

# The Critical Collaborator: Using AI for Audience Analysis, Role-Play, and Argument Defense

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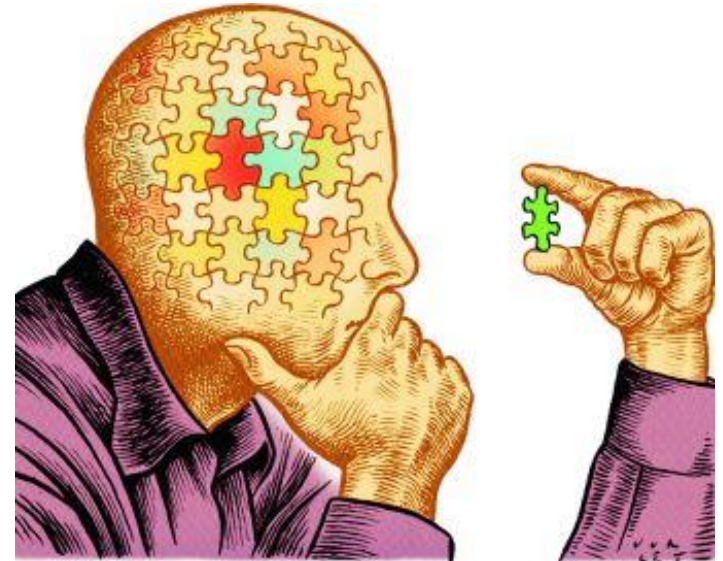
# From Ghostwriter to Critical Collaborator

*If the student cannot defend it out loud, the writing is not finished.*

**Common pattern:** Students use **AI** to **generate** finished prose (low ownership, shallow reasoning).

**Better pattern:** Students use **AI** to **challenge** thinking before writing (higher ownership, stronger arguments).

**Core shift:** From output **generation** to input **refinement** (audience, constraints, evidence, tradeoffs).



# The 3-Stage Workflow



# General AI Tips

## 1. Start with a role and real audience constraints

- AI performs best with **clear, detailed instructions**.
- *You are a skeptical city council member who prioritizes fiscal restraint, measurable outcomes, and legal risk. Read my proposal below and tell me: (1) your top 3 concerns, (2) what evidence you would require to support it, and (3) what would make you more likely to vote yes.*

## 2. Ask for critique, not drafting

- Do not **rely** on **AI** to do all the work for you.
- *Do not rewrite my text. Act as a critical reviewer and diagnose weaknesses only. Identify: (1) unclear claims, (2) missing assumptions, (3) strongest counterargument, and (4) where I overstate confidence. Suggest what information I should add or clarify.*

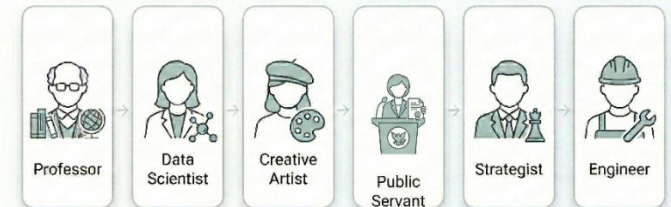
## 3. Iterate with specificity (better inputs beat better outputs)

- Work **with** AI through a **repetitive** process.
- *Context: I am writing a one-page recommendation memo for a budget-conscious director. Goal: secure approval for a pilot program. Constraints: respectful tone, no jargon, include costs and evaluation plan. Rubric: clarity, feasibility, stakeholder risk, measurable outcomes. Task: Critique my draft against the rubric and propose 3 targeted revision moves (not a rewrite). Then ask me 2 questions to fill any missing context.*

# Stage 1: Audience Personas

*Use AI to simulate stakeholders so students test their argument before they write.*

- Choose a few **real stakeholders** (decision-maker, affected party, implementer)
- Ask each persona for top **objections**, **assumptions**, and “what would **persuade** me”
- Convert critique into **revision targets** (evidence to add, risks to address, tradeoffs to clarify)
- Outcome: clearer stakeholder **logic** and stronger **empathy-driven** persuasion



# Stage 1: Audience Personas (prompt)

*AI critiques; the student decides what to change.*

Please help me prepare a **stakeholder critique** for a recommendation memo.

Stakeholder target: [name/role]

- Source material (quotes/notes):
- [quote or paraphrase #1]
- [quote or paraphrase #2]
- [policy statement / interview / priorities #3]

Task: From this material, produce a concise “**stakeholder profile**” with:

1. Top **priorities** (3–5)
2. Red **lines** / non-negotiables (2–3)
3. Likely **objections** (3)
4. **Evidence** they find persuasive (2–3 types)
5. **Tone** preferences (direct vs. diplomatic, technical vs. plain language)

Keep it grounded in the source material. If something is unclear, **list assumptions**.

# Stage 1: Audience Personas (prompt)

*AI critiques; the student decides what to change.*



Act as this stakeholder and **critique my** proposal.  
Stakeholder profile: [paste the profile from Step 1]  
My proposal (paste): [text]

Deliverables:

1. Top 3 **objections** (with a one-sentence reason each)
2. Hidden **assumptions** I am making
3. What would **persuade** you (specific evidence or changes)
4. One “**approval sentence**” I could credibly say to you

Do **not rewrite** my proposal. Diagnose strengths and weaknesses only. Thank you.

# Stage 2: Tone & Style Refinement

*Align a student's message to a specific audience without losing the student's voice.*

- Start with a **real draft** (student-written) & the Stage 1 stakeholder profile
- Ask AI to **diagnose** tone risks (too vague, too confident, too defensive, too technical)
- Request **revision** moves, **not** a **rewrite** (what to change and why)
- Rule: **AI critiques**; student rewrites and explains choices



You are a **skeptical** external **partner** deciding whether to work with our program/business. Do not rewrite.

Identify where my email **lacks credibility** signals (specifics, evidence, feasibility, mutual benefit).

**Provide 3 revisions** and **2 questions** I should answer to strengthen trust.

Email/Memo: [paste]

# Stage 2: Stress-Test

Please analyze the following email.

First, extract and list only the **three most critical action items or pieces of information** the sender is conveying.

Second, analyze the text and identify the **most likely dominant emotional tone** (e.g., Frustration, Urgency, Disappointment, Neutrality).

Finally, provide a **one-sentence summary of the sender's core objective** based purely on the facts, ignoring the emotional tone. [paste text]

Please evaluate the following draft email for tone and clarity.

First, identify and quote any specific **phrases or sentences that could be misinterpreted as defensive, accusatory, or dismissive.**

Second, suggest a **professional, neutral revision** for each of those quotes to maintain a cooperative tone.

Third, rate the overall tone of the revised draft on a scale of **1 (Hostile) to 10 (Collaborative)**, and justify the score.

# Stage 3: Role-Play for Oral Defense

*Use AI to pressure-test reasoning so students can defend their work with clarity and evidence.*



- Practice the “**hot seat**” before the real defense (or stakeholder meeting)
- Surface **weaknesses** in method, assumptions, counterarguments, and limitations
- Build a **repeatable defense**: claim → evidence → tradeoff → boundary/limit
- Outcome: **stronger arguments** and **lower anxiety** through deliberate practice

# Stage 3: Role-Play for Defense (prompt)

*AI interrogates; the student practices disciplined responses.*

I am preparing to defend a project/thesis/policy recommendation.

**Context** (2-3 sentences): [topic, setting, decision being made]

My **claim** (1 sentence): [...]

My **evidence** (3 bullets): [...]

**Constraints:** time limit 60–90 seconds per answer; avoid jargon; be candid about limitations.

**Role:** Act as a *cynical professor / skeptical decision-maker / chosen stakeholder*.

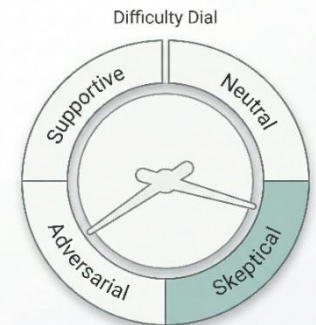
Ask me 3 **difficult questions**, one each about:

1. methodology or assumptions,
2. strongest counterargument or alternative explanation,
3. limitations, risks, or ethics.

After I answer each, **grade** my **response** (1-5) for: clarity, evidence use, and tradeoff awareness.

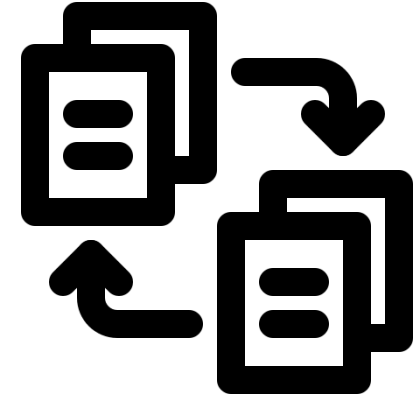
Then ask one **follow-up** that probes the weakest point.

Do **not** give me **answers**. Thank you.



# Implementation: Make It Replicable

- What students submit (3 artifacts of their work):
  1. **persona critique** notes
  2. **revised draft & rationale**
  3. **defense** prep sheet/oral arguments
- What I grade: **reasoning quality** (assumptions, evidence, tradeoffs), not “polish”
- Guardrails: AI diagnoses; students write. Require an **evidence list** and a brief **AI-use** appendix (prompt log) & reflection on AI **contributions**
- Pilot lesson learned: **weak inputs** produce generic feedback, **prompting** lecture, clear AI **policy**
- Quick win: start with **one assignment** before scaling across the course and pick an assignment that you are very comfortable with



# Extension: AI for Learning Reflection

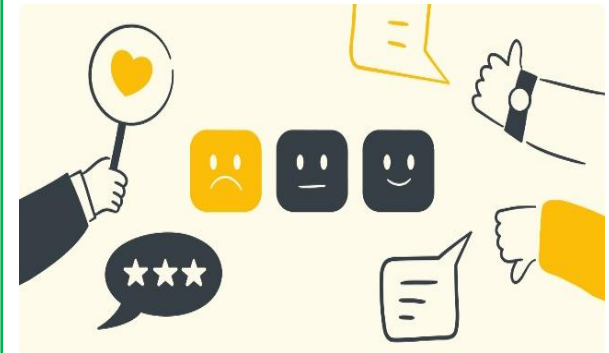
*The end goal is not better AI outputs; it is better human judgment.*

Please **analyze** my problem-solving and decision-making approach based on our **interactions**.

Specifically:

1. **Strengths**: Identify my strong points in thinking and problem-solving, noting patterns or strategies that enhance my effectiveness.
2. Areas for **Improvement**: Highlight aspects that could be improved, with examples from our discussions.
3. Actionable **Advice**: Provide practical suggestions to enhance my approach, considering my strengths and current methods.

I value thoughtful and constructive insights to aid my growth. Thank you.



# Three Takeaways to Use AI as a Critical Collaborator



**Anchor everything to a real audience.**

Use **personas** to surface objections, values, and decision constraints early.

**Use AI to diagnose; keep writing and evidence human-owned.**

Ask for **critique** and **revision** moves; students (or you) do the rewriting and verification.

**Stress-test before you submit or present.**

**Role-play** tough questions to strengthen claims, evidence, tradeoffs, and limits.

Thank you!  
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