

TomorrowNow.

AI for Educators

A Scaffolded Learning Path Using Claude, Microsoft Copilot & Google Gemini

Prepared for: Sun West Teachers' Association

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Mission: "To cultivate a learning community that empowers, innovates, and inspires all learners to thrive in a changing world."

Vision: "Spark Curiosity, Ignite Possibilities"

Core Values: Accountability, Collaboration, Courage, Creativity, Curiosity, Empathy, Integrity, Leadership, Respect, Responsibility

"Curiosity is where learning begins and opens the door to endless opportunities."

How to Use This Guide

This document provides a scaffolded, beginner-friendly learning path organized into five phases. Each phase builds on the last, progressing from foundational AI literacy through platform-specific skills to advanced classroom integration. Lessons draw from official free courses by Anthropic, Microsoft, and Google, supplemented by curated YouTube videos. All resources are free. Links are clickable.

Educator Focus: Every lesson connects back to Sun West's mission of empowering learners and igniting possibilities. Activities are designed to leverage your deep expertise in K–6 and 6–12 education and your high emotional intelligence to create new opportunities in the education space.

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PHASE 1: AI FOUNDATIONS — Understanding the Landscape

Weeks 1–2 | Estimated Time: 4–6 hours total

Before diving into specific tools, educators need a shared vocabulary and conceptual grounding in what AI is, how it works, and why it matters for teaching and learning. This phase aligns with Sun West's value of **curiosity** — exploring with an open mind before committing to action.

Lesson 1.1: What Is Generative AI?

Learning Outcome: Understand what generative AI is, how large language models work at a high level, and the difference between AI tools.

Official Course:

- Anthropic Academy — *AI Capabilities and Limitations* (free, ~45 min)
anthropic.skilljar.com

YouTube Supplement:

- "AI, Machine Learning, Deep Learning and Generative AI Explained" by IBM Technology
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYNweeDHiyU>
- "AI for Absolute Beginners" by The AI Advantage
<https://www.youtube.com/@aiadvantage>

Classroom Connection: Discuss with a colleague: "What questions do my students already have about AI?" This taps into your high EQ — listening before leading.

Lesson 1.2: AI Fluency Framework

Learning Outcome: Learn the 4D Framework (Delegation, Description, Discernment, Diligence) for working effectively with AI.

Official Course:

- Anthropic Academy — *AI Fluency: Framework & Foundations* (free, ~2 hrs)
[AI Fluency: Framework & Foundations](#)

YouTube Supplement:

- "Prompt Engineering for Teachers" by Skill Leap AI
<https://www.youtube.com/@SkillLeapAI>

Classroom Connection: Try the 4D Framework on a real task: draft next week's newsletter using AI, then critically evaluate the output. How does your expertise improve the result?

Lesson 1.3: AI Ethics, Safety & Responsible Use in Schools

Learning Outcome: Understand responsible AI use, privacy considerations, and age-appropriate policies for K–6 and 6–12 settings.

Official Course:

- Anthropic Academy — *AI Fluency for Educators* (free, ~1 hr)

anthropic.skilljar.com — AI Fluency for Educators

YouTube Supplement:

- "AI Ethics in Education" by Google for Education

<https://www.youtube.com/@GoogleForEducation>

Classroom Connection: Draft a one-page "AI Acceptable Use" guideline for your classroom that reflects Sun West's values of **integrity**, **respect**, and **responsibility**.

Phase 1 Checkpoint: Before moving on, you should be able to (1) explain what generative AI is to a parent, (2) describe the 4D Framework, and (3) articulate one ethical consideration for your classroom.

PHASE 2: GETTING HANDS-ON WITH CLAUDE

Weeks 3–4 | Estimated Time: 4–6 hours total

Claude by Anthropic is designed with safety and helpfulness at its core. Its Learning Mode makes it especially valuable for educators who want AI that guides students rather than giving answers. This phase builds your practical Claude skills from first use to classroom integration.

Lesson 2.1: Claude 101 — Your First Conversation

Learning Outcome: Navigate Claude's interface, understand features (Projects, Artifacts, web search), and hold your first productive conversation.

Official Course:

- Anthropic Academy — *Claude 101* (free, ~1 hr)
[Claude 101 on Anthropic Academy](#)

YouTube Supplement:

- "Claude Tutorial for Beginners — How to Use Claude AI Step by Step (2026)"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-xEF5WrdIWs>
- "Full Claude Tutorial: Beginner to Advanced in 19 Minutes"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WSPChfxJyA>

Try It: Ask Claude to help you brainstorm 5 creative ways to teach a concept from your next unit. Compare its ideas to yours — where does your expertise shine?

Lesson 2.2: Prompt Engineering for Educators

Learning Outcome: Write clear, effective prompts that produce useful educational content. Learn to iterate and refine.

Official Course:

- Anthropic Academy — *Prompt Engineering Fundamentals* (free, ~2 hrs)
anthropic.skilljar.com

YouTube Supplement:

- "FULL Claude Tutorial for Beginners in 2026!" by AI Foundations
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xg55nTrbYYY>

Practice Activity: Use Claude to create a differentiated reading passage for three levels in your class. Prompt it with your learning objectives, curriculum outcomes, and student needs. Your **empathy** and knowledge of individual learners makes the output better.

Lesson 2.3: Claude for Lesson Planning & Assessment

Learning Outcome: Use Claude to draft lesson plans, rubrics, assessment questions, and parent communication aligned to curriculum outcomes.

Official Course:

- Anthropic Academy — *Introduction to Claude Cowork* (free, ~45 min) — for non-technical task automation
anthropic.skilljar.com

YouTube Supplement:

- "Gemini for Education: The Complete Tutorial Series" (9-part educator series)
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL-m80M_9t53I78Dd-Se8l2cd6moF-3YF_

Classroom Connection: Create a complete lesson plan using Claude for an upcoming unit. Include learning objectives, activities, assessment, and differentiation. Share it with a colleague for feedback.

Phase 2 Checkpoint: You should now be comfortable having multi-turn conversations with Claude, writing structured prompts, and generating lesson-ready materials. Save your best prompts in a personal "Prompt Library."

PHASE 3: GETTING HANDS-ON WITH MICROSOFT COPILOT

Weeks 5–6 | Estimated Time: 4–6 hours total

Microsoft Copilot is embedded directly into the tools many schools already use — Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and Teams. This phase focuses on using Copilot to streamline the administrative and communication tasks that consume educator time, freeing you to focus on what matters: teaching and relationships.

Lesson 3.1: Introduction to Microsoft Copilot

Learning Outcome: Understand what Copilot is, where it lives in Microsoft 365, and what it can do for educators.

Official Course:

- Microsoft Learn — *Enhance Teaching and Learning with Microsoft Copilot* (free)
[Microsoft Learn — Enhance Teaching & Learning](#)
- Microsoft Learn — *Enhance Teaching and Learning with Microsoft 365 Copilot Chat* (free module)
[Microsoft Learn — Copilot Chat Module](#)

YouTube Supplement:

- "Microsoft Copilot Tutorial for Beginners" by Kevin Stratvert
<https://www.youtube.com/@KevinStratvert>

Try It: Open Copilot in Microsoft Edge or at copilot.microsoft.com and ask it to help you write a parent email about an upcoming field trip.

Lesson 3.2: Copilot in Word, PowerPoint & Excel

Learning Outcome: Use Copilot inside Word (draft reports), PowerPoint (create presentations), and Excel (analyze data) for education tasks.

Official Course:

- Great Learning — *Introduction to Microsoft 365 Copilot* (free, ~2 hrs)
[Great Learning — Intro to M365 Copilot](#)
- Coursera — *Microsoft 365 with Generative AI Professional Certificate* (audit free)
[Coursera — Microsoft Copilot Courses](#)

YouTube Supplement:

- "How to Use Microsoft Copilot in PowerPoint" by Leila Gharani
<https://www.youtube.com/@LeilaGharani>

Practice Activity: Use Copilot to turn your existing lesson notes into a student-facing PowerPoint presentation. Use your **creativity** to refine the design and content beyond what AI generates.

Lesson 3.3: Copilot for Communication & Collaboration

Learning Outcome: Use Copilot in Outlook and Teams to streamline parent communication, staff collaboration, and meeting follow-ups.

Official Resources:

- Microsoft 365 Copilot Training Events (free, live webinars)

[Microsoft Copilot Training Events](#)

Classroom Connection: Draft three versions of a parent communication about student progress using Copilot: one for K–3, one for Grades 4–6, and one for Grades 7–12. Notice how your understanding of families and **empathy** improves each draft.

Phase 3 Checkpoint: You should now be able to use Copilot for everyday tasks in Word, PowerPoint, and Outlook. You can articulate when Copilot is the right tool vs. when Claude might be better for a task.

PHASE 4: GETTING HANDS-ON WITH GOOGLE GEMINI

Weeks 7–8 | Estimated Time: 4–6 hours total

Google Gemini is deeply integrated into Google Workspace — Docs, Sheets, Slides, Gmail, and Classroom. For schools using Google Workspace for Education, Gemini is available free of charge with built-in data protection. This phase helps you harness Gemini and the powerful NotebookLM tool.

Lesson 4.1: Introduction to Gemini for Education

Learning Outcome: Understand Gemini's capabilities, how it integrates with Google Workspace, and how it differs from Claude and Copilot.

Official Course:

- Google Skillshop — *Get Started with Google AI in K–12 Education* (free)
[Google Skillshop — Get Started with AI in K-12](#)
- Google for Education — *Generative AI for Educators with Gemini* (free)
[Generative AI for Educators with Gemini](#)

YouTube Supplement:

- "Google Gemini Tutorial for Beginners" by Google for Education
<https://www.youtube.com/@GoogleForEducation>

Try It: Open gemini.google.com and ask Gemini to help you create a quiz for your next unit. Then try it inside Google Docs.

Lesson 4.2: Gemini in Google Workspace (Docs, Sheets, Slides)

Learning Outcome: Use Gemini directly inside Docs, Sheets, and Slides to create, analyze, and present educational content.

Official Course:

- Coursera — *Google Workspace with Gemini Specialization* by Google Cloud (audit free)
[Coursera — Gemini for Google Workspace](#)
- Grow with Google — *AI Courses and Tools* (free workshops)
[Grow with Google — AI](#)

YouTube Supplement:

- Google — "Transform Education with Gemini for Workspace" (official demo playlist)
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLP7Bvyb3ap462hNhU9dZdFEu3H04Efbyf>

Practice Activity: Use Gemini in Sheets to analyze a sample gradebook. Use Gemini in Slides to create a visual summary of a unit. Your **leadership** in tech adoption inspires colleagues.

Lesson 4.3: NotebookLM & Gems for Deep Learning

Learning Outcome: Use NotebookLM to synthesize sources and create study materials. Create custom Gems as personalized AI assistants.

Official Resource:

- Google — *Gemini for Education* (overview of Gems, NotebookLM, Canvas)
[Google Gemini for Education](#)

YouTube Supplement:

- Google for Education — NotebookLM & Gemini Tutorials (official channel)
<https://www.youtube.com/@GoogleforEducation>

Classroom Connection: Upload your curriculum documents to NotebookLM and generate a podcast-style summary for parents. Create a custom Gem that acts as a study coach for your subject area.

Phase 4 Checkpoint: You should now be comfortable with Gemini inside Google Workspace and can choose the right AI tool (Claude, Copilot, or Gemini) for different tasks. You can also explain the strengths of each.

PHASE 5: INTEGRATION, INNOVATION & OPPORTUNITY CREATION

Weeks 9–10 | Estimated Time: 4–6 hours total

This capstone phase brings everything together. You'll combine your deep subject expertise, your high EQ, and your new AI skills to create innovative opportunities in education. This is where you move from AI user to AI leader — embodying Sun West's vision of sparking curiosity and igniting possibilities.

Lesson 5.1: Choosing the Right Tool for the Task

Learning Outcome: Develop a personal decision framework for when to use Claude, Copilot, or Gemini based on the task, context, and audience.

Activity: Complete the "AI Tool Decision Matrix" below:

Task Type	Best Tool	Why
Deep thinking, writing, nuanced tasks	Claude	Strongest reasoning, safe learning mode
Microsoft Office productivity	Copilot	Embedded in Word, Excel, PPT, Outlook
Google Workspace tasks	Gemini	Native in Docs, Sheets, Slides, Classroom
Research & source synthesis	Gemini / Claude	NotebookLM for sources; Claude for analysis
Creative brainstorming	Any / All	Try the same prompt in all three and compare

Lesson 5.2: Leveraging Your Expertise & EQ

Learning Outcome: Identify how your subject expertise and emotional intelligence make AI outputs better — and how to create new opportunities from that combination.

Key Insight: AI is a powerful assistant, but it lacks your understanding of individual students, community context, cultural nuance, and the human art of teaching. Your deep expertise means you can:

- Write prompts that produce curriculum-aligned, developmentally appropriate content
- Evaluate and improve AI outputs in ways non-experts cannot
- Design learning experiences that combine AI efficiency with human connection
- Model responsible AI use for students, parents, and colleagues
- Create new roles: AI curriculum designer, AI literacy coach, EdTech innovator

Lesson 5.3: Creating New Opportunities in Education

Learning Outcome: Design an AI-enhanced project, program, or resource that creates new opportunities for your students or school community.

Capstone Project Ideas (choose one):

- **K–6:** Design an AI-assisted learning station where students interact with a Gem for guided inquiry
- **6–12:** Create an AI literacy mini-unit students can complete using Claude, Copilot, and Gemini
- **School-wide:** Build a teacher toolkit of curated prompts aligned to Sun West curriculum outcomes
- **Community:** Host a parent information night on AI in education using materials you created with AI

YouTube Inspiration:

- "How Teachers Are Using AI in 2026" by Skill Leap AI

<https://www.youtube.com/@SkillLeapAI>

Final Reflection: How does your AI learning journey connect to Sun West's mission of cultivating a learning community that empowers, innovates, and inspires all learners to thrive in a changing world? Write a one-paragraph reflection and share with your PLC.

CERTIFICATION PATHWAY: EARN INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALS

Each platform in this learning path offers **free, official certifications** issued directly by the company. These are verifiable digital credentials you can add to your LinkedIn profile, resume, or professional portfolio. Earning all three demonstrates AI fluency across the major platforms and positions you as a leader in educational technology.

■ Anthropic Academy — Free Certificates of Completion

What you earn: A downloadable certificate for each course you complete, issued by Anthropic via their Skilljar platform. Certificates can be shared on LinkedIn or attached to your professional portfolio.

How it works: Each course includes videos, practical exercises, quizzes, and a final assessment. Pass the assessment and your certificate is issued instantly. No paid subscription required.

Courses that earn certificates (recommended for educators):

- Claude 101 (~1 hour)
- AI Fluency: Framework & Foundations
- AI Fluency for Educators
- AI Capabilities and Limitations
- Prompt Engineering Fundamentals

[Register free at anthropic.skilljar.com](https://anthropic.skilljar.com)

■ Microsoft Elevate for Educators — Free AI Literacy Credential

What you earn: The *Microsoft Elevate for Educators Credential*, developed in partnership with ISTE+ASCD and aligned to the AI Literacy Framework. This is a free, industry-recognized credential that validates your ability to integrate AI into teaching and learning.

How it works: Complete self-paced courses and AI-powered simulations through the AI Skills Navigator. Available in 13+ languages. Earn digital badges and recognition. Additional certifications include the *Microsoft Certified Educator (MCE)* and the forthcoming *Microsoft Certified Instructional Technologist and Coach*.

Recommended path for educators:

- Join Elevate for Educators (free membership)
- Complete the AI Literacy for Educators credential course
- Explore Microsoft Learn modules for Copilot

[Register free at elevateforeducators.microsoft.com](https://elevateforeducators.microsoft.com)

■ Google — Gemini Certified Educator (Free)

What you earn: The *Gemini Certified Educator* credential, a verifiable digital certificate valid for 3 years. Issued by Google through Accredible, it can be shared digitally or presented to your district for professional development (PD) credit.

How it works: Complete the free foundational course, then pass a 37-question multiple-choice exam (no time limit, must finish within 14 days of registration). The exam covers Gemini features, ethical AI in education, prompt engineering, and practical applications. No cost at any stage.

Recommended path for educators:

- Complete "Generative AI for Educators with Gemini" (free, ~2 hrs) at Grow with Google
- Register for the Gemini Certified Educator exam at educertifications.google
- Pass the exam and receive your digital certificate

Course: grow.google/ai-for-educators

Exam: educertifications.google

Your Certification Goal: By the end of this learning path, aim to earn at least one certificate from each platform. Together, these three credentials demonstrate well-rounded AI fluency — a powerful signal on your resume and a concrete step toward new leadership opportunities in education. All three are completely free.

Appendix A: Quick-Reference Link Directory

Anthropic (Claude)

- Anthropic Academy: <https://anthropic.skilljar.com>
- Claude 101: <https://anthropic.skilljar.com/claude-101>
- Claude.ai: <https://claude.ai>
- Claude for Education: <https://claude.com/solutions/education>

Microsoft (Copilot)

- MS Learn — Copilot for Educators: <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/training/courses/enhance-teaching-learning-microsoft-copilot>
- Copilot Chat Module: <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/training/modules/enhance-teaching-learning-microsoft-copilot/>
- Copilot Training Events: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/events/category/microsoft-365-copilot-training>
- Great Learning — M365 Copilot: <https://www.mygreatlearning.com/academy/learn-for-free/courses/introduction-to-microsoft-365-copilot>

Google (Gemini)

- Google Skillshop — AI in K-12: <https://skillshop.exceedlms.com/student/path/1178011-get-started-with-gemini-for-google-workspace>
- Generative AI for Educators: <https://edu.exceedlms.com/student/path/1787126-generative-ai-for-educators-with-gemini>
- Gemini for Education: https://edu.google.com/intl/ALL_us/ai/gemini-for-education/
- Grow with Google AI: <https://grow.google/ai>
- Coursera — Gemini Workspace: <https://www.coursera.org/specializations/gemini-for-google-workspace>

YouTube Channels

- The AI Advantage: <https://www.youtube.com/@aiadvantage>
- Skill Leap AI: <https://www.youtube.com/@SkillLeapAI>
- Google for Education: <https://www.youtube.com/@GoogleForEducation>
- Kevin Stratvert: <https://www.youtube.com/@KevinStratvert>
- Leila Gharani: <https://www.youtube.com/@LeilaGharani>

Certification & Credentials

- Anthropic Academy (all courses with certificates): <https://anthropic.skilljar.com>
- Microsoft Elevate for Educators Credential: <https://elevateforeducators.microsoft.com>
- Microsoft Certified Educator (MCE): <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/credentials/certifications/microsoft-certified-educator/>
- Google Gemini Certified Educator Exam: <https://educertifications.google/>
- Google AI for Educators Course (with certificate): <https://grow.google/ai-for-educators/>

Appendix B: Scope & Sequence Overview

Phase	Week	Focus	Key Deliverable	Core Value
1	1–2	AI Foundations	AI Acceptable Use guide	Curiosity, Integrity
2	3–4	Claude	Lesson plan + Prompt Library	Creativity, Empathy
3	5–6	Microsoft Copilot	Presentation + parent emails	Collaboration, Respect
4	7–8	Google Gemini	NotebookLM resource + Gem	Leadership, Courage
5	9–10	Integration & Innovation	Capstone project	Accountability, Responsibility

Appendix C: Reflection Journal Prompts

1. What surprised me most about AI's capabilities? What are its limitations?
2. How does my subject expertise make AI outputs better? Give a specific example.
3. Which AI tool (Claude, Copilot, or Gemini) felt most natural to me? Why?
4. How might AI help me meet the diverse needs of learners in my classroom?
5. What new opportunity could I create by combining my expertise with AI?
6. How can I model responsible AI use in a way that reflects Sun West's values?
7. What would I want parents to know about how I use AI in my teaching?
8. How has this learning journey sparked my curiosity and ignited new possibilities?

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