

Thinking-First AI Prompts for Educators

AI Compass · Practical Prompt Set (Classroom & Planning Use)

This document collects the **core prompt patterns** introduced during the **AI Compass Professional Development session (Jan 2026)**.

These prompts are intentionally designed to:

- reduce cognitive offloading
- increase instructional clarity
- surface weak task design before students find it
- and keep **teacher judgment** firmly in control

This is not about getting better answers.
It is about **getting better thinking**.

How to Use This Set

- Use these prompts **before** lesson delivery
- Use them **after** drafting a task
- Use them **instead of** asking AI to "generate" content

Each prompt can be copied directly into Gemini, ChatGPT, or Claude.

Core Thinking Prompts

Prompt Name	Purpose	Prompt Text (Copy / Paste)
1. Socratic Partner	Clarify learning intent before designing activities	Act as a Socratic partner. Do not agree with me. Do not praise my ideas. Ask me three questions that challenge my assumptions about how students will learn in this lesson. Here is my lesson plan:[PASTE OBJECTIVE / PLAN] Help me clarify the learning intent, not the activity. What should students be able to understand, explain, or justify at the end of this lesson?
2. Adversarial Prompt	Stress-test lesson rigor and expose shallow learning paths	This lesson is probably too safe. Identify three ways a student could complete this task successfully without real learning or understanding. For each: -Explain how the student would bypass thinking. -Suggest how I could redesign the task so thinking is unavoidable. Here is the task or lesson description: [PASTE TASK]
3. Assumption Challenge	Surface hidden beliefs about students and content	Challenge my assumptions. Based on the lesson or task below: -What am I assuming students already know? -What am I assuming they will find easy? -What am I assuming they will struggle with? -Which of these assumptions is most likely to be wrong, and why? Here is the lesson or task: [PASTE CONTENT]
4. Output Fencing	Control AI output structure to reduce cognitive load	Before answering, follow these output rules exactly: - Format: [e.g. bullet points / table / numbered list] Length: [e.g. max 5 bullets / max 150 words] Tone: [e.g. neutral / student-friendly / professional] Focus: [e.g. conceptual understanding, not activities] Exclude: [e.g. no examples / no explanations / no extra commentary] If you cannot follow these rules, say so. Here is the request:[PASTE REQUEST]

When to Use Which Prompt

- **Socratic Partner** → when you are unsure what the lesson is *really* about
- **Adversarial Prompt** → when the task feels “too easy” or “too safe”
- **Assumption Challenge** → when outcomes vary wildly between students
- **Output Fencing** → when AI responses are long, vague, or exhausting

Non-Negotiable Principle

AI may:

- draft
- question
- critique
- compare

AI never owns:

- learning quality
- assessment validity
- student outcomes
- responsibility

If AI fails, **the teacher owns the result.**

Final Reminder

If you spend **five more minutes** verbalizing your own thinking and telling AI *how to think and respond*,
you save **hours** editing output later.

That is not efficiency.

That is professional judgment.

-Arttu Karppanen