

Headmaster's Letter

6th November 2026

Dear Parents, Carers and Students,

I hope that this letter finds you all well and that our students enjoyed a good break over half term, at home with family.

Staff Training (INSET) Day

On Monday, all staff enjoyed a whole school training session on adaptive teaching practice, designed to support the progress and achievement of all students, including those with Special Educational Needs. We also enjoyed a session on how AI can be used to support work in the classroom, help teachers develop assessment activities and how AI can be used more broadly across school work. Of course, AI will not replace the skills, and very human qualities that teachers bring to their lessons, to the care they offer to students in their classes and tutor groups, and to the work they do to develop the uniquely human potential that is to be found in every member of our school community here at Crypt.

Year 11 - post 16 options

Our sixth form open event on Thursday evening was well attended by both our own year 11 students and students from other schools. The evening provided them all with an insight into what Crypt's post-16 offer involves. I know that we have an exceptional sixth form here at Crypt, and every one of our year 11 students is guaranteed a place in year 12 in September, subject to them meeting the entry requirements, as set out in our information booklet available on the school website.

Our sixth form has numerous strengths, and is in many way the flagship of the school and students now in year 11 will be able to study, work and socialise in a dedicated sixth form centre, which was

fully refurbished in the summer of 2025 at a cost of nearly £300,000, with its own study and social facilities, including a dedicated cafe. Whilst students will develop their identities as sixth formers, and as young adults in our sixth form, they will still be very much part of our wider school community, and will want to continue to play an important part in its wellbeing and development. Our sixth form is a school-based one, albeit with its own identity and place at the heart of the school. Last year's academic results were exceptionally strong with 45% of all grades awarded at A*-A and 75% at A*-B, with last year's year 13 students moving into their chosen destinations as a consequence. The deadline for applications to join year 12 in September, 2027, is Friday the 22nd of January, 2027 - do visit the school website for more details about the school's outstanding sixth form and the opportunities it offers.

Academic update

Some important dates for our examination groups in year 11 and 13 are coming into view: year 13 will all sit assessments in either the main hall, or in classrooms, in week commencing the 16th of November, and year 11 will now be thinking of revising for their GCSE Mock Exams fortnight, with all exams held in the main hall, and which are due to start on Monday the 7th of December.

Personal development and enrichment

We had two external very impressive whole-school assemblies this week: one led by St John's Ambulance, about the importance of understanding CPR, and of the work that organisation undertakes across our communities; and earlier today, one on Diwali - the Hindu Festival of Lights - which is also celebrated by other Indian religions such as Jainism and Sikhism, and commences on Sunday I believe. Once again, it was wonderful to welcome into school Amol and Sam Deorukhkar, who led the whole-school assembly on the meaning and importance of Diwali, which symbolises the spiritual victory of Dharma over Adharma, light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance and which is known as the 'festival of lights'. I'm sure that many of our students will be celebrating Diwali over the weekend and next week, as they join millions others in doing so across the world.

Sport

Good to see sporting fixtures across this week, including a year 7 rugby fixture on Tuesday against Chosen Hill , and others against Newent and Old Swinford Hospital School; football matches were played against Severn Vale, and our U13a girls Road to Wembley tournament began on Thursday; netball matches were held on our courts against Malvern College and Kings, Worcester. Well done to all involved.

Remembrance at Crypt

Every year, the school community comes together on, or close to the 11th of November, to remember all those whose lives were lost, or were transformed by the wars and conflicts of the twentieth and twenty first centuries, and especially to remember the 136 Cryptians who lost their lives in the two world wars of the twentieth century. The names of all Old Cryptians who died in World War One and World War Two, are displayed on two memorial plaques housed in the Crush Hall, and which will be the focus of our school remembrance service next Wednesday - the 11th of November. Once again, and led by Mrs Hargraves (former officer in the British Army) we shall be holding two services, so all members of the school can attend. Poppies are on sale in school, and I urge all students to support the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal, 2026 through both buying and then wearing a Poppy next Wednesday.

Staff achievements

I am sure that you will all join with me in congratulating Mrs Hargraves for being awarded a prestigious Honorary Fellowship, by the Historical Association. These awards are given to recognise and celebrate outstanding services to history and to the work of the Historical Association. Mrs Hargraves is a frequent contributor to articles in the Teaching History journal and is a former member of the Historical Association committee. It is a great honour for Mrs Hargraves to have her contribution to the work and development of the Historical Association recognised in this manner; it is also wonderful to have such a brilliant historian working here at Crypt.



My continued best wishes,



Nicholas Dyer
Headmaster

Dates For Your Diary

13th November	GCSE History Trip London
19th November	Teenage Voices Gloucester Cathedral
19th November	Y11 Parents Evening in school
24th November	Y9 Options Evening in school
25th November	Gabrielli Roar Tewkesbury Abbey
25th November	Y11 Sports Science Trip Gloucester University
27th November	Animal Farm 7pm Main Hall
28th November	Animal Farm 7pm Main Hall

Year 13 Take on Mock Interviews

The hall had a purposeful buzz on Friday 16 October as Year 13 took part in their mock interviews with business leaders and industry professionals. There were no job offers handed out on the spot - but plenty of thoughtful questions, impressive answers and very positive feedback.

For students, it was a chance to talk about their futures with someone from outside school and show what they can do.

Maddison Year 13 student: “I feel the mock interviews were extremely valuable as it gave me the opportunity to speak with someone who is where I want to be in 10 years time. It was positive to hear feedback on what I’ve done so far and to know that I’m headed in the right direction. It also relieves some of the pressure of any future interviews as it gives me an understanding of what to expect.”

The interviews gave students valuable practice in oracy: speaking clearly, listening carefully and expressing their answers with confidence. These skills matter well beyond an interview room. Whether students are applying for university, an apprenticeship or their first job, they need to explain what they think, describe their strengths and respond thoughtfully to questions. That can feel daunting, but confidence grows with practice - and Friday gave students a supportive opportunity to do exactly that.

Mladen Dragojlovic, Amey “I've been supporting mock interviews for a number of years now, and it never ceases to amaze me how bright, articulate and well-prepared the students are for life after A-levels. I always leave incredibly impressed by their confidence, maturity and potential.”

It was also a chance to reflect on how they come across. A strong interview is not about delivering a perfect speech or memorising a script. It is about being prepared, making eye contact, listening to the question and giving an honest answer that helps someone else understand who you are and what you could bring.

Helen Michaluk, Careers Advisor: “The mock interviews gave students valuable practice in expressing their strengths and aspirations. They left with greater confidence, constructive feedback and a clearer understanding of how to prepare for their next steps.”

The interviewers were extremely complimentary about the students and how they presented themselves. Their feedback recognised the way Year 13 engaged with the experience and spoke about their plans and ambitions. The day offered students a valuable opportunity to practise, learn something about themselves and, most importantly, shine.

We are extremely grateful to all those who gave up their time to come into school to help our students. It is very much appreciated.

Act of Remembrance

Our Act of Remembrance will take place on Wednesday 11 November, when our school community will come together to remember those who have lost their lives in conflict.



Poppies are available to buy in school and will be brought round to forms during form time on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. They are also available on reception. Please could students bring some cash if they would like to buy a poppy and support the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal.

TechFirst Girls Competition Y8

We are excited to invite our Year 8 students to participate in this year's TechFirst Girls Competition. This national competition is a fantastic opportunity for students to build their problem-solving skills, explore the world of cyber security, and work collaboratively to solve fun, engaging challenges.

Here are the key details for students wishing to take part:

Team Size: Students should form teams of up to 4 members.

Registration Deadline: All teams must be registered by 10th November.

How to Sign Up: To register, students need to send an email to Mr Rice containing their chosen team name and the names of all team members.

Support & Facilities: Room 15 will be open and available for teams to meet up, collaborate, and complete the competition challenges.

For full competition details and further background information, please visit: https://www.techfirstgirls.co.uk/ and challenges before the competition can be found here https://www.hacktivate.io/

We encourage all interested Year 8 students to get involved and test their technical skills so please do encourage them! Challenges when the competition starts can be done at home as well.

If you have any questions, please email Mr James Rice (jrice@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk)



Introducing the new Crypt School Sports Foundation

We are delighted to announce the launch of the new Crypt School Sports Foundation, established with a simple but important mission: to enhance sporting opportunities for all students.

We believe every young person should have the opportunity to discover the enjoyment and benefits of sport and physical activity, whatever their interests, experience or ability. Yet, at a time when participation in sport is declining, and the costs of providing sporting opportunities continue to rise, ensuring that young people have access to a broad range of activities has never been more important.

The Foundation aims to help us do just that. This isn't about creating more elite sporting programmes or focusing solely on those who already excel on the pitch, court or track. It is about widening participation, removing barriers and encouraging more young people to get involved. It is about giving students the chance to try something new, develop their skills, build confidence, discover their strengths and, above all, enjoy being active.

Through the Foundation, we hope to expand the range of sporting opportunities available, support access to specialist coaching and equipment, and create more opportunities for students to participate, regardless of their starting point.

Sport has so much more to offer than competition and results. It can build friendships, develop resilience, improve physical and mental wellbeing and establish healthy habits that last well beyond school. Our ambition is simple: to make sport more accessible, more inclusive and more enjoyable for every student, helping more young people find an activity they love and the confidence to take part.

For more information please contact Sarah Veal: sveal@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk

Or to support this campaign, go to https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/campaign/the-crypt-sports-foundation-vital-impact-partnership-programme-vipp

or scan the QR code:

Trustee vacancies at The Crypt School

I am writing to invite you to consider joining the Board of Trustees (Governors) of The Crypt School.

Our Board of Trustees, who are all volunteers, is responsible for the strategic direction of the school. We have three core functions. We set the vision, ethos and strategic direction of the school. We have effective oversight of the operations, performance and financial management of the school, and hold school leaders to account for their work. And we ensure that there is meaningful engagement with those with a stake in the school – including its pupils, parents, staff and local community. These responsibilities carry real weight, and they also offer the chance to make a lasting difference to the young people in our community.

You do not need previous experience of governance to become a Trustee. What matters most is a genuine commitment to the success of our pupils and the school, a willingness to ask thoughtful questions and the ability to work constructively as part of a team. We aspire to have a welcoming Board that reflects the diversity of our school community and encourage any parent or carer who wishes to be involved with the governing body to put themselves forward.

For more information on the role and how to apply, please visit the Governors section of the school website at https://cryptschool.org/explore-our-school/governors/

Lee Hill, Chair of Trustees

Music Newsletter

Our recent Autumn Concert was a tremendous success, showcasing the exceptional musical talent, dedication and commitment of our students. It was a wonderful evening of music-making, with a diverse programme that celebrated the breadth of talent across our school ensembles.

The Symphony Orchestra opened the evening in spectacular style with Mozart's Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, setting a high standard for the performances that followed. They brought the concert to a fitting and exhilarating conclusion with the Greatest Showman Medley, leaving the audience on a real high.

Every ensemble performed brilliantly, demonstrating both musical skill and confidence. The Magnificats delivered a beautiful performance of Ave Verum Corpus, while Young Voices impressed with their energetic rendition of You Can't Stop the Beat and the more reflective Panis Angelicus. The Percussion Group brought excitement and drama to the stage with He's a Pirate, and the A Cappella Choir showcased their vocal quality and musical sensitivity through Never Weather Beaten Sail and Everywhere.

Our Jazz Quartet entertained with Interplay and Don't You Worry About a Thing, demonstrating impressive musicianship and ensemble skills. The Y12 Ensemble took the audience on a musical journey with a medley from Star Wars, while the Woodwind Group delighted everyone with their lively performance of 9 to 5. A special thanks goes to our soloists Erika, Rayna and Sebastian.

What was particularly remarkable throughout the evening was the extraordinary effort, dedication and commitment shown by all our students. The hours of practice, perseverance and attention to detail were evident in every performance. Their professionalism, discipline and confidence on stage were a credit to themselves and to the school. It was wonderful to see so many young musicians working collaboratively, supporting one another and taking such pride in their performances.

A concert of this quality would not be possible without the support and hard work of so many people. Our sincere thanks go to all the staff who gave their time, encouragement and expertise in preparing the students and bringing the event together. We would also like to extend a special thank you to our caretaking team, whose hard work behind the scenes ensured that everything ran smoothly and that the venue was ready to welcome our audience.

Congratulations to all the students and staff involved. The Autumn Concert was a wonderful celebration of our musical community, and we are incredibly proud of everything that was

achieved. It was an evening to remember!

We now look forward to our upcoming Remembrance Service on Wednesday, Teenage Voices Project on Thursday 19th November and our spectacular choral event with Gabrieli Roar on Wednesday 25th November.

PED Term 2

Term 2 sees the delivery of statutory Relationship & Sexual Education lessons at School during timetabled PED lessons. The subject matter of the PED lessons are shared with students via their google classroom. Whilst this can be sensitive subject matter, it is part of the curriculum content and included as part of the PeD learning journey. However, we always aim to make the students feel as comfortable as possible. Ground rules are in force (as always) in these lessons, we will only expect those to contribute who wish to do so and all conversations are hypothetical scenarios only.

We signpost support within School, such as Pastoral Support, Form Tutors and HOY, in addition to other trusted adults in school. During the lessons we reference agencies that can support. We encourage students to let their PED teacher or Pastoral Support know in advance of the lesson, should this subject matter be a trigger for them so we can work out a way forward with them.

The GlosFamilies Directory has some wonderful support guides as well as signposting further support- https://www.glosfamiliesdirectory.org.uk/kb5/gloucs/glosfamilies/home.page

Please refer to the School's RSE policy on our website for further information.

https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/sh22-cryptschool-org/media/downloads/relationshipsandsexeducationpolicy2024final.pdf

Y7

Students will be reminded of and build upon KS2 work to have explored the key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body - in males and in female bodies; menstrual wellbeing, self examination, about personal hygiene and FGM issues. Exploring personality types, relationships, friendships & coping strategies. To understand the importance of sleep, diet, & exercise.

External support includes:

www.nhs.uk/

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/types-of-abuse/female-genital-mutilation-fgm/

www.childline.org.uk

Y8

Students will have an understanding of the characteristics of positive and healthy relationships (in all contexts) including boundaries, abuse, and consent. This includes different types of relationships with practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or

support respectful and safe relationships. In addition, students will have an awareness of how viewing habits & listening habits can affect mood & mental health, whilst exploring happiness and its meaning.

External support includes:

www.childline.org.uk/

Childnet.com

Rapecrisis.org.uk

Thinkuknow.co.uk

www.victimsupport.org.uk

www.brook.org.uk

Y9

Students will have an awareness of laws relating to sexual consent and other related areas such as contraception and how to manage the end of an intimate relationship.

External support includes:

www.childline.org.uk

Y10

Students will have been supported with an understanding of the benefits of delaying sexual activity with the understanding of consent and communication in a sexual relationship. To understand how pornography can influence behaviour and about the dangers of abuse and marriage against consent.

External support includes:

www.rapecrisis.org.uk

www.victimsupport.org.uk

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.childline.org.uk/

www.brook.org.uk

www.ceop.police.uk

Y11

Students will have an understanding of the need to discuss and decide upon the best forms of contraception and how to reduce the chance of an STI and where to access help regarding these if needed.

External support includes:

www.brook.org.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.childline.org.uk

Y12

Students will have discussed healthy and unhealthy relationships and come up with strategies to deal with situations relating to relationships, the pressures exerted by society and by peers or partners. They will be aware of the impact of viewing harmful content and that pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, and negatively affects how they behave towards sexual partners. They will understand the laws around this.

External support includes:

www.childline.org.uk

www.samaritans.org

www.brook.org.uk

www.victimsupport.org.uk

www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Y13

Students will have deepened their understanding of contraception and STIs. They will also explore unplanned pregnancies and the options available in this scenario.

External support includes:

www.childline.org.uk

www.nhs.uk/conditions/infertility

www.brook.org.uk

www.nhs.uk

Gloucester Santa Fun Run – Saturday 12 December 2026

Get into the festive spirit at this year's Gloucester Santa Fun Run! Run, walk or stroll the 1km or 5km route, dressed as Santa, an elf or in your favourite festive outfit.

All profits support The Rotary Club of Gloucester and the Rotary in Gloucester Community Awards, helping local charities and community organisations across Gloucester. Find out where the money goes.https://www.rotaryclubofgloucester.co.uk/rotary-community-awards/

The event starts outside the University's City Campus (former Debenhams), Kings Square, with registration from 9.30am and a 10.30am start.

Suggested entry donations are £6 for adults, £4 for under-16s or £20 for a team of four. Entry is free for Blue Badge holders and wheelchair users. Medals cost £5 and must be ordered separately. A virtual option is also available.

Find out more and sign up. https://www.glossantafunrun.co.uk

ROTARY CLUB OF GLOUCESTER PRESENTS

GLOUCESTER SANTA FUN RUN

Sat 12th December 2026

Run 5k or 1k

around historic Gloucester dressed as Santa, an elf or any festive costume!

Entries now open!

www.GlosSantaFunRun.co.uk

ALL profits to charity

You can register on the day from 9:30 am at Kings Square

We are looking for elves to help run the event.
Please go to our website if you would like to get involved.

Rotary Club of Gloucester

Cass Stephens

PDG Wealth Management

GLOUCESTER BID

Could you help our Year 10 students shine?

Following the success of our Year 13 mock interviews, we're looking for volunteers from our parent community to interview Year 10 students on Friday 29 January 2027, from 8.30am to 12.30pm.

A mock interview gives students valuable experience speaking with an adult outside school. It helps them build confidence, practise explaining their strengths and interests, and develop the oracy skills they'll need in future interviews and the workplace. A friendly conversation and constructive feedback can make a real difference.

If you're able to volunteer, please contact Mr Germaine at cgermaine@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk. Your time could help a student take an important step forward.



Careers, Conversations and What Comes Next

Our annual Careers Convention took place on Wednesday 21 October, bringing nearly 50 exhibitors into school for one of our flagship careers events. With universities, employers and professionals all under one roof, students had plenty of people to meet—and, happily, no need to travel across the country to do it.

Representatives from the Universities of Bath, Sheffield and Exeter joined organisations including Hazlewoods, Ontic, 3PB Barristers and KPMG. They took

time out of their busy days to speak with students about their futures, share their experience and answer questions about the world of work and further study.

“There's a range of employers and universities to talk to from different parts of the UK. Everyone is really knowledgeable and really good at telling you the process of how to apply whether that is university or an apprenticeship”. Evelyn & Mollie, Year 10.

Students arrived ready to make the most of the event. Beforehand, they researched the organisations attending and prepared five questions to help them find out more about progression routes, qualifications, skills and career opportunities. That meant conversations could go beyond “So, what does your organisation do?” - useful as that is - and get straight to the details students really wanted to know.

“I was impressed by the students’ thoughtful questions and their enthusiastic participation in the jury challenge. Their confidence, curiosity and ability to weigh different pieces of evidence were evident throughout. It was a privilege to meet them and discuss law and the legal profession.” Nicola Frost 3PB

Exploring different pathways matters because there is no single route to a successful and rewarding career. University is an excellent choice for many students, while apprenticeships, further education, professional training and going directly into employment can offer other routes to exciting opportunities. Finding out about these options helps students make informed choices that suit their interests, strengths and ambitions. It can also reveal a pathway they had not even thought to ask about before the Convention.

Thank you to all the exhibitors who gave their time and expertise, and to the students who came prepared to ask thoughtful questions. We hope everyone left with fresh ideas, useful advice and a few new possibilities to consider.

“The Careers Convention gives our students the chance to meet people who can bring different jobs, industries and university pathways to life. These conversations can spark new interests, challenge assumptions and help students see possibilities they may not have considered. It is a privilege to see our exhibitors broaden students’ horizons and help them feel more confident about shaping their future.” Chris Germaine, Careers Leader.





PANTRY APPEAL

We're collecting tinned and long-life food items to support our Poets Pantry, this will help local people and families in our community who may be struggling to put food on the table. Every donation, big or small, can make a real difference.

DONATE HERE TODAY

WE'RE LOOKING FOR ITEMS SUCH AS:



- TINNED MEAT
- TINNED SOUPS
- BAKED BEANS
- TINNED TOMATOES
- TINNED SWEETCORN
- TINNED FRUIT
- DRIED PASTA
- PASTA SAUCE







APPEAL RUNS UNTIL:

1st December 2026

Donations can also be dropped off at: Blackbridge Community & Sports Hub Laburnum Road Podsmead GL1 5PG FOA Debbie Walton

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT - IT WILL MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE!

BLACKBRIDGE
CHARITABLE COMMUNITY BENEFIT SOCIETY

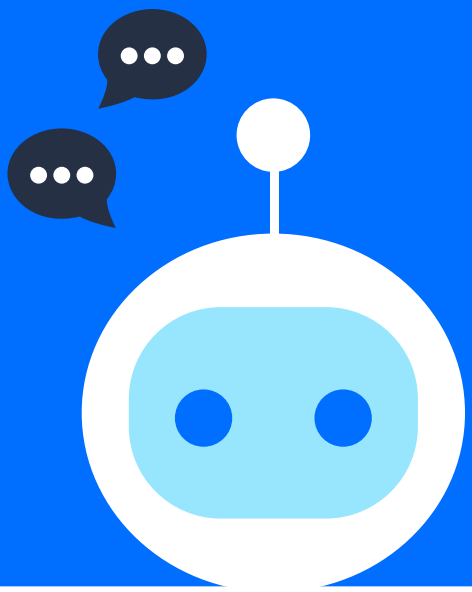
For more information please email info@blackbridge.org.uk or call 01452 415223

Poets Pantry
PODSMEAD BIG LOCAL

Talking about AI – a guide for families

internet matters.org

Conversation starters and activities to help parents talk to children about artificial intelligence



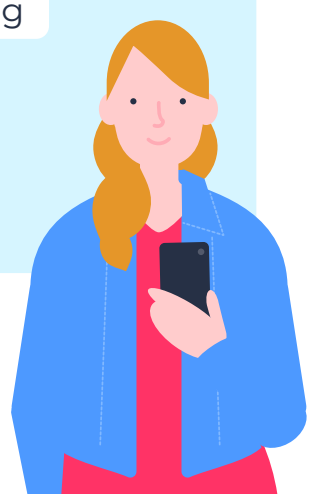
Helping children understand how AI works and how to use it safely starts with regular conversations and small, age-appropriate activities.

Use this guide to explore AI together and encourage curiosity, critical thinking and healthy digital habits.

Supporting children at different ages

- **Early years (0-5s)** – Exploring together
- **Young children (6-10)** – Building their understanding
- **Tweens (11-13)** – Focusing on critical thinking
- **Teens (14+)** – Using AI responsibly







Tweens (11-13)
Focusing on critical thinking

What to say

“AI can be helpful, but it doesn’t always get things right. It can reflect bias or miss important details, which is why it’s smart to double-check and think before you act on what it says.”

Conversation starters

- “What kinds of things would you ask AI?”
- “Why do you think it answered that way?”
- “How can we tell if something is true or made up?”

Try this together

- **Research challenge**
  Ask AI a question, then check the answer using a trusted source like a textbook or child-friendly website. What’s similar? What’s different?

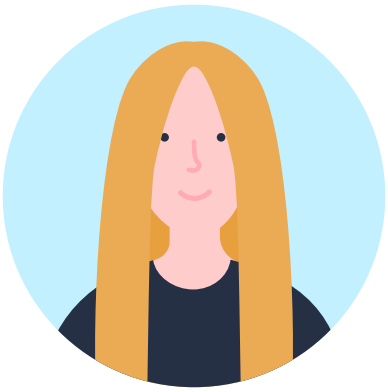
- **Improve the prompt**
  Change the wording of a question and see how the response changes.

- **Ask for sources**
  Talk about where information comes from and why that matters.
- **Design your own AI**
  What rules would it follow? What would it not be allowed to do?

Tip

Reinforce that AI doesn't have feelings or opinions, and some topics, like health or friendships, are always best talked through with an adult.





Teens (14+)
Using AI responsibly

What to say

“AI can be a great tool for learning and creativity, but it has limits. It’s not a substitute for your ideas, your voice or real relationships.”

Conversation starters

- “How do you use AI? What do you like or dislike about it?”
- “Have you seen people use it in ways that don’t feel OK?”
- “Do you think AI changes how people think or learn?”

Try this together

- **Review AI-generated content**
  Read a short AI-written piece on a familiar topic. Challenge teens to spot anything that sounds robotic, off-topic, or that is missing key details.

  Ask them how they’d improve it. By adding personality, fixing mistakes, or making it clearer. This builds their critical thinking and editing skills while showing AI is a helpful tool, not the final word.

- **Talk about honesty**
  When is AI helping and when is it crossing a line?
- **Real or AI?**
  Look at images or videos online and discuss what might be AI-generated.
- **Correct the AI**
  Show how to tell an AI tool it's wrong, ask it to check again, or improve an answer.

Tip

Be open, not judgemental. Help teens reflect on how they use AI and the digital footprint they're creating.

If something doesn't feel right

Pause. Talk it through. Check a trusted source. And remind children it's always OK to ask a trusted adult for help.



Remember

You don't need to be an AI expert. Staying curious, involved and open to conversation matters most.