THE HUMAN INTELLIGENCE METHOD

AI Gives Answers.

We Teach Children to Think.

A manifesto for educators
in the age of artificial intelligence.

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A FOUNDING DOCUMENT

This manifesto is the founding document of The Human Intelligence Method — an educational framework for teaching and learning in the age of artificial intelligence.

It is intended for educators, school leaders, and anyone responsible for the formation of a young mind. It may be shared, quoted, and applied in classrooms with attribution. Commercial adaptation, certification, or training programs based on the method require written agreement.

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A NOTE BEFORE READING

For those holding young minds in their hands.

This manifesto is written for educators, school leaders, parents, and anyone responsible for the formation of a young mind in the age of artificial intelligence.

It is not a policy document. It is not a research paper. It is not a guide to AI tools.

It is a position — and a method built on that position. It argues that *AI did not break education; it revealed where education was already weak.* And it offers a concrete way for teachers to redesign learning so that a child's thinking remains visible, defensible, and their own.

Read it slowly. The five principles in Part IV and the rebuilt assignment in Part V are meant to be used in real classrooms, not just admired on a page.

If any part of this resonates with what you already feel, the final part of the manifesto contains an invitation.

— S.B.

CONTENTS

The argument, in six parts.

PART I

The Wrong Conversation

The conversation about AI in education has become small.

It has shrunk into two flat positions. *Ban it, because children will cheat.* Or *embrace it, because this is the future.* Both feel responsible. Neither is.

The real question is not whether a child uses AI. The real question is whether the child remains the author of their own thinking.

We are talking about plagiarism, but not about thought. About tools, but not about development. About efficiency, but not about growing up. About answers, but not about questions. About control, but not about trust. About AI policy, but not about the human culture of learning.

This is why the conversation feels exhausting and gets us nowhere. It is built on the wrong axis.

The crisis is not that children can now get answers from a machine. The crisis is that, for a long time, much of education was already built around the production of answers, not the development of thinking. If that were not

true, AI would not be such a threat. A child who has been taught to think does not lose that skill the moment a chatbot appears. A child who has only been taught to deliver the right answer has nothing to defend.

So let me say it plainly.

> *AI did not break education. It revealed where education was already weak.*

And this matters, because it changes what we are actually being asked to fix.

For nearly a decade, I have watched children inside a science museum. I have watched them wait for the adult to give them the correct answer. I have also watched them change — when they are invited to observe, guess, test, fail, and explain in their own words. The difference is not academic. It is visible. A child who has been handed answers all their life looks one way. A child who has been trusted to think looks like a different person. That is the child this manifesto is written to protect.

Before I go further, let me name what I mean by *thinking*. I am not using the word loosely. By thinking, I mean a specific set of human capacities:

- the capacity to **observe**
- the capacity to **ask** a real question
- the capacity to **attempt** — and to be wrong
- the capacity to **verify** a claim instead of accepting it
- the capacity to **doubt**
- the capacity to **choose**
- the capacity to **take responsibility** for a conclusion

When I say a child must remain the author of their thinking, this is what I am defending. Not a vague intellectual mood. A set of habits that, once lost, are very hard to grow back.

This is not an accusation against teachers. Many teachers have spent years working inside systems that rewarded coverage, speed, compliance, and measurable outputs. AI did not create that pressure. It exposed its limits.

The teachers I know are not the problem. Teachers are often the only reason the problem has not been worse. The problem is weak learning design — and the systems that have rewarded it for too long.

When a machine can produce an answer in seconds, the task of education stops being the collection of answers. It becomes something older, and something harder: **to make thinking visible.**

The final answer is no longer proof of understanding.

That sentence is the beginning of everything that follows.

This is not a manifesto against AI. I use AI every day. I build with it. I think alongside it. I am not afraid of it, and I am not in awe of it. I am clear about what it is: a powerful instrument that can serve thinking, or quietly replace the habit of it.

This is a manifesto against an education system that, in its panic, is preparing to do exactly the wrong thing — to fight a tool, instead of finally protecting the child's mind.

We do need rules. But rules are not enough. A policy can regulate the use of a tool. It cannot, by itself, build a culture of thinking. We need a new culture of learning. One that does not measure children by what they can deliver, but by how they think, what they choose, what they question, what they create, and what they refuse to outsource.

That culture begins with one shift: **from checking answers to making thinking visible.**

That is the conversation we should be having.

This is my attempt to start it.

PART II

What AI Actually Revealed

If AI had simply made it easier for children to cheat, we would not be having this conversation. Cheating is old. Children have copied from each other, from books, from the internet, for as long as schools have existed. Teachers have always known this, and have always worked around it.

What AI did was different. It did not give children a new way to cheat. It removed the disguise from a much older problem.

For decades, much of school has measured the wrong thing. Not because teachers wanted it that way, but because the system was easier to run when the wrong thing was measured. It is much simpler to grade a final answer than to evaluate a child's reasoning. It is faster to mark a closed test than to listen to a student explain their thinking out loud. It is more convenient to assign an essay and check whether it sounds correct than to sit with a thirteen-year-old and ask them, *how did you arrive at this idea, and what did you reject along the way?*

So we built education around what was easy to grade. The result was an enormous machine optimized for the production of answers. Children learned this faster than anyone admitted. They learned that school does not actually want their thinking. School wants their *output.* The thinking, if it happened, was their private business.

This worked, in a fragile way, for a long time. It worked because producing the output still required some real cognitive effort. To write the essay, the child had to read something. To solve the problem, the child had to follow some logic.

For a long time, output was a weak proxy for thinking. Weak, but usable.

> *AI broke the proxy.*

Now a thirteen-year-old can produce a clean, well-structured, plausible essay in under a minute, without reading a single source, without forming a single opinion, without noticing a single contradiction. The page is full. The mind is untouched. The teacher cannot tell the difference. Often, the child cannot tell the difference either.

This is the moment of revelation. The system was not measuring thinking directly. It was measuring output — a substance that *used to correlate* with thinking because producing it was difficult. AI made the output easy. The correlation collapsed. And underneath, we found what was always there: an education that had quietly stopped asking children to think, and started asking them only to deliver.

This is what AI revealed. Not a new problem. An old one, finally impossible to hide.

I want to be precise here, because this is the heart of the manifesto.

There is nothing wrong with a child producing an essay, solving a problem, or writing a clean answer. These are valuable acts. The problem is when the *artifact* of thinking is mistaken for the *act* of thinking.

> *The artifact is not the act.*

A child who writes a beautiful essay about Marie Curie has done something. But what have they done? Did they wrestle with her choices? Did they form an opinion they are willing to defend? Did they reject an easier version of the story? Or did they assemble fluent sentences in the shape of an essay?

Before AI, we could pretend not to know the difference. After AI, we cannot.

This is why teachers feel the ground moving. It is not that their job has become harder. It is that the contract between the assignment and the learning has been broken in plain sight. The thirteen-year-old in front of them is the same child as before. But the assignment no longer reaches him.

There are two reactions to this.

The first is to defend the old contract. To find better detectors. To write stricter rules. To return to handwritten exams under supervision. To imagine that if we can just block the tool, the system will go back to working. This reaction is understandable. It is also, in the long run, a losing fight. The tool will get better. The detectors will get worse. And the deeper problem — that the system was never really measuring thinking — will remain.

The second reaction is harder, and it is the one this manifesto argues for. We accept that the old contract is finished. We use this moment, painful as it is, to build something the old system never asked for: an education that makes thinking itself the visible material of learning. Where the child is not graded on the artifact alone, but on the reasoning that produced it. Where AI is present in the classroom not as a smuggler's tool, but as a transparent partner in a child's own intellectual development.

This is not nostalgia for a golden age of education that never existed. It is not a return. It is a step forward — into a kind of teaching that, until now, was too expensive, too slow, and too demanding to scale. AI made the old model collapse. AI also, paradoxically, makes the new one possible.

That is what we do next.

PART III

What Must Remain Human

There is an exhibit in our science museum where children place small balls on a rotating disk and watch how they move.

At first, many of them expect the adult to explain the rule. *Where should I put it? What is the right place? What is supposed to happen?* They have learned, somewhere along the way, that the world arrives pre-answered, and that their job is to receive what is given.

But if no one gives the answer too quickly, something changes.

The child moves the ball. Watches. Moves it again. Tries a different point. Notices a pattern. Gets it wrong. Tries again. They begin to ask their own questions, not because they were told to, but because the disk is doing something they did not expect, and they want to know why. They lose track of time. They forget there was supposed to be a “right” answer at the end. They are not performing curiosity. They are inside it.

Nothing has been submitted. No essay has been written. No final answer has been produced. And yet, learning is happening.

The thinking is visible before it becomes language.

This is what I mean by *human intelligence.* Not performance. Not output. Not fluency. The living movement between attention, question, attempt, error, judgment, and responsibility. It exists before the page is filled. It exists before the answer is named. It is the part of a child that AI cannot do for them, and that no system has any right to take away.

I have seen another moment many times. A child is quiet at the beginning. They do not raise their hand. They do not perform curiosity on command. They watch. They listen. They stay close to the edge of the group. And then, suddenly, they ask one real question.

That question matters more than many correct answers. Because it did not come from compliance. It came from attention.

Human intelligence is not always loud. Sometimes it is silent for a long time, and then it speaks with precision. A school that only rewards speed and visibility will miss the children whose thinking grows slowly and deeply. Used poorly, AI will be even less patient than school. It will hand children an answer before they have finished forming the question. We have to protect the space in which the question is allowed to arrive.

So let me name it directly.

> *Human intelligence is not the ability to produce an answer. It is the ability to stay present with a question.*

This is what must remain human, no matter how powerful our tools become. And this is what we are at risk of losing — not because AI is taking it from us, but because we never built an education that consistently asked a child to grow it.

What does it mean, in practice, to defend human intelligence in a thirteen-year-old?

It means defending seven capacities. Not as a list to be memorized, but as habits to be grown — slowly, over years, in the way muscles are grown.

THE SEVEN CAPACITIES

What we are actually defending in a thirteen-year-old.

01

Observe

Notice what is actually there before reaching for an explanation.

02

Ask

Form real questions that come from contact with the unknown.

03

Attempt

Try, risk being wrong, and learn from the attempt.

04

Verify

Check claims against evidence, sources, and reality.

05

Doubt

Hold ideas lightly enough to question them — including one's own.

06

Choose

Take a position and explain why this, not that.

07

Take responsibility

Stand behind a conclusion, revise it honestly, and own the work.

The capacity to observe.

To look at something — a phenomenon, a text, a person, a problem — and notice what is actually there, before reaching for an explanation. Most children have never been seriously asked to observe. They have been asked to identify, to label, to summarize. Observation is older and slower. AI can describe, classify, and explain. But it cannot give a child the lived discipline of noticing.

The capacity to ask.

Not a homework question. Not a question the teacher already has the answer to. A question that comes from the child's own contact with something they do not yet understand. The quality of a thirteen-year-old's questions is the most reliable signal of their intellectual life. AI can produce a thousand answers per minute. It cannot ask, on a child's behalf, the question that matters to that particular child.

The capacity to attempt.

To put forward a guess, an interpretation, a draft, knowing it might be wrong, and to find out. Children who have only been rewarded for correct answers are afraid of this. They would rather not try than try and fail visibly. AI offers them a way to never have to be wrong again. This is why it is so dangerous. A child who never risks being wrong never finds out how their own mind works.

The capacity to verify.

To not believe something just because it sounds good. To check a source, compare two accounts, ask where a claim came from, notice when something is being asserted with more confidence than it deserves. AI will produce confident, fluent statements that are sometimes true, sometimes partial, sometimes wrong. A child who cannot verify is at the mercy of whatever sounds most authoritative.

The capacity to doubt.

Not cynicism. Not the reflex to disagree with everything. The slower, harder ability to hold a thought lightly enough to question it — including one's own thought. Doubt is the muscle that protects a child from being captured by the first persuasive voice in the room. In an AI-saturated world, persuasive voices are infinite. Doubt is the firewall.

The capacity to choose.

To take a position. To say, *I think this, and not that, and here is why.* To accept that choosing one interpretation means leaving others behind. AI can present every side of every question. It cannot, and should not, choose on the child's behalf. The act of choosing is what turns a thirteen-year-old from a consumer of opinions into a person with a mind of their own.

The capacity to take responsibility.

To stand behind what one has said. To explain it out loud. To defend it under questioning. To revise it honestly when shown a better idea, rather than abandoning it under social pressure. Responsibility is the opposite of outsourcing. It is the moment a child says, *this is mine.*

These seven capacities are not subjects. They cannot be taught in a chapter and tested on a Friday. They are grown across years, through thousands of small situations in which the child is asked, *what do you observe? what do you wonder? what is your guess? how would you check? what makes you doubt? what do you choose? can you stand behind it?*

This is the human curriculum underneath every subject. It does not replace mathematics, literature, history, or science. It is the spine that makes those subjects do their real work in a child's mind.

And this is the curriculum AI cannot complete on a child's behalf. AI can support every part of it — as a sparring partner, a research assistant, a generator of counterexamples. But the act of observing, asking, attempting, verifying, doubting, choosing, and taking responsibility has to be done by the child. There is no version of the future in which a machine does this for them and they remain a person in the full sense of the word.

So when we ask, *what should education protect in the age of AI*, the answer is not *the essay.* The answer is not *the test.* The answer is not even *knowledge,* in the narrow sense in which schools have used the word.

The answer is the child's own intelligence. Not as an abstraction. As a set of seven living habits, grown one situation at a time, by adults who refuse to outsource the most important part of a thirteen-year-old's development to a machine — and who refuse, equally, to pretend the machine is not there.

> *That is what must remain human.*

The next question is how. How do we actually teach this way, inside a real classroom, with a real syllabus, limited time, twenty-five different minds in the room, and a real thirteen-year-old who has a phone in his pocket and a chatbot one tap away.

That is what the rest of this manifesto is for.

PART IV

How Learning Must Change

Seven capacities do not grow on their own.

A child becomes a person who observes, asks, attempts, verifies, doubts, chooses, and takes responsibility — not because we tell them to, but because they live, year after year, inside situations that ask these things of them. The capacities are grown by the design of learning around the child. They are not grown by hope, by lecture, or by punishment.

This is where the work of educators becomes the most important work in the AI era — not the least. Educators are not being replaced. They are being asked to do something the old system never seriously asked them to do.

To begin, we have to be honest about what is ending.

The old contract

For a long time, learning had a simple shape:

The teacher assigns. The student submits. The teacher grades the artifact.

The teacher was, in practice, a collector and evaluator of outputs. The student was a producer of outputs. The artifact — the essay, the test, the answer — stood between them as the unit of exchange. If the artifact was acceptable, learning was assumed to have happened.

This contract was always imperfect. But it functioned, because producing the artifact required the student to do at least some of the cognitive work along the way. The artifact was a weak proxy for thinking, and we treated it as if it were a strong one.

AI ended this arrangement. Not gradually. Suddenly. A thirteen-year-old can now produce the artifact without doing the thinking. The contract no longer carries what it was supposed to carry. We can keep using it out of habit, or we can write a new one.

The new contract

The new contract has a different shape:

The teacher designs conditions in which thinking becomes visible. The student demonstrates reasoning, judgment, and responsibility. AI is used transparently, as a named instrument, never as a hidden author. Learning is judged by what the mind did, not by what the page contains.

This sounds harder. In some ways it is. In other ways, it is simply more honest. It names what teaching has always been about, underneath the bureaucracy of grading: the formation of a young person's mind.

I want to be clear about something before we go further. This is not a call for more work. The teachers I am writing for are already overworked. They have twenty-five different minds in the room, a syllabus they did not

design, parents who expect grades, administrators who expect compliance, and a phone in every pocket. The answer is not more assignments, more rubrics, more meetings.

> *The answer is not more work for teachers. The answer is better learning design.*

At first, this may require a shift in practice. But the goal is not to add another layer of work. The goal is to replace low-trust policing with higher-quality learning design. Less time chasing plagiarism. More time designing situations. Less time grading polished artifacts. More time listening to students reason out loud. The shape of the work changes — toward the part of teaching that mattered most all along.

With that said, here are the five principles of the method.

THE FIVE PRINCIPLES

The Human Intelligence Method

01

The artifact is not the act.

The answer is not the evidence. Thinking must be made visible.

This principle is about *what we evaluate.*

A clean, well-written, well-structured piece of work is no longer proof that a student has thought. It is proof that something — the student, the AI, or both — has produced an acceptable artifact. The artifact alone tells us nothing about what happened in the mind.

The first move of the new contract is to stop treating the final product as the unit of evaluation. The unit of evaluation becomes the *traceable presence of thinking* — the questions asked, the attempts made, the sources checked, the doubts named, the choices defended.

This does not mean the final product disappears. It means the final product is one piece of evidence among several, and not the most important one.

02

The process must precede the product.

Before the answer, there must be evidence of a mind at work.

This principle is about *when thinking begins.*

Every assignment of any weight should begin before AI. Not as a punishment, not as a trick, but as a structural commitment: the student's first contact with a question is their own.

Five minutes of honest first-thinking, written down before any tool is opened, changes the entire character of an assignment. It establishes a starting point that is the student's own. Whatever happens with AI afterward, there is now a record of the mind that began the work.

This is not a romantic gesture. It is a structural one. The process has to leave a trail before the product is allowed to exist.

03

AI must be visible, not hidden.

A policy can regulate the tool. It cannot design the thinking.

This principle is about *how AI enters the classroom.*

Most school AI policies today are written as defensive perimeters — what is forbidden, what is permitted, what counts as cheating. This is necessary. It is also insufficient. The deeper move is cultural. We stop asking *did you use AI?* — a question that produces lying — and start asking *how did you use it?* — a question that produces honesty.

When AI is named in the work, it stops being a smuggler's tool and becomes a transparent collaborator. The lie disappears, and so does the cat-and-mouse exhaustion that has consumed so much of the recent conversation.

04

Judgment cannot be outsourced.

A child may use AI for support. They may not outsource judgment.

This principle is about *what stays with the student.*

This is the principle that protects what Part III called *human intelligence.* AI can produce material. The student must do something the machine cannot do for them: choose what to keep, choose what to reject, verify what is uncertain, take a position, and stand behind it.

In practice, this means every assignment that uses AI must include moments where the student is required to evaluate what AI gave them, identify what was useful, partial, wrong, or misleading, check at least one claim against an independent source, make and defend a choice between alternatives, and say, in their own words, what they think and why.

These are not extras. They are the spine of the assignment. Without them, the work is not learning. It is delivery.

05

The teacher becomes the architect of thinking.

The new contract does not weaken the role of the teacher. It elevates it.

This principle is about *what teaching becomes.*

In the old contract, the teacher was, in practice, often a collector of outputs and a checker of correctness. Software can increasingly assist with checking, sorting, summarizing, and producing feedback. But it cannot design the *conditions* under which a young mind develops. That is the teacher's real work, and it always was — but the system rarely paid for it, and rarely gave teachers the time or support to do it.

The teacher in the new contract is an architect of thinking. Not because they control every answer, but because they create the conditions in which a child's mind has to become visible. They notice the unfinished question. They hear the hesitation before the sentence. They ask, *what made you think that?* — and wait long enough for the child to find out.

> *AI may automate parts of schooling. It cannot replace the adult who notices a mind forming in front of them.*

What this looks like in practice

A teacher working with these five principles does not need a new curriculum. They need a different default for what an assignment is shaped like.

The default assignment changes from a single-act delivery — *write an essay, submit it, receive a grade* — to a staged structure: a moment of first thinking before any tool, a transparent encounter with AI with its role named, a moment of human judgment in which the student verifies, rejects, chooses, and defends, a short oral or written reflection that makes the reasoning visible, and a final artifact that is read alongside the trail behind it, not in place of it.

The thirteen-year-old still produces an essay. But the essay is no longer the entire transaction. It is the visible tip of a process the teacher can see, evaluate, and trust.

And there is a stronger principle underneath all of this, which is worth stating directly, because it changes the entire intellectual posture of the new contract:

> *The goal is not to make assignments AI-proof. The goal is to make thinking unavoidable.*

These are very different goals. The first is defensive and unwinnable. The second is generative, and it is exactly what education should have been doing all along.

Principles are easy to write. They mean nothing until they change the assignment on the page.

So let us take a simple school task — the kind a thirteen-year-old will be given next week, in a classroom anywhere in the world — and rebuild it under the new contract.

PART V

Rebuilding an Assignment

A principle only matters if it changes the assignment on the page.

So let us take a piece of homework that almost every thirteen-year-old has been given at some point, in some form, in some country. The kind of task a teacher might assign next Monday without thinking twice.

The old assignment

> *Write a 500-word essay about Marie Curie. Discuss her life, her discoveries, and her contribution to science. Due Friday.*

There is nothing wrong with this assignment in spirit. Marie Curie is one of the most extraordinary minds in modern history. A child should know who she was. A teacher who gives this task is not lazy. They are doing what the system has trained generations of teachers to do.

The problem is that this assignment was built for a world that no longer exists.

A thirteen-year-old can paste this prompt into a chatbot and have a clean, well-organized, factually plausible 500-word essay before the teacher has finished writing the next email. The student can then make small edits — change a few sentences, soften the tone, add a personal sentence at the start — and submit it as their own. The teacher receives a competent essay. The grade is given. The transaction is complete.

And nothing has happened.

> *The page is full. The mind is untouched.*

This is not a story about a lazy student or a careless teacher. It is a story about an assignment that no longer asks the right thing. The form of the task — *produce an essay* — was never really about thinking. It was about producing a substance that *correlated* with thinking, in a world where producing that substance was hard. AI made the substance easy. The assignment did not change. So the assignment now measures nothing.

The fix is not a stricter rule. The fix is a different assignment.

The new assignment

Same topic. Same student. Same week. Different design.

Marie Curie — A Defended Interpretation

> *Choose one decision in Marie Curie's life that you believe required real courage — intellectual, moral, or personal. Explain why this decision was difficult, what alternatives existed, and what your interpretation reveals about the nature of scientific courage. Use at least two checked sources. Submit your work in five parts: First Thinking, AI Dialogue, Verification, Final Interpretation, and a 2-minute Oral Defense.*

The topic is not new. The assignment is. Let us walk through it.

Stage 1

First Thinking

before any tool is opened

The student spends ten minutes writing, by hand or in a fresh document, before touching AI or the internet. They answer four questions in their own words: what they already know about Marie Curie, even if the answer is "almost nothing"; what comes to mind when they hear the word courage in science; which moment of her life seems most surprising or most difficult to them; and what they want to find out.

This is not graded for accuracy. It is graded for honesty and presence. A student who writes *"I only know she discovered radium and was a woman, which was unusual"* has done the work. A student who writes a polished paragraph copied from somewhere has not.

Ideally, this stage happens in class. Ten quiet minutes, before research, before AI, before the internet. This protects the student's first contact with the question. This stage exists for one reason: to mark the territory of the student's own mind, before any other voice enters.

Stage 2

AI Dialogue

with the tool, transparently

Now the student opens AI. Not to write the essay. To think with it. They are required to use AI for at least three of the following moves, and to log each one: ask AI for three moments in Marie Curie's life that required courage and compare with their own first idea; ask AI to challenge their first interpretation; ask AI what is often simplified or romanticized in popular accounts of her life; ask AI for possible primary or reliable secondary sources, but not trust the list without checking it; ask AI to identify two competing interpretations of one specific decision in her life.

The student copies, into their submission, the actual prompts they used and a short note on what each exchange gave them. AI is named, not hidden. The work shows the dialogue, not just the result.

Stage 3

Verification

human judgment begins

The student takes one specific factual claim that emerged from the AI dialogue — a date, a quote, a circumstance, a relationship, a cause — and verifies it against an independent source. Not by asking AI again. By going to a book, an encyclopedia, a documentary, a museum site, a published article. They write a short paragraph: what claim they checked, where they checked it, whether it was confirmed, partially confirmed, or wrong, and what this taught them about trusting confident answers.

This is the moment the student stops being a consumer of AI's output and becomes a person with a verified piece of knowledge. It is small. It is essential. One checked claim is enough to change the intellectual posture of the work.

Stage 4

Final Interpretation

the artifact, now with weight

Now, and only now, the student writes their interpretation. Not a biography. Not a summary. An *argument:* which decision in Marie Curie's life they chose, and why this one; why this decision was difficult, and what real alternatives she had; what their interpretation reveals about what scientific courage actually is; what they rejected from their first thinking, and why; what they kept; what they rejected from AI's suggestions, and why.

This is still an essay. It still has structure, evidence, and prose. But it carries something the old essay could not carry: a documented relationship between a young mind and a difficult question.

Stage 5

Oral Defense

two minutes, in front of the teacher or class

The student speaks for two minutes, without notes, answering five questions: what was your first idea, before any research; what changed in your thinking, and what made it change; what did you verify, and what did you find; what do you still wonder about; what is your final position, and what is the strongest objection to it.

This is the moment when the assignment becomes much harder to fake. A student who has done the work can answer these questions easily, even imperfectly. A student who has not done the work cannot fake it for two minutes under live questioning. It is the smallest possible structural change with the largest possible effect on the integrity of learning.

THE PROOF OF THINKING TRAIL

What the teacher receives instead of an essay.

01 *First Thinking*

A page written before any tool. The student's own starting point.

02 *AI Dialogue*

A log of prompts and reflections. AI named, not hidden.

03 *Verification*

One claim checked against an independent source.

04 *Final Interpretation*

The argument, written after the thinking, not before.

05 *Oral Defense*

Two minutes of the student's voice, defending the work.

What the teacher actually grades

The grading rubric changes. A possible version, for the Marie Curie assignment, might look like this: First Thinking 15%, AI Dialogue 20%, Verification 15%, Final Interpretation 30%, Oral Defense 20%. The exact percentages can change. The principle cannot: the final artifact should no longer carry the whole grade. The trail of thinking must count.

In this version, the polished final artifact is no longer 100% of the grade. It is 30%. The other 70% is the trail. A student who only does the final essay, even brilliantly, gets at most 30%. A student who does the full process, even imperfectly, gets the full possible grade. The system now rewards what we actually want to grow: not output, but the human capacities behind it.

The same structure works for any subject

Marie Curie is one example. The structure is general. In every subject, the same shape holds: *before AI, with AI, after AI, final work, oral defense.* The Human Intelligence Method is not a curriculum. It is a *shape of learning.* The shape is portable. The shape is what changes the assignment, and the assignment is what changes the child.

TWO FORMS OF THE METHOD

You do not have to do everything at once.
You have to start.

THE FULL VERSION

Changes the assignment.

A complete redesign for a major essay, project, or unit of work. Five stages, days or weeks long, ending in oral defense.

- Stage 1 — First Thinking
- Stage 2 — AI Dialogue
- Stage 3 — Verification
- Stage 4 — Final Interpretation
- Stage 5 — Oral Defense

THE 20-MINUTE VERSION

Changes the day.

A daily practice that fits inside a single class period. Twice a week, for a few weeks, the room begins to think differently.

- 5 min — First Thinking
- 5 min — AI or Source Comparison
- 5 min — One Verification
- 3 min — One Sentence of Judgment
- 2 min — One Voice

This is not a full assessment. It is a *daily practice* of making thinking visible. A teacher who does this twice a week will, by the end of a term, have built habits in their students that no AI tool can dissolve.

> *The full version changes the assignment. The short version changes the day.*

You do not have to do everything at once. You have to start.

PART VI

The Invitation

I am not writing this manifesto because I believe I have finished the answer. I am writing it because I believe the question has become too urgent to avoid.

What happens to education when answers become instant? What happens to children when the artifact can be produced without the act? What happens to teachers when the old contract no longer carries learning, and no one has yet written a new one?

I do not write from a distance. I write from years of watching children inside a science museum — watching them meet a real experiment, hesitate, try, fail, ask a question they did not have ten minutes earlier, and suddenly understand something they did not know they were capable of understanding. I write from conversations with parents who are quietly afraid for their children, and with teachers who feel the ground shifting under what used to be a stable profession. I write as someone who uses AI every day, in real work, and knows both what it can do and what it cannot.

I am not against AI.

I do not want to protect children *from* AI.

I want to protect the part of them that must remain awake while they use it.

This is not a technology project for me. It is a human one. I have seen what happens when a child begins to think for themselves — the small moment when the eyes change, when the question becomes their own, when they stop waiting for the adult to confirm what is correct. I cannot accept an education that lets that quietly disappear, traded away for the convenience of instant answers and the illusion of finished work.

So this manifesto is not a complaint about what is wrong. It is a beginning.

What I am asking you to do

If you are an educator, a parent, a school leader, or anyone responsible for the formation of a young mind — and if any part of what I have written resonates with what you already feel — I am asking three things of you, in order of how much you are ready to give.

Start with one assignment.

Not your entire curriculum. Not your school policy. Not next year. One assignment, this week or next. Look at it and ask: *where in this task is the student's thinking actually visible? Where are they required to observe, ask, attempt, verify, doubt, choose, and take responsibility?* If the honest answer is *nowhere*, redesign it. Even one stage. Even five minutes of First Thinking before AI. Small structural changes do real work.

Try the 20-minute version.

Twice a week, for a few weeks, in any subject. Not as an experiment to evaluate. As a practice to build. Within a month, many teachers begin to see a different kind of thinking in the room — the part of teaching they had been missing returns.

Join the Founding Lab.

If this work feels like the work you want to do — not just to read about — I am opening a small Founding Lab for educators who want to test, question, adapt, and strengthen The Human Intelligence Method in real classrooms.

This is not a course. It is a working circle. Real assignments. Real students. Real constraints. Real reflection. We will build the method by using it. We will collect cases. We will refine the protocols. We will learn what works, what fails, and what must be changed in different subjects, age groups, languages, and school cultures.

For the first cohort, I am looking for a small group of thirty educators who do not want to become police officers of AI use. I am looking for educators who want to become architects of thinking.

If that is you, join us. If you are not yet ready for that, start with one assignment. But do not wait for the perfect policy, the perfect tool, or the perfect moment. None of those are coming.

> *The moment has already arrived.*

A final word

I do not know exactly what education will look like in ten years. Neither does anyone else who is honest about it. The pace of change in AI is faster than any school system can absorb, and most of what we are confident about today will need to be rewritten.

But there is one thing I am sure of, and I will end on it.

A child who has been taught to observe, to ask real questions, to attempt and be wrong, to verify, to doubt, to choose, and to stand behind a conclusion will be ready for any future we walk into. A child who has only been taught to deliver answers will be left behind by a tool that delivers them better.

The choice is not between AI and education. The choice is between an education that makes children stronger as AI grows stronger, and an education that quietly hands them over.

I know which one I am choosing.

I am asking you to choose with me.

AI gives answers.
We teach children to think.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Sofiko Bigvava is the creator of *The Human Intelligence Method*, an educational framework for teaching and learning in the age of artificial intelligence.

She is the CEO of *Experimentorium*, an interactive science museum in Tbilisi, where she has spent nearly a decade designing learning experiences that ask children to observe, question, attempt, doubt, and reason for themselves. She is the founder of *Girls Who Change the World*, an international movement supporting girls in science, courage, and independent thinking.

She works daily with AI in real projects. Her work sits at the intersection of education, museums, AI, and human development.

The Founding Lab for educators is now open.

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