

# AI Bytes

## Making Sense of Artificial Intelligence in Literacy and Basic Skills Education

A Contact North | Contact Nord and Literacy Link South Central publication

**e-Channel  
Apprentissage en ligne**



Welcome to *AI Bytes*, your digital digest for the latest in artificial intelligence information for LBS!

Whether you're an educator crafting engaging lessons or a learner who needs interactive study aids, *AI Bytes* is your go-to source for quick AI-powered ideas. In this second ebulletin, we dive into the innovative world of AI, exploring a spectrum of AI tools or assistants designed to streamline your workflow and ignite your creativity. From the text and imagery wizardry of Microsoft Copilot to the dynamic design capabilities of Gemini, we've got you covered.

Stay tuned for additional updates, insightful tutorials and much more as we navigate the exciting landscape of artificial intelligence together!



## Inside *AI Bytes*

This bulletin is the second in a series of six scheduled for distribution throughout 2024 and 2025. We specifically designed it to provide valuable insights and resources for educators in adult education, with an emphasis on Literacy and Basic Skills programs (LBS).

- Microsoft Copilot: Your AI assistant
- Microsoft Designer: The DIY design tool
- Gemini: Your talented AI companion
- ChatGPT: Your creative chatbot that can do complex tasks
- Generative AI: Your turn!

## Meet the AI Bytes team



**Carolina Cohoon** is a project manager and edtech innovation strategist at Literacy Link South Central. Her professional background encompasses education and rehabilitation, with a

passion for inclusion and accessibility. Carolina is dedicated to designing learning experiences that celebrate and embrace diversity. Her interest in artificial intelligence (AI) is fueled by her enthusiasm for innovation, knowledge sharing, enhancing accessibility, and improving the learning experience through personalized learning adaptations that AI can offer within the framework of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).



**Jeremy Marks** works for Literacy Link South Central as a project manager and edtech researcher. He recently completed the Teacher/Trainer of Adults program at Conestoga College. Jeremy

has taught learners in public and secondary schools and colleges and universities, in Canada and the U.S., since 2002. His fascination with AI comes from his longstanding passion for educational theory and cognitive philosophy.

\* This bulletin is edited by Contact North | Contact Nord.

## Four AI tools for your LBS practice

### Microsoft Copilot: Your AI assistant

Microsoft Copilot is an AI assistant that generates text and imagery based on text prompts. It uses GPT-4 to generate responses and Bing for web search capabilities.

**For educators:** Copilot can generate text and imagery related to teaching materials. For example, educators might type a specific prompt such as “create a learning activity to introduce learners to passwords, competency D.1 and provide a link to the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum (OALCF) framework”. In response to this request, Copilot will produce a draft of a learning activity that aligns with the specified curriculum framework.

**For learners:** Copilot can serve as a study partner and creative mentor. Learners can generate explanations, summaries and practice questions by either typing or using voice dictation. For example, they can paste a paragraph they have written and ask Copilot for tips to improve the text or identify any grammar errors.

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**Free version:** The base option of Copilot is free, and it allows you to do everything discussed above + 15 daily boosts (number of turns you have to create images faster). Get it here: [Copilot \(microsoft.com\)](https://copilot.microsoft.com)

**Feature+ with subscription:** Microsoft Copilot Pro Personal \$27 CAD per user/month (get one month free)

- ✓ Get faster responses during peak times
- ✓ Use Copilot in select Microsoft 365 apps: Word, Excel (in preview), PowerPoint, and Outlook (Microsoft



email address is required). Get it here: [Copilot \(microsoft.com\)](https://copilot.microsoft.com)

- ✓ Accelerate AI image creation with Designer. Generate unique images even faster with DALL-E 3 and then enhance your creations with 100 daily boosts with Designer.
- ✓ Use Copilot on the web, in the mobile app, and in Windows, Bing, and Microsoft Edge

**Enterprise (business and school board/ faculty) \$40.70 CAD per user/ month with an annual subscription.**

- ✓ Integration with Teams, Word, Outlook, PowerPoint, Excel, Teams, and other Microsoft apps
- ✓ AI-powered chat with Microsoft Copilot
- ✓ Enterprise-grade security, privacy and compliance
- ✓ Use Copilot on the web, in the mobile app, and in Windows, Bing and Microsoft

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### Microsoft Designer: Your DIY design tool

Microsoft Designer is a graphic design app that lets you create professional-quality designs, including social media posts and postcards. What sets it apart is its image creator, which lets you create custom images for any project just by describing what you want.

**For educators:** Microsoft Designer generates images based on your words using AI. You provide a description or a scenario, and Designer creates an image that matches your description. This feature is particularly useful for creating engaging visuals for presentations, social media posts and custom educational resources such as images for cards, flashcards, personalized avatars, web pages and infographics. This wide range of formats and designs can cater to different learning styles, making learning more interactive and engaging. For example, in a language learning class, an educator can use Copilot to generate practice dialogues in the target language.



**For learners:** Designer can generate captivating visuals that give learners an opportunity to express their understanding creatively. This approach is especially helpful for those who may struggle with traditional expression methods because it empowers them to display their acquired knowledge and skills in a way that's meaningful to them.

For example, learners can use Designer to produce images and incorporate them into a comic strip layout using applications such as Microsoft Word or PowerPoint. This process not only develops their linguistic abilities but also allows them to express their creativity.

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**Free\* web app** with a free Microsoft account. Get it here: [Microsoft Designer - Stunning designs in a flash](#)

- ✓ All images generated using this feature will have metadata attached to the files to identify the source (content credentials)
- ✓ Controls are in place to prevent the upload or generation of harmful images when using this feature

\* A preview of the Microsoft Designer mobile app is now available at no cost on both iOS and Android. With its AI-powered features, you can unleash your creativity anytime, anywhere. Use text prompts to craft stunning images and designs, and easily edit them on-the-go. To download, visit [Microsoft Designer](#).

## Gemini: Your talented AI companion

Google's Gemini (formerly known as Bard) is a versatile, talented companion that can help you with a wide range of tasks such as generating text, images, videos and audio. It can do complex tasks in subjects such as math and physics and can understand and generate high-quality code in a variety of programming languages.

**For educators:** Gemini can generate LBS lesson plans, learning materials and assessments based on prompts. It can save you time and energy by creating drafts and introducing innovative strategies you may not have considered. It can also alleviate the fatigue associated with rewording tasks or finding alternative ways to share information.

For example, you can prompt Gemini to create a learning task on the topic of "starting a small business" — an excellent exercise for LBS learners because many of them (newcomers in particular) need to do this when they lack Canadian work experience. You can include a reference to the UDL guidelines, asking it to eliminate any potential obstacles for learners. You can then ask it to evaluate the task for any possible learner barriers and provide suggestions. After receiving the output, you then make any necessary modifications.

**For learners:** As with Copilot, Gemini can be a study partner that provides several creative options to help demonstrate learning.

For example, it can help learners formulate a business concept and prepare a proposal, offering suggestions to enhance a business idea with focused questions, such as guidance for marketing strategies. LBS learners often have children who are taking business math in school. Instructors can help them get more familiar with business concepts and prepare proposals — not only for their own needs but also to help their children. Once a business proposal is in place, LBS learners can employ Gemini to produce

photographic images of objects. This capability can be especially advantageous for learners as they build a simple webpage on Google Sites to showcase the products they plan to market. Gemini equips learners to create copyright-free images of any product they envision, thereby adding a visual element to their business idea.

**Free version:** Gemini has a free web application and has been slowly integrated to newer Android devices.

**Gemini Advanced is \$26.99 CAD (\$0 for 2 months).** This upgrade requires a [Google One AI Premium plan](#)

- ✓ Upload Google Docs, PDFs, and more for summaries, answers and feedback
- ✓ New Upload your spreadsheets for faster data cleaning, charts and insights
- ✓ Priority access to new and exclusive features
- ✓ Edit and run Python code directly in Gemini Advanced
- ✓ 2 TB of storage from Google One

For more information, visit <https://gemini.google.com/advanced>

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## Your creative chatbot that can do complex tasks

OpenAI's ChatGPT is a creative artificial companion that aids in tasks from brainstorming to writing — and even artistic creation. ChatGPT understands conversation context and nuances, making it versatile for professional and personal use. It can understand and generate text in multiple languages and simplify complex concepts, making it a valuable tool for education. It excels in complex tasks across various fields and can generate high-quality code in several languages.

**For educators:** Like other advanced systems, ChatGPT can generate LBS lesson plans, learning materials and assessments from

specific requests. For example, you can provide a link to the OALCF curriculum and ask it to create a lesson plan with objectives and several activities on any topic with engaging resources like quizzes, images with descriptions, fill in the blanks, and problem-solving games in various scenarios.

**For learners:** This versatile tool serves as an interactive study companion, enriching learning experiences across diverse subjects. It facilitates conversation practice with virtual characters, provides pronunciation analysis and corrections, and suggests relevant vocabulary aligned with the learner's goals and interests. It also helps learners solve mathematical problems, and helps LBS learners with independence and employment-related goals.

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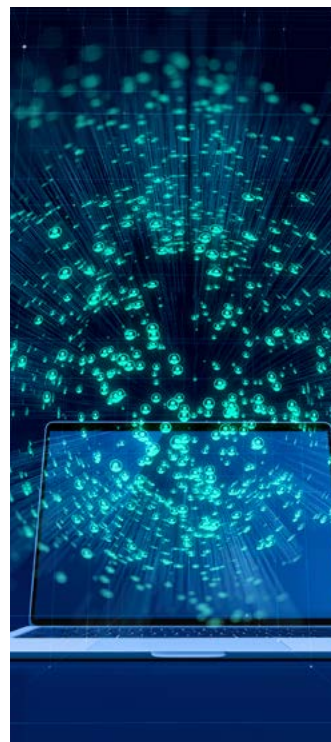
**Free version:** The free version of ChatGPT offers basic conversational AI capabilities suitable for casual users or small-scale applications with limited requirements. Free users can use GPT-4o (Omni) only a limited number of times within a three-hour window. Open AI will notify you once you've reached the limit and invite you to continue your conversation using GPT-3.5 or upgrade to ChatGPT Plus. Free users also have access to GPTs (key technology used to build personalized chatbots\*). However, you need a Plus, Team or Enterprise account to generate images with DALL-E or to build GPTs.

**Paid account:** For \$27 CAD a month, you get ChatGPT Plus, which has advanced features such as higher response limits, priority access and specialized customization options that catering to businesses or users with more demanding needs. Paid users have 5x the limit of free users.

As of July 18, 2024, an earlier version of GPT-4o mini is outperforming GPT-4 in the analysis of larger volumes of data and has an updated knowledge cutoff date of October 23, 2023. However, it falls short in advanced creative writing or content generation compared to the larger model. In ChatGPT, Free, Plus and Team users can now access GPT-4o mini in place of GPT-3.5.

Some advantages for educators:

- **Faster and more natural responses:** GPT-4o certainly brings us closer by enabling real-time, more lifelike conversations
- **Multimodal capabilities:** Supports text, audio, and visual inputs and outputs



## The GPT Store: What's in it for you?

The GPT Store, which is a marketplace for AI innovations, is designed to make AI accessible and easy to use for everyone.

In it, users can find a multitude of unique versions of ChatGPT (3 million in fact!) that have been created by other users.

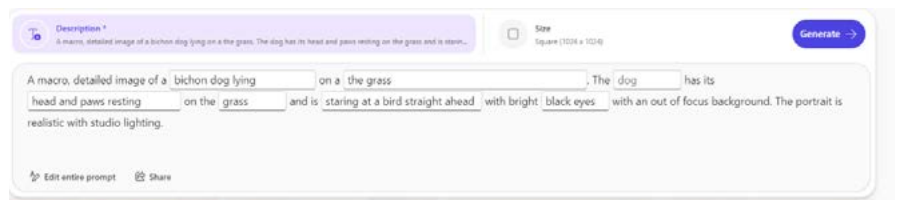
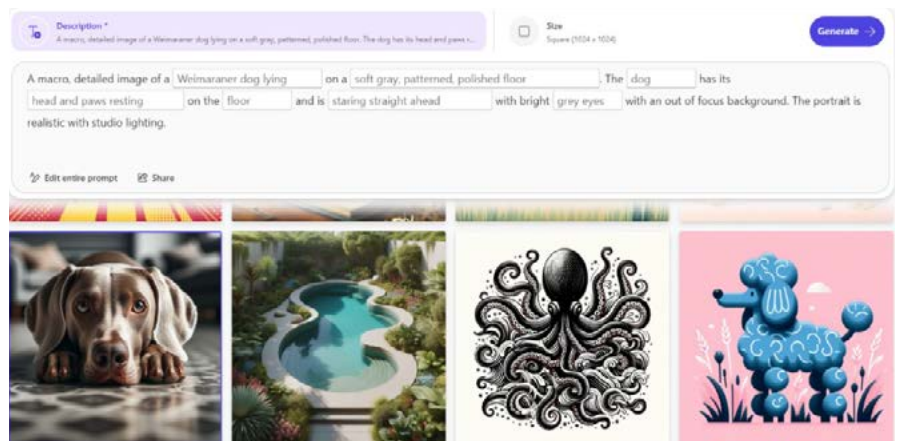
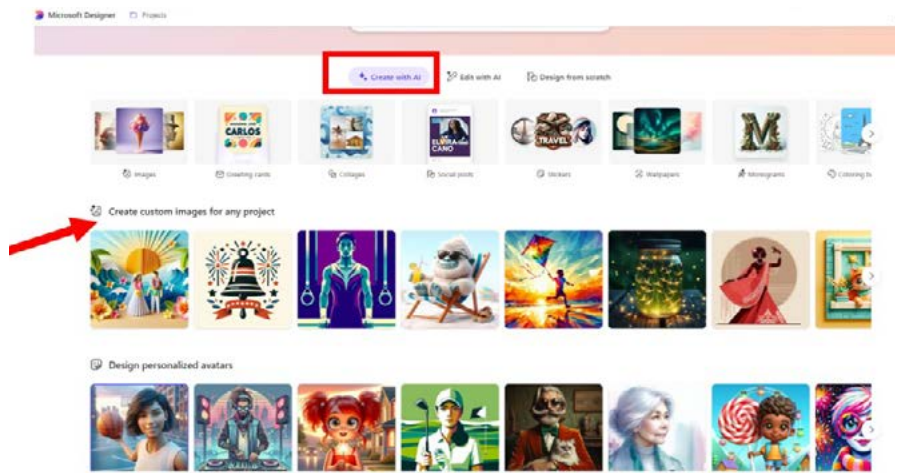
The GPT Store is accessible for users of ChatGPT Plus, Team and Enterprise.

### Creative ways to use Chat GPT Store

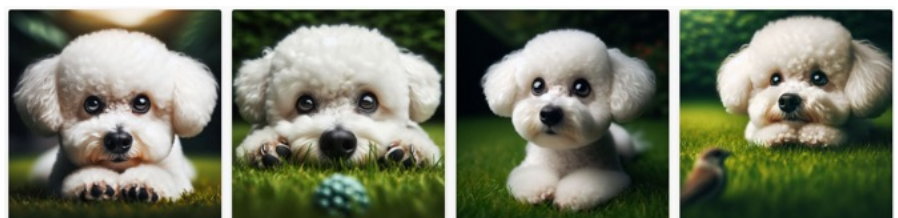
Adult educators can craft a range of Generative Pre-trained Transformers (GPTs) customized to their unique instructional needs. Let's look at a few examples:

- **Lesson plan creators:** GPTs can be designed to generate detailed lesson plans based on specific topics or learning objectives. This can include the scope of the lesson, key points to cover, suggested activities and assessment methods.

- **Content summarizers:** GPTs can be created to provide concise summaries of complex topics or reading materials. This helps adult learners grasp key concepts quickly and effectively.
- **Quiz generators:** Educators can create GPTs that generate quizzes or practice questions based on a given topic.
- **Discussion facilitators:** GPTs can be designed to generate thought-provoking questions or discussion prompts related to a specific subject.
- **Resource recommendation:** GPTs can be created to recommend additional learning resources such as books, articles, videos or websites based on a learner’s interests or areas of study.



Here’s our output:



## Generative AI: Your turn!

Want to try creating something yourself with AI? Here’s an easy way to get started:

1. Log in to Microsoft Designer with your paid or free Microsoft account: [Microsoft Designer - Stunning design in a flash.](#)
2. Select “Create with AI”
3. Under create custom images for any project, choose an image
4. Fill in the blanks to create a prompt, then select “generate”

Generating images like this can serve several purposes. You can use them in language activities to explore adjectives when describing dogs. Learners with small businesses might use them to create custom greeting cards, mugs, T-shirts, or to brand their business. And aspiring writers could find inspiration for their storybooks.

There's no limit to what you can generate with Designer. Think about your own instruction style and try generating an image that'll help your learners understand a key concept.

Here's one to try:

- Generate meaningful flashcards for Indigenous storytelling literature circle

Want to show AI Bytes readers how you used AI in your own LBS practice? Submit your success story to: [AI Bytes submissions](#)



## **AI Bytes edition 3: What's next**

In our upcoming bulletin, we'll showcase our own LBS-created chatbots. We'll also introduce tools that support English language learning — tools that can help second language learners and native English speakers to address writer's block, refine grammar skills, enhance word choice (diction), expand vocabulary and improve reading fluency through interactive reading sessions.

## **References**

[Using ChatGPT's Free Tier - FAQ | OpenAI Help Center](#)

[What is Gemini? Everything you should know about Google's new AI model | ZDNET](#)

[Frequently asked questions: AI, Microsoft Copilot, and Microsoft Designer - Microsoft Support](#)

[Introducing the GPT Store | OpenAI](#)

[Microsoft Designer hands-on: Finally, a useful AI image creator](#)

[GPT-4o mini: advancing cost-efficient intelligence](#)