

Lesson Plan: When Leaders Outsource Thinking to AI

1. Context & Situation Overview

In August 2025, Sweden's Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson revealed that he regularly uses AI tools such as ChatGPT and LeChat to help shape his understanding of policy issues. He emphasized these tools are used as a 'second opinion' rather than for sensitive or national security purposes. The revelation has sparked public debate, with critics arguing that unelected AI tools should not influence democratic leadership.

2. Similar Contemporary Examples

This is not an isolated case. In July 2025, Kristersson's party briefly launched an AI-powered tool that allowed the public to generate manipulated campaign images of him, which led to controversy and was quickly removed. Other world leaders and campaigns have experimented with AI-generated speeches or analysis tools, highlighting a growing trend that raises ethical and democratic concerns.

3. Discussion Topics

- Is it acceptable for elected officials to use AI tools to inform their decision-making?
- What are the risks of relying on AI that may reinforce biases or provide overly agreeable outputs?
- How does AI use affect democratic legitimacy and transparency? Should the public be informed?
- What are the security and privacy risks of feeding political information into commercial AI systems?
- Could reliance on AI create a slippery slope toward intellectual dependence or political manipulation?
- Where else—education, healthcare, journalism—might the use of AI by authority figures become problematic?

4. Suggested Classroom Structure

• Opening (10 mins): Introduce the scenario and key facts. • Group Work (15–20 mins): Break into small groups to explore selected discussion topics. • Debate (20 mins): Have groups present findings and arguments to the class. • Synthesis (10 mins): Facilitate a full-class reflection connecting this case to the role of educators in modeling ethical AI use.

5. Optional Extensions

• Research Task: Have students investigate other recent examples of AI in politics. • Writing Prompt: Should political leaders be required to disclose AI usage? • Cross-disciplinary Link: Explore how AI ethics intersects with civic education and digital literacy.