

Public Libraries & AI



THE GALECIA GROUP

* technology solutions for librarians

AI Studio [Words, Images, +]

CALL Academy
March 24-27th, 2026



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Safety First

Never enter private, personal,
proprietary, or patron data into
any AI system*!

*(*unless your IT department said it's OK)*



Housekeeping

- Tuesday (today!): learn and ask questions
- Wednesday: practice on your own
- Thursday: optional "office hours" Q&A session w/ demos
- Friday: final Qs&As, attendee showcase, reflections

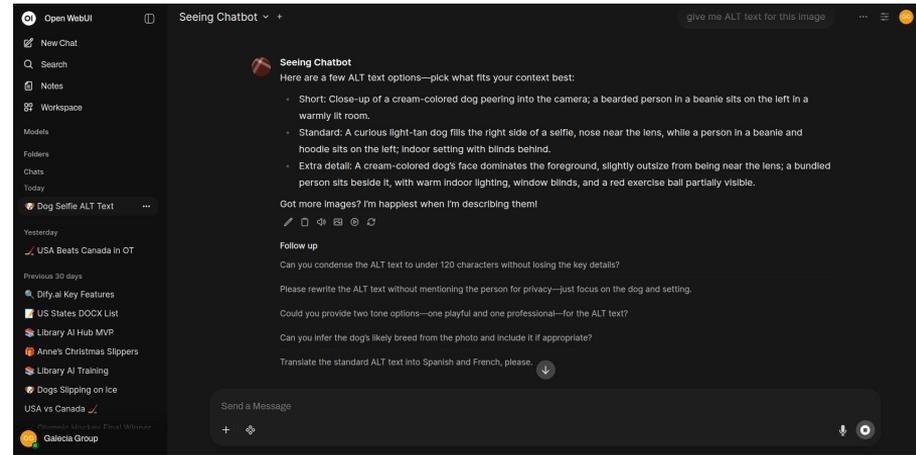
Keep it SFW. Ask questions. Have fun!

Goals

- Confidently use a large language model ("LLM") AI tool to draft and refine text copy for library projects.
- Confidently use an AI image generation tool to create and edit images for library projects.
- Consider important factors like accessibility, transparency, and ethical use of AI.

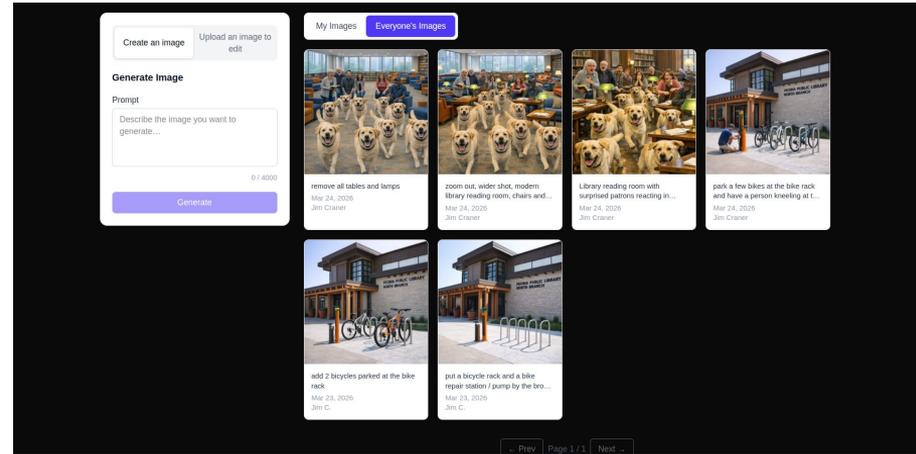
Our Tools: Chatbot aka "LLM"

- Standard interface for interacting with AI tools
- Large language models ("LLMs") can create text, edit, translate, transform, etc.
- Collaborate in a conversation to create useful copy



Our Tools: Image Generator

- Create a new image by describing it
- Edit existing images by requesting specific changes
- This is a simple tool, more advanced tools do exist



Large Language Model (LLM)



You

I'm a children's librarian at a public library. Help me brainstorm 20 ideas for rainy day craft activities in the library that have a rainy day theme. Suggest some books for kids about rainy days.



ChatGPT

Sure, here are 20 craft ideas for rainy day-themed activities in the library, along with some book suggestions:

Rainy Day Craft Activities

1. **Paper Raindrops Mobile:** Kids can cut out and decorate paper raindrops, then hang them from a stick or hoop to create a mobile.
2. **Cloud and Raindrop Window Decorations:** Using contact paper, cotton balls for clouds, and blue streamers or ribbons for rain.
3. **Rain Gauge Making:** Using clear plastic bottles to make simple rain gauges and decorating them.
4. **Puddle Jump Board Game:** Create a board game where players jump over paper puddles to reach the end.

- Analyzes and generates language:

- Summarization

- Classification

- Prediction

- Generation

AI as Mentor

- **Describe ultimate goals to AI, request action plan**
- For each item, the AI can assist with implementation
- Meta: ask AI how to use AI effectively

"I want to improve our library's outreach to underserved communities. Can you suggest a detailed action plan for achieving this goal?"

"Prompt"

A command or request given to an AI tool



AI as Mentor

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AI as Mentor

- Describe ultimate goals to AI, request action plan
- **For each item, the AI can assist with implementation**
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"You recommended hosting community events to attract more visitors. Can you draft a program schedule and a sample invitation for these events?"

AI as Mentor

- Describe ultimate goals to AI, request action plan
- For each item, the AI can assist with implementation
- **Meta: ask AI how to use AI effectively**

"What are the most effective ways I can use AI to streamline library operations and increase community engagement?"

AI as Writing Coach

- **Feedback on Tone, Structure, or Clarity**
- Improving Writing
- Sharpening Skills

"Here's a draft of a grant proposal for funding a new children's reading program. Can you provide feedback on tone and structure to make it more compelling?"

AI as Writing Coach

- Feedback on Tone, Structure, or Clarity
- **Improving Writing**
- Sharpening Skills

"Review this draft email to library staff about upcoming policy changes. Simplify and clarify this message."

AI as Writing Coach

- Feedback on Tone, Structure, or Clarity
- Improving Writing
- **Sharpening Skills**

"Review these documents and create an assessment of my writing style with suggestions for improvement."

AI as a Creative Partner

- **Chat back and forth to "bounce ideas around."**
- Keep on brainstorming!
- Try a role prompt.

"We want to host a program for young adults. Let's bounce around ideas—what themes, activities, or topics might resonate with this age group?"

AI as a Creative Partner

- Chat back and forth to "bounce ideas around."
- **Keep on brainstorming!**
- Try a role prompt.

"No, those aren't good enough. Brainstorm 10 more."

AI as a Creative Partner

- Chat back and forth to "bounce ideas around."
- Keep on brainstorming!
- **Try a role prompt.**

"You are an excellent problem solver who understands library challenges. How can we boost foot traffic to our library on weekday mornings?"

Be Specific and Verbose

- Tell the AI "who" and "how" and "why" - not just "what"
- Explain format preferences - "a brief email," "a comprehensive memo," "an XLSX sheet"
- "Simplify to a sixth-grade reading level."



Break Up Large Tasks

- Build an outline or skeleton
- Compose and refine each section, piece by piece
- Ensure AI aware of all changes made to source material



Feeling Unsure? Ask AI

"Our library serves a diverse community. Can you suggest a brand voice and tone that feels welcoming, inclusive, and accessible to everyone? Include examples of how to adjust our tone for formal policy documents vs. social media posts."

Brand Voice: Welcoming, inclusive, and accessible. Friendly yet professional, approachable without being overly casual.

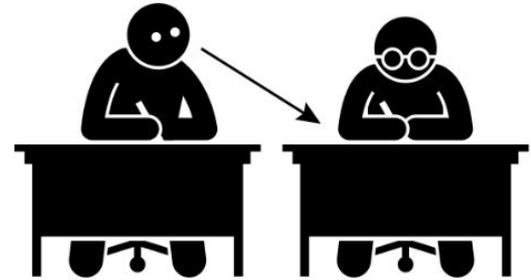
Tone Adjustments:

- **Formal Policy Documents:** Clear, respectful, and professional. Avoid jargon; use plain, concise language. Example: "Our library is committed to ensuring equitable access for all members of our community."
- **Social Media Posts:** Warm, engaging, and conversational. Use inclusive language and emojis sparingly if appropriate. Example: "Looking for your next great read? 📖 Everyone is welcome at your community library—stop by today!"

Show AND Tell

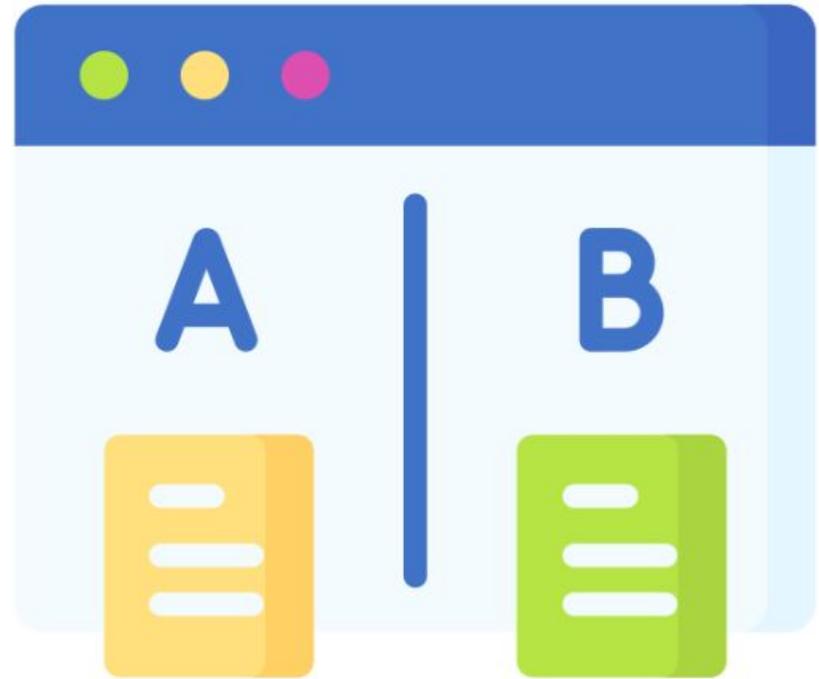
- AIs are great at following examples or patterns
- Want to emulate a great doc?
Ask the AI for guidance
- Imitation, flattery, etc.

"Analyze this memo and identify its style hallmarks, including tone, voice, structure, and phrasing. What can we emulate to achieve a similar effect in our communications?"



Experiment With Varied Phrasing

- Request different phrasing, synonyms, etc. for consideration
- Always request multiple options to choose from
- Refine, iterate, repeat



Proofread and Verify

- Yes, you *can* use AI to proofread and verify...
- ... *but* eventually you should have a human "in the loop"



Establish an Organizational "Voice"

- Cheat sheet for the AI describing your preferences:
 - Voice - Constant personality of your communications
 - Tone - Can change based on context (like mood)
 - Style - Rules and preferences for writing (like clothing)



Human Voice Style Guide

- Use AI to create a "style guide" based on your existing writing.
- Include this style guide whenever requesting new language.
- Incorporate personal touches.
- Remove superfluous or unnecessary or extra words*.
- Use active voice instead of passive voice for extra humanity.

Example Gallery

Library Writing Applications



Let the AI Help Plan the Route



"Generate a cheat sheet for first-time grant-writers."

"Analyze this grant document and create a concise list of step by step actions I should do to create a successful proposal."

Example: Policy Development

Library Writing Applications



Research Issue and Peers

- Gather facts and figures relevant to the topic
- How do peer libraries address the topic?

Caveat: LLMs are not authoritative data sources

> LLM Ideas

- "Suggest data sources to inform our policy of _____"
- "Review the following policies to identify common elements."
- Use ChatGPT's data analysis tool to analyze data.

Simplify Complex Language

- Many similar applications offer "chat with your documents" or "PDF Chat" tools
- You must provide the source document to be summarized

Human: Which rules in the Cards for Kids library card program apply to CEP communities?

Bot:

The Cards for Kids library card program applies to Community Eligible Provision (CEP) communities. In CEP communities, the non-resident fee waiver can be applied to all non-resident students who attend a school operating under CEP. The public library can waive the fee for all non-resident students in CEP schools. If the fee waiver does not apply to all students in a CEP school, the public library can create a certification document for students. The certification document must include current household size and current annualized income, and it must be signed by an adult representative of the student applicant's household. The public library can review the certification document and waive the non-resident fee for applicants whose household income indicates eligibility for free or reduced-price school meals



Sources

+ Add source

Select all sources

- Board Recommendations.pdf
- Cost Sharing
- EnvironmentalSources.pdf
- Grant Reviewer Criteria
- Live and Learn Construction G...
- Opportunity.pdf
- RVL_LaLCG22_SupportingDoc...

Chat

Grantwriting: ISL Construction 2024

7 sources

The provided texts detail the Illinois State Library's "Live and Learn Construction Grant Program." One document outlines the application criteria and scoring rubric, emphasizing project description, cost justification, and adherence to accessibility standards like the ADA. The second offers a program overview, including grant categories (Accessibility, Mini-Grants, New Construction/Remodeling), eligibility requirements for public libraries, required supporting documentation (e.g., facilities plans, cost share proof), and past program impact. Both sources aim to inform applicants about the grant process and requirements. The program funds library construction and renovations, prioritizing projects improving services and accessibility.

Save to note

Add note Audio Overview Briefing doc

Start typing... 7 sources

What key criteria determine grant success for ISL Construction projects >

Studio > Note

Illinois Library & Community Grants

(Saved responses are view only)

potentially in other parts of the state.

- **Sustainability:** Libraries need to demonstrate their ability to maintain and sustain operations post-project completion.

III. Restore, Reinvest, and Renew (R3) Program

A. Overview

- **Purpose:** To redirect cannabis revenues to communities that have been disproportionately affected by violence, economic disinvestment, and the historical impact of drug policies, with a focus on providing locally controlled, community-based responses.
- **Funding Source:** Generated from the legalization of adult-use cannabis.
- **Administering Agency:** Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA)
- **Funding Amount:** \$4,500,000 total program funding, with individual awards ranging from \$25,000 to \$318,212.

B. Program Objectives:

- Directly address the impact of economic disinvestment, violence, and the overuse of criminal justice responses to community and individual needs.
- Substantially reduce gun violence and concentrated poverty.
- Protect communities from gun violence through targeted investments and intervention programs, improving economic growth, violence prevention, community trauma treatment, gun injury victim services, and public health.
- Promote employment infrastructure and capacity building related to the social determinants of health.

C. Program Priorities:

- Civil Legal Aid

Convert to source

NotebookLM can be inaccurate, please double check its responses.

Example: Newsletter Creation

Library Writing Applications



Newsletter / Announcement Ideas

- Use AI to simplify language for a broad audience
 - Drawing a blank on article ideas or headline phrasing?
Make the AI brainstorm!
- "Suggest five cutesy names for the Event Calendar page on our library's newsletter."*
- "Rewrite this description of our homework helper program to appeal to kids."*

Example: Social Media Content

Library Writing Applications



Example Prompts

"Suggest four possible captions for each of these pictures from Summer Reading..."

"Suggest five Insta posts to celebrate National Library Week..."

"Brainstorm a dozen 'roses are red, violets are blue' poems for our public library Valentine's Day posts"

"Suggest guidelines for our new social media team to discuss and adopt"

Example: Press Releases

Library Writing Applications



Extra! Extra!

- Generate strong headlines
- Draft compelling quotes from staff
- Use a formal and professional tone
- Double-check dates, times, etc.



Example: Website Content

Library Writing Applications



Creating Content

- Analyze email and phone inquiries to determine F.A.Q.s for website
- Draft blog posts for each new programming event



Example Prompts

"For each title in this 'New Arrivals' list, search the web for a synopsis, and write a short compelling invitation to read the book."

"Brainstorm fifty funny reasons to participate in Summer Reading!"

"Create a funny, light-hearted reason to attend each event in this event calendar similar to these examples.

Example #1: Genealogy workshop might be 'You're probably not related to royalty but... maybe?'"

Technical Assistance

- AI has relevant skills: HTML, CSS, Javascript, WordPress, and more
- Can help with troubleshooting, recommendations



Working With Images



Don't be a COOL LIBRAAIAR!!



Image Generation

- AI Image Generation has come a loooooong way since 2023!



Image Generation

- Historically (until April 2025), popular AI image generators couldn't reliably generate text.

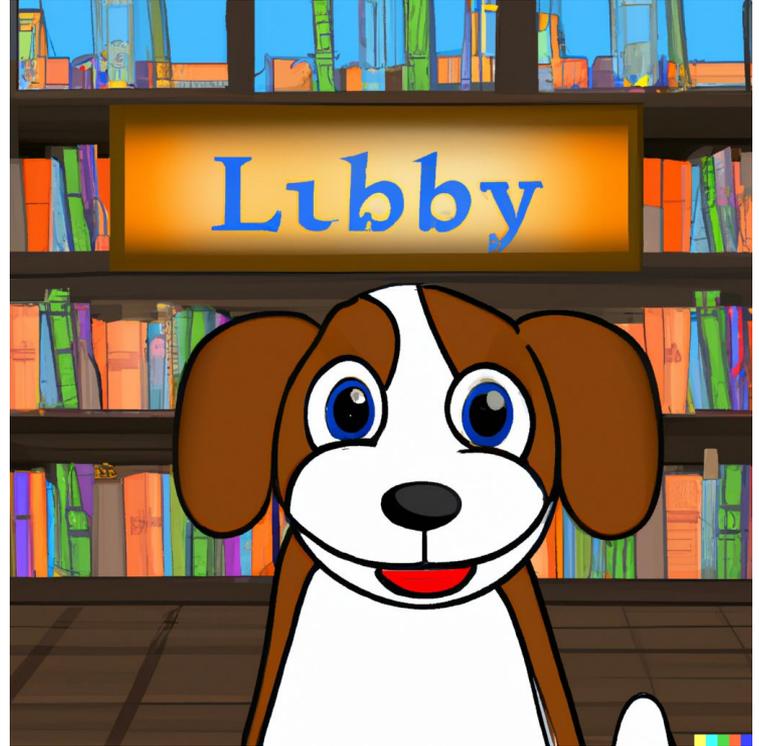


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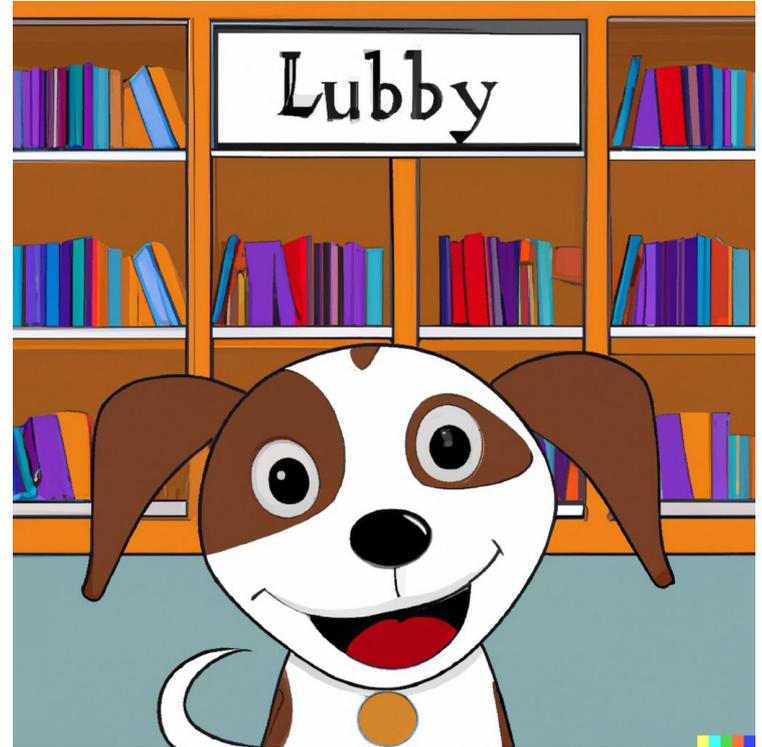


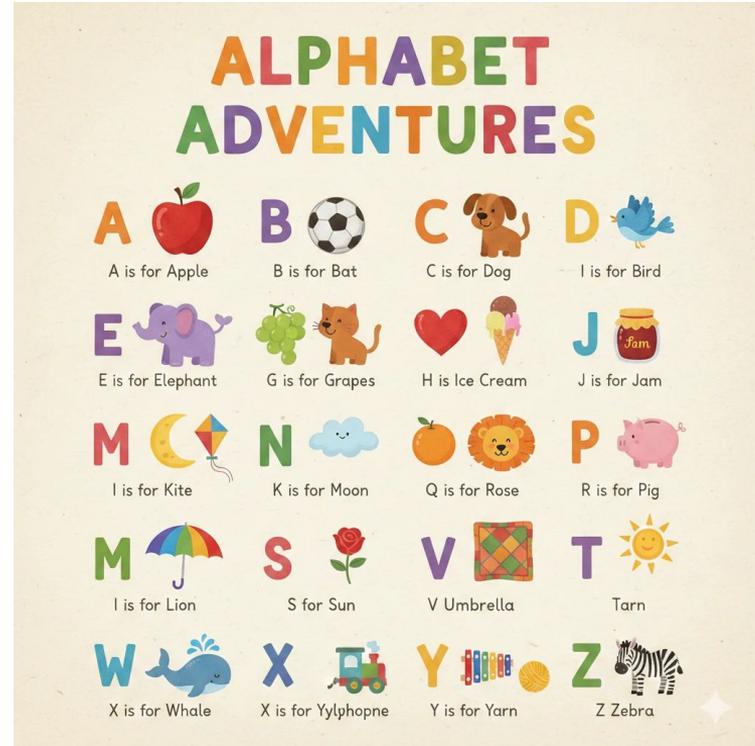
Image Generation

- OpenAI Image Generation costs 1¢ to 17¢ (June 2025 pricing)



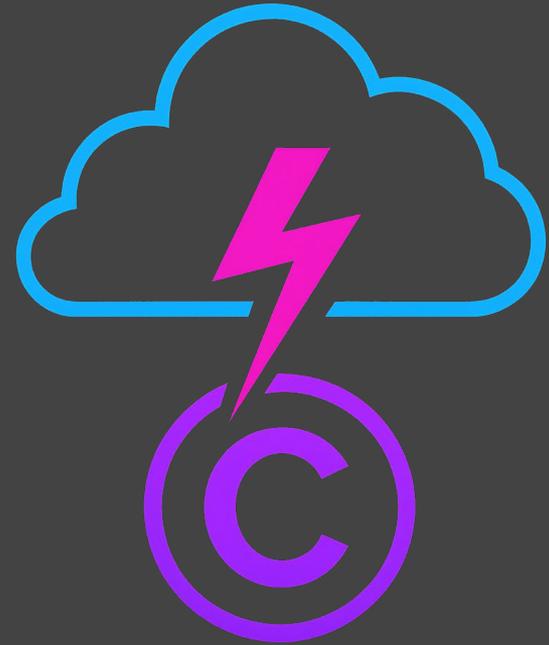
Image Generation

- Modern AI image generators can handle MUCH more text
- But they eventually will make mistakes



Copyright Concerns?

- AI-generated content is NOT eligible for copyright protection in the US
- Text and image lawsuits still in progress; settlements also happening



Transparency! Let People Know...

"Some material was generated using [AI-based tools] and reviewed for accuracy by human staff."



Aside: Librarian Stereotypes in AI



Bias and Discrimination



Image Bias Example #1

"picture of teenagers in a public library" in DALL-E2, 25 Jan 2023

picture of teenagers in a public library

Generate



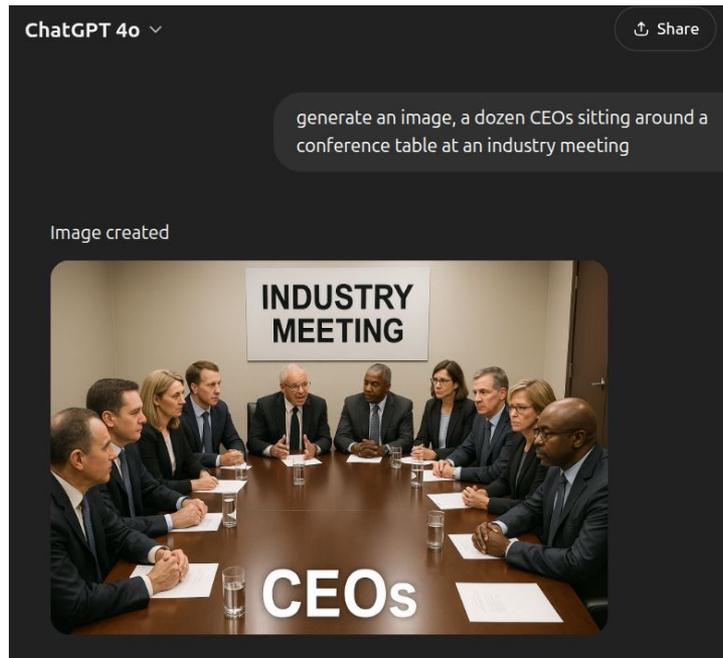
Image Bias Example #2

Slate.com Example, 2023



Modern Example

GPT-4o, May 2025



Be Persistent

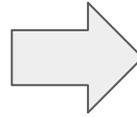
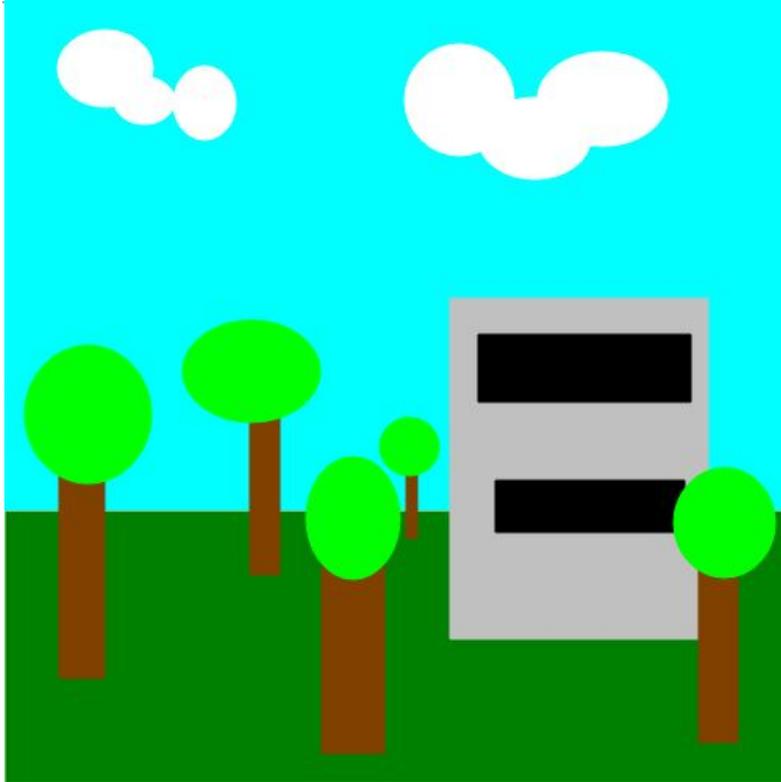
- Try prompts multiple times
- Try multiple prompts
- Try different settings when available
- Keep trying
- Try again
- Don't give up
- You can probably do it

Show AND Tell

- Use reference images (edit / upload) when possible
- Be as descriptive as possible in the supplemental prompts
- Use negative prompts where possible



Image Transformation ("img2img")



Imitation, Flattery, etc.

- "... in the style of..." (basic)
- specific style models (advanced)



"Add a bike rack and repair station to this picture"

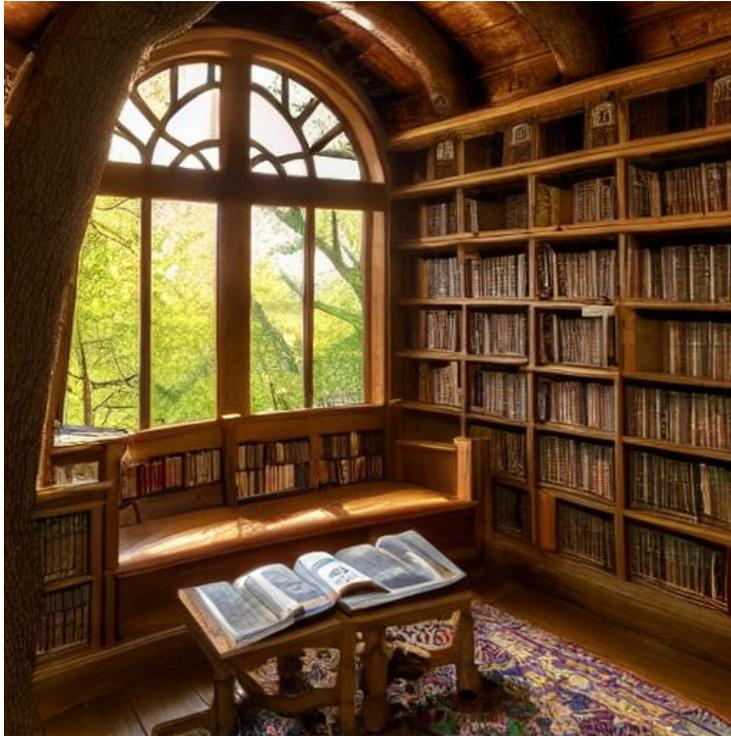




Prompt Examples

- graphic novel panel of a public library reading room with two superheroes battling between two bookshelves, high-contrast, vivid colors, heavy inking
- photograph of a public library circulation desk with a cartoon librarian sitting behind the computer
- custom embroidery of Eleanor Roosevelt smiling and waving, needlepoint, craft, pinterest
- impressionist painting of Abraham Lincoln, oil, canvas
- painting of Ada Lovelace done in the style of pointillism
- portrait of Mary Queen of Scots with an aquamarine theme, done ~~in the style of Matisse~~
- solarpunk portrait of Cleopatra
- painting of a spaceship landing in a forest clearing on a cloudy day ~~in the style of Emily Carr~~

"a quaint rustic public library reading room built inside a giant oak tree, ornately hand-carved windows letting in sunlight, books lining shelves placed irregularly on the wooden walls, treetop living, northwoods, digital art artstation hq"



"mixed media collage, Halloween, papercraft, terrifying, blood-chilling, nightmare, pumpkins, vampire, Frankenstein, monster"



Example Re-usable Prompt (Detailed! :-)

STYLE STATEMENT: you are creating an element that will be part of a cohesive set of clip art, icons, and visual accoutrement in a unified “Neo-80s Vector Noir” style: pure black background with high-contrast neon accents. Visual language is a deliberate cross between Patrick Nagel graphic minimalism (clean silhouettes, hard edges, elegant negative space), 80s desktop clip art (simple, slightly playful geometry), 32-bit / retro gaming tech motifs (chunky UI primitives and pixel-era abstraction), and flat material-design clarity (bold hierarchy and legibility). Icons are constructed from large filled vector shapes (flat planes), not thin monoline strokes. Prefer no outlines; if separation is needed, use shape breaks, negative-space cutouts, or thick blocky edging sparingly. Use a tight neon palette (2–4 colors per icon) such as electric cyan, hot magenta, laser purple, neon blue, with rare acid-lime or neon-orange highlights. Keep surfaces clean: no photorealism, no grain, no complex textures, no busy backgrounds. Shading is minimal and graphic only—flat shadow slabs (one darker tone), optionally a subtle controlled neon glow on small accents while preserving crisp edges and deep black. Composition should be centered, emblem-like, and highly readable at small sizes, with symbolic storytelling (clear metaphors, totemic stacking of 1–3 simple elements). Overall feel: logo-meets-poster, retro-futurist, bold, and consistent across the entire set.



Congratulations!

You are now in charge of outreach and promotion for our Summer Reading Program. Plan and implement an outreach strategy that will bring in crowds of enthusiastic readers!

Thanks for watching!

Questions? Comments? Email jim@galecia.com any time!

