

STAC

Science & Technology Advancement Center

Classroom AI Agreements

Teacher Guide for Building Shared Agreements With Students

A discussion-first resource for building shared classroom agreements about AI use.

Purpose

This activity helps teachers and students develop shared classroom agreements about AI use through structured discussion. The goal is not to begin with rules. The goal is to begin with thinking. Students need opportunities to discuss what AI is, how it works, when it helps learning, when it interferes with learning, and what responsible use should look like in a classroom. When students help shape the agreements, they are more likely to understand them, value them, and use them as part of a shared classroom culture.

Key Idea: The discussion that happens before the agreement list exists is the most important part of the activity.

Why?

As AI becomes part of school, work, and everyday life, students need more than a list of allowed and prohibited uses. They need structured opportunities to reason about how AI should be used and why. Creating classroom AI agreements helps students understand that AI use is a learning issue, not just a compliance issue. It also helps them think about how AI can support or weaken understanding, recognize that polished output is not the same as real learning, and consider fairness, honesty, responsibility, and transparency.

This activity also helps establish a classroom culture in which expectations are built through conversation and reasoning rather than surveillance. That matters because the broader instructional shift in an AI-rich classroom is from product to process: from asking whether a final answer looks finished to asking whether the student's thinking is visible, evidence-based, and genuinely their own.

Core STAC Framing

- AI literacy is a disciplinary thinking competency. Students should learn to question, evaluate, verify, and use AI thoughtfully, not simply operate a tool.
- AI use should be intentional. Students and teachers should be able to explain when AI is helping learning and when it is taking over thinking students need to do themselves.
- Productive struggle must be protected. If AI removes the need to think, interpret, decide, revise, or defend reasoning, it may interfere with learning rather than support it.
- The shift is from product to process. The classroom should value how understanding is built, not just whether a final answer looks polished.

- Students should help shape the norms. This is not about imposing rules from above. It is about building agreements that protect learning and make expectations visible.

Before the Discussion

Before students draft agreements, they need enough shared understanding to participate meaningfully. A teacher may want to briefly establish a few foundational ideas:

- AI can generate language, suggestions, summaries, and responses.
- AI does not understand in the same way humans do.
- AI outputs can sound confident even when they are weak, incomplete, or wrong.
- AI can sometimes support learning, but it can also replace important thinking if used carelessly.
- Classrooms need agreements that protect learning, honesty, responsibility, and fairness.

Facilitation Note: Keep this framing brief and accessible. The point is not to frontload a long lecture, but to ensure students have enough background to discuss the issue well.

Suggested Facilitation Sequence

1. Start with the purpose

Explain that the class is going to build shared agreements about AI use. Suggested framing: “We are not starting with a list of rules. We are starting with a conversation about learning. AI is now part of the world students live in. Because of that, we need shared agreements about how to use it in ways that support thinking rather than replace it.”

2. Surface student thinking

Invite students to discuss questions such as: When can AI help someone learn? When can AI get in the way of learning? What kinds of thinking should stay with the student? What makes AI use responsible in a classroom? What would fairness and honesty look like when AI is involved?

3. Look for themes

As students talk, capture recurring themes publicly. These might include using AI to support, not replace, thinking; being honest about when and how AI was used; checking whether AI responses are accurate; not treating AI as the final authority; and protecting discussion, creativity, and effort.

4. Draft agreements together

Turn student ideas into short, clear agreement statements. Keep them actionable and classroom-centered. Agreements should be phrased so students can tell what they mean in practice.

5. Review and refine

Ask: Is this clear? Is this fair? Does this protect learning? Would we know what this looks like in practice?

6. Revisit over time

Return to the agreements after students begin using AI in real tasks. Revise if needed. Agreements should be treated as living agreements.

Facilitator Notes

As students discuss, it may help to steer them away from vague or overly punitive statements. The table below shows how to move ideas toward learning-centered agreement language.

If students say...	Help shift it toward...
“Don’t misuse AI.”	“Use AI in ways that support your thinking, not replace the thinking you are expected to do.”
“Do not cheat with AI.”	“Be transparent about when and how you used AI, and make sure your work still shows your own reasoning.”
“Always trust your own ideas over AI.”	“Evaluate AI outputs carefully and use evidence, reasoning, and class learning to decide what to accept, revise, or reject.”

Possible Agreement Categories

To support drafting, teachers can organize ideas into categories such as:

Category	Guiding focus
Purpose	Why are we using AI in this classroom?
Thinking	What kinds of thinking must remain with students?
Transparency	How should students acknowledge or explain AI use?
Verification	How should students check or question AI outputs?
Responsibility	What does responsible use look like for individuals and for the class?
Fairness and Access	How do we make expectations fair when access to tools may differ?

Sample Agreement Stems

These are not final rules. They are scaffolds that may help if students need support moving from ideas to agreement language.

- We use AI to support learning, not to avoid thinking.
- We are honest about when and how AI was used.
- We do not assume AI is correct just because it sounds confident.
- We check AI responses against evidence, class learning, and reasoning.
- We keep important thinking in human hands.
- We use AI in ways that are fair to everyone in the class.
- We revisit our agreements as we learn more.

Closing Thought for Teachers: The strength of this activity is not in the final list alone. Its value comes from the discussion that happens before the list exists. That discussion helps students see AI use as a matter of judgment, responsibility, and learning.