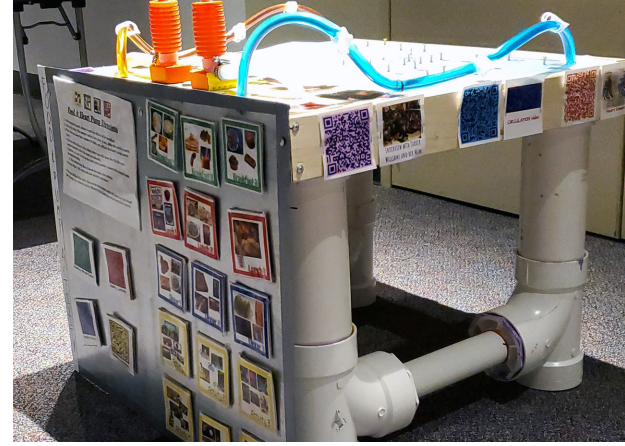# Artificial Intelligence Explorations

and Their Practical Use in School Environments

ISTE | **GENERAL MOTORS**

Melanie Haynes, a technology integration coach for Hoover City Schools in Alabama, was starting with a clean slate in undertaking an artificial intelligence project with a group of fifth-graders.

"My students did not initially understand what AI was," she said. *"But as we went on, they got a better grasp for the abstract aspects and awareness of what AI was. They were able to then look for and recognize AI in their daily lives."*

Hands-on student learning with AI

What Haynes and the students created was a website chatbot that showed how different foods and activities affect the human heart. As users clicked on food or activity choices, the Healthy Heart Chatbot described the healthiness of their choice, while an accompanying video showed students demonstrating on a heart-pump model the food or activity's effect on blood flow. The chatbot component navigated users towards healthier choices that were customized based on information they provided earlier.

It didn't take long for Haynes' students to catch on to how a chatbot works.

"It was great to see our students working toward understanding how to create conversation flow, anticipating what a user might input, and responding in an appropriate and accurate way to that answer," she said.

Looking Ahead

Haynes sees the project as just a beginning for herself, as well as for other educators in her district who are hungry to adapt traditional instructional practice for modern times.

"I definitely see this becoming more and more popular," she said. *"Many people look at it as an unattainable goal, but the teachers and instructors in our district are incredibly open to incorporating new ideas like AI into the classroom, and so I can only see this getting better and better."*

Like the students, Haynes came out of the project with more than just an understanding of how AI works, but the possibilities it offers for improving society.

"I think that one of the big pieces that I got out of the whole process is that I was able to recognize AI's presence in our society at the end of the course," she said. *"Now, not only am I able to recognize AI, but I am able to consider the endless possibilities in terms of the application of AI in various subjects."*

MELANIE HAYNES
Technology integration coach

HOOVER CITY SCHOOLS
Hoover, Alabama

DEMOGRAPHICS
13,856 students in a metropolitan school district; 59% white, 25% African-American, 7% Asian; 9% other; 24% of students qualify for free or reduced price lunch

"It was eye opening to see how much we are using AI already, and now we know more about it. My students...now have a better understanding of how everything works."

ISTE