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Final Projects Summer 2023

LIS 9704: Librarianship and Evolving
Technologies

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AI and Library Programming

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AI and Library Programming

Research question:

Can current iterations of AI be used effectively to create a realistic library program?

Part One: Asking AI to create three core library programs - Using the free version of Chat GPT (3.5)

| Storytime | |
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| <p>Text input into chat box:</p> <p><i>Create a dog themed library storytime</i></p> | <p>Generated program:</p> <p>Title: "Pawsitively Perfect Library Adventure: A Dog-Themed Storytime"</p> <p>Introduction: Welcome to our dog-themed storytime at the library! Get ready to embark on a pawsitively perfect adventure filled with furry friends, wagging tails, and heartwarming tales. Let's gather around as we delve into the world of lovable canines and the adventures they lead.</p> <p>Activity: "Doggy Ears Craft" Before we begin our storytime, let's start with a fun craft activity. We'll make "Doggy Ears" headbands! Use brown construction paper, markers, and glue to create your own adorable set of floppy dog ears to wear throughout our stories.</p> <p>Book 1: "Biscuit" by Alyssa Satin Capucilli Meet Biscuit, the charming little yellow puppy, as he explores the world around him. We'll follow Biscuit on his adventures and learn about the value of friendship, loyalty, and everyday joys. Get ready for heart-melting moments!</p> <p>Song: "The Happy Puppy Song" Sing along to a joyful tune about playful puppies and their wagging tails. (Tune: "If You're Happy and You Know It")</p> <p>Book 2: "Clifford the Big Red Dog" by Norman Bridwell Join Emily Elizabeth and her giant red dog, Clifford, as they experience various adventures in their neighborhood. Clifford's big heart and lovable personality will surely capture your hearts.</p> |

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| | <p>Activity: "Dog Training Fun" Time to practice our dog training skills! We'll play a game where each child pretends to be a dog, and their parent or caregiver can be the trainer. The "trainer" can give commands like "sit," "stay," and "roll over." Let's see who can perform the best doggy tricks!</p> <p>Book 3: "Harry the Dirty Dog" by Gene Zion Meet Harry, a mischievous little white dog who loves to explore but dislikes baths. Follow his humorous journey as he gets into muddy adventures and eventually finds his way back home.</p> <p>Song: "Who Let the Dogs Out" Get ready to dance and sing along to the catchy tune of "Who Let the Dogs Out." Let's unleash our inner party pups!</p> <p>Book 4: "Go, Dog. Go!" by P.D. Eastman Jump into the world of energetic dogs in this classic Dr. Seuss Beginner Book. Follow the colorful canines as they drive cars, play together, and have fun at the biggest dog party ever!</p> <p>Activity: "Guess the Dog Breed" Let's play a guessing game! We'll show pictures of different dog breeds, and everyone can try to guess their names. It's a great opportunity to learn about the incredible diversity of dog breeds.</p> <p>Book 5: "If You Give a Dog a Donut" by Laura Numeroff Join this delightful tale of a dog's adventures when he gets a donut and how one thing leads to another in a chain of funny events.</p> <p>Conclusion: As our dog-themed storytime comes to an end, we hope you had a tail-wagging good time! Remember, dogs are not just our loyal companions; they also teach us valuable life lessons about love, friendship, and adventure. Don't forget to check out some dog-themed books to continue your reading journey at home. Until next time, keep reading and loving our furry friends! Woof!</p> |
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| Children's STEM program | |
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| <p>Text input into chat box:</p> <p><i>Create a kids library STEM program</i></p> | <p>Generated text:</p> <p>Title: Exploring STEM Wonderland - A Kids Library Program Objective: The "Exploring STEM Wonderland" program aims to introduce young learners to the fascinating world of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) through engaging and interactive activities at the library. The program's primary goals are to foster curiosity, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and a love for learning in children aged 6 to 10.</p> <p>Duration: 8 weeks (one session per week)</p> <p>Week 1: Discovering Science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands-on science experiments with everyday materials. • Introduction to the scientific method. • Exploring basic concepts of physics, chemistry, and biology. <p>Week 2: Marvelous Mathematics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fun math games and puzzles. • Introduction to basic arithmetic, shapes, and patterns. • Math activities involving measurements and counting. <p>Week 3: Technology Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to age-appropriate educational apps and websites. • Basic coding activities using visual programming languages. • Learning about computers, their components, and how they work. <p>Week 4: Engineering Adventures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building structures with different materials. • Exploring simple machines and their functions. • Designing and testing paper airplanes or bridges. <p>Week 5: Nature and Ecology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor exploration and nature walk. • Learning about plants, animals, and ecosystems. • Environmental awareness activities and recycling games. <p>Week 6: Space and Astronomy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring the wonders of the universe. • Hands-on activities on the solar system, stars, and constellations. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creating a space-themed craft. <p>Week 7: Science in Everyday Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connecting science to everyday experiences.• Kitchen science experiments.• Understanding the importance of hygiene and healthy habits. <p>Week 8: Science Fair Showcase</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children present their favorite project or activity from the program.• Encourage creativity and confidence in sharing their knowledge. <p>Supplies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Science experiment kits• Math games and puzzles• Age-appropriate tablets or computers for technology activities• Building materials (blocks, LEGO, etc.)• Nature exploration tools (magnifying glasses, binoculars, etc.)• Art and craft supplies <p>Marketing and Promotion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Design colorful and attractive flyers and posters.• Collaborate with local schools and childcare centers to promote the program.• Utilize social media platforms and the library’s website for announcements.• Encourage parents to register their children in advance to secure a spot. <p>Program Guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure the program is inclusive and accessible to children with diverse backgrounds and abilities.• Keep the sessions interactive and age-appropriate, maintaining a balance between education and fun.• Involve parents and caregivers in some activities to foster a collaborative learning environment.• Provide take-home materials, handouts, or resources to encourage continued learning outside the program. <p>Conclusion: The “Exploring STEM Wonderland” program at the library aims to inspire young minds, spark their curiosity, and lay the foundation for a lifelong interest in STEM fields. By offering</p> |
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| | <p>engaging and interactive activities, this program can create a positive impact on children’s learning and development, preparing them for a bright and knowledgeable future.</p> |
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| Adult Book Club | |
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| <p>Text input into chat box:</p> <p>Create an adult library book club for the book The Saturday Night Ghost Club: A Novel Book by Craig Davidson</p> | <p>Generated text:</p> <p>Welcome to the "Saturday Night Ghost Club" Adult Library Book Club!</p> <p>Are you ready to embark on a journey into the mysterious and nostalgic world of "The Saturday Night Ghost Club: A Novel" by Craig Davidson? Join us as we delve into this captivating and thought-provoking literary work, exploring its themes, characters, and intricate storytelling. Whether you're a seasoned book club member or a newcomer to the joys of literary discussion, you're invited to be a part of our community of avid readers.</p> <p>About the Book: "The Saturday Night Ghost Club" takes us back to the summer of 1988, where a young neurosurgeon named Jake Baker reflects on his formative years in the small town of Cataract City. Amidst the adventures of his youth, Jake forms the Saturday Night Ghost Club with his uncle and a group of misfit friends, embarking on a series of paranormal investigations that blur the lines between reality and imagination. As secrets are unveiled and connections are forged, the story explores themes of friendship, memory, the unknown, and the enduring power of nostalgia.</p> <p>Book Club Activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monthly Meetings: We'll meet on the last Saturday of every month to discuss different sections of the book, share our thoughts, and engage in insightful conversations. 2. Thematic Discussions: Explore the book's themes, such as the supernatural, memory, coming-of-age, and the impact of our past on our present. 3. Character Analysis: Delve into the characters' motivations, developments, and relationships. Share your favorite characters and moments. 4. Author Exploration: Learn more about Craig Davidson's writing style, influences, and background. Discuss how his experiences may have shaped the novel. 5. Paranormal Adventures: Channel your inner ghost hunter! Share your thoughts on the paranormal investigations in the book and discuss your own beliefs and experiences with the supernatural. |

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| | <p>6. Nostalgia Night: Embrace the 1980s setting by sharing your own nostalgic memories, favorite movies, music, and pop culture references from that era.</p> <p>7. Book-to-Screen Comparison: If applicable, discuss how the story might translate to different media, such as film or television.</p> <p>8. Guest Speakers: Invite guest speakers, such as local historians or experts in related fields, to provide additional insights and perspectives.</p> <p>9. Creative Expressions: Share your own creative works inspired by the book, whether it's fan art, short stories, or poems.</p> <p>10. Field Trips: Consider visiting local places mentioned in the book or locations with a similar nostalgic vibe to enhance the reading experience.</p> <p>How to Join: Simply sign up at the library's front desk or on our website. Borrow or purchase a copy of "The Saturday Night Ghost Club" by Craig Davidson and start reading. We look forward to welcoming you to our engaging and enriching book club discussions!</p> <p>Let's journey together through the pages of "The Saturday Night Ghost Club" and explore the mysteries that lie within. Happy reading!</p> |
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Part two: Refining input text

After asking the initial requests, I realized the output text for the STEM program and book club was not quite what I had wanted. The programs generated were multi-week programs, whereas I wanted single session programs. As such, I went back to refine the parameters the text I input, making them more specific. In the case of the STEM program, a third revision was done to narrow down to a specific STEM topic.

| Children's STEM program - Refined | |
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| Refined input text: | Generated Text |
| Create a single session library STEM program for children ages 9-12 | <p>Title: Exciting STEM Explorers</p> <p>Overview: Welcome to Exciting STEM Explorers! This single-session library STEM program is designed for children aged 9 to 12 to engage them in fun and interactive activities that foster curiosity and critical thinking in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). The program aims to</p> |

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| | <p>make learning enjoyable and inspire young minds to become enthusiastic problem solvers and innovators.</p> <p>Duration: 1.5 – 2 hours</p> <p>Materials:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Whiteboard or large paper2. Markers and chalk3. Projector (optional)4. STEM-related books (optional)5. Sticky notes6. Craft supplies (paper, scissors, glue, etc.)7. Worksheets (created or printed in advance)8. Small prizes or certificates for participation <p>Session Plan:</p> <p>Introduction (10 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome the children and introduce yourself as the STEM facilitator.• Icebreaker: Have the children introduce themselves and share one thing they find fascinating in the world of science or technology. <p>Activity 1: The Amazing Rube Goldberg Machines (30 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explain what a Rube Goldberg machine is (a complex machine that performs a simple task through a series of chain reactions).• Show a short video or images of Rube Goldberg machines for inspiration.• Divide the children into small groups and provide craft supplies.• Instruct each group to design and build their own Rube Goldberg machine that accomplishes a specific task (e.g., popping a balloon, turning on a light).• Each group will present their machines to the rest of the participants, explaining the chain reaction and how it achieves the task. <p>Activity 2: Codes and Ciphers (30 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduce the concept of codes and ciphers and how they are used to keep information secure.• Show examples of simple ciphers like Caesar cipher or Morse code.• Provide each child with a worksheet containing encrypted messages and instructions on how to decode them.• Guide them through the process and encourage teamwork to solve the puzzles.• Offer small hints or clues if needed. <p>Snack Break (15 mins)</p> |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a healthy snack and a chance for the children to interact casually. <p>Activity 3: Straw Tower Challenge (30 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the engineering challenge: Build the tallest tower using only drinking straws and tape that can support a marshmallow on top. • Divide the children into teams and provide them with straws and tape. • Set a time limit for construction and testing. • After the time is up, measure each tower's height and test their stability with a marshmallow on top. • Celebrate the winning team with a small prize. <p>Conclusion (5 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather the children and recap the activities they enjoyed during the session. • Ask them what they learned and how they can apply the knowledge in their daily lives. • Distribute participation certificates and thank the children for being enthusiastic STEM explorers. <p>Note: Feel free to modify the activities according to the resources and time available. The emphasis should be on fostering creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving skills while introducing them to various STEM concepts in a fun and engaging way.</p> |
| <p>Revision #3 input text:</p> <p>Create a single session STEM library program for children ages 9-12 about chain reactions.</p> | <p>Generated text:</p> <p>Title: Chain Reaction Bonanza</p> <p>Objective: The "Chain Reaction Bonanza" is a single-session STEM library program designed for children aged 9-12. The program aims to introduce the concept of chain reactions and its applications in various fields. Participants will engage in interactive activities to understand the principles of chain reactions and develop their problem-solving and teamwork skills.</p> <p>Duration: Approximately 90 minutes</p> <p>Materials:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dominos or building blocks 2. Balls of different sizes 3. Ramps and tracks 4. Various objects like toy cars, marbles, etc. 5. Safety goggles (for each participant) 6. Whiteboard or large paper and markers 7. Projector and screen (optional) <p>Program Outline:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction (10 minutes) |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome the children and introduce yourself as the facilitator.• Explain the concept of chain reactions and its significance in various fields, such as science, engineering, and even daily life.• Share a simple example of a chain reaction to spark their curiosity. <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Chain Reaction Principles (15 minutes)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present a brief presentation or use visual aids to explain the basic principles of chain reactions, including potential and kinetic energy, trigger mechanisms, and the role of transfer of energy.• Encourage questions and discussions from the children to make it an interactive session.3. Safety Instructions (5 minutes)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emphasize the importance of safety during the hands-on activities.• Demonstrate the proper use of safety goggles and set clear rules for the program.4. Building a Simple Chain Reaction (30 minutes)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide the children into small groups and provide each group with dominos or building blocks.• Instruct them to design and build a simple chain reaction using the materials provided.• Encourage creativity and experimentation as they plan and test their chain reactions.5. Chain Reaction Challenge (20 minutes)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gather all the groups together and set up an area where they can connect their chain reactions.• Invite each group to present their chain reaction and explain how it works.• As a group, create a large-scale chain reaction by connecting the individual designs to trigger a series of events.6. Real-World Applications (10 minutes)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss real-world applications of chain reactions, such as in manufacturing, engineering, and scientific experiments.• Highlight famous chain reaction devices like Rube Goldberg machines.7. Wrap-up and Reflection (10 minutes)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gather the children in a circle and facilitate a group discussion on their experiences during the program. |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage them to share their favorite parts and any new insights they gained about chain reactions. • Conclude the program by reinforcing the importance of curiosity, creativity, and teamwork in STEM. <p>Optional: If time permits, show a short video of complex chain reaction machines to inspire the children further.</p> <p>Note: Remember to tailor the difficulty level of the activities to suit the age and capabilities of the children attending the program.</p> |
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| Adult Book Club – Refined | |
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| <p>Text input into chat box:</p> <p>Create a single session adult library book club for the book <i>The Saturday Night Ghost Club: A Novel</i> by Craig Davidson</p> | <p>Generated text:</p> <p>Title: The Saturday Night Ghost Club: A Novel Book Club Welcome to our adult library book club, where we'll be delving into the intriguing and eerie world of "The Saturday Night Ghost Club" by Craig Davidson. In this captivating novel, we'll follow the adventures of a young boy as he uncovers the mysteries of his hometown and the darker secrets that lie beneath the surface.</p> <p>Objective: Our book club aims to explore the various themes, characters, and narrative elements of "The Saturday Night Ghost Club." We will engage in thoughtful discussions, share our interpretations, and enjoy an enriching literary experience together.</p> <p>Meeting Schedule: We will meet once a month on the last Saturday of each month, starting from [insert start date]. The sessions will be held in the library's cozy reading corner or any suitable space available.</p> <p>Session Plan:</p> <p>Session 1: Introductions and Setting the Stage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce ourselves and share our interests in reading and the supernatural genre. • Briefly discuss the author, Craig Davidson, and his other works. • Explore the initial impressions of "The Saturday Night Ghost Club" based on the cover, title, and synopsis. • Dive into the first few chapters and discuss the setting, tone, and the introduction of characters. <p>Session 2: Character Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the main characters in the novel, such as the protagonist, Jake Baker, and his eccentric uncle, Calvin. • Examine the character development throughout the story and how they contribute to the overall plot. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share our favorite and least favorite characters, and reasons behind our choices. <p>Session 3: Themes and Symbolism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify the major themes explored in the novel, such as nostalgia, loss, friendship, and the supernatural.• Discuss the symbolism of the Saturday Night Ghost Club and its significance to the narrative.• Analyze the author's writing style and how it enhances the storytelling. <p>Session 4: Plot Twists and Unraveling Secrets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore the pivotal moments and plot twists that kept us engaged.• Unravel the secrets and mysteries surrounding the town and the Ghost Club.• Share our predictions for the remaining part of the story. <p>Session 5: The Supernatural Element</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss the supernatural aspects of the novel and how they blend with the coming-of-age theme.• Share any personal encounters with the paranormal or similar experiences that relate to the book. <p>Session 6: Final Thoughts and Reflections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share our overall impressions and feelings about "The Saturday Night Ghost Club."• Reflect on the lessons and takeaways we gained from the story.• Vote for the next book we'll explore together. <p>Additional Activities (Optional):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Movie night: Watch a related supernatural movie after finishing the book and discuss the differences and similarities.• Field trip: Organize a visit to a local haunted site or historical landmark to add to the eerie atmosphere. <p>Remember to bring your enthusiasm, insights, and a desire to explore the unknown as we embark on this literary journey together! Happy reading!</p> |
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Part three: Analysis of programs

Qualifying information: These analyses are based off both professional standards and my personal experiences as both a library technician responsible for delivering programs as well as my work on the program development division of the Brampton Public Library.

Storytime

Methodology

I asked ChatGPT to create a dog themed storytime. While storytimes do not necessarily need a theme, I personally find they are helpful in the planning process.

Evaluation

The purpose of storytime is to help promote early childhood literacy through reading, songs, and rhymes. As such, I was pleasantly surprised by outline generated by ChatGPT. It was coherent and hit on specific elements that make up a storytime: activities, books, and songs. The structure of the outline followed a natural storytime order: 1) Introduction, 2) a story, 3) activity or song, 4) repeat steps two and three, depending on length of program. However, there are a few things that can need to be changed in order to make it a better storytime.

The introduction provided to for the storytime was a nice way to start off the program. However, storytimers (library staff who deliver storytime programs), generally start off the program with a welcome song. This is a song that is sung at the beginning of every storytime to help the children and their caregivers settle in. Most storytimers use the same welcome song for each session.

The outline then calls for an activity. I would leave activities closer toward the end of the storytime because putting out materials, doing the activity, and then tidying up takes time and leads to distractions. It is better suited towards the end of the storytime for this reason. Instead of an activity, swap it out for a settling down song (such as "[Open and Shut Them](#)", or "[Shake Our Sillies Out](#)"). These songs are meant to help children expel any extra energy they may have to get ready to sit still for a story.

All the books used in the outline were actual books. I was surprised by this because when I had done a test run during my project proposal process, the books that were used were actually fake titles. However, this time around I was able to find all the books used in the outline as actual published materials. They were also available on the [Internet Archive](#) website. This allowed for me to assess whether or not the books would be appropriate for both the target age group (in this case, children ages 0-5 years old), as well as for a storytime. Book one, "Biscuit" by Alyssa Satin Capucilli, is a short story with few words and lots of repetition but not a strong narrative. It could work if the crowd of children leaning on the younger end of the 0-5 years spectrum. The second book, "Clifford the Big Red Dog" by Norman Birdwell, is a classic story that would work well for storytime. It is age appropriate and has a strong, easy to follow narrative. The third book, "Harry the Dirty Dog" by Gene Zion is an excellent book for storytime (I have actually used it for a real storytime before). The story is fun, with not too many or too little words. The fourth book, "Go, Dog. Go!" by P.D Eastman is the least suitable of the four titles for a storytime. While it is appropriate for the age group, at 64 pages it is far too long for a storytime.

The outline suggested three activities. The "Doggy Ear Craft" activity, creating a dog ear headband, was a realistic activity that might be included in a storytime. It was something simple

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enough that most children with varying dexterity levels would be able to participate in, does not require too many materials, and would be quick to do. The next activity, “Dog Training Fun”, was one that I was not too sure about. While playing and using your imagination is an important part of early literacy, the idea of calling children dogs and giving them dog commands could be offensive to some. The final activity, “Guess that Dog Breed” is a good activity that is both a fun game and educational.

The outline used two songs. The first was “The Happy Puppy Song” that is to be sung to the tune of “If You're Happy and You Know It”. While the outline does not actually provide the lyrics to the song, the name and the tune that it is to be sung to is enough inspiration for the storytimer to come up with lyrics. The other song suggested, “Who Let the Dogs Out” is, in my opinion, inappropriate. While the theme connection is clear, and the main course for the song is innocent enough, the rest of the lyrics and the underlying sexual connotations of the original song by Baha Men, is not at all appropriate for children.

Something that was missing from the ChatGPT outline that should be included is a “learning aside”. Learning asides are informative comments or suggestions directed at the guardians of the children that are based in the principles of the [Every Child Ready to Read \(ECRR\)](#) initiative. The initiative is founded in the belief that there are five practices – talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing – that when done every single day improve a child’s literacy. An example of a learning aside is “Grownup, did you know that talking to your little ones is a great way to increase their vocabulary and world knowledge? So ask your children lots of questions and encourage them answer.”

Final thoughts

ChatGPT would be a good tool for seasoned librarians and storytimers to use when they are short on time and need to put together a program in a pinch. The outline generally provides a realistic structure. It also provides actual published titles. However, the storytimer would still need to assess the appropriateness of the books, activities, and songs.

STEM Program

Methodology:

Generally, library STEM programs for children are divided into age groups because skill levels and prior knowledge vary greatly between children ages 6-12. I chose to plan a program for children ages 9-12.

Evaluation

During the first iteration of text I input into ChatGPT, I simply asked it to create a children’s STEM library program. The program that was generated was an eight-week series, with one session happening per week. The outline specified what STEM concept was to be focused on each week, and what topics and activities were to be covered. While this was a good

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outline for a longer series, I was looking for a single session outline instead. As such, I refined the input text to clarify that the program was to be a single session instead. The outline generated by this specification was better as it produced a program that was approximately 1.5-2 hours long instead. It even provided the estimated time that should be spent on each activity. However, the actual content of the session was broadly focused on several STEM concepts. I wanted to see if I could make the outline more specific, so I refined my input text for the third time.

For the third revision, I included a specific STEM concept, chain reactions, into the input text. The ChatGPT generated text for this input was much more specific than the previous iterations. For example, it mentioned the specific scientific principles related to chain reactions – potential energy, kinetic energy, trigger mechanisms. The experiments that were included effective ways to illustrate chain reactions. However, none of the generated text explained the principles or how they applied to the experiments/activities.

The structure of the outline generated was pretty close to how a Brampton Public Library runs its Kids Discovery club. Introducing the program, introducing the STEM concepts and tying them into real-world scenarios, breaking into groups to conducting the activity, coming together to discuss the results.

Final thoughts

When a specific topic was identified, ChatGPT provided a good bare-bones outline for a children's STEM program. However, library programs would still need to take the time to research the specifics of the STEM concept and to test to make sure the experiments in the outline do in fact illustrate the concept effectively.

Book Club

Methodology

I picked The Saturday Night Book Club by Craig Davidson as the title for the book club for two reasons: I have read it; it has been read for actual library book clubs. Having read the book was important to this experiment because it would allow me to fact-check the information provided by ChatGPT.

Evaluation

As with the STEM program, the initial input text I sent to ChatGPT did not specify with that the program was to be a single session one. As a result, the generated text was for a monthly book club. In most cases, book clubs that meet once a month tend to discuss different titles. I revised the question to specify it was to be a single session book club. Even with this revision, the generated text still produced a multi-session book club. It merely included the word “session” into the text. When comparing the two outlines, I personally found the first to be more creative and engaging in the activities (my favourites being week 5: Paranormal Adventures and week 9: Creative Expressions).

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However, even though ChatGPT was unable to create a program of the desired length, it provided accurate summaries of the book in the “About the book” sections. Further, it also identified specific themes that were present in the novel (nostalgia, memory, supernatural). The suggested activities were realistic to what a real book club would do – discussing themes and symbolism, character analysis, etc. I was also very surprised that the activities were highly specific to the novel. For example, week 6, Nostalgia Night, in the first outline suggests having an 80’s themed night because the setting of the book takes place in the 1980s. This particular activity is not one what I would have thought of for a library book club.

Final Thoughts

While ChatGPT may not have been able to create a book club program of the specified length, it was still able to provide a relevant and title-specific outline. Library programmers could create their own length-appropriate book club meeting piecing together various elements of the outline. Even so, it is still important for the book club leader to have read the book before they use the outline in order for them to be able to accurately assess the suggested activities for relevance.

Conclusion

I believe that ChatGPT 3.5 can to a provide a good rough outline to be used as a starting point during the program planning process of the three specified core library programs. The outlines contain all the structural elements of “real” library programs. However, it cannot create a fully ready to deliver program on its own. Library programmers will need to both expand of the activities, providing the content for the overall objectives of those activities, as well as assess the accuracy of the information provided.

Even if AI could create more fulsome and complete outlines, human involvement would still be needed at some level. Either for ensuring the content was in fact correct, or for actually facilitating and delivering the programs.