



ERROR 403: This School Is Mine

By The Necessary Stage (Singapore)

20 – 23 Jul 2026

Esplanade Annexe Studio

Post-show Educator's Guide

Recommended Level: Secondary – Tertiary

Note to Teachers

Hi teachers!

Firstly, thank you for bringing your students to see *ERROR 403: This School Is Mine*. Theatre is such a powerful way to open them up to complex conversations, and this 30-minute guide is designed to keep that post-show energy buzzing in your classroom. We know talking about AI can sometimes feel overwhelming, especially since our students are often clicking through these platforms faster than we can track (and it's being implemented so quickly in schools now)! You don't need to be a computer science expert, or an art teacher, or a science teacher to run this session. You, and your students, can embrace not knowing safely.

Here are a few gentle tips to keep in mind as you lead this lesson:

1. Embrace the Mess (*It's very similar to devising*)

In Part 1 and Part 2, the drawings are going to be messy, funny, and chaotic. That is exactly the point. Similarly, in creating devised theatre, there are no wrong answers. If a student draws a cat that looks like a potato, celebrate it! That potato-cat represents human imperfection and humour which is something a sterile AI algorithm would never think to create.

2. Keep the "5 Human / 5 AI" Secret Under Wraps (*if you reveal this too early, there will be no fun!*)

In Part 3, students will be trying to reverse-engineer the artwork prompts. They will ask you which ones real and which ones are AI. Letting them debate, argue over visual cues, and change their minds as they rotate the artworks amongst themselves. That is when the deep learning happens. Also, if you want to do it again, feel free to scour the internet for more images. Many of these platforms are free and accessible for educators (Canva, Google Gemini etc).

3. You Don't Have to Have All the Answers

When you hit *the Ownership Debate* in Part 4, students might raise heavy questions like "But if I paid for the AI subscription, don't I own the art?". It is 100% okay to say: "Wow, that is a massive question that even global courts and artists are fighting over right now. What do you think is the fairest solution?" It would be very challenging for you to provide a final verdict, but you can help them weigh different perspectives and they can continue thinking and discussing about it.

4. End in a casual, reflective manner.

For the final five-minute debrief, try to get the students to push their chairs back and stand or sit in a circle, where you are also included in the space as an invested member of the argument. In theatre, the circle is a sacred space where everyone is equal. There is no head of the table or one person holding all power. It perfectly reinforces the non-hierarchical, democratic spirit of The Necessary Stage and Esplanade, and all that they try to do.

Have fun with it! Your classroom is about to become a miniature creative lab.

Materials List

You will need:

1. Blank A4 paper (1 per student).
2. Pencils or pens
3. A timer
4. Projector
5. Resource – Visual Art
6. Whiteboard to track correct/incorrect guess tallies
7. A pack of post-it notes
8. Some markers

Additional Resources

Some interesting resources you can read beforehand to feel better prepared:

1. Incorporating AI Art Generation in the Classroom

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/generative-ai-art-school/>

This article argues that generative AI doesn't replace art education but rather makes it more vital because students must master the precise language and history of art to write successful, high-quality prompts. It also emphasises that as human creators transition into curators, students must be taught to critically evaluate AI outputs for algorithmic bias and technical flaws.

2. AI art education – artificial or intelligent? Transformative pedagogic reflections from three art educators in Singapore

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/383608153_AI_art_education_-_artificial_or_intelligent_Transformative_pedagogic_reflections_from_three_art_educators_in_Singapore

This 2024 academic paper by Singapore-based art educators explores the practical advantages and ethical limitations of blending AI into local art classrooms. It highlights how AI can spark student engagement and quicken brain-storming, but strongly cautions educators that it must be used critically to protect personal identity and artistic integrity.

3. Artificial Intelligence in education

<https://www.unesco.org/en/digital-education/artificial-intelligence>

UNESCO's framework outlines that AI must remain human-centred, acting as an equitable tool that supports and expands student agency rather than replacing human teachers and relationships. It emphasises that global education policies must urgently establish ethical, transparent standards to protect learner privacy, prevent data bias, and bridge the growing digital divide.

The Lesson Plan

Duration	Segment	Objectives	Materials Needed	Activity	Further Prompts / Additional Remarks	Links to Curriculum
5minutes	Part 1: Warm-Up (The Human Thumbprint)	- To observe the inherently available diversity of human creation. - Introduce the concept of algorithmic uniformity vs. human variation.	- Blank A4 paper (1 per student) - Pencils or pens - A timer	Teacher to introduce what makes a Haiku. Haiku structure: Line 1: 5 syllables Line 2: 7 syllables Line 3: 5 syllables Some examples: Old pond (5) A frog jumps into the water (7) Deep sound of water (5) Teacher to ask students for five, one-syllable words: Eg. Cage, trap, desk, wall, clock etc Teacher to ask students for five, two-syllable words: System, rules, locked, classroom, shadows etc. Then students to try and write a haiku with at least three words on the board.	- How is writing a strict haiku like writing an incredibly high-quality prompt for an AI tool? - Why does restriction sometimes make our choices more deliberate? - When you only have five syllables, you can't waste a single word. How did changing just one word (e.g., swapping 'desk' for 'cage') completely change the entire mood of your poem?	- Character & Citizenship Education (CCE): Cyber Wellness (Understanding identity and self-expression in digital spaces). - Art (Lower Sec): Discussion on personal voice and artistic interpretation.
5minutes	Part 2: Challenge (The Art Room Prompt)	- Analyse the role of voice and individuality in creative constraints. Students will recognise how the same structural rules (5-7-5 syllables) and identical vocabulary inputs still result in vast, unpredictable variations, validating the value of their unique creative voice. - Deconstruct the mechanics of text-based "prompting." Students will see firsthand how slight adjustments in word choice and arrangement fundamentally alter the output of both human writers and generative AI models.	To use laptop / phone for AI generation.	Teacher to use AI on the spot (phone / laptop) to create haikus based on words on the board. Teacher to ask if any of the students had produced the same version. You may use these as examples: "Write a strict 5-7-5 syllable haiku using only these words from our classroom whiteboard: [Insert four to five words from the board, e.g., desk, cage, clock, digital, free]." OR To play with tone: "Write a 5-7-5 syllable haiku using the words [insert words]. Make the tone completely cold, mechanical, and objective, like a computer system monitoring a classroom."	- The AI used the exact same words on the whiteboard that you did. Why didn't one of you write the exact same poem as the machine? - When you chose your specific word order, you did it because of a feeling or a memory. What was the AI thinking about when it ordered its words?	- English Language (Secondary): Analysing how metaphors change meaning across different mediums. - Developing <i>Critical, Adaptive, and Inventive Thinking (21CC)</i> through digital literacy and visual inquiry.

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10minutes	Part 3: Analysis (Reverse-Engineering)	- To decode visual cues into descriptive language. - Practice collective analysis through peer rotation.	- Teacher to print / put in online folder accessible to students: 10 curated digital art prints (five human, five AI). [Resource B] - Packs of Post-it notes - Markers	Students to be divided into 10 groups. Then, teacher to provide the following instructions: "Look at the artwork. If a computer made this, what text instructions (prompts) did the user type to get this result?"	- What additional adjectives or descriptive words could the group use to define the mood or lighting here? - Look beyond the main subject of this artwork? What hidden keywords did the creator have to type to get this exact texture, camera angle, and lighting mood?	- English Language / Media Literacy: Using precise vocabulary, adjectives, and syntax to describe visual texts. - Science / Technology (Computational Thinking): Deconstruction (Breaking an output down into variables/inputs).
7minutes	Part 4: The Reveal (The Ownership Debate)	- Develop critical evaluation skills to discern human vs. AI traits. - Debate the ethics of copyright and artistic intellectual property.	Whiteboard to track correct/incorrect guess tallies.	First, teacher to ask students to cast votes. Then, teacher to do the big reveal: "Five of these were painted by real people; five were generated by text prompts."	- What were the 'tells'? - Did the AI mess up anatomy or lighting, or did it feel too perfect? - The Ethics Question: "Who owns the AI art? The person who typed the prompt? The tech company? Or the thousands of human artists whose works the AI scanned with or without permission?"	- CCE (National Education / Digital Literacy): Ethical use of technology, understanding copyright, intellectual property, and respecting the labour of creators. - Social Studies: Impact of technology and globalization on societal norms and future jobs.
3minutes	Part 5: Closing and Debrief	- Consolidate learning by tying the art activity back to the play's themes. - Emphasise the value of human collaboration over automated generation.	NA	Teacher to preface the following statement: "In <i>ERROR 403</i> , the school system tries to automate student choices. Looking at our activities today, what is the one thing a machine can never replace in human theatre-making or art?"	- What are some things that can be easily replaced by AI? Would it make a lot more sense if it was done by computers? - What are some things that might put our parents, or loved ones at risk with excessive use of AI?	- CCE (Cyber Wellness & Mental Well-Being): Developing a sense of agency, self-worth, and human connection in an AI-driven society. - Drama / Literature: Reflecting on the social functions and human value of performance art

Interested to learn more about the arts? Check out www.esplanade.com/schools for more resources and content!