Bot on Ballot-Digital Citizenship Project Based AI Social Impact Learning

Students exercise digital citizenship learning critical reading, thinking and decision making skills as they examine the actual inclusion of bots on the ballot along with human candidates. They discuss as readers and as how citizens how the logical impact of technology advances on our society has resulted in robots, AI creations actually replacing humans on various jobs and recently being used as political campaigners for election. Students react emotionally and logically with arguments for and against this new trend. They learn about: the legal aspects of this technology social impact, frame candidate campaigns/dialogues, develop advertising campaigns to educate the public and examine the extent to which contemporary juvenile and YA authors have incorporated these social impacts of technology into science fiction about this science fact.

Task

Students analyze a current news story about an actual. In this initial lesson, students will have a facilitated conversation with focused technology social impact print and digital texts, concepts and critical technology AI impact prompts to help them examine an issue, which does not have a single factually correct perspective. The goal is to begin to immerse these digital citizens into some of the legal and political challenges raised for their futures as voters and citizens. They authenticate discussion, argument, analysis, evaluation and decision making skills with this real news real science AI technology impact story as a starting informational text to focus inquiry, reading, research, outreach and ongoing conversation.

Engage

Launch this lesson with the essential technology AI impact question:

Should a robot be allowed to be on the ballot with human candidates? What arguments could be made for the robot being eligible to be on the ballot and what arguments could be made against a robot competing for votes with humans?

Allow students to share their emotions and reactions to these real questions focusing on an actual AI issue. Have their quotes and art inspired by this issue documented online or through experiential charts or a video of the discussion (which could then be shared with other peer groups considering the topic).

Then share the actual news story plus digital coverage

<https://nypost.com/2024/06/12/us-news/ai-powered-candidate-running-for-mayor-in-wyoming/>

AI Mayoral Candidate VIC Sparks Controversy in Cheyenne Wyoming Race

<https://youtu.be/OyXEY27Yaq4?si=shMsGSXN663II1G8>

 that goes with it about the Cheyenne VIC AI candidate.

Have the students read that story and view the digital text. This reading and viewing framework can be used to focus student critical reading and media viewing on the issue.

1. What arguments are being made about VIC as a candidate? List them. Who is making the arguments about VIC’s candidacy? Why is that person’s identity important? What does the work “conduit” mean in this context?
2. Beyond actual spoken words or print text, graphics and advertisements for candidates also convey a message about the candidate’s values and are targeted for a specific voter demographic.

What does the advertisement for this bot message the viewer about the bot’s values, cultural identity and potential policies if elected? List the clues- visual and graphic and style of the advertisement that are used to convey specific information about the bot candidate to the voter.

1. Putting aside your first feeling reaction to the bot candidate, would you were you old enough to vote cast your ballot for this candidate? There is obviously no correct answer, but support your decision about the candidate with evidence from text of the news story or the advertisement.
2. Since the bot has already while you are still in school, been placed on the ballot in Wyoming and in other states, it is very likely that in the next few years more bots will be placed or at least attempts will be made to place them on ballots. Do you as digital informed citizens, feel that bots should be eligible to run for office or that laws have to be written in states to start banning AI robots from being placed on the ballot? You and the rest of the citizens of the United States will eventually decide this issue, what would be your decision now? Cite at least two arguments or emotions for it.

Create

After students have had sufficient time to share their notes and reactions to the news story and the issues of the social impact of bot candidates, give them a chance to “voice” their responses in terms of reading, researching, investigating and creating additional products or resources for this issue.

Among the options they can choose are:

1. Develop a poster, an iMovie trailer, or a video campaign helping VIC or directly campaigning against this bot. Explain in a short statement how the poster or digital product reacts to the campaign and refutes its values.
2. Generate a podcast or interview script where you as an alert digital citizen interview VIC and the campaign manager. Include your questions and based on the information in the text and resources, anticipate with reference to information in the text available to you what the candidate and the campaign person would respond. You might enjoy actually recording this as a podcast or using audacity or flip to record it.
3. Interview actual voters in your family about this issue. Share the story and ask if they would consider voting for a bot candidate. Get the reasons for or against from them. Write up the interview and extract at least one key quote from these adults.
4. Review this article written in 2017 about the possibility of a robot running for President.

<https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/07/08/robot-president-215342>

 What arguments are being made for this by the writer? To what extent do you agree or disagree with this writer? Author your own argument for publication in the school newsletter or posting online on the school website. You can also draw an editorial cartoon or create a graphic advertisement sharing your perspective on this highly possible development you as voter could well experience.

1. Develop a rap, a campaign song or a poem for this Bot on Ballot issue, which can be used as part of the campaign for either side of the issue. Record it on flip or audacity.
2. Read the book Fuzzy by Tom Angleberger about a bot student in middle school. That school also has an AI bot Assistant Principal. Or read the book The School for Whatnots by Margaret Peterson Haddix which is about a child being protected from real school, by attending a school with peer bot classmates as opposed to human peers. Each of these fictions is technologically possible as you sit in school today, would you want a single peer bot in your actual class and a single or more bot Assistant Principal as one of your school leaders, explain your reaction and consider the economic, data aggregating and social impact of these already possible technology impacts on schooling. Write yourself into either of these premises and explain what you would would say about the issue.

Share

The editorials, advertisements, podcast recordings, interviews, campaign songs, advertisements, and drop in to already published books about AI in school, can be shared in individual classrooms aloud or filmed and uploaded for share in all sections of content a single teacher teaches or on a grade level among English, SS, Science and Tech teachers. In addition, individual student ideas and products can be filmed to be posted on the school website, published in the school newsletter, and shared at PTA meetings or local community organizations.

This project can also grow into an expo or festival with students distributing a survey form and interviewing visiting peers and adults about their positions.

Student written and graphic projects can also be sent to the respective companies and they can get as ongoing customers a reaction to their ideas in terms of the real world.

Assessment

Students can react to exit ticket, which asks them to respond to the following question:

In what ways, if any did reading, viewing and talking about bot on ballot, change your initial reaction to this idea? Explain how and why or if no change, why no change.

What did you learn you did not know or never thought of before this lesson?

Students can also get a rubric evaluating their written reports, editorials, arguments and explanations with reference to sentence structure, details to support reaction and expression of decisions or evaluations of the print and digital resources relevance, effective arguments and messaging.

Standards Common Core for English Language Arts

Reading Standards

Read Informational literature for details

Writing Standards

Text type and Purpose

1. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Speaking and Listening Standards

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays to enhance understanding of presentations.

Reading for Information

Key ideas and details-

1. Read closely for what the text says explicitly and to make inferences.

2. Determine central themes of the text.

Craft& Structure-RI 4.4, 4.5, 4.6

Integration of Knowledge &Ideas RI 4.7, 4.9

Knowledge of Reading and Complexity of Text, RI 4.10

Speaking and Listening: Comprehension&Collaboration 4.1, 4.2, 4.3

Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas SL 4.4, 4.5, 4.6

Iste Nets:

Creativity &Innovation

Communication &Collaboration

Research & Information Fluency A-D

Critical Thinking, Problem Solving &Decision Making

Digital Citizenship A-D

Technology Operations &Concepts

Terms: Social Impact, Digital Citizenship, Critical media viewing, messaging, constituents, conduit, corruption, self-serving, personal agendas, VIC Virtual Integrated Citizen, leveraging , transparency, fairness in government, data driven insights.

Resources:

 Technology Social Impact NYS Learning Standards

<https://www.nylearns.orh/module/Standards/Tool/Browse?LinkStandardId=251.348&Standardld=251406>

Fuzzy by Tom Angleberger

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/28818327-fuzzy>

The School for Whatnots by Margaret Peterson Haddix

<https://shop.scholastic.com/parent-ecommerce/books/the-school-for-whatnots-9780062838506.html>

 Asimov- Three Laws of Robotics

<https://www.auburn.edu/~vestmon/robotics.html>