



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

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Using ChatGPT to Simplify Complex Text

By Wendy Overturf

ChatGPT is an advanced artificial intelligence program designed to understand and **create** human-like text. It works by studying the words you type and responding in a way that copies natural conversation. ChatGPT can answer questions, explain complex topics, help with writing, or even hold casual conversations. People use it for education, work, and entertainment because it can simplify difficult ideas and assist with tasks quickly.

ChatGPT can be used as an assistive technology tool. Assistive technology means tools that help people do things more easily, especially if they have challenges or disabilities. ChatGPT can help people understand complex reading passages by explaining it in simpler words. ChatGPT might be of value for children who are struggling with reading and understanding complex texts.

For example, after the ChatGPT website is open, there is a chat box that says “ask anything.” Suppose you wanted to know more about Labor Day. You would type, “What is Labor Day?” Below might be the first response from ChatGPT.

Labor Day is a national holiday in the United States celebrated on the first Monday in September. It was established to honor the contributions and achievements of American workers and the labor movement, which fought for fair wages, reasonable working hours, and safer working conditions. Originating in the late 19th century during a period of growing industrialization and labor unrest, Labor Day recognizes the economic and social impact of workers. Today, it is often observed with parades, community events, and time off work and school, marking both a tribute to labor rights and the unofficial end of summer.

But perhaps the wording and vocabulary are too complex for your child to understand. You could then follow-up with an additional question, “Rewrite this paragraph at a 6th grade reading level.” Here is the response.

Labor Day is a holiday celebrated on the first Monday in September. It honors and thanks all the

workers in our country for the hard work they do. It started long ago to remember the fight for fair pay and safe working conditions. On Labor Day, many people have the day off work or school. They celebrate with picnics, parades, or spending time with family and friends. It also marks the end of summer for many people.

You can also copy and paste any written text from an article into ChatGPT and ask for it to be rewritten at lower reading level, using shorter sentences, or simplifying words.

Basic ChatGPT is free to use. Anyone can sign up and use it to ask questions, get help with writing, or just have a conversation without cost. But there is also a paid version that has extra features, like faster answers or access to newer tools. Remember that ChatGPT is not perfect. Sometimes it makes mistakes or does not know the right answer. It is always good to check what it says.

To use ChatGPT, go to the official website chatgpt.com or download the mobile app. You can then create an account or sign in and start typing your prompts or questions into the chat box.

Caution: Do not enter any personal identifying information when using Chat GPT.

UPCOMING WI FACETS EVENTS

[IEP 2: Special Education Referral Process \(Pre-recorded\)](#)

Date: September 2, 2025

Presenter: Ann Zielke, WI FACETS

["Will you play with me?" - How to use DIRFloortime Play to Connect with your Child](#)

Date: September 3, 2025

Presenter: Helen Groth, DIRFloortime® Expert

[What is Wisconsin Special Education Mediation System and How to Use It](#)

Date: September 8, 2025

Presenters: Courtney Salzer, WI FACETS and Heidi Siebert, CESA 7

[Serving on Groups: Opportunities to Get Involved and Types of Groups \(Sec 1 & 2\)](#)

Date: September 11, 2025

Presenter: Jan Serak, Serak Consulting

[Intimidación y acoso a estudiantes con discapacidades](#)

Date: September 11, 2025

Presenter: Nathaly Silva, WI FACETS

[IEP 3: Evaluation and Eligibility in the IEP Process \(Pre-recorded\)](#)

Date: September 16, 2025

Presenter: Ann Zielke, WI FACETS

[Addressing Feeding and Swallowing in Schools](#)

Date: September 17, 2025

Presenters: Dawn Merth-Johnson and Michelle Silverman, WI DPI

[The Role of Sensory Processing in Self-Regulation](#)

Date: September 24, 2025

Presenters: Carlynn Higbie, Eva Kubinski, and Michelle Silvermann, WI DPI

Serving on Groups: Processes Groups Use (Sec 3)

Date: September 25, 2025

Presenter: Jan Serak, Serak Consulting

Resolución de desacuerdos sobre educación especial

Date: September 25, 2025

Presenter: Nelsinia Ramos, WI FACETS

IEP 4: Reevaluation and Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) (Pre-recorded)

Date: September 30, 2025

Presenter: Ann Zielke, WI FACETS

HOME LEARNING



Grandparents Day - September 7, 2025

Grandparents Day is the perfect opportunity for kids to show love and appreciation for their grandparents. (If your child does not have any grandparents this could be revised to show their love for a special adult in their life). Whether in person, virtually, or through mail, these ideas help make the day extra special.

Handmade Cards

- Let kids draw pictures or write notes about why they love their grandparents.
- Add photos or pressed flowers for a keepsake touch.

Memory Book

- Fill pages with drawings, photos, and written memories. Include “My favorite thing to do with you” or “What you taught me.”

Storytime Together

- Your child can read to grandparents or listen to grandparents share their favorite story. Do it in person or over video call.

Interview Grandparents

- Prepare simple questions: What was your school like? What games did you play? What was your favorite thing to eat? Older children can write the answers in a notebook for a family keepsake.



Literacy Ball Games for Kids

Outdoor ball games are a wonderful way to make literacy practice fun, active, and engaging. These games are simple to set up, need minimal equipment, and can be easily adapted for kids of different ages and skill levels. Here are some easy-to-play games that build reading, vocabulary, and phonics skills while keeping kids moving.

Alphabet Ball

The adult calls out a letter (e.g., “B”). Your child says a word starting with that letter (“ball”) before catching or returning the ball. Then your child calls out a new letter for the adult to answer.

Rhyming Ball

One person calls out a word (“cat”). The other must respond with a rhyme (“hat”) before throwing or catching the ball.

Opposite Ball

The adult says a word (“hot”). Your child responds with its opposite (“cold”) before tossing the ball.

Next Letter Ball

The adult says a letter (“C”). Your child must say a word starting with the next letter (“dog” for “D”).

ABC Sequence Ball

The adult says a letter (“G”). Your child simply calls out the next letter in the alphabet (“H”).

Category Ball

Choose a category (e.g., animals, foods, colors). On each player’s turn the player must name something in that category before tossing the ball. Example: “Elephant,” “lion,” “zebra,” and so on for animals.

Ball Games to Practice Math

Are you tired of using flashcards to help your child practice their math facts? Make math practice active and fun by adding a ball.

Math Facts Ball Toss

An adult calls out an addition problem (e.g., “7 + 5”). Your child answers before catching

Wisconsin Fall Colors

Next to Vermont and New England region, the US state famous for its fall colors is Wisconsin. Every autumn, the leaves of deciduous trees (oak, maple, elm, birch, etc.) change their color to a stunning combination of red, orange, and yellow due to the anthocyanin, carotene, and xanthophyll pigments.

The [best places to see the fall colors in Wisconsin](#) are Seven Bridges, Holy Hill Church, Lake Geneva, Minocqua, Eagle River, Sturgeon Bay, and Door County.

As the fall color is highly weather-dependent, relying on the length of daylight and change in temperature, the depth of the color and the exact time of occurrence may vary from one year to another.

The best time for fall foliage in Wisconsin is late September to mid-October.

First Day of Fall (Autumn) September 22, 2025

Celebrate the arrival of fall with these [fun, hands-on activities](#) that help your child connect with the season’s colors, textures, and traditions. Many of them only require materials that you would already have at your house.

[Fall into Fun with These AMAZING Autumn Facts for Kids!](#)

[Learning About Different Tree Species](#): Use a tree identification guide to learn about the trees in your area. Identify trees by their leaves, bark, and seeds.

[8 Easy Fall Recipes to Try with Your Child.](#)

[31 Fall Books for Kids: Best Autumn Stories for Young Children](#)

[Simple Fall Learning Activities](#)

[Autumn Paper Bag Tree](#)



UPCOMING STATE EVENTS

[State Superintendent's Conference on Special Education & Pupil Services Leadership](#)

Date: October 1, 2025

Location: Glacier Canyon Lodge, Wisconsin Dells, WI

This conference provides local directors of special education and pupil services and other interested parties with opportunities to network with colleagues from around the state as well as consultants and administrators from the Division for Learning Support at the Department of Public Instruction. Presentations will include information about current issues and changes in state and federal policy related to meeting the needs of students with disabilities and students facing other challenges to success in school.

\$100 registration closes on Wednesday, September 24, 2025.

After this date, walk-in or late registration is \$125.

Celebrating All Abilities: Thriving Together, Sharing Cultures

Date: October 4, 2025 - 10:00 am-2:00 pm

Location: Wick Playfield, 4929 W. Vliet Street, Milwaukee, WI 53208.

Join us for an interactive event designed to strengthen families of children with disabilities. Celebrating All Abilities will offer workshops, resources, and opportunities to connect with experts and community organizations that support special education and inclusion. Refreshments, lunch and childcare will be provided. For more information about this event contact MPS/Quiana Words at Office: 414-475-8075 - Cell: 414-333-1108

[Self-Determination by Design: Your Life, Your Way](#)

Dates: October 20 - 22, 2025

Location: Kalahari Resort, Wisconsin Dells, WI

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: September 25, 2025

Self-determination means taking control of your life. This conference is for people with disabilities and the people who support them. Learn more about independent living, [community](#) participation, and how to use public funds efficiently.

[2025 Children Come First Conference-Save the Dates](#)

Dates: November 3rd-4th, 2025

Location: Kalahari Resort • Wisconsin Dells, WI

As one of the largest and longest-running family-driven events in the state, this conference is dedicated to addressing the pressing needs of children and families living with mental and behavioral health issues.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Family Resource Centers

[Family Resource Centers \(FRCs\)](#) serve as welcoming and inclusive hubs of services and opportunities designed to strengthen families. They are focused on the community. They listen to the specific needs, cultures, and interests of the people they serve. FRCs offer programs and services that are tailored to local families and are provided at little or no cost.

FRCs help all families in their area by focusing on preventing problems before they start. They use

services that build on families' strengths and follow five important protective factors to guide their work.

FRCs across Wisconsin offer five core categories of services:

- Parenting Supports
- Resource and Navigation Services
- Child Development Activities
- Parent Leadership Development
- Community Engagement

Check this [interactive map](#) to find a Family Resource Center near you.

ONLINE RESOURCES: ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY



[Center for Parent Information and Resources \(CPIR\)](#)

This site has links to resources related to assistive technology. It also has links to checklists that IEP teams can use when considering assistive technology.

[Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction \(DPI\)](#)

Along with AT resources, this site also has federal and state requirements that address assistive technology as it relates to the development of IEPs and the implementation of special education. Additionally, this [resource](#) might be of value to educators regarding the use of AI in their teaching.

[Wisconsin AT4ALL](#)

The Assistive Technology Lending Center (ATLC) is now part of Wisconsin AT4ALL and includes lite, mid and high-end Alternative and Augmentative Communication(AAC) equipment for trial purposes for loan to Wisconsin LEA public school licensed professional educators. These devices can be trialed with children ages 3 to 18 who have IEPs and are enrolled in public schools or students age 19-21 who are enrolled in a Wisconsin LEA school program and have an IEP. To request assistive technology items for loan through the ATLC, click on the link above, set up a free account, select the category you are interested in, select "ATLC (AT Lending Center) WI School Based Loans" as the program, and search for the assistive technology that you are interested in obtaining for loan.

[Information Update Bulletin 22.02 from WI Department of Public Instruction](#)

This bulletin provides technical assistance on state and federal requirements related to identifying and addressing the need for assistive technology as part of a special education evaluation and Individualized Education Program (IEP) development.

[National Center on Accessible Educational Materials \(AEM\)](#)

The agency provides technical assistance, coaching, and resources to increase the availability and use of accessible educational materials and technologies for learners with disabilities across their lifespans.

[Bookshare](#)

Bookshare® is an ebook library that makes reading easier. Members can access a huge collection of ebooks and read "their way" with the most customizable ebooks for people with reading barriers. Bookshare is free for U.S. students with qualifying reading barriers. People with [qualifying conditions](#) who are not U.S. students,

and organizations serving them, pay a low membership fee. [Educators](#) may also sign up for an account to access books for their students.

[SETT Framework](#)

The SETT Framework is an organizational tool to help collaborative teams create student-centered, environmentally useful, and tasks-focused tool systems that foster the educational success of students with disabilities. The SETT Framework is built on the premise that in order to develop an appropriate system of assistive technology devices and services, teams must first gather information about the student, the customary environments in which the students spend their time, and the tasks that are required for the students to be active participants in the teaching/learning processes that lead to educational success.

[Free Assistive Technology Apps](#)

Check this website for links to online assistive technology tools to help with reading, writing, and math. Do a search for “free assistive technology apps” and the search results will provide even more links.

[Assistive Technology for Kids with Learning Disabilities: An Overview](#)

This is a link to an article for parents about the role of AT in helping their children with a learning disability. The better informed that parents are about AT, the greater the chances their child will experience success in school, in recreation and, eventually, at work.

[Closing the Gap Resource Directory](#)

The Resource Directory is a go-to guide for exploring the most recent advancements in assistive technology products. From software to hardware, the directory is regularly updated with the latest offerings and their manufacturers. This guide was made to help you find, learn about, and compare the newest assistive technology products available today.



Journal of Special Education Preparation

RESEARCH

Remixing Special Education Practices with Artificial Intelligence: UDL, EBP, and HLPs

McMahon, D., & Firestone, J. (2024). Remixing Special Education Practices with Artificial Intelligence: UDL, EBP, and HLPs. *Journal of Special Education Preparation*, 4(2), 66-76.

[Read Full Article](#)

This article presents engaging and practical methods of helping educators to “remix” the evidence-based and high-leverage practices they are already familiar with to include the new capabilities of artificial intelligence (AI). Transformational modern technologies can be powerful and disruptive, possessing the potential to impact multiple areas of society, including education. One of the best ways for educators to implement AI in their teaching is using it to help support and extend their current practices (Mishra et al., 2023). Similar to how a new remix on the radio can make an old favorite song fresh again, educators can use AI to uphold and enhance their existing instructional strategies and skills. However, adapting to the new paradigm of AI in education may be challenging for teacher preparation programs in special education. The authors of this article apply some of the strategies from “[Leveraging Emerging Technology to Design an Inclusive Future with Universal Design for Learning](#)” (McMahon & Walker, 2019) to effectively implement AI in education. Rather than needing to start fresh or relearn how to teach while incorporating AI, teachers can view this article as a foundation for how to

apply AI tools to support current practice. The recommendations are based on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and strategies for adapting AI tools to support high-leverage practices (HLP) and established evidence-based practices (EBP). The authors aim to inspire special educators to start using AI to help “remix” and innovate the implementation of their existing instructional strategies.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER

Upcoming Newsletter Topics:

October: Learning Disabilities

November: Emotional Behavioral Disabilities

December: Communication

To submit contributions of articles, events, or resources you may use the [Word document](#). Send submissions to [Wendy Overturf](#). If you are unable to access the form, you may send the information in an email.

Material appropriate for the monthly newsletter include web links to family involvement/parent leadership resources, advertisements for statewide trainings for parents, youth or parent/educator audiences, information about statewide parent agencies, recent research pertaining to family engagement, and family engagement success articles.

This monthly update is provided by Wisconsin Family Assistance Center for Education, Training & Support (WI FACETS) to share statewide information regarding parent leadership and family involvement. If you would like to receive this monthly update or if you would like to have your name removed from the distribution list, please email [WI FACETS](#).

The WI FACETS Family Engagement E-Newsletter can be found online: www.servingongroups.org/newsletter



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