

Thinking about ChatGPT and assessment in my history classroom

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DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17159/2223-0386/2023/n29a8>

It has been said that modern problems require modern solutions. This does not necessarily convince me. I think ChatGPT can potentially become a “major train smash” in history classrooms. I am adopting this position, because in my experience giving history assessments which learners can do at home has brought numerous challenges to the fore around “whose work it really is”. This has been the case, in my experience, before the recent advent of ChatGPT, as I sensed that some were using other freely available AI tools to assist them in their assessments. This could be done easily, resulting in learners doing well in continuous assessment tasks without exerting themselves. The problem came when the learners had to write exams—suddenly their marks dropped remarkably. I fully understand that we cannot change the fact that technology is advancing and challenging “old ways of learning”. I also do not want to blame ChatGPT and AI, but I need to develop solutions to incorporate them into our lives and classrooms and learn to live with them. Now how do I live with it in an old-fashioned way? One solution has been to let my history learners conduct the research for their tasks on the school premises under my supervision. They use our school’s computer centre to search for information relevant to their research topic. Why do I do this? For the following reasons:

- to counter the negative impact of ChatGPT and other AI tools
- to teach my learners to search for themselves and to develop their writing skills
- to teach the learners to develop their own historical thinking based on their own understanding or their perspectives.

In my context, this is working for me and my history classes. For now.