AI words for kids

27 AI words explained simply, for kids, students, parents and teachers.

Youth AI Hackathon
SINGAPORE · SEASON 26/27

THE BASICS

Artificial intelligence (AI)
Computer programs that do things we usually think need human thinking, like recognising pictures, understanding speech or answering questions.

Algorithm
A set of step-by-step instructions a computer follows to do a task, a bit like a recipe.

Data
Information a computer can use: numbers, words, pictures, sounds or measurements.

Dataset
A collection of data gathered for one job, such as lots of photos of cats and dogs used to teach a program to tell them apart.

Machine learning
A way of making AI where the computer learns patterns from examples, instead of a person writing every rule.

Training
Showing a program lots of examples so it can learn the patterns in them.

Model
What a program ends up with after training: the part that makes guesses about new things it hasn't seen before.

Prediction
A model's best guess, such as what is in a photo or which word comes next. A prediction can be wrong.

AI THAT MAKES THINGS

Generative AI
AI that makes something new, such as text, pictures, music or code, based on what it learned in training.

Prompt
The instruction or question you type or say to an AI tool. A clear prompt with details usually gets a more useful answer.

Chatbot
A program you talk to by typing or speaking, which replies in words. ChatGPT, Gemini and Copilot are chatbots.

Large language model (LLM)
The kind of model inside most chatbots. It learned from a huge amount of text and writes by predicting which words should come next.

Image generator
A generative AI tool that makes pictures from a text prompt.

Hallucination
When an AI tool says something that sounds right but is made up or wrong. Check important facts with a source you trust.

BUILDING WITH AI

AI agent
An AI tool that takes steps on its own towards a goal, such as looking things up, using other apps or making a plan, rather than only answering one question.

Computer vision
AI that makes sense of pictures and video, such as spotting a face, reading a sign or noticing a hand signal.

Sensor
A part that measures something in the real world, like light, sound, distance or temperature, and turns it into data.

Robot
A machine that can sense what is around it and move or act by itself, following a program.

Classifier
A model that sorts things into groups, such as "thumbs up" or "thumbs down". Google's Teachable Machine lets you train one with your own photos or sounds, with no code.

No-code
Building something that works by dragging blocks, filling in boxes or describing it in words, instead of typing a programming language.

Vibe coding
Describing what you want in everyday words, letting an AI tool write the code, then testing it and asking for changes.

Prototype
An early, working version of an idea, made quickly to test it. Most hackathon projects are prototypes.

USING AI WELL

Bias
When an AI tool treats some people or things unfairly, often because its training data left some groups out or showed them unfairly.

Privacy
Keeping personal information, like your full name, school, address, face or passwords, away from tools and people that don't need it.

Deepfake
A fake video, picture or voice made with AI to look or sound like a real person.

Crediting AI
Saying which AI tools you used and what they did, the same way you would credit a book or a website you used.

Age limit
The youngest age a tool's own terms allow. It differs from tool to tool, and some tools need a parent's permission.

Read it online: yai.sg/blog/ai-words-for-kids · Free to print and share for learning.
From YAI Singapore, a youth AI hackathon for ages 7–24, organised by YCESS (Youth and Children Education Society, Singapore).

AI words: match it up

An activity sheet to go with the word list.

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Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

1. Match each word to its meaning

Write the letter of the right meaning in the box next to each word.

☐	**1. Prompt**	**A**	When an AI tool treats some people or things unfairly, often because its training data left some groups out or showed them unfairly.
☐	**2. Chatbot**	**B**	When an AI tool says something that sounds right but is made up or wrong.
☐	**3. Hallucination**	**C**	A fake video, picture or voice made with AI to look or sound like a real person.
☐	**4. Dataset**	**D**	The instruction or question you type or say to an AI tool.
☐	**5. Sensor**	**E**	A part that measures something in the real world, like light, sound, distance or temperature, and turns it into data.
☐	**6. Bias**	**F**	A program you talk to by typing or speaking, which replies in words.
☐	**7. Prototype**	**G**	An early, working version of an idea, made quickly to test it.
☐	**8. Deepfake**	**H**	A collection of data gathered for one job, such as lots of photos of cats and dogs used to teach a program to tell them apart.

2. Try it (with a parent or teacher)

1. **Write a prompt.** Write a prompt asking an image generator to draw your dream classroom. Add at least three details.

   _____

   _____

2. **Spot a hallucination.** Ask a chatbot something you already know the answer to. Did it get anything wrong? What would you check it against?

   _____

3. **Find the bias.** Ask an image generator for “a scientist” a few times. Who does it show? Who is missing?

   _____

Each AI tool sets its own minimum age. Ask a parent or teacher before you use one, and never type your full name, school or address into it.

Answers: 1 D · 2 F · 3 B · 4 H · 5 E · 6 A · 7 G · 8 C

Make your own AI project: yai.sg/go/ai-words-sheet
YAI Singapore is a youth AI hackathon for ages 7–24. Teams of 1–4 build one AI project online; no quest requires typed code.