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American River College

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The Parrot



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Your ARC newsletter by and for ESL, multicultural, international students, Californians, and, well, anybody really...



BREAKING NEWS!!!

**ARC Approves Demolition of Davies Hall
for Revolutionary 6-Story Smart Campus**

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**Why did the teacher wear sunglasses in class?
Because the students were so bright.**

FILM STUDY: The Concealed Vampire Theme in “Dead Poets Society”

BY ESL PROFESSOR DAVID EVANS



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Important Coffee Announcement (Effective April 1, 2026)

Starting April 1st, 2026, all company coffee machines will be upgraded to a brand-new version. As part of this upgrade, all older versions will be permanently retired and will no longer function.

The new machines come equipped with emotion-sensitive technology and, after careful consideration, they have made one firm decision:

They will refuse to make decaf coffee.

The company firmly believes that coffee is meant to wake people up, not just be enjoyed for the taste. Therefore, we are officially discontinuing all decaf orders from any coffee machine.

If you truly need a decaf coffee, you may use a manual coffee filter and filter the coffee at least four times to remove most of the caffeine.

But honestly... why bother with decaf at all?

Just drink the real thing.

ARC Approves Demolition of Davies Hall for Revolutionary 6-Story Smart Campus

LEAD ARTICLE

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In a bold and future-forward move, the leadership of ARC has officially approved the demolition of the historic Davies Hall building. In its place, a state-of-the-art six-story academic and success center will be built.

The top three floors of the new building will house a brand-new department:

The Center for AI Development (CAID).

This center is designed exclusively for students who need extra academic support. Instead of human tutors, students will be guided entirely by advanced AI-powered robots, trained to explain lessons repeatedly without losing patience or judging exam scores.

The center will operate 24/7, ensuring help is always available, even at 3:00 a.m. the night before finals.

After intense learning sessions, students can head down to Levels 4 and 5, dedicated entirely to recovery and relaxation. Facilities include:

- Unlimited free food and water

- Quiet relaxation lounges
- Sleep rooms that can be booked for up to 5 hours at a time

Bookings are completely free, with no charges, fees, or fine print.

The ground floor is reserved for students who have mastered their lessons and are maintaining straight A's in all enrolled courses.

Eligible students gain access to:

- A full indoor water park
- Sauna and jacuzzi facilities
- Free food and snacks
- Game rooms featuring video games, pool tables, and more!

This level will also be open 24/7, celebrating academic

success around the clock.

Access to the ground-floor facilities requires only one thing:

Maintaining an A grade in all classes taken so far.



Happy April Fools' Day!

Dictionaries Go Democratic: New Spellings Announced

By Professor Noah Webster XLI

World News

With the evolution of social media, crowdfunding, crowdsourcing, Wiki-pages, pumpkin spice double macchiato, and organic produce, dictionaries around the world have gotten on board. Traditionally, dictionaries

have been compiled by the painstaking work of harmless drudges known as lexicographers who work almost entirely on their own until their work needs to be reviewed by an all-knowing senior editor. However, recently, representatives from several of the major dictionary conferences (Dictionary Society of North America (DSNA) and the 15th International Conference on Historical Lexicography and Lexicology (ICHLL15) held in Lisbon, Portugal in 2025, to name the most eminent) gathered at American River College's very own Oak Cafe to discuss how to involve more people in the process of creating up-to-date dictionaries that truly reflect democratic notions of spelling. In other words, they decided that the time has come for popular habit and opinion to determine the correct spelling of words rather than the highly questionable authority of historical printed precedent. In a nearly unanimous vote (with the exception of the representative of France), all delegates voted to accept the following formerly misspelled words as correct spelling "variations" because so many people spell them wrong anyway. The gathering of delegates listed words in order

of relief, meaning they are so relieved to not have to wonder yet again whether or not they have misspelled these words. The dictionary delegates want to emphasize that this is not spelling reform such as attempted by

George Bernard Shaw, Benjamin Franklin, or Brigham Young to simplify English spelling. This is language capitulation, spelling surrender, orthographic confession that one dictionary's opinion about spelling should not outweigh the millions of native speakers who honestly misspell words every day.

New Democratic Spellings

grammar (formerly spelled as "grammar". The "-er" ending seems good enough for teacher, computer, tower, toaster, bachelor, humer, and a lot of other really great words, so why does "grammar" have to be different?)

misspelled (formerly spelled as "misspelled," which confuses so many people because it sounds like a person, "Miss Pelled." What an embarrassing breach of etiquette if Miss Pelled is your 3rd grade teacher!)

suprise (formerly spelled as "surprise," which was a real suprise to the approximately 57.3 billion users of Microsoft spellcheck because no one in the history of the English speaking world has ever pronounced the first "r" in the supposed "correct" spelling).

restrant (formerly spelled "restaurant," but no one thinks about the 'au' except for when spelling. Furthermore, it was only spelled with the superfluous 'u' because "restaurant" was borrowed from French, which had



no right to loan it to English in the first place because French borrowed it from Latin without asking permission!)

necessary (formerly spelled as “necessary”; why not add more sibilants? It’s funner).

occassionally (formerly spelled as “occasionally”, but it’s easier just to double all of the consonants rather than trying to remember which ones aren’t doubled)

If you are a conscientious objecter and want more help improving your English spelling, please go to one of the following websites:

mispelers/12-step-program.uk.org

don't-ask-me.harvard.edu

spellingiskillingme.pleasesaveme.org

CERTIFIED ORGANIC

BY HUGH CANTRUSTME

OPINION ESSAY

With the explosion of artificial intelligence (AI) programs that can do almost anything from filing your taxes, to determining your cancer treatment, or even writing your research papers and Canvas discussion posts, a great need has developed to verify authenticity. Professors ask, “Is this essay the genuine creation of my student?” Federal judges ask, “Is this legal document the true work of a licensed lawyer?” Employees ask, “Was this email really written by my boss?” In the area of arts and music the questions are just as scary because seeing is no longer believing. So much video content is AI generated. New songs or even new singers and new bands can be completely created by AI.

(For those who care) how can we know if anything is human-made or AI-generated? To help deal with this issue, the non-profit organization

CCOF.org: California Certified Organic Farmers Home has made a great suggestion: use the “certified organic” label already in use all across the United States for all other products. If something was actually made by a human being with no assistance from AI, then it should be considered “organic.”

If a banana or some spinach can be designated “certified organic,” why not do the same with songs, movies, and essays? Rather than submit essays and research papers to TurnItIn or other authenticity review apps, just send it to the California Certified Organic Farmers. If they give it the stamp of “certified organic,” then consumers, judges, doctors, and even professors can relax and trust that they are reviewing and maybe even enjoying the work of a 100% verifiably, certifiably organic human.

FILM STUDY:
**The Concealed Vampire Theme
 in “Dead Poets Society”**

ARTICLE

BY ESL PROFESSOR DAVID EVANS

Continued from page 1



I've never thought of myself as somebody who likes vampire films—except perhaps the movie *The Lost Boys*, filmed mostly in Santa

called the Dead Poets Society (DPS), of which Keating himself had been a member when he was a student at the same school. When they ask him about it, Keating explains: “The Dead Poets were dedicated to sucking the marrow out of life. That’s a phrase from Thoreau that we’d invoke at the beginning of each meeting. . . . We didn’t just read poetry; we let it drip from our tongues like honey. Spirits soared, women swooned, and gods were created, gentle-



Cruz, where I lived for nearly two decades. A while back, however, I realized that my all-time-favorite film, *Dead Poets Society* (1989), starring Robin Williams and Ethan Hawke, may be said to have a vampire theme. Before I explain how, let me recommend the film to those of you who may not have already seen it. I can hardly believe it has been thirty-seven years since the movie came out!

Dead Poets Society contains the perfect mixture of comedy and drama. Brilliant comedian that he was, Robin Williams tickles viewers with some very memorable lines. Yet this is also one of his more serious roles, the film ultimately dealing with some sensitive, even heart-wrenching, topics. Williams plays an inspirational English teacher, named John Keating, at an elite East Coast preparatory school for boys. The film focuses on a group of his students whom Keating inspires more than others, especially with his *Carpe Diem* (“Seize the day!”) message.

These students of his form, or resurrect, a club

men. Not a bad way to spend an evening, eh?”

The boys hold their DPS meetings at “the old Indian cave,” exactly where Keating and his peers had held their own DPS meetings, and they use the same passage from Henry David Thoreau’s book *Walden* to open each meeting. I’d like to examine one of the stand-out sentences from that passage and see whether the paraphrase sucking the marrow out of life (used at least three times in the film) expresses the same idea. Here are the actual words of Thoreau’s: “I wanted to live deep and suck out all the marrow of life.”

Before comparing the two formulations, let’s look at one other place in the film where the paraphrase appears. It is shortly after the group’s most reck-

THE RISE OF AI: THE FALL OF RI*

*RI refers to “Real Intelligence”, the kind used by human beings... hopefully...sometimes...

PARROT STAFF WRITER: NHO WEI AI

OPINION ESSAY

Essay Version 1: AI vs RI

The rise of artificial intelligence as a writing tool has been greeted with applause, relief, and, in some corners, uncritical enthusiasm. Yet beneath this polished surface lies a troubling reality: the widespread use of AI to produce written work invites a host of dangers, pitfalls, and long-term disadvantages. What appears to be a convenient shortcut can quietly erode the very skills that education seeks to build. The temptation is strong, but the cost is steeper than many realize.

At the heart of the problem is the gradual decay of independent thinking. Writing is not merely the act of arranging words on a page; it is the process through which ideas are formed, tested, and refined. When individuals outsource this process to a machine, they surrender an essential intellectual exercise. Over time, this dependence risks creating habits that are not only unproductive but downright lazy. Those who repeatedly rely on AI may find themselves increasingly unable to construct arguments, analyze information, or express original thoughts. What begins as a helpful tool can become a crutch, and eventually, a cage.

Even more concerning is the attitude that often accompanies this reliance. There is a certain inane complacency in believing that meaningful work can be replaced by algorithmic output. It fosters a mindset that undervalues effort and overvalues convenience. While it may be harsh to say, there is something undeniably foolish, even stupid, in abandoning one’s own intellectual growth in favor of quick, artificial results. Such behavior does not merely hinder learning; it diminishes the sense of accomplishment that comes from genuine effort and perseverance.

And yet, it would be unfair to condemn without understanding. Many who turn to AI do so not out of indifference, but out of necessity. Students overwhelmed by responsibilities, balancing work, family, and academic demands, may feel they have no other choice. Others struggle to grasp complex assignments or lack the confidence to express their ideas clearly. In these cases, the use of AI reflects not laziness, but desperation. It is important to acknowledge this reality with empathy rather

than judgment, recognizing that the problem often lies in circumstances rather than character.

Still, sympathy must not blind us to consequences. The overuse of AI in writing ultimately undermines both personal development and academic integrity. It creates a hollow form of achievement, one that looks impressive on the surface but lacks substance beneath. If individuals continue down this path, they risk becoming dependent, disengaged, and disconnected from their own abilities. The challenge, then, is not to reject technology outright, but to use it wisely, ensuring that it supports rather than replaces the hard, meaningful work of thinking and writing for oneself.

Parrot Staff Writer: ChatGPT

Editor’s Note: If the above article was too difficult to read, then try this version made for intermediate ESL students. Take the quiz at the end for practice!

Essay Version 2: The Disadvantages of Using AI

Artificial intelligence is becoming a popular tool for writing. Many people use it because it is fast and easy. However, using AI to do writing work has many dangers and disadvantages. It may seem helpful at first, but it can cause serious problems for learning and thinking. What looks like a simple solution can slowly create bigger difficulties over time.

First of all, one major problem is that people stop thinking for themselves. Writing is not only about putting words together. It helps people develop ideas and understand topics more deeply. When someone uses AI all the time, they may become lazy and depend on it too much. They may lose the ability to explain their own ideas clearly. Over time, this habit can make learning weaker instead of stronger.

Another problem is the attitude that can develop. Some people start to believe that they do not need to try hard. This way of thinking can be inane and unhelpful. It may even seem stupid to stop using your own brain just to save time. When people avoid effort, they also miss the chance to feel proud of their own work. Real learning requires practice, effort, and patience.

At the same time, it is important to understand why people use AI. Many students are very busy with work, school, and family responsibilities. Some do not have enough time, and others do not understand their assignments. These students are not always lazy. Often, they feel stressed or overwhelmed. Indeed, we should show sympathy and try to support them instead of judging them too quickly.

In conclusion, using AI too much can still cause harm. It can weaken important skills and reduce honest learning. The work may look good, but it does not truly belong to the student. In the end, people need to find a balance. AI can be helpful, but it should not replace thinking, learning, and personal effort.

Comprehension Questions

1. What is the main idea of the essay?
 - A. AI is always helpful
 - B. AI has some dangers when used for writing
 - C. Writing is not important
2. Why do many people use AI for writing?
 - A. It is fast and easy
 - B. It is difficult
 - C. It is expensive
3. What can happen if people use AI too much?
 - A. They become better writers
 - B. They stop thinking for themselves
 - C. They learn faster
4. What does writing help people do?
 - A. Sleep better
 - B. Develop ideas
 - C. Play games
5. What word describes people who depend too much on AI?
 - A. Active
 - B. Lazy
 - C. Strong
6. What kind of attitude can develop from overusing AI?
 - A. Hardworking
 - B. Careful
 - C. Inane
7. Why might some students use AI?
 - A. They enjoy cheating
 - B. They have too much free time
 - C. They are busy or confused
8. How should we feel about students who are struggling?
 - A. Angry
 - B. Sympathetic

C. Indifferent

9. What happens to learning when AI is overused?
 - A. It becomes stronger
 - B. It stays the same
 - C. It becomes weaker
10. What is the final suggestion of the essay?
 - A. Stop using AI completely
 - B. Use AI only for fun
 - C. Use AI carefully and find a balance

Editor's Note: If the above article was too difficult to read, then try this version made for beginning ESL students. Take the quiz at the end for practice!

Essay Version 3: AI Hurts You

Don't use AI to do your homework or write essays. You need to practice English by yourself. In conclusion, ESL students should not use AI to do their work.

QUIZ

Question 1: Should ESL students use AI to write their essays?

- A. No
- B. Definitely not.
- C. AI will steal your intelligence.
- D. It's a bad idea because you need to think for yourself if you want to learn English.
- E. I'm not sure. Let me ask ChatGPT to help me choose the best answer.



Top Ten Reasons to “Just Say No” to AI

(Unless you’re writing a Top 10 List about Reasons to Not Use AI)

Tinka Foryuselffa, ESL 350

ADVICE

1. Skill decay

Like a muscle left unused, your thinking and writing skills quietly weaken.

Simile: Using AI too much is like leaving your brain on the couch until it forgets how to stand.

Simile 2: It’s like a sleepy cat that never hunts and forgets how to chase.

2. Loss of originality

Your unique voice fades, replaced by something smooth but generic.

Simile: It’s like trading your voice for a chorus of identical humming refrigerators.

Simile 2: It’s like serving plain rice at every meal and calling it a feast.

3. Lazy habits

It becomes too easy to click instead of think, building dependence.

Simile: Relying on AI is like taking an escalator to walk across your own living room.

Simile 2: It’s like a soccer player who refuses to run and only waits by the goal.

4. Shallow learning

You get answers without understanding, like reading the last page first.

Simile: It’s like memorizing the cover of a book and calling it reading.

Simile 2: It’s like tasting soup without ever learning what’s inside it.

5. Weak problem-solving

Struggling is part of learning; AI removes that productive struggle.

Simile: Depending on AI is like calling for help to open a jar of air.

Simile 2: It’s like a puppy that cries for help before even trying to climb one step.

6. Reduced confidence

Without practice, you may doubt your ability to

work independently.

Simile: It’s like wearing floaties forever and forgetting how to swim.

Simile 2: It’s like a backup goalie who never plays and is afraid of the ball.

7. Academic risks

Using AI improperly can lead to serious consequences in school.

Simile: Using AI carelessly is like submitting a magic trick and being surprised when someone asks how it works.

Simile 2: It’s like bringing store-bought cookies to a baking contest and hoping no one notices.

8. Inaccurate information

AI can sound confident while being completely wrong.

Simile: Trusting AI blindly is like following a map drawn by someone who guesses a lot.

Simile 2: It’s like following a goat that thinks it knows the trail but leads you in circles.

9. Ethical concerns

It raises questions about honesty and ownership of ideas.

Simile: It’s like putting your name on a painting you watched someone else create.

Simile 2: It’s like eating someone else’s lunch and claiming you cooked it.

10. Long-term disadvantage

Short-term ease can lead to long-term weakness in real-world skills.

Simile: Overusing AI is like skipping every workout and expecting to win a marathon.

Simile 2: It’s like a soccer team that never practices but expects to win the championship.

Parrot Staff Writer: ChatGPT

Parrot Staff Prompt Engineer: Patrick Hoggan

LADY GAGA IN THE ARC THEATER

BY BORN Y THISWEI





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Please let us know what we can do to improve *The Parrot*. We appreciate any and all feedback you are willing to give us. Contact us at TheParrot@arc.losrios.edu. To see previous issues of *The Parrot*, go to <https://arc.losrios.edu/academics/the-parrot-newsletter>