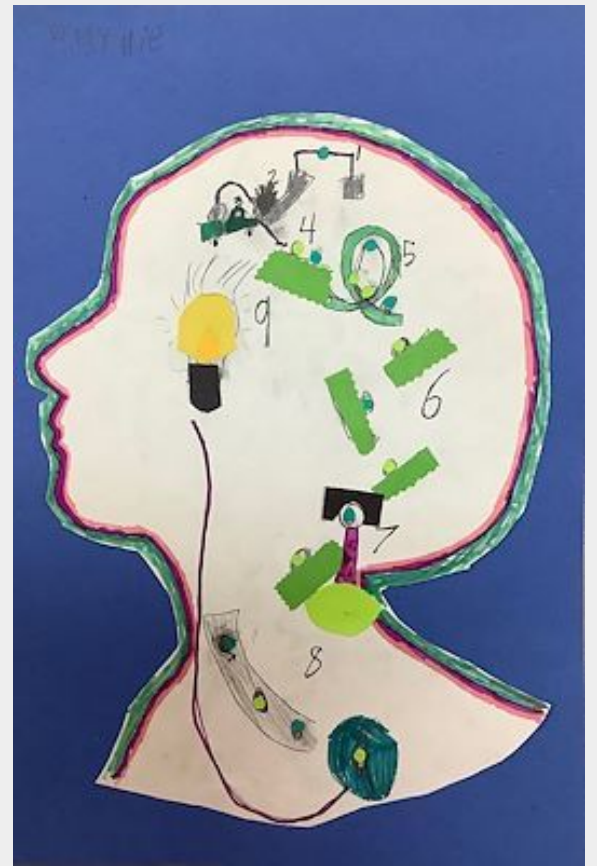
## **Work with your table or form a small group.**

- Discuss the activity questions and write down a few ideas in the shared Google Sheet or printed handout.
- Prepare to briefly share with larger group (please choose a spokesperson and rotate taking notes so that everyone can have time to discuss).

## Activity Questions (Part 1)

- What are your key concerns about teaching and learning with AI in the library instruction classroom?
- How have these concerns shown up in instruction sessions?
  - Or how are you worried about them potentially showing up?
- What outcome(s) would you like to see for learners?

# Group Discussion



"4th Grade: Brain Machines!" by Delanyie22  
at Wabeno Elementary School. On Artsonia.co

# Activity: Part 2



Rutkowski, Greg. *Secret Pass - Eagle Nest.*  
ArtStation.com.

This image was featured in the MIT Tech Review (2022). Rutkowski's work has been highly imitated in AI art generators after being scraped from ArtStation.

## **Return to small groups.**

- As a group, select 1-2 scenarios from part one of the activity to revisit.
- Discuss, take notes and prepare to briefly share with larger group again (please choose a spokesperson and rotate taking notes so that everyone can have time to discuss).

To achieve the learning outcome(s) you identified in part 1, how would you approach this scenario, applying ideas from the minimal AI framework?

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# Discussion

“Robot Painting” by Evrydiki1, from first grade class taught by Cindy Ives at Hawthorn Elementary School (North) on [Artsonia.com](http://Artsonia.com)

# THANK YOU!

Would you please answer one quick question for us?

**Tell us about the most interesting conversation you had in today's workshop about minimal AI.**



# Citations

Haider, J., Söderström, K. R., Ekström, B., & Rödl, M. (2024). GPT-fabricated scientific papers on Google Scholar: Key features, spread, and implications for preempting evidence manipulation. *Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review*. <https://doi.org/10.37016/mr-2020-156>

Risam, R., & Gil, A. (2022). Introduction: The Questions of Minimal Computing. *Digital Humanities Quarterly*, 016(2).

Minimal Computing Working Group 2022. Minimal Computing Working Group. "About." Minimal Computing: A Working Group of GO::DH. Accessed June 17, 2022. <https://go-dh.github.io/mincomp/about/>.

Morris, S. (2026). Making Sense of GenAI Amidst AI Hype and AI Personalization – In the Library with the Lead Pipe. *In the Library with the Lead Pipe*. <https://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2026/ai-hype-and-ai-personalization/>