

Debating the Ethical Implications of Artificial Intelligence

CEFR C1 Roleplay



1. Warm-up Discussion Questions:

1. How would you define artificial intelligence (AI), and what are some examples of its use today?
2. In what ways do you think AI has impacted our society positively?
3. What are some potential dangers or risks associated with the advancement of AI?
4. Do you think there are certain areas where AI should not be used? Why or why not?
5. Who do you believe should be responsible for setting ethical guidelines for AI?
6. How can we ensure AI is developed and used ethically, considering its powerful capabilities?

2. Example Conversation: Debating the Ethical Implications of Artificial Intelligence

Student A (Pro-AI Development): "Thanks for meeting to discuss this. I believe that AI has the potential to advance human capabilities significantly. It's revolutionizing industries."

Student B (Ethical Concerns about AI): "I agree that AI brings innovation, but we can't ignore the ethical challenges it raises. For example, what if AI systems make decisions that harm individuals?"

Student A: "That's a valid point, but safeguards and regulations can mitigate those risks. With the right policies, AI can be a powerful tool for good."

Student B: "But who creates these policies? Corporations may prioritize profit over ethics, and governments might not fully understand the technology."

Student A: "That's where a collaborative approach comes in—researchers, tech companies, and regulatory bodies working together to create balanced guidelines."

Student B: "True, but even then, AI systems can reflect the biases of their creators. Is that fair?"

Student A: "I understand your concern. Developers are working on ways to make AI more transparent and unbiased, which could address those issues."

Student B: "Transparency is key, but how do we ensure accountability if something goes wrong? AI lacks the human judgment needed for ethical decisions."

Student A: "AI can be designed to follow ethical standards, and it can learn to adapt. Besides, there are many situations where AI could help save lives, like in medical diagnostics."

Student B: "I agree there's potential there, but when we allow AI in such sensitive areas, we also risk dehumanizing essential aspects of care."

Student A: "It's a delicate balance, certainly. However, the benefits of precision, efficiency, and even lower costs in healthcare can't be ignored."

Student B: "But if we rely too heavily on AI, we risk losing our own skills and judgment. Shouldn't we be cautious in areas that affect human well-being so directly?"

Student A: "Absolutely, caution is essential. But if we don't push forward, we may also miss out on advancements that could improve life for many people."

Student B: "Perhaps the answer lies somewhere in the middle—a cautious approach with robust ethical oversight. It's a complex issue, for sure."

Student A: "Agreed. AI will likely reshape the future, so careful development with ethical checks seems to be the best path forward."

3. Background:

Artificial intelligence (AI) is advancing rapidly, influencing numerous sectors from healthcare to finance. While AI offers incredible potential, it also raises ethical questions about accountability, bias, and the potential loss of human oversight. You are participating in a debate about the ethical implications of AI, with one of you arguing in favor of continued AI development and innovation and the other advocating for caution and ethical regulation. The goal is to explore these complex issues and consider a balanced perspective.

4. Instructions:

Student A (Pro-AI Development):

You believe AI has great potential and could significantly benefit society if developed responsibly. Argue that the advantages of AI, such as efficiency and innovation, outweigh the risks. Support the idea of continued AI research and development while promoting ethical oversight.

Student B (Ethical Concerns about AI):

You believe that AI, while useful, poses serious ethical risks that must be carefully considered. Raise concerns about AI's potential impact on jobs, privacy, and human values. Argue for a cautious approach, advocating for strict ethical guidelines and oversight to prevent harm.

5. Vocabulary List:

artificial intelligence, bias, accountability, transparency, innovation, regulation, oversight, ethical standards, automation, implications