Read It Together

Whose Thinking Is It?

When a tool helped, did you write it?

You can say what the machine does, when it is wrong, and why it is not a source. That is the vocabulary this plate needs.

Forty minutes on one question, asked twice: what did I do, and what did the tool do?

Step 1 · The starter · 5 min

Whose work is it?

Who wrote your last piece of homework? Everyone says "me".

If a friend fixed your spelling, is it still yours? If a friend dictated it, sentence by sentence? If a friend wrote it and you copied it out?

The question was never who typed it. It is whose thinking is in it.

Step 2 · Two pieces · 8 min

Which one has an author in it?

Two short pieces on the same topic, unlabeled. One written by a student who then used a tool for spelling and unclear sentences. One produced by a model from a one-line prompt and lightly reworded.

In pairs, decide which has an author in it, and write one sentence on how you can tell.

The tell is specificity. The student's piece has a detail only someone who did the work would know. The model's piece is smooth and general.

Do this together

Reveal which is which, then ask what the tool did in each case. Spelling and clarity in one. Everything in the other.

Step 3 · Your own work · 12 min

Two questions and a line

Take a recent piece of your own work. In writing, honestly and specifically: what did I do? What did the tool do? "No tool" is a complete answer.

Then the line you would put at the bottom of the work to tell the whole truth. "I used a spelling checker." "I asked an AI tool to explain photosynthesis before writing this." "No tool."

Precision

"It helped a bit" is not an answer

Vagueness here is not modesty. It is a way of not answering.

> Someone might say: It helped a bit.
>
> **It corrected six spellings and flagged one unclear sentence.**

> Someone might say: I changed enough of it to make it mine.
>
> **Changing words conceals the origin. It does not add thinking. Authorship is a claim about where the thinking came from.**

> Someone might say: AI was used.
>
> **I used an AI tool to outline the argument; the paragraphs and the examples are mine.**

Plenary · 10 min

Comfortable or not

Read some disclosure lines aloud. Which would be comfortable to say to a teacher's face? The discomfort is the lesson. The reason a sentence is hard to say is the reason the use was not fair.

If a model is at the front, ask it whether its piece becomes yours after enough edits. It will usually say yes, with a percentage. The room knows what is wrong with that.

Next · Plate 5

What was it collecting?

The disclosure habit, turned the other way: not what did the tool do for me, but what did I give it?

For the adult in the room

Notes

The failure to guard against is the percentage rule. Authorship is a claim about where the thinking came from, and no share of changed words alters that. Do not negotiate a number.

The second failure is treating all tool use as forbidden. Spelling, flagging unclear sentences, and explaining a term before writing are fair, and should be named as fair. Otherwise students hide their use rather than disclose it.

Keep the tone away from accusation. The work is their own, in private. Nobody confesses anything aloud.