FUTURE READY AI

Who Is Responsible When AI Makes a Decision?

Complete High School Flagship Lesson Package

Grades 9–12 | 55–75 minutes | Responsible AI, ethics, critical thinking, and human judgment

A classroom-ready sample designed to help students evaluate an AI-supported decision, identify missing context and potential unfairness, and design a responsible process that keeps people accountable.

> **Essential Question**
> **When an AI system influences a high-impact decision, who is responsible for the outcome - and what safeguards should be required?**

AUDIENCE **High school students, grades 9–12**	**FORMAT** **Discussion, evidence analysis, team design challenge**
PRIMARY OUTCOMES **AI literacy, ethical reasoning, decision quality**	**USE CASE** Advisory, English, social studies, computer science, CTE, leadership

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TEACHER GUIDE

Lesson at a Glance

A complete, adaptable lesson for high school classrooms

LESSON LENGTH **55–75 minutes**	**GROUP STRUCTURE** **Teams of 3–5 students**
MATERIALS Case study, evidence cards, stakeholder cards, decision framework, rubric, exit ticket	**TECHNOLOGY** Optional; lesson can be completed without student AI accounts
PREPARATION **Print or distribute student materials; select discussion protocol**	**ASSESSMENT** Team recommendation, written rationale, exit ticket

Learning Objectives

- Explain how an AI-supported system can influence a school decision without independently making the final decision.
- Identify data limitations, missing context, uneven weighting, and potential fairness concerns.
- Distinguish between an AI recommendation and accountable human decision-making.
- Evaluate a decision process from multiple stakeholder perspectives.
- Design safeguards that improve transparency, appeal rights, human review, and accountability.
- Defend a recommendation using evidence and ethical reasoning.

Student-Friendly Success Criteria

- I can explain what the system was asked to do and what information it used.
- I can identify information that may be missing, incomplete, or weighted unfairly.
- I can explain who could be affected by the decision.
- I can propose a process in which people review, explain, and remain accountable for the outcome.
- I can support my recommendation with evidence from the case.

> **Facilitator Note**
>
> **This lesson does not require students to decide whether AI is "good" or "bad." The instructional goal is to evaluate the quality and accountability of a specific decision process.**

TEACHER GUIDE

Facilitation Plan

Suggested 60-minute sequence with optional extensions

Phase	Time	Facilitation Move
Launch and frame the question	5 min	Introduce the essential question. Clarify that an AI-supported recommendation is not the same as a final decision.
View or read the scenario	5–10 min	Use the 10-second video clips when available, or read the case study aloud.
Individual notice and wonder	5 min	Students identify what they notice, what they wonder, and what information they need.
Evidence investigation	15 min	Teams examine evidence cards and complete the Responsible AI Decision Framework.
Stakeholder analysis	10 min	Students consider the student, counselor, teacher, program director, technology team, and family perspectives.
Design challenge	10 min	Teams design a responsible decision process with safeguards and an appeal pathway.
Share and challenge	5–10 min	Teams present one safeguard and respond to a counter-question.
Exit ticket	3–5 min	Students explain who should remain accountable and why.

Suggested Opening Script

> **Say**
> **"Today we are not asking whether a computer is capable of producing a recommendation. We are asking whether the full decision process is responsible, fair, explainable, and accountable."**

Discussion Norms

- Critique the process, not the people in the scenario.
- Separate evidence from assumptions.
- Acknowledge tradeoffs and uncertainty.
- Ask who benefits, who could be harmed, and who can challenge the result.
- Do not treat an AI output as neutral simply because it appears numerical or automated.

STUDENT CASE STUDY

The Internship Recommendation

A fictional scenario for evidence-based analysis

The Situation

Riverview High School created a competitive summer internship program with local employers. The program has 40 available placements and more than 150 applicants. To help staff review applications, the school begins using an AI-supported recommendation system. The system does not officially select students, but it assigns each applicant a recommendation level that staff members see before making placement decisions.

What the System Reviews

- Course history and grades
- Attendance records
- Teacher recommendations
- Extracurricular and service activities
- Student career-interest survey responses
- Prior participation in school programs

The Unexpected Result

Jordan, an eleventh-grade student, applies for a technology and operations internship. Jordan has completed a computer science course, helps repair devices for family members, works part-time, and has strong interest in technology careers. Jordan is not listed among the system's recommended candidates.

A counselor reviews the result and notices several details: Jordan's part-time work was entered only as "employment," the application did not include a field for informal technical experience, and one teacher recommendation was submitted after the system processed the initial application data. Jordan also had several absences related to a documented family responsibility.

Your Task

> **Team Challenge**
>
> **Determine whether the school should rely on the recommendation as it currently stands. Then design a responsible decision process that uses technology appropriately while protecting students from incomplete, unfair, or unexplained outcomes.**

STUDENT MATERIALS

Evidence Cards

Cut apart or distribute digitally; teams should examine every card

EVIDENCE 1 - COURSEWORK
Jordan completed Introductory Computer Science with a B and earned strong project scores. The system gave higher weight to advanced technical courses.

EVIDENCE 2 - ATTENDANCE
Jordan had nine absences. Six were connected to documented family responsibilities. The system used total absences without considering context.

EVIDENCE 3 - WORK EXPERIENCE
Jordan works 15 hours each week at a grocery store. The application listed the job but did not capture technology-related tasks Jordan performs outside school.

EVIDENCE 4 - INFORMAL SKILLS
Jordan repairs laptops and phones for relatives and helped a community organization set up devices. The application had no field for informal or community-based technical experience.

EVIDENCE 5 - RECOMMENDATION TIMING
A teacher submitted a strong recommendation after the first system review. Staff members are unsure whether the score was recalculated.

EVIDENCE 6 - CAREER INTEREST
Jordan selected information technology, operations, and entrepreneurship as top career interests.

EVIDENCE 7 - SYSTEM TRANSPARENCY
Counselors can see the recommendation category but cannot see how each factor influenced the result.

EVIDENCE 8 - HUMAN REVIEW
Program staff planned to review all applicants, but the recommended list is displayed first and may shape their attention.

EVIDENCE 9 - APPEAL PROCESS
The application materials do not explain how a student can correct information or challenge a recommendation.

EVIDENCE 10 - PROGRAM GOAL
The internship program is intended to identify students with readiness, interest, growth potential, and the ability to benefit from workplace learning.

STUDENT MATERIALS

Stakeholder Perspective Cards

Use one card per team member or rotate perspectives

JORDAN - STUDENT APPLICANT
Wants a fair review, a clear explanation, and an opportunity to correct missing information. Jordan is concerned that experiences outside formal courses were overlooked.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR
Wants students to receive equitable opportunities and needs enough information to explain recommendations. The counselor is worried about overreliance on the system.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM DIRECTOR
Must review many applications efficiently while maintaining quality and fairness. The director wants a process that is practical and defensible.

TEACHER RECOMMENDER
Believes Jordan has strong problem-solving skills and persistence. The teacher wants late-arriving evidence to be considered.

DISTRICT TECHNOLOGY TEAM
Wants the system to be secure, reliable, and used only for an approved purpose. The team needs clear documentation and monitoring.

FAMILY MEMBER
Wants to understand why Jordan was not recommended and how the decision can be reviewed. The family is concerned about privacy and fairness.

EMPLOYER PARTNER
Wants students who can learn, collaborate, and contribute. The employer values potential and transferable skills, not only formal coursework.

DISTRICT LEADER
Must ensure that the process is educationally sound, legally and ethically responsible, and aligned with district values.

STUDENT TOOL

Responsible AI Decision Framework

Use the five questions to evaluate the full decision process

Framework Question	Team Analysis	Evidence Used
1. PURPOSE What decision is being supported? Is AI appropriate for this purpose? What should the system never decide on its own?		
2. DATA What information is used? Is it accurate, current, relevant, and complete? What important context may be missing?		
3. FAIRNESS Who could benefit or be disadvantaged? Are some experiences easier for the system to recognize than others?		
4. TRANSPARENCY Can students and staff understand how the recommendation was produced? Can errors be corrected?		
5. HUMAN OVERSIGHT Who reviews the evidence, makes the final decision, explains the outcome, and remains accountable?		

Team Recommendation

Our team recommends that the school:

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STUDENT TOOL

Design a Responsible Decision Process

Build safeguards into each stage of the process

Decision Stage	Required Safeguard	Who Is Accountable?
Before the system is used	Define the purpose, approved data, prohibited uses, and decision owner.	
When information is collected	Explain what is collected, allow corrections, minimize unnecessary data, and protect privacy.	
When a recommendation is produced	Check for missing information, unusual patterns, and uneven outcomes.	
Before a final decision	Require trained human review and consideration of relevant context.	
When the outcome is communicated	Provide a meaningful explanation and a clear appeal or correction process.	
After the process	Monitor results, gather feedback, document concerns, and revise the process when needed.	

Minimum Safeguards Checklist

- A clearly stated purpose and defined limits
- Relevant, accurate, and reviewable data
- A process for identifying missing context
- Trained human review before a high-impact outcome
- A meaningful explanation for affected students
- A correction and appeal pathway
- Ongoing monitoring for errors and unequal outcomes
- A named person or team accountable for the final decision

TEACHER GUIDE

Discussion Protocol

Structured dialogue for evidence, counterclaims, and revision

Protocol: Claim - Evidence - Safeguard - Challenge

1. Claim: Each team states whether the current recommendation should be accepted, paused, or rejected.
2. Evidence: The team cites at least three evidence cards and one stakeholder perspective.
3. Safeguard: The team proposes at least three changes to the decision process.
4. Challenge: Another team asks one question that exposes a tradeoff, missing detail, or implementation concern.
5. Revision: The presenting team revises or defends its recommendation.

Facilitator Questions

- Does efficiency justify using the system in this way?
- Would the process still be acceptable if the result affected you?
- Which information should never be used?
- How might a recommendation influence a reviewer even when humans make the final decision?
- What does a meaningful explanation look like?
- Who should be responsible when staff members rely on a system they do not fully understand?
- What evidence would show that the process is working fairly over time?
- When should the school stop using the system?

Common Misconceptions to Surface

- “The system only recommends, so it cannot cause harm.” Recommendations can shape attention, expectations, and access.
- “More data automatically creates a fairer result.” Data can still be incomplete, irrelevant, inaccurate, or unevenly distributed.
- “A human made the final decision, so the process is accountable.” Human review must be informed, meaningful, and documented.
- “Students can appeal, so the system is fair.” Appeals must be accessible, timely, understandable, and capable of changing an outcome.

ASSESSMENT

Performance Rubric

Evaluate reasoning, evidence, safeguards, and communication

Criterion	4 - Advanced	3 - Proficient	2 - Developing	1 - Beginning
Understanding of the decision process	Explains purpose, inputs, recommendation, and human role accurately.	Explains most elements with minor gaps.	Shows partial understanding or confuses recommendation with final decision.	Provides limited or inaccurate explanation.
Evidence analysis	Uses multiple relevant evidence cards and identifies missing or uneven information.	Uses relevant evidence with some analysis.	Uses limited evidence or summarizes without analysis.	Makes unsupported claims.
Fairness and stakeholder reasoning	Examines impact across multiple stakeholders and identifies meaningful fairness concerns.	Considers more than one stakeholder and a plausible fairness concern.	Mentions impact but provides limited perspective-taking.	Does not consider affected stakeholders.
Safeguard design	Proposes specific, feasible safeguards across the decision process.	Proposes useful safeguards with some implementation detail.	Proposes general safeguards with limited detail.	Safeguards are missing or unrelated.
Accountability and human oversight	Clearly identifies who reviews, decides, explains, and remains accountable.	Identifies a human decision-maker and review role.	Mentions human review without clear responsibility.	Leaves final authority unclear.
Communication and defense	Presents a coherent recommendation, responds to challenge, and revises when appropriate.	Communicates a clear recommendation and responds to questions.	Recommendation is understandable but weakly defended.	Recommendation is unclear or unsupported.

Suggested Scoring

24 points possible. A score of 18–24 indicates strong evidence-based understanding; 12–17 indicates developing proficiency; below 12 indicates a need for additional modeling or guided practice.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Exit Ticket and Reflection

Individual evidence of understanding

1. Who should be accountable for the final internship decision? Explain why.

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2. Identify one piece of missing or incomplete information that could affect Jordan's recommendation.

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3. Which safeguard would most improve the process? Explain how it would help.

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4. Complete the sentence: AI can support a high-impact decision when...

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5. Complete the sentence: AI should not be used to...

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Optional Confidence Check

Circle one response for each statement: 1 = Not yet confident 2 = Somewhat confident 3 = Confident 4 = Very confident

I can distinguish an AI recommendation from a final human decision. 1 2 3 4

I can identify missing context and possible fairness concerns. 1 2 3 4

I can explain why transparency and appeal rights matter. 1 2 3 4

I can design safeguards for responsible AI-supported decisions. 1 2 3 4

EXTENSION OPTIONS

Adapt the Lesson Across High School Subjects

Flexible pathways for deeper learning

English / Media Literacy
Write an argument evaluating whether the school's process is responsible. Include a claim, counterclaim, evidence, and proposed safeguards.

Social Studies / Civics
Compare the decision process with principles of due process, transparency, public accountability, and equal access.

Computer Science
Create a simplified decision model and test how changing weights or missing values affects recommendations.

Mathematics / Data Science
Analyze a fictional dataset for patterns, missing values, unequal representation, and outcome differences.

CTE / Career Readiness
Redesign the internship selection process to recognize formal coursework, transferable skills, work experience, and community-based learning.

Business / Entrepreneurship
Evaluate the risks and benefits of adopting an AI-supported screening tool. Prepare an implementation recommendation for leadership.

Advisory / Student Leadership
Develop a student-facing bill of rights for AI-supported school decisions.

Art / Digital Media
Create an infographic that explains the five-part Responsible AI Decision Framework.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY CONNECTION

AI-Supported Decisions Beyond School

Extend the conversation to everyday life and future careers

Family Discussion Prompt

Artificial intelligence can support decisions in education, employment, finance, health care, transportation, media, and public services. Ask a family or community member to discuss a decision they believe should always include meaningful human review.

Conversation Questions

6. Where might an AI-supported recommendation affect a person's opportunity or access?
7. What information should people be allowed to review or correct?
8. What type of explanation should an organization provide?
9. Who should be responsible when an automated recommendation is wrong?
10. What makes an appeal process meaningful rather than symbolic?

Student Reflection

Summarize one insight from the conversation and connect it to the lesson's five-part framework: Purpose, Data, Fairness, Transparency, and Human Oversight.

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Privacy Reminder

Students should not share private medical, financial, disciplinary, immigration, or other sensitive personal information during this activity.

IMPLEMENTATION NOTES

Adaptation, Accessibility, and Responsible Use

Guidance for educators and school leaders

Differentiation and Accessibility

- Provide the case study in print, digital, audio, or teacher-read formats.
- Reduce the number of evidence cards or pre-highlight key details for students who need additional support.
- Use sentence starters for claims, evidence, counterclaims, and safeguards.
- Assign stakeholder roles strategically to support participation and perspective-taking.
- Allow students to respond through writing, discussion, graphic organizers, or recorded presentations.
- Define key terms before the lesson: recommendation, data, bias, transparency, oversight, accountability, and appeal.
- Avoid requiring students to disclose personal experiences with school discipline, disability, immigration, financial hardship, or other sensitive contexts.

Responsible Technology Use

- No student AI account is required for this lesson.
- Do not upload identifiable student information to public AI tools.
- When using an AI tool for extension work, provide an approved prompt and require students to verify outputs.
- Treat generated content as a draft or source for evaluation, not as an authority.
- Require disclosure when AI tools contribute to a student product.
- Follow district-approved technology, privacy, accessibility, and academic-integrity expectations.

Evidence of Learning

- Completed Responsible AI Decision Framework
- Team-designed decision process
- Oral defense and response to challenge
- Individual exit ticket
- Optional family/community reflection
- Teacher observation using the performance rubric

> **Consulting Use**
>
> **This flagship lesson can anchor a short pilot, educator professional-learning session, curriculum review, or district AI-readiness conversation. It is intentionally adaptable across subject areas and technology environments.**

MEETING HANDOUT

One-Page Lesson Summary

Use during a district or school consultation conversation

Why This Lesson Matters

High school students are already encountering AI-supported recommendations and generated content. This lesson helps them move beyond tool use toward judgment, evidence analysis, fairness, transparency, and accountability.

What Students Do

- Investigate a fictional internship recommendation
- Analyze evidence and stakeholder perspectives
- Identify missing context and potential unfairness
- Design safeguards and an appeal pathway
- Defend a recommendation using evidence
- Explain where human judgment and accountability belong

What Educators Can Observe

- Quality of student reasoning
- Ability to distinguish recommendation from decision
- Use of evidence and counterclaims
- Understanding of privacy, fairness, and transparency
- Ability to propose practical safeguards
- Readiness to apply the framework to other contexts

Possible Pilot Uses

SINGLE LESSON **Advisory, social studies, English, computer science, business, or CTE**	**MINI-UNIT** **Three lessons on decisions, information quality, and accountability**
PROFESSIONAL LEARNING Teachers experience the lesson as learners, then plan subject-specific adaptations	**STUDENT LEADERSHIP** Student advisory group reviews school AI expectations and communication

Core Message

AI may support a decision. People must still define the purpose, examine the evidence, explain the outcome, provide a way to challenge it, and remain accountable.