PROJECT LENS

WORKSHOP KIT 01 OF 05 · FACILITATOR GUIDE

AI Basics Facilitator Guide

See AI clearly.

Think clearly in an AI-powered world.

L	Learn	Understand AI.
E	Evaluate	Question and verify.
N	Navigate	Know when and how to use it.
S	Secure	Protect yourself and others.

Version 1.3 · Updated October 13, 2026

01

About this workshop

This 45-minute session is the best first workshop for any group. Attendees learn what AI is in plain language, why it can sound sure and still be wrong, and a simple way to ask it good questions: **START, IMPROVE, CHECK.** It pairs well with Kit 2 (AI Scams and Deepfakes) as a follow-up.

This workshop grew out of the "Artificial Intelligence: An Overview" course the Project LENS team first taught with the City of Lake Oswego Youth Leadership Council.

Detail	
Length	45 minutes
Best for	Libraries, senior centers, retirement communities, civic groups, family nights
Group size	8 to 40 people; one helper for every 10 during the breakout
Facilitators	One lead plus one helper. Student pairs work well.
Devices	Optional. Attendees with a phone or tablet can try prompts in the breakout; everyone else works on paper.

By the end, attendees will be able to:

1. Explain in one sentence what AI is and how a chatbot comes up with an answer.
2. Name everyday places they already use AI.
3. Say why AI can sound confident and still be wrong.
4. Use the three questions before reaching for AI: Can I? Should I? How?
5. Write a better prompt using START, IMPROVE, CHECK, without sharing private information.

02

What's in the kit

Item	Who it's for	How many to print
This facilitator guide	Lead facilitator and helpers	1 per facilitator
Slide deck with speaker notes	Facilitator (projected)	Print slides 6 per page as a backup
Participant pack: My First Prompts practice sheet	Each attendee	1 per person
Participant pack: before and after quiz	Each attendee	1 per person
Participant pack: feedback form, sign-in sheet, flyer	Attendees and host	1 feedback form per person; 1 sign-in sheet per 20
AI Safety Guide (Guide 1) and Prompting Guide (Guide 2)	Take-home	1 each per person, or a QR code to projectlensai.org
Prompt cheat sheet (last page of Guide 2)	Take-home	1 per person, on cardstock if possible

03

Before the session

Two weeks before

- [ ] Confirm the date, room, group size, and accessibility needs (microphone, large print, wheelchair access) with the host.
- [ ] Send the host the flyer from the participant pack.
- [ ] Ask whether there is guest Wi-Fi, in case attendees want to try prompts on their own phones.

- [ ] Read the Real or AI? answer key in Activity 1, so the reveals feel natural.

The day before

- [ ] Print handouts (see the table above).
- [ ] Rehearse the deck out loud with your co-facilitator and time it.
- [ ] Try the breakout prompts yourself on two different chatbots, so you know what answers to expect.

At the room (30 minutes early)

- [ ] Test the projector, laptop, clicker, and microphone. Save the deck offline.
- [ ] Seat people in pairs or small tables for the breakout.
- [ ] Put pencils, the quiz, and practice sheets on each table.

04

Ground rules for facilitators

Read these before every session. They are the same in every Project LENS kit.

1. **Protect privacy.** Never ask attendees for personal details or account information. If someone volunteers a personal story, keep it general and don't write down names.
2. **No photos without permission.** Ask the host and the group before taking any photo. Never photograph someone who says no. Don't post photos online without written permission.
3. **Educate, don't advise.** You are teaching habits, not giving legal, financial, or medical advice. When someone asks about their own situation, point them to the right professional or helpline.
4. **Respect experience.** Your audience has decades of judgment. Never talk down.
5. **Stay neutral about AI.** AI is a tool, not good or evil. Don't push people toward it or scare them away from it.
6. **Use real, safe examples only.** Don't show actual scam links, phone numbers, or real people's private information on screen. Use the made-up examples in this kit.
7. **Don't promise outcomes.** Never say "this will always work" or "this app is completely safe."
8. **Never collect money or sell anything.** Project LENS workshops are free and educational.
9. **Hands off other people's devices.** If someone wants help on their phone or tablet, they hold it and they type. Don't log into their accounts, don't create accounts for them, and don't type on their device. Show the steps on your own device or on the slide instead.

05

Run of show (45 minutes)

Time	Segment	Slides	What happens
0:00 to 0:04	Welcome and before-quiz	1 to 3	Introductions, agenda, 5-question quiz
0:04 to 0:08	Do you use AI?	4 to 5	Hands up, then the reveal: everyday AI you already use
0:08 to 0:16	**Activity 1: Real or AI?**	6 to 13	Three rounds of photo pairs, each with an answer slide, then how to check
0:16 to 0:23	What AI is and isn't	14 to 16	AI, generative AI, and chatbots; how a chatbot answers; what AI is not
0:23 to 0:28	AI and the environment	17 to 18	Water and electricity, with sources; a fair, calm comparison
0:28 to 0:33	Using AI well	19 to 21	Can I? Should I? How?; what makes a good prompt; START, IMPROVE, CHECK
0:33 to 0:41	**Activity 2: Breakout**	22 to 23	Pairs practice prompts on the sheet, then share
0:41 to 0:45	Wrap-up	24 to 26	Three things to remember, after-quiz, feedback, questions

Running long? Play two rounds of Real or AI? instead of three (skip slides 11 and 12), and shorten the share-out to two pairs.

06

Talking points

The full script is in each slide's speaker notes. These are the points that matter most.

Do you use AI? (slides 4 to 5)

- Many people say no at first. Then they realize their phone, maps, TV recommendations, spam filter, and bank fraud alerts all use AI.
- Key line: *"You're already an AI user. Today is about using it on purpose, and safely."*

What AI is and isn't (slides 14 to 16)

- **AI** is the big category: computer programs that learn patterns from huge amounts of examples.
- **Generative AI** is one kind of AI. It creates new things: text, images, audio, video.
- **Chatbots** like ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, and Claude are one kind of generative AI. They run on "large language models."
- How a chatbot answers: it predicts the most likely next words based on patterns it learned. Many chatbots can now also search the web, so attendees may see sources and links. But no chatbot checks whether what it finds is true, so a smooth answer can still be wrong.
- AI is not conscious, not magic, and not perfect. It doesn't know you or care about you.

AI and the environment (slides 17 to 18)

Keep this calm and factual. The goal is thoughtful use, not guilt.

- An average American family uses about 300 gallons of water a day at home, roughly 110,000 a year (EPA WaterSense).
- A medium-sized data center can use up to about 110 million gallons a year for cooling, about as much as 1,000 homes (EESI, 2025).
- U.S. data centers used 183 terawatt-hours of electricity in 2024, more than 4% of the country's total. That's projected to reach 426 by 2030 (IEA, via Pew Research Center, 2025).
- One question is small. Google reports a typical Gemini question uses about as much electricity as watching TV for 9 seconds, and about five drops of water (Google, 2025).

It's the billions of questions every day that add up.

- Key line: *"That's why we start with: can I do this without AI?"*

Using AI well (slides 19 to 21)

- Can I do this another way? Should I use AI for this? How can I use it well?
- A good prompt: no private information, be specific, give a role ("Act as a master gardener"), and say what to do and not do.
- START, IMPROVE, CHECK: walk through the hyacinth example below. The original Youth Leadership Council course taught this recipe as ASK, TWEAK, VERIFY; Project LENS renamed it so it doesn't clash with PAUSE. VERIFY. ASK. from the scams workshop.

The hyacinth example (slide 21)

Step	What you say or type
START with a clear question	"What is the best time to plant hyacinth bulbs?"
IMPROVE it with details	"I live in the Pacific Northwest. Answer like a master gardener, keep it short, and ask me questions if you need more information. Please link your sources."
CHECK the answer	Open one of the links yourself. Is it a real, reputable site, and is it current? Compare with a second source, like the OSU Extension gardening pages or a local garden center.

Point out what the IMPROVE step added: a place, a role, a length, permission to ask questions, and a request for sources.

07

Activity 1: Do you use AI? and Real or AI? (12 minutes, slides 4 to 13)

Part 1: Do you use AI? (4 minutes)

1. Ask: "Hands up if you use AI." Count roughly out loud.

2. Show slide 5. Ask: "Hands up if you use a smartphone, maps, Netflix, email, or online banking." Nearly every hand goes up.
3. Say: "Then you already use AI." Ask one or two people which example surprised them.

Part 2: Real or AI? (8 minutes, slides 6 to 13)

Each round shows two pictures of the same scene, labeled A and B. One is a real phone photo taken by the Project LENS team. The other was made by an AI image tool from a short written description of that photo. The images are already in the deck; there's nothing to find or insert.

How to run it:

1. Show the round for about 20 seconds. Ask: "Which one is the real photo? Hands up for A." Then: "Hands up for B."
2. Ask one person from each side what made them choose. Then click to the answer slide.
3. On the answer slide, point out the clue in the speaker notes. Say clearly that a clue is a hint, never proof.
4. After the last round, show slide 13: how to check. Search the image, find the original source, look for a Content Credentials "CR" label.

Answer key

Round	Scene	Real photo	Made by AI	Clue to point out
1 (slides 7 and 8)	Two dogs on garden steps	A	B	The AI dogs are too tidy: neat curls, perfect pose, leashes in neat loops. The real leashes are tangled.
2 (slides 9 and 10)	Potted white lilies	B	A	The real plant has unopened buds and messy leaves. The AI plant has five matching open flowers and no buds.
3 (slides 11 and 12)	Safari camp at sunset	B	A	Most people pick A because it looks like a postcard. The real photo is hazy and a little blurry.

All six images belong to the Project LENS team: the real photos were taken on team members' phones, and the AI versions were made by the team with Canva and Figma AI image tools in October 2026. No faces, house numbers, or license plates appear in any of them.

Key line after round 3: *"Some of these fool all of us. That's why we don't rely on spotting fakes. We check where they came from."*

Making your own pairs (optional). You can swap in your own pairs: take an everyday photo on your phone (a pet, a garden, a meal, a view), then ask an AI image tool to make a picture from a description of it. No faces, house numbers, or license plates. Remove location data before sharing the real photo. Keep a written answer key. If you're also running Kit 2 with the same group, use different pictures in each kit (Kit 2 already uses different pairs from Kit 1).

08

Activity 2: Breakout prompt practice (8 minutes, slides 22 to 23)

Goal: everyone writes one better prompt, step by step, without sharing private information.

How to run it

1. Pair people up. Hand out the My First Prompts sheet from the participant pack.
2. Each pair picks one of the three scenarios on the sheet: gardening, a recipe, or phone help. (Or their own idea, if it needs no private details.)
3. **START:** write a simple first question. (1 minute)
4. **IMPROVE:** add at least two ingredients from the checklist: a role, details, a format, or "ask me questions first." (3 minutes)
5. **CHECK:** write down how you'd check the answer: which website, person, or second source. (1 minute)
6. Pairs with a phone can try their prompt in any chatbot. Helpers walk around and help.
7. **Share out (slide 23):** two or three pairs read their before and after prompt aloud. (3 minutes)

Device rules for helpers

- The attendee holds their own phone or tablet and does the typing.
- Don't log into anyone's accounts, don't create accounts for attendees, and don't type on someone else's device.
- If someone doesn't have a chatbot app yet, show the steps on your own device and let them decide later whether to set one up.
- If a prompt starts to include private details, pause and help them reword it before they send it.

What to listen for

- Did their improved prompt add a role, a place ("I live in Oregon"), a format, or a do or don't?
- Did anyone include private details? Gently point it out, and show how to ask without them.
- Is their CHECK step a real, separate source, not "ask the AI again"?

If someone has a device and gets a strange answer, celebrate it: "Great, that's exactly why we CHECK."

09

Hard questions and simple answers

They ask...	You can say...
"Is AI going to take over / become conscious?"	"Today's AI is a prediction tool. It isn't aware of anything. People still decide how it's used."
"Which chatbot is best?"	"The well-known ones all work for everyday questions. Pick one, download it from the official app store, and use the same safe habits."
"Does AI know who I am?"	"Only what you tell it or what you've allowed in settings. That's why we never type private details."

They ask...	You can say...
"Is it cheating to use AI to write a letter?"	"It can help you draft, like a helpful friend. Make it sound like you, and you're responsible for what it says."
"Should I feel guilty about the environment?"	"No guilt needed. Just ask: can I do this another way? If AI really helps, use it thoughtfully."
"Can AI give me medical or money advice?"	"It can help you understand terms and prepare questions. Decisions go to your doctor, pharmacist, or a trusted professional."
"Don't chatbots search the internet now?"	"Many can, and that helps. But they still don't check whether what they find is true. That's why we always CHECK anything we'll act on."
"Is my phone listening to me?"	"Some apps can use your microphone if you allow it. You can check that in your phone's settings."
A question you can't answer	"I don't want to guess. A librarian at answerland.org can help, free, any time."

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After the session

Quiz answer key (same 5 questions before and after)

#	Correct answer
1	False: some chatbots can search the web, but none of them check whether what they find is true
2	C: "Explain what a deductible is"
3	B: Check
4	A: Can I do this without AI?
5	False

Scoring: count correct answers for the whole group before and after, not by person.

Within one week

- [ ] Add a row to the session log.
- [ ] Read the feedback forms and note one thing to improve.
- [ ] Only share comments where the person ticked "OK to share," and never with names.
- [ ] Thank the host, and offer Kit 2 (AI Scams and Deepfakes) as a follow-up session.
- [ ] Within one week, copy any emails from the sign-in sheet into the Project LENS mailing list, then shred the sheet. The host doesn't keep a copy.

Session log

Date	Host and location	Facilitators	Attendees	Avg before	Avg after	One thing to improve

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Appendix: what changed from the original course deck

For facilitators who taught the Youth Leadership Council "AI Overview" course. New facilitators can skip this page.

Original	Now
"Generative AI (LLMs)" listed with LLMs as the bigger group	Corrected: chatbots run on large language models, which are one kind of generative AI, which is one kind of AI
"The answer marked favorable the most times in training"	Clearer: AI predicts the most likely next words. It doesn't check facts.
Water and data center numbers with no source	Every number now has a source on the slide. Two figures that couldn't be traced to a source were replaced with verified ones.
"Breakout session" slide with no instructions	Step-by-step breakout with a printed practice sheet
All "AI or not" reveals said "AI"	Mix of real photos and AI images, plus a "how to check" slide
No agenda or closing	Agenda, three things to remember, before and after quiz
All-caps titles, Youth Leadership Council branding	Sentence-case titles, Project LENS brand, with credit to the Youth Leadership Council on the cover

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This workshop is for education only. It is not legal, financial, or medical advice.

AI changes quickly. We review this workshop every six months. For the newest version, visit projectlensai.org.

Sources: EPA WaterSense: How We Use Water · EESI: Data Centers and Water Consumption (2025) · Pew Research Center: Energy use at U.S. data centers (2025) · Google Cloud: Measuring the environmental impact of AI inference (2025) · EPA ENERGY STAR DataTrends: Water Use Tracking

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