

Using LLMs in Writing Center Sessions: A Quick Guide

Introduction

To help writers use Large Language Models (LLMs) effectively, writing tutors should model how they can be best used in the writing process, and what limitations exist.

LLMs

- Remix existing language from a provided dataset
- Advantageous for writing tasks involving summary, paraphrase, or translation
- Will fabricate information without the user limiting the scope of text generation
- Requires frequent guidance toward specific goals

Do Not Enter

- legal information
- student information (e.g. grades, IDs)
- information protected by an NDA (non-disclosure agreement)
- intellectual property

General Process

- **Have a conversation** about project goals, what ideas or questions the writer may have, and the basic capabilities of LLMs.
- **Use an LLM to generate relevant text** with the writer. The next page provides some prompts. Writers can begin by generating general topic sentences and outlines.
- **Read the generated text and discuss** how it may or may not fit in with the assignment. Think about the discipline-specific genre expectations the instructor may have for the document (format, overall structure, particular vocabulary and phrasing). Think about the rhetorical situation (what is the writer's argument, and what is the most effective strategic path toward presenting it?). Consider ethics and innovation (Do conclusions support a better social future? Think divergently: What approaches to social problems might there be that fall outside the binary thinking often at work in public discourse?).
- **Filter and layer generated text into a document.** Decide what text may be useful and carry that over into a draft. Revise text as needed before submitting.

Topic Sentences

“Suggest a topic sentence for each point in the following outline: [insert outline here].”



Supporting

“Identify useful quotes from the attached file for a paragraph with the following topic sentence: [PARAGRAPH TOPIC SENTENCE].”



Concluding

“Why would it be a good idea to include the following quote in a paragraph about [PARAGRAPH TOPIC]: “[INSERT QUOTE/PARAPHRASE/DETAIL].”



Transitions

“Write a transition sentence connecting points 1 and 2. 1. [TOPIC SENTENCE 1]. 2. [TOPIC SENTENCE 2].”

Layering

Filter and gather the LLM’s responses into a separate document. Consider what information is relevant, and rearrange the content as needed. Look for supporting details that the LLM might have fabricated. As information is layered in, what gaps exist? How could we construct more text or pull from supporting information to fill those gaps? These questions can help writers think about how to shape text into a strong rhetorical document.