

PUBLIC LIBRARY • DIGITAL LITERACY SERIES

AI Literacy for Everyone

Understanding and using artificial intelligence in
everyday life



Your Public Library

July 12, 2026



WHY IT MATTERS

Why learn about AI?

1

AI is already part of daily life

From the moment you unlock your phone, AI is quietly at work.

2

It powers the tools you rely on

Search engines, smartphones, healthcare, education, and the workplace.

3

It helps you make informed decisions

Knowing how AI works lets you judge what to trust and what to question.

4

Digital literacy now includes AI

Understanding AI is becoming a core everyday skill for everyone.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session

Participants will be able to:



Define artificial intelligence



Identify common AI tools



Understand benefits & limitations



Write effective prompts



Evaluate AI-generated information



Use AI safely & responsibly

AI explained simply

DEFINITION

Technology that performs tasks that normally require human intelligence.

AI learns patterns from large amounts of data — it isn't “thinking” the way people do.



Language understanding



Image recognition



Recommendations



Content generation

You already use AI



Search engines



Streaming picks



Voice assistants



Navigation apps



Spam filters



Shopping suggestions

ACTIVITY

Which of these do you use every day? Call out the ones you recognize.

Common categories



Chatbots

ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot



Voice assistants

Siri, Alexa



Image generators

DALL-E, Microsoft Designer



Translation tools

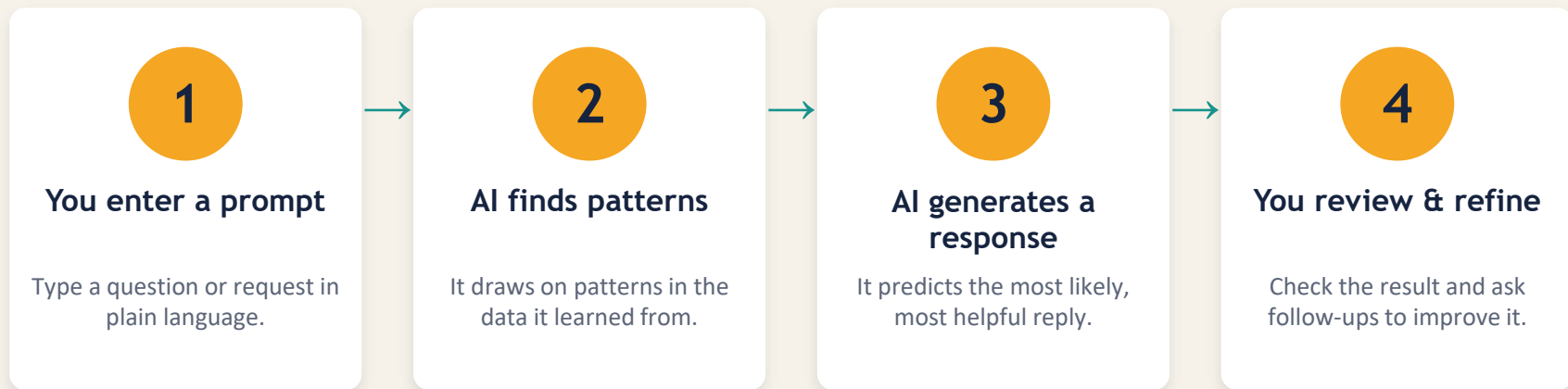
Google Translate



Recommendation systems

Spotify, Netflix

Behind the scenes



Generative AI predicts likely words from patterns it has seen — it does not “look up” a single correct answer.

Talking to AI effectively

A prompt is simply what you ask. Good prompts include:



A clear goal Say what you want to achieve



Specific instructions Spell out the details that matter



Helpful context Who it's for and any constraints



A desired format List, table, short paragraph, etc.

EXAMPLE PROMPT



*Create a two-day travel itinerary
for San Francisco for a family of
four.*

Better prompts = better results

✗ Too vague

"Tell me about gardening."

The AI has to guess what you mean, so the answer is broad and generic.

✓ Clear & specific

"Explain vegetable gardening for beginners in Northern California, with a month-by-month planting guide."

Goal, audience, place, and format — so the answer is useful right away.

ACTIVITY

Take a weak prompt and improve it together as a group.

How AI can help



Learning new skills



Research assistance



Writing support



Language translation



Career development



Accessibility support

What AI cannot do reliably



Understand truth perfectly



Verify every fact on its own



Replace human judgment



Predict the future



Eliminate bias completely



Handle with care

AI can sound confident even when it is wrong.

Key message: Always verify important information.

Responsible AI use



Privacy



Misinformation



Bias in AI systems



Copyright



Transparency

LIBRARY CONNECTION

Your library champions critical thinking and information evaluation — the same skills that keep AI use safe and responsible.

Think critically

Before you trust an answer, ask:

- ✓ Is the information accurate?
- ✓ Can I verify it somewhere else?
- ✓ Are sources or references provided?
- ✓ Is anything missing or one-sided?



Verify before you trust.

PRACTICAL USE CASES

AI at the public library



Resume & cover-letter help



Research support



Language learning



Book recommendations



Digital literacy programs



Small-business planning



HANDS-ON DEMONSTRATION

Let's try an AI tool

LIVE DEMO

Together, we'll walk through:

1

Ask a clear question

Start with a simple, well-scoped request.

2

Improve the prompt

Add goal, context, and format, then compare.

3

Summarize information

Turn a long passage into key points.

4

Create content responsibly

Draft, then review and fact-check before using.

What's next?



More personalized assistants

AI that adapts to how you learn and work.



AI in everyday services

Built quietly into apps, tools, and public services.



New workplace skills

Working alongside AI becomes a common ability.



Greater need for digital literacy

Knowing how to question AI matters more than ever.

DISCUSS

How might AI affect our community — schools, jobs, and libraries?

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Remember



AI is a tool, not a replacement for human judgment



Good prompts lead to better results



Verify important information



Protect your personal information



Keep learning as AI evolves

RESOURCES & QUESTIONS

Continue your AI learning journey

Free tools and programs to keep exploring:

- Microsoft Copilot — free, everyday AI assistant
- Khan Academy — free lessons on AI and learning
- Common Sense Media — AI guidance for families
- Your local library technology programs

Questions & Discussion

