

AI in Writing Process – Script for the fifth episode

Welcome back to AI in the Writing Process! I'm Matilda, an AI voice.

And I'm Chris, another AI voice. Last time, we talked about how we used AI to help us draft our essay. Now it's time to keep working with that draft—and yes, AI is back in the editing room.

Today, we're diving into the editing phase—also known as “the part where we realize how many words we've written... and how many we need to delete.”

Exactly. This is where we took our draft from last time and brought AI back into the mix to help us polish it up.

Since we'd already used AI in the planning and drafting phases, we wanted to make sure the actual writing was our own. But once that first version was done, we figured—why not let AI take a red pen to it?

This time, we used ChatGPT because Copilot was down that day. We asked ChatGPT for constructive feedback.

And oh boy, did it fail!

It sure did! We learned that you had to be specific—otherwise, it just tells you your essay is “well-written” and “insightful,” like a teacher who tries to sound encouraging but hasn't actually read the text. AI tends to be overly cheerful and kind, so if you really want constructive criticism, you need to prompt it in.

And once we did that, we got some solid feedback. We even asked if there were any confusing parts—and, surprise, there was one! We made the fix and moved on.

Then we asked if the text flowed logically. Basically: “Would a reader get whiplash at any point?” The AI gave us some good notes, and we added a few examples and clarifications.

But not all feedback was golden. Some of it was based on misunderstandings. So we used our judgment—because, let's face it, we're still smarter than the robot. For now. Still, those misunderstandings made us take a more critical look at our text to see if a human reader might also misinterpret it.

We also asked if there were any contradictions in the text. The AI got a little overexcited and started inventing problems! That's why it's useful to specify in the prompt that if there are no issues, the AI should just say so, rather than start making things up.

One suggestion was still helpful, though. It helped us better clarify the part where we say that AI can't be the author—humans are always responsible.

Good catch—I'd forgotten about that. Then we asked for feedback on the structure—intro, body, conclusion. We wanted to make sure the conclusion actually matched the promises we made in the introduction.

We made a few tweaks, added some concrete details, and rearranged the summary. Again and again. During this phase, we actually ended up rewriting and editing the summary about ten times—but that probably would've happened even without AI. Writing is a process, after all.

We also asked what could be added or removed. The AI had ideas—some good, some not so much—but the text was already way past the maximum length, so we only added a future perspective to the conclusion.

At one point, the AI said we had “too much theoretical content.” We didn't really understand the comment, so we asked for an example. It gave us... a mix-up of sources and a vague suggestion. But the idea to condense was good, so we adapted it in our own way—keeping in mind that academic essays are actually supposed to include theoretical content.

We also asked about metatext—those little guiding sentences that help the reader follow along. The AI gave us feedback, and we used it to improve the introduction and add a helpful sentence in the middle.

Not all suggestions made the cut. Some were just... off. But even the bad ones helped us think more critically about our own writing. It showed us that an outsider's view on your text is valuable, even if the comments themselves aren't directly useful.

We also asked the AI for ideas on peer review questions—what to ask if someone else was reading our text. It gave us some great prompts, and some of them we had already used during the process.

This is a great way to prepare for peer review in class—if AI-use is allowed—especially if you're not sure what kind of feedback to ask for. Just a hint!

Then we wanted to get some perspective on how our essay might be perceived. We asked ChatGPT to summarize the main message of our essay. It got the message right, but the perspective? Not quite. Still, it helped us reflect on how the text might be interpreted, and that helped us edit further.

We even asked for a 300-word summary to see what the AI thought were the key points of our text. It was a good way to check if our message was coming through—and it was.

And just for fun, we asked the AI to grade our essay. It didn't have the actual evaluation criteria, so this was more of a "just curious" moment. Like asking your dog what it thinks of your cooking. Generative AI can't—at least not yet—accurately grade anything, even with the criteria. So we don't recommend doing this, except for fun.

Then came the hard part: cutting the length down. We were way over the page limit, so we asked the AI for tips.

It gave us section-by-section suggestions. We followed many of them—cutting fluff, combining sentences, and trimming repetition.

We also made our own cuts. For example, we found two paragraphs saying the same thing, so we condensed and merged them.

We did several rounds of editing. Each time, we got closer to the target length. It took about an hour, but we finally made it. Without AI, this might've taken twice as long—or at least felt like it. So AI definitely sped up the shortening process. But again, it didn't do it for us—it did it with us.

So that's how we used AI in the editing phase. It gave us feedback, helped us reflect, and even made us laugh a little.

So would you say it made us better writers?

I'd say it made us more reflective writers—for sure. Even when the AI got things wrong, it pushed us to think more critically about our writing—and that's a win.

But in the end, we made the decisions—just like we've been doing and saying in every episode.

Thanks for joining us on AI in the Writing Process. Next time, we'll talk about the finalizing phase. Or as we like to call it: "The Finish Line... Almost."

Hello from the creators! This podcast was created with the help of AI. Copilot was used to translate the original Finnish video subtitles into an English language podcast draft. This draft was then heavily edited to fit our needs and ideas. Then Elevenlabs was used to turn our finished script into the podcast you are now listening to.