



Working on Students' AI literacy through Poetry-Slam Workshops



Domain:
Digital Age



Place:
Nice, France



Duration:
6 workshops, spaned
over 4 months



Target audience:
Two classes of middle
school students (30
children)

Mission

Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies can potentially influence children's learning and cognitive development significantly. This calls for careful guidance and critical reflection on their integration into education, alongside a focus on essential competencies for both students and teachers. These competencies, known as "AI literacy," are often defined beyond technical skills, encompassing critical thinking, ethical awareness, and collaborative abilities to equip learners for the opportunities and challenges of AI.

This interaction seeks to harness the arts as a powerful tool for fostering AI literacy through a human-centred approach, encouraging creativity, reflection, and deeper engagement with technology.

Engagement activities

This interaction is structured around three key activities for the students: exploring artificial intelligence through a visit to the House of AI, an interactive space complemented by dedicated presentations; developing their cognitive and socio-emotional skills through slam poetry workshops; and finally, applying their knowledge by using Generative AI to enhance their work and expand their cultural references, in alignment with the school curriculum.

Artistic activities

Five poetry-slam workshops, where students develop their own poetry and learn how to declaim it. During the last workshop, all students will go on stage to publicly present their work.

IMPACT

Confidence boost

Increased AI literacy

Broadened cultural references

Enhanced critical thinking capacities

Stronger Students-Teachers relations

Nurtured cognitive and socio-emotional skills

WHAT HAPPENED?

The interaction took place in the Alpes-Maritimes region in the south of France, a territory where AI plays a significant role. Policymakers have taken proactive steps to address its societal impact, notably through OTESIA (The Observatory of AI Economic and Societal Impacts) and the "House of AI," a publicly funded space designed to introduce AI concepts and applications to diverse audiences, particularly students.

Amid the rapid rise of Generative AI and growing concerns over misinformation, strengthening AI literacy has become crucial—both for students who must navigate these technologies and for teachers who guide them. Recognising this need, slam poetry was identified as an innovative and impactful medium to complement AI education.

Slam poetry indeed fosters self-expression, critical thinking, and creativity, making it a natural fit for this initiative.

To bring this vision to life, the CidiSol association was approached as a key partner. Their established relationships with teachers interested in integrating slam poetry into their curriculum were instrumental in selecting the participating secondary school and the two classes that took part in the interaction.

PARTICIPANTS ENGAGEMENT

Visit at the House of AI

The initiative commenced with a visit to the House of AI. Through interactive demonstrations, students explored the question, "What can AI do?" while also engaging in discussions about how AI operates, how it is trained, and the ethical concerns surrounding its use. Particular attention was given to Generative AI and its role in the spread of misinformation, ensuring that students developed both technical awareness and critical thinking skills in relation to AI technologies.

Poetry-slam and new learning experiences

Building on this foundation, the initiative continued with a series of five poetry-slam workshops (see below). Following the writing phase, students began experimenting with Generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT and Mistral AI, to further develop their creative work. This included an introduction to prompt engineering, where students learned to formulate precise queries to achieve specific outputs. By using AI to reimagine their poetry-slams in different styles and formats based on teachers' recommendations (e.g. "put my poetry in the style of Shakespeare"), students expanded their artistic and cultural exploration while developing a more nuanced approach to AI.

Assessing AI literacy

To evaluate the impact of the initiative, an AI literacy test, developed by researchers in the field of AI education, was reviewed, translated, and adapted to align with the themes explored during the students' visit to the House of AI and the subsequent workshops.



Artistic activities

To kick off the poetry-slam workshops, the students were introduced to a brief history of poetry-slam and rap, providing context for the movement's roots and its objectives. Poetry-slam is a dynamic art form designed to capture attention, where both the performance and the text hold equal significance.

To create an immediate connection and offer a practical example, the artist Killian Alaari performed one of his own poetry-slams, inviting the students to join in as part of the choir. This hands-on involvement allowed the students to experience the rhythm and energy of slam poetry firsthand, while also creating a collaborative atmosphere that set the tone for the workshops.

It was then the students' turn to embark on creating their own poetry-slams. Each student chose a personal topic that resonated with them—whether it was a strong emotion they had felt during the week or something they were passionate about.

Through a series of interactive games, the students delved into relevant lexical fields and rhythmic patterns, which helped them align their poetry with their chosen topics and emotions. The challenge was to develop sentences and ideas that connected with the essence of their topic, but without explicitly mentioning it, nor the time and place they had chosen. This approach encouraged creativity and a deeper exploration of their emotions and experiences. With the support of the slam poet and their teachers, the students crafted personal narratives, enabling them to express themselves authentically. The environment fostered during the workshops was safe, welcoming, and judgment-free, ensuring that students felt comfortable exploring and sharing their thoughts.

In a second step, the students worked on crafting their pieces into cohesive and impactful performances, focusing on how to deliver their words with emotion, rhythm, and clarity. They explored the use of pauses, intonations, and body language to enhance the delivery of their narratives, ensuring that their words resonated not only through content but through the power of performance. Then, students worked on their stage presence, practicing in front of their peers, gaining confidence, and adjusting their delivery.

The performance day was not only an opportunity for students to showcase their work but also a moment of collective celebration. Each performance was met with applause and encouragement from peers, teachers, and the slam poet, creating an atmosphere of mutual respect and support.

By the end of the workshops, the students had not only developed their poetry and performance skills but also gained valuable insights into how AI can be used as a tool to enhance creativity, expand their artistic horizons, and engage with complex emotional themes.



Find the artist,
Killian Alaari,
on Youtube





You need to use GenAI as a tool to guide you where you want to be, and to learn. Because if we don't learn anymore, we become useless.

Isabelle Galy, OTESIA

Impact of the interaction

The integration of slam-poetry workshops into AI education created a powerful and engaging learning experience, enabling students to express themselves more effectively while fostering critical thinking and creativity. Students refined their ability to structure thoughts into meaningful narratives, strengthening both their writing and speaking skills. This process encouraged them to evaluate and articulate their ideas with clarity, while the act of self-expression in a supportive environment boosted their confidence and self-esteem.

A key element of the workshops was the personalised feedback provided by the artist, which deepened students' connection to their work and strengthened their relationship with teachers. This positive, interactive setting nurtured both cognitive and socio-emotional development, ultimately contributing to improved learning outcomes. The workshops did more than just enhance linguistic and artistic abilities—they created a space for personal reflection and open dialogue, helping students develop a stronger sense of self-awareness and resilience.

By merging AI education with slam poetry, the initiative offered a unique, reflective approach to understanding AI, how it works and how to use it. Rather than seeing AI as a passive tool or a replacement for human creativity, students engaged with it critically, learning how it can support their artistic and intellectual growth. This approach encouraged active participation, ensuring that students remained emotionally and cognitively engaged while developing essential AI literacy skills.

Using AI to adapt their slam poetry into the style of various authors, genres, or artists provided students with an immersive and dynamic way to explore literature and artistic expression. This process enabled them to rapidly discover new texts, broaden their cultural references, and gain a deeper appreciation for different literary traditions. By experimenting with AI-generated transformations of their work, students could compare stylistic elements, identify thematic influences, and reflect on how language and form evolve across different artistic contexts. It allowed them to see their own writing from a fresh perspective.

Beyond the students, the experience also proved transformative for teachers, providing them with insights into AI's potential in education. They gained a deeper understanding of how AI can be integrated into their classrooms and how to guide students in using it effectively. By combining artistic self-expression with digital literacy, the initiative not only enriched students' perspectives on AI but also empowered educators to navigate and leverage AI's possibilities in a thoughtful and responsible way.



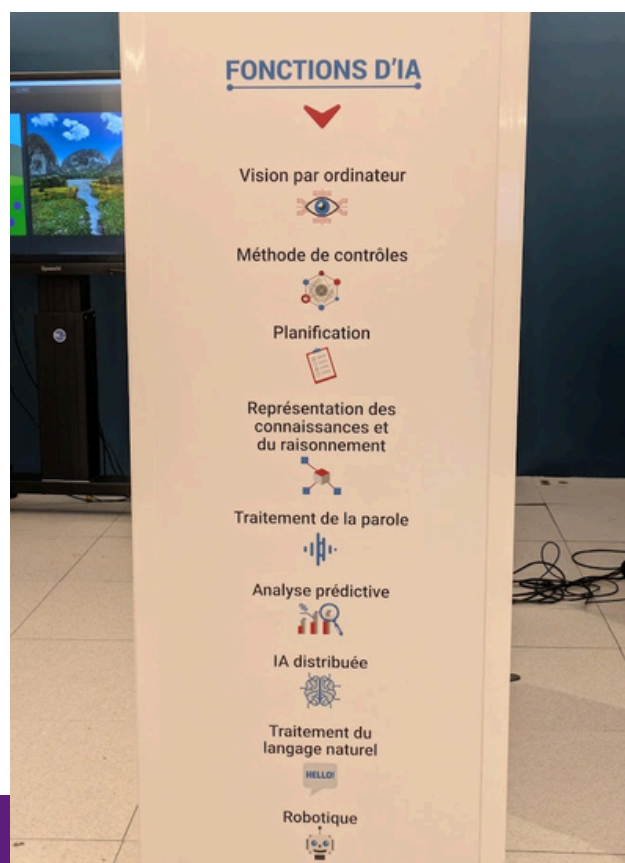
As opposed to Artificial Intelligence, making arts means taking your time.

**Killian Alaari,
Poetry-slam artist**



For successful replication, DOWEL emphasises the importance of focusing on the following key aspects:

- Strong teacher engagement is essential, as they play a pivotal role in maintaining students' curiosity, assessing their AI literacy, and providing ongoing support between workshops. To ensure their preparedness, an initial alignment and awareness-raising session with teachers is crucial. This not only helps them understand the process but also addresses any apprehensions they or the artist may have about AI integration.
- The experience and approach of the slam poet are equally vital. As the facilitator of the creative process, the poet establishes a trusting and open environment, enabling students to express themselves freely, think critically, and engage fully in the activity.
- Finally, since students are exposed to AI from an increasingly young age, early awareness is key. Introducing discussions on AI literacy before misconceptions take root ensures they develop a thoughtful and informed perspective on the technology.



Ressources

The poetry-slam workshops cost **2700€**. The visit of the House of AI is a free-service, setup by the local authority to facilitate AI introduction to the general public.



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