

GENERATIVE AI for *Writing Instructors*

WEEK 3

SJSU | WRITING CENTER

Reflection

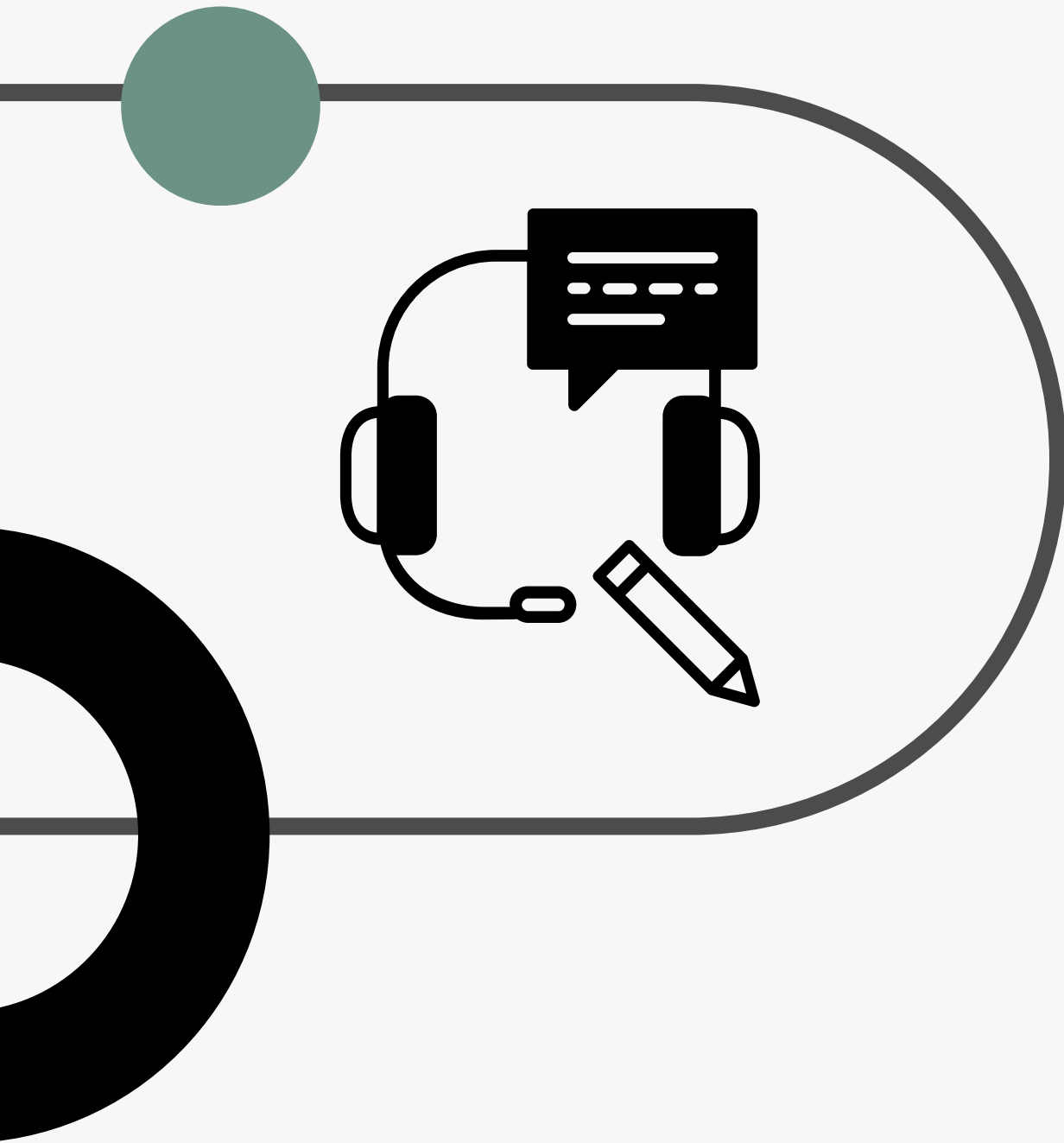
1. Did using AI for your outline help? Why or why not?
2. What did you find were some of the strengths of using generative AI for this purpose?
3. What were some limitations?

Objectives

Meeting #3: AI for Writing Assistance



- Use AI tools to help structure your paper.
- Become familiar with prompt engineering strategies that can help produce effective outputs.
- Reflect critically on generative AI as a tool for writing assistance beyond idea generation.



AI for Writing Assistance

AI Writer Toolbox

➔ AI for Writing

Let's take a look at the toolbox section.



OVERVIEW

AI platforms can be useful when used as supplementary tools during the writing process. This section will cover when and how AI can be incorporated into different stages of the writing process, from planning to drafting, with a focus on strategies for prompt engineering and getting effective results. Note that AI should never be used to generate writing from scratch; that's not what learning writing skills is about. It is never acceptable to have an AI chatbot write your papers for you. Instead, we will look at ways that AI can enhance and help you to enhance your writing process, while making sure that you're still doing the bulk of the work.

While the AI Writer Toolbox can help you learn more about applications of AI in writing, it's important to remember that faculty will have different policies about the use of AI in the classroom. **If you are ever in doubt about acceptable applications of AI tools in a specific class, the best thing to do is ask your instructor.**



Prompt Engineering Strategies



CLARITY & SPECIFICITY

Make your prompts as clear and specific as possible. Ambiguous or vaguely worded prompts can produce AI outputs that are irrelevant or confusing. Prompts should explicitly state the desired outcome or format.



CONTEXTUAL INFO

To get an accurate response, you need to provide the relevant context! Doing so will help guide the AI chatbot toward producing a more informed and appropriate response.





Prompt Engineering Strategies



LIMITING LENGTH

Consider specifying how long you want the response from an AI chatbot to be. This can help with receiving output that is concise and meets your expectations.



ITERATIVE REFINEMENT

Prompt engineering can involve trial and error. Test out different prompts; play with different wording and lengths. Observe the responses and refine if necessary by adding more context, adjusting length, etc.





Prompt Engineering Strategies



PROMPT CHAINING

Often, a single prompt won't be enough to get the response you are looking for. Consider breaking down complex prompts and asks into smaller parts and entering them in sequence. This can help guide the chatbot toward a desired outcome and also help you break down your thought process and develop your topic.



How would you use any of these strategies to help your writing process?

1. Clarity and specificity
2. Contextual information
3. Limiting length
4. Iterative refinement
5. Prompt chaining



Caveat



- It's important to emphasize to students that there is a difference between copying/pasting material and simply using it as a guide.
- They should always remember that AI does not produce original writing.

Why might students turn to AI at this point in their writing process?

→ Time Management Issues

- Students could see AI as the last resort option when a deadline is imminent.
- No time is built in to obtain feedback from outside parties, such as a peer, a tutor, or the instructor.

Why might students turn to AI at this point in their writing process?

→ Imposter Syndrome

- AI may be seen as a trend: “Everyone else is using it, so I should too.”
- Using AI “just because” can trigger latent feelings of imposter syndrome if the student isn’t confident in their writing ability.

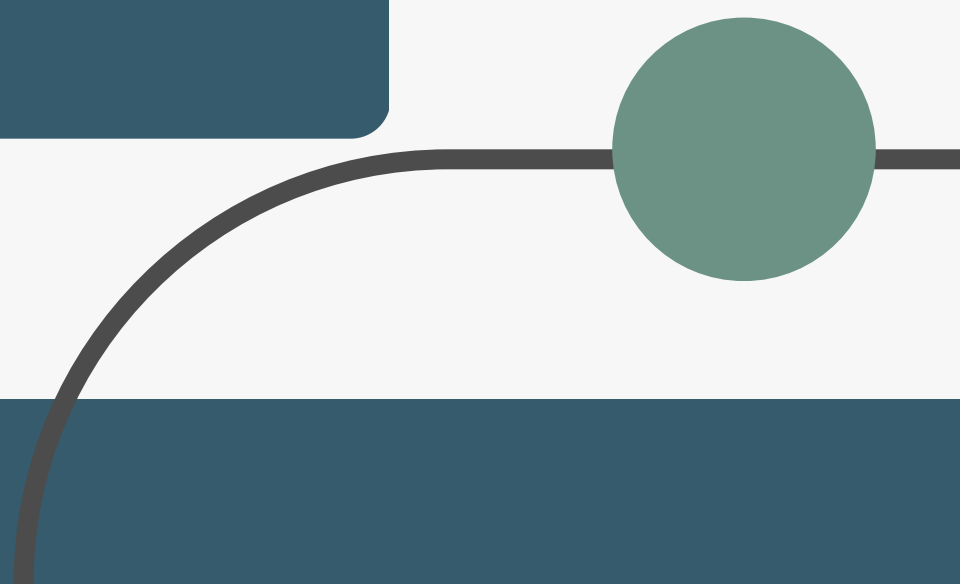
Why might students turn to AI at this point in their writing process?

→ Lack of Confidence

- Students may believe that they are “bad writers.”
- They don’t believe that they can learn or improve; previous poor grades may lead them to AI since using the tool to produce writing may result in a higher grade.



→ Solutions ←

- Don't make yourself replaceable!
 - Seize your value.
 - Drive your own project.
 - Use AI to strategically define purpose.
 - Treat AI as a starting point, and involve humans.
- 



Activity



PROMPT-ENGINEERING MINI WORKSHOP

- In groups, read through the weak prompts displayed on the next slide. Redraft into a strong prompt/series of prompts based on the strategies discussed. Feel free to use AI tools to test them out.
- We will share our work and thoughts on the process afterward.

“Weak” Prompts

PROMPT #1

Draft two op-eds on [chosen topic] and pick out the one that will go most viral.

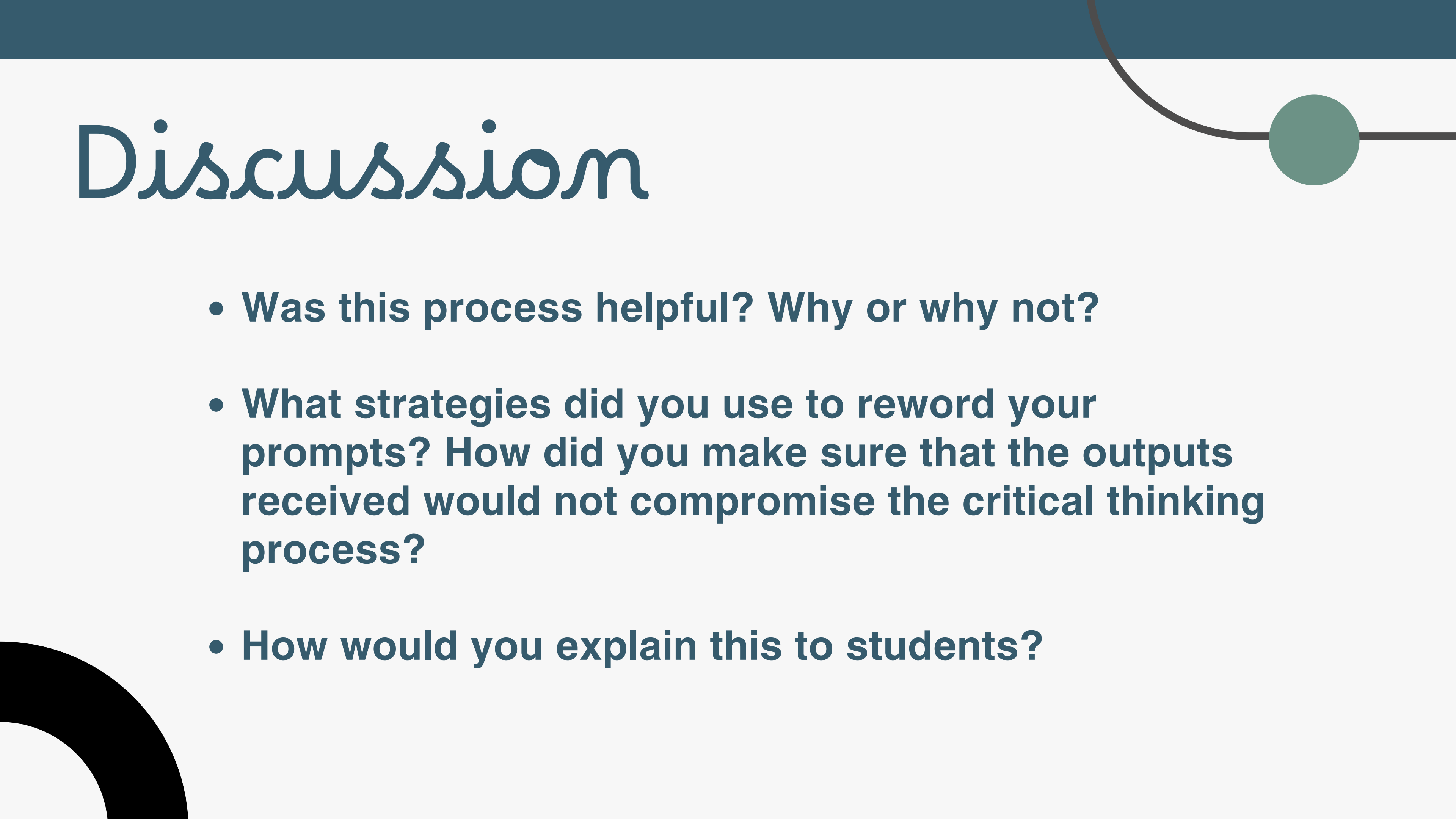
PROMPT #2

Give me three ideas for arguments that I can use to write a paper on [chosen topic].

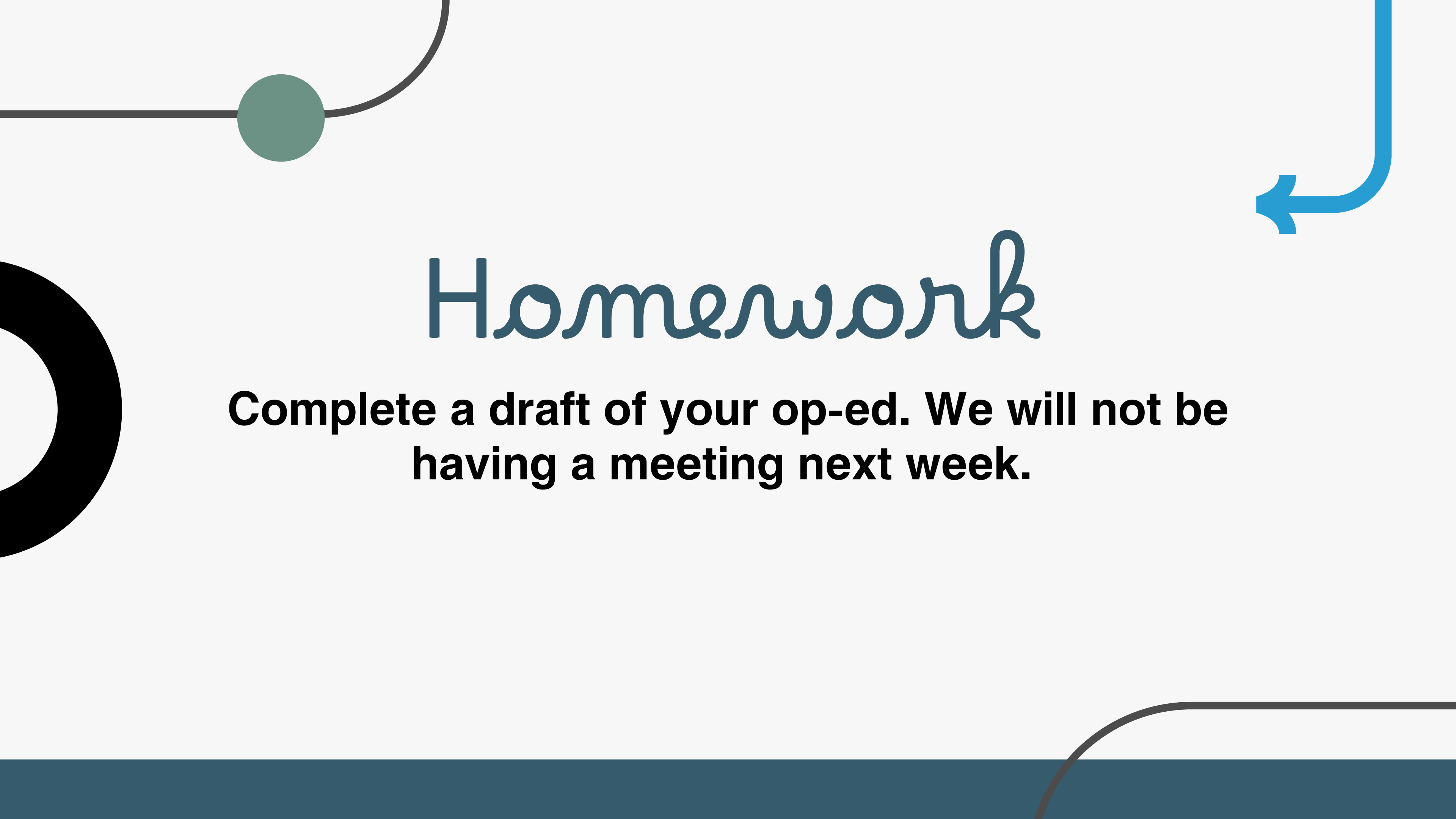
PROMPT #3

**Here is my thesis statement. Make it better.
[Thesis statement here.]**

Discussion



- Was this process helpful? Why or why not?
- What strategies did you use to reword your prompts? How did you make sure that the outputs received would not compromise the critical thinking process?
- How would you explain this to students?



Homework

Complete a draft of your op-ed. We will not be having a meeting next week.

→ Homework Tips ←

USING AI TOOLS AT THE PARAGRAPH LEVEL

- Try drafting an intro or body paragraph for your paper, using the prompt engineering strategies to help with structure and development. Use both what you know as writing instructors *and* the strategies we've discussed to word your prompts as you see fit.

Questions?



AI Writer Toolbox:

sites.google.com/sjsu.edu/aiwritertoolbox



Website:

sjsu.edu/writingcenter/



Email:

writingcenter@sjsu.edu

Thank you!