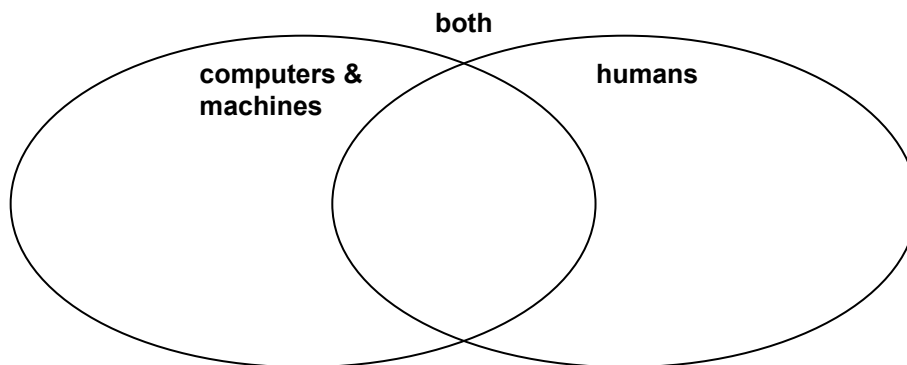


Will AI free us from drudgery – or leave us jobless and hungry?

Level 1: Elementary

1 Warmer

- Brainstorm jobs that you know. Make a list with a partner.
- Discuss. Which jobs are computers good at? Which jobs are humans good at? Which jobs are both good at? Fill in the Venn diagram.



2 Key words

- Write the correct words from the wordpool to match the definitions below. Then find and highlight them in the article to read them in context.

assistant

blogpost

boss

staff

steal

- The _____ is the group of people who work at a company
- An _____ is someone whose job is to help another person.
- A _____ is a piece of regular writing that is on a website
- To _____ is to take something without permission.
- The _____ is the person at work who tells people what to do

agree

department

expensive

machine

replaced

- _____ is something that costs much money
- If you are _____, something or someone took or was put in your place.
- A _____ is something with many parts that does one or more jobs.
- To _____ is to have the same opinion as another person.
- A _____ is part of a business, government, or university that does one kind of work or study

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b. Use some of the key words above to complete these sentences. You may need to change the form of the word.

1. The HR _____ posts new jobs and helps find the right person to do them.
2. A computer is a _____ that can do many different things.
3. In that film, the thief _____ the famous Hope diamond.
4. Do you _____ that computers will take our jobs?
5. Ask the CEO's _____ what time the meeting ends.
6. The _____ told his team about their new project.

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Arwa Mahdawi

30 May, 2023

- 1 Goodbye humans, hello “Tessa”. The US-based National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) said goodbye to their staff and hello to an AI assistant called Tessa. NEDA said this was the plan for a long time. But a staff member’s blogpost says this is not true.
- 2 Will more bad things happen? Will millions of jobs go to AI assistants instead of humans? After stealing our jobs, will all the Tessas become the boss?
- 3 The short answer is: maybe. I don’t think AI will end life as we know it. But I think many companies want to change from expensive humans to AI. In the next few years, I think there will be a lot of changes and mistakes as companies try to save money and make their own “Tessas”.
- 4 Few companies are talking about how many people might lose their jobs to AI, but IBM is. CEO Arvind Krishna said, “I think that AI and machines will replace at least 30 per cent of our workers in the next five years.” That’s about 7,800 jobs.
- 5 What companies *aren’t* saying is also essential. AI is a big problem for the Writers Guild of America (WGA). The WGA wants to stop Hollywood studios from teaching the computers with writers’ work and using AI instead of human writers. The studios didn’t agree. Instead, they said they could meet every year to talk about it. But probably, they want to use AI as soon as possible.
- 6 Yet, some people think AI is going to make the world a better place. Yes, AI will take some jobs, but it will also create better jobs. It will do all the boring work, and humans will have more free time. Nobody is sure how everyone will pay for food with all this free time, but we’ll talk about that another day.
- 7 Jonah Peretti, the CEO of BuzzFeed, was very excited about AI. In January, he wrote to BuzzFeed staff about the good things AI will bring. We all know what happened a few months later, don’t we? BuzzFeed closed its news department, ended many people’s jobs and started using more AI. AI could make the world better, but I don’t think the bosses want to use it that way.

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First published in *The Guardian*, 30/05/2023

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3 Comprehension check

a. Change the sentences below so they are correct. Three of them are True, so you don't need to correct them.

1. NEDA uses an AI assistant called "Hello".
2. NEDA said this was the plan for a long time, and a staff member agreed.
3. The author thinks AI will end life as we know it.
4. The author thinks many companies want to change from humans to AI.
5. The author thinks we aren't going to see changes or mistakes in the next few years.
6. Companies want to save money and make their own "Tessas".
7. Many companies are talking about how many people might lose their jobs.
8. IBM thinks about 26,000 people will lose their jobs because of AI.
9. Some people think that AI is going to make the world a better place.
10. BuzzFeed opened a news department, added new jobs and started using less AI.

4 Key language

a. Complete the sentences using the quantifiers.

few

a little

a lot

many

1. _____ people understand how to make AI.
2. _____ people have "smart" gadgets or appliances in their homes.
3. The sky is blue, but we may get _____ rain today.
4. The sky is very grey. I think there will be _____ of rain today.

b. Write personalised sentences using the quantifiers above.

5 Discussion

a. Discuss these statements.

- "AI can be both good and bad."
- "In ten years, humans' jobs will be very different."

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6 In your own words

a. Imagine you are the boss of a company. You want to change some of your staff to AI.

- Where do you work?
- What jobs will you give to AI?
- What jobs will you give to humans? Why?

Use an internet search engine to find more information about AI applications in your chosen industry.

b. Report your findings to the class and share your opinion about the issue. Here are some phrases to help you.

I think/don't think ...

I agree/disagree with ...

One plus/minus is ...

One reason is ...