

AI for narrative

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Narrative is often central to engaging learning design. It can help learners understand why content matters, imagine professional contexts, and connect abstract concepts to real situations.

Generative AI can be useful for drafting and varying narrative material, particularly in scenario-based learning, case studies, and explanatory storytelling.

When narrative is used well, it supports meaning-making and transfer. When used poorly, it becomes decorative, unrealistic, or distracting. AI can help produce narrative quickly, but the resulting material still needs to be grounded in authentic context, learning purpose, and tone.

Where AI can help

AI can support the creation of:

- case studies
- scenario introductions
- workplace dialogues
- role-play prompts
- reflective story prompts
- narrative transitions between topics
- alternative versions of the same scenario for different audiences

This is especially useful when a designer needs realistic variation or multiple contextual examples.

Good practice

When using AI for narrative:

1. **Ground the narrative in a real context**

Provide the vocational, cultural, organisational, or learner context so the output is not generic.

2. **Keep the educational purpose explicit**

A narrative should help learners understand, apply, analyse, or reflect — not simply entertain.

3. **Check realism and tone**

AI can produce dialogue or scenarios that feel polished but unnatural. Revise to fit the real-world setting.

4. **Avoid unnecessary complexity**

Narrative should clarify the learning task, not bury it under too much detail.

5. **Review for bias and assumptions**

AI-generated narratives can encode stereotypes, unrealistic roles, or narrow workplace assumptions.

Risks and limitations

Narrative generated by AI may:

- sound plausible but feel inauthentic
- over-dramatise situations
- miss important cultural or workplace nuance
- make assumptions about people, roles, or motivations
- create scenarios that do not meaningfully support the learning outcomes

For this reason, AI narrative should be reviewed and adapted, particularly when it is used in vocational or culturally sensitive contexts.

Example uses

Example 1: Drafting a case study

A designer asks AI to draft a short workplace case study involving a team communication problem. The draft gives the designer a useful structure, but the details are then edited to reflect the actual sector and learner context.

Example 2: Creating reflective prompts

A designer uses AI to generate multiple short reflective prompts based on a scenario, such as:

- What assumptions did the character make?

- What could have been done differently?
- What policy, process, or communication skill is relevant here?

This can speed up the production of reflective learning content without requiring AI to define the educational logic.

Relationship to other design work

Narrative is often most effective when it supports [content creation](#), frames [tasks and activities](#), and prepares learners for [assessment](#). It should work with the intended learning outcomes rather than sitting alongside them as an afterthought.

AI-generated workplace case study illustration showing a professional conversation in context

Example: an AI-generated narrative image used to support a workplace case study or scenario-based learning activity.

Practical guidance

AI is helpful for narrative when you need:

- scenario variety
- quick first drafts
- alternate contexts
- dialogue prompts
- narrative framing for content

It is less suitable when the scenario must be highly accurate, culturally nuanced, or directly tied to high-stakes assessment without careful review.

Use AI to accelerate narrative drafting, but shape the final story with clear educational intent and contextual awareness.

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