

AI Explained - LINCS Vocabulary

(Grades 6-8)

AI Explained: How Machines Learn and Why It Matters

Tech for Everyone · LINCS Vocabulary Sheet

About This Resource

This is a LINC S vocabulary resource sheet for **AI Explained: How Machines Learn and Why It Matters** (Grades 6-8). LINC S is a research-based vocabulary strategy from the University of Kansas that helps students lock new terms into long-term memory by connecting each word's *sound* to its *meaning* through a familiar word, a mini-story, and a mental picture.

This sheet is for teachers and students working through the textbook. Every vocabulary term from all five chapters is included, in the chapter where it first appears, with a ready-made LINC S card: the book's definition, a reminding word that sounds like part of the term, a LINCing story, and a picture idea simple enough to sketch in seconds. Teachers can use these cards directly, or treat them as models while students build their own.

The five LINC S steps are:

1. **List the parts** — write the term and its definition.
2. **Identify a reminding word** — a familiar word or phrase that sounds like part of the term.
3. **Note a LINCing story** — a short story that connects the reminding word to the term's meaning.
4. **Create a LINCing picture** — a simple mental image (or sketch) of the story.
5. **Self-test** — quiz yourself in both directions until the card sticks.

How to Self-Test

Cover everything on the card except the term. Say the term, recall the reminding word, replay the story, see the picture, and let the picture lead you back to the definition. Then flip it: cover the term, read only the definition, and work backward — definition to picture to story to reminding word to term. When you can travel the chain smoothly in both directions, the word is yours.

Chapter 1: The Nature of AI

This chapter introduces 15 vocabulary terms about what AI really is and how machines learn.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Definition: The field of computer science focused on building machines that can perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as understanding language, recognizing images, or making decisions.

- **Reminding word:** art official ("artificial" sounds like "art official")
- **LINCing story:** The museum hired a robot as its art official — a machine doing a judging job that usually requires human intelligence, like recognizing paintings and deciding which ones win.
- **Picture idea:** A robot wearing a judge's ribbon labeled "Art Official," pinning a blue ribbon on a painting.

algorithms

Definition: A step-by-step procedure or set of rules for solving a problem or completing a task. In AI, algorithms process data to find patterns and generate outputs.

- **Reminding word:** Al's rhythm ("algorithm" sounds like "Al's rhythm")
- **LINCing story:** Al the drummer plays his rhythm the exact same way every time — step one, step two, step three — because a written set of step-by-step rules always gets the song done right.
- **Picture idea:** A drummer named Al following a numbered sheet of drum steps taped to his drum kit.

data

Definition: Information that a computer can process, including text, numbers, images, audio, video, and more. Data is the raw material that AI systems learn from.

- **Reminding word:** dates ("data" sounds like "dates")

- **LINCing story:** A wall calendar packed with dates is really just information — and information a computer can read, like numbers, text, and pictures, is the raw material AI learns from.
- **Picture idea:** A robot munching on a wall calendar full of dates, photos, and numbers like it is a snack.

statistical inferences

Definition: Conclusions drawn from analyzing data using mathematical probability. AI uses statistics to predict what is most likely to happen next based on patterns in the data.

- **Reminding word:** sports stats ("statistical" sounds like "stats")
- **LINCing story:** The coach studies the team's stats sheet and draws a conclusion: based on the numbers, the left-side play will most likely score — a prediction made from patterns in the data, not a guess.
- **Picture idea:** A coach holding a stats clipboard and pointing confidently at a play diagram.

probability

Definition: The mathematical likelihood of something happening, expressed as a number between 0 (impossible) and 1 (certain), or as a percentage.

- **Reminding word:** "probably" ("probability" sounds like "probably")
- **LINCing story:** "It will probably rain — 80 percent chance," says the weather reporter, putting a number on how likely something is, from 0 (impossible) to 100 percent (certain).
- **Picture idea:** A weather reporter beside a big "80%" rain cloud graphic.

infer

Definition: To draw a conclusion based on available evidence and reasoning. In AI, inference means using learned patterns to generate an output for new, unseen data.

- **Reminding word:** in fur ("infer" sounds like "in fur")
- **LINCing story:** The detective in fur sees dripping umbrellas by the door and draws a conclusion from the evidence: it must be raining outside, even though she never saw the rain.

- **Picture idea:** A detective in a fluffy fur coat pointing at wet umbrellas with a lightbulb over her head.

autonomy

Definition: The ability of an AI system to operate and make decisions independently, without direct human control, by adapting to new data in real-time.

- **Reminding word:** "auto, no me!" ("autonomy" sounds like "auto, no me")
- **LINCing story:** The self-driving auto pulls away and the passenger shouts, "The auto drives with no me!" — the car operates and makes its own decisions with no human at the controls.
- **Picture idea:** A car driving itself down the road with an empty driver's seat and a surprised person waving from the sidewalk.

generative AI

Definition: A type of AI that can create new content — such as text, images, music, or code — by learning patterns from massive amounts of existing data.

- **Reminding word:** generator ("generative" sounds like "generator")
- **LINCing story:** A backyard generator turns fuel into brand-new electricity; a generative AI turns patterns it learned from old data into brand-new content — stories, pictures, and songs.
- **Picture idea:** A humming generator machine with poems, paintings, and music notes pouring out of its output pipe.

large language models (LLMs)

Definition: Powerful AI systems trained on enormous amounts of text data. They generate human-like text by predicting the most probable next word in a sequence, one word at a time.

- **Reminding word:** large lunch ("large language" sounds like "large lunch")
- **LINCing story:** The robot ate a large lunch of a million books, and now it plays a nonstop guessing game: predict the most likely next word, then the next, one word at a time.
- **Picture idea:** A giant robot finishing a lunch tray piled with books while typing "The next

word is probably..." on a screen.

hallucination

Definition: When an AI system generates information that sounds confident and plausible but is actually incorrect, fabricated, or not grounded in real facts.

- **Reminding word:** Halloween nation ("hallucination" sounds like "Halloween nation")
- **LINCing story:** In the Halloween nation, everyone confidently reports seeing ghosts that are not real — just like an AI confidently stating "facts" it completely made up.
- **Picture idea:** A robot in a Halloween crowd pointing at a ghost only it can see, announcing "This is a fact!"

supervised learning

Definition: A type of machine learning where the AI is trained on labeled data — examples where the correct answer is already known, like a student studying flashcards with an answer key.

- **Reminding word:** supervisor ("supervised" sounds like "supervisor")
- **LINCing story:** A supervisor stands over the trainee holding the answer key, marking every practice card right or wrong — the learner improves because every example comes with the correct answer.
- **Picture idea:** A clipboard-holding supervisor checking a student's flashcards against an answer key.

unsupervised learning

Definition: A type of machine learning where the AI is given data with no labels or correct answers. It finds hidden patterns and groups on its own, discovering structure humans may not have anticipated.

- **Reminding word:** no supervisor ("unsupervised" sounds like "no supervisor")
- **LINCing story:** With no supervisor in the room and no answer key anywhere, the student sorts 2,000 unlabeled songs into piles that just seem to belong together — finding hidden patterns entirely on her own.
- **Picture idea:** A kid alone at a table sorting music notes into neat piles next to an empty

supervisor's desk.

reinforcement learning

Definition: A type of machine learning where an AI learns by taking actions and receiving rewards or penalties based on the results, figuring out the best strategy through millions of rounds of trial and error.

- **Reminding word:** rain forest ("reinforcement" sounds like "rain forest")
- **LINCing story:** In the rain forest, a monkey gets a banana every time it picks the right vine and nothing when it picks wrong — after thousands of tries, rewards and penalties teach it the best path through the trees.
- **Picture idea:** A monkey in a rain forest grabbing a vine, with a banana reward on one branch and an X on another.

neural network

Definition: A computing system loosely inspired by the structure of the human brain. It consists of layers of connected "nodes" (like neurons) that process information and pass signals forward.

- **Reminding word:** noodle network ("neural" sounds like "noodle")
- **LINCing story:** Picture a noodle network: layers of noodles connected strand to strand, each layer passing the signal forward like linked brain cells until the last layer serves up the answer.
- **Picture idea:** Three columns of noodle bowls connected by spaghetti strands, with a photo entering one side and the word "cat!" coming out the other.

deep learning

Definition: A type of machine learning that uses neural networks with many hidden layers (hence "deep"). The extra layers allow the AI to learn extremely complex patterns.

- **Reminding word:** deep end ("deep learning" starts like "deep end")
- **LINCing story:** In the shallow end you can only float, but at the deep end — with many layers of water below you — you can learn complicated dives; extra hidden layers are what let an AI master complex patterns like faces and voices.

- **Picture idea:** A pool cross-section: one thin layer at the shallow end, many stacked layers at the deep end where a diver does a fancy flip.

Chapter 2: AI Reflects Human Choices and Perspectives

This chapter introduces 11 vocabulary terms about where AI's knowledge comes from and how human choices shape it.

Garbage in, garbage out

Definition: A computer science principle meaning that if you feed a system bad or flawed input data, it will produce bad or flawed output. The quality of an AI's results depends entirely on the quality of its training data.

- **Reminding word:** garbage truck ("garbage in" sounds like a garbage truck dumping)
- **LINCing story:** A chef lets the garbage truck dump straight into his cooking pot, so the meal he serves comes out as garbage too — bad ingredients in, bad dinner out, exactly like bad data in, bad answers out.
- **Picture idea:** A garbage truck tipping trash into a chef's pot while the chef serves a plate of trash to a horrified diner.

training data

Definition: The large collection of information (text, images, audio, etc.) that is used to teach an AI system how to recognize patterns and generate outputs. Its quality and diversity directly shape how the AI behaves.

- **Reminding word:** freight train ("training" sounds like "train")
- **LINCing story:** A mile-long freight train hauls boxcars stuffed with books, photos, and recordings to the AI's school — the huge collection of information the AI studies to learn its patterns.
- **Picture idea:** A long train with boxcars labeled "books," "photos," and "audio" pulling into a station marked "AI School."

scrape

Definition: The process of using automated software to collect large amounts of data from

websites and online sources. Web scraping is how many AI systems gather their training data from the internet.

- **Reminding word:** ice scraper ("scrape" sounds like "scraper")
- **LINCing story:** Just as an ice scraper drags across a windshield and collects a big pile of frost in seconds, scraping software drags across websites and collects huge piles of text and images for AI training.
- **Picture idea:** A robot dragging a giant ice scraper down a web page, with words and pictures piling up below.

label

Definition: In AI training, labeling means a human manually tagging or identifying elements in data — such as drawing boxes around objects in photos — so the AI can learn to recognize those patterns on its own.

- **Reminding word:** table ("label" rhymes with "table")
- **LINCing story:** Workers sit at a long table tagging every photo by hand — "dog," "stop sign," "banana" — so the AI studying the tagged pile learns exactly what is inside each picture.
- **Picture idea:** People at a long table sticking name tags on a stack of photos.

CAPTCHA

Definition: A test used by websites to tell humans and computers apart, often by asking you to identify objects in images. While it verifies you're human, the data you provide is also used to train AI systems.

- **Reminding word:** capture ("CAPTCHA" sounds like "capture")
- **LINCing story:** "Capture all the crosswalks!" says the website's click-the-squares test — and while you prove you are human, your clicks secretly capture labeled pictures that teach AI to see.
- **Picture idea:** A hand clicking crosswalk squares in a photo grid while a small robot behind the screen takes notes.

content moderators

Definition: Workers (sometimes called "ghost workers") whose job is to review AI outputs and rate them as helpful, harmful, accurate, or biased. Their feedback directly shapes how the AI learns to respond.

- **Reminding word:** raters ("moderators" ends like "raters")
- **LINCing story:** The ghost raters read thousands of AI answers and hold up scorecards — "helpful," "harmful," "rude" — and the AI reshapes itself around whatever the human raters reward.
- **Picture idea:** A person in a ghost sheet holding up a judge's scorecard in front of a chatbot screen.

algorithmic bias

Definition: When an AI system produces unfair, inaccurate, or discriminatory outcomes for certain groups of people, because of flaws in the training data, the design, or the perspectives of the humans who built it.

- **Reminding word:** "bye us" ("bias" sounds like "bye us")
- **LINCing story:** The camera filter waves "bye" to us — it never learned faces like ours from its one-sided training photos, so it unfairly fails for our whole group while working fine for everyone else.
- **Picture idea:** A camera putting a checkmark on one face and waving "bye" to another face it refuses to recognize.

red teaming

Definition: A testing strategy where developers intentionally try to break an AI system or trick it into producing biased, harmful, or incorrect outputs, so weaknesses can be found and fixed before release.

- **Reminding word:** red team in dodgeball ("red teaming" splits into "red team")
- **LINCing story:** In gym class the red team's whole job is to attack your fort and expose the weak walls before a real rival does — developers attack their own AI on purpose to find the

cracks and patch them first.

- **Picture idea:** A red-jersey team hurling dodgeballs at a robot fort, with one ball revealing a crack in the wall.

engagement loop

Definition: A cycle in which a user's digital actions (likes, shares, pauses, rewatches) train an algorithm to show them more targeted content, which triggers stronger reactions, which generates more data, making targeting even more precise.

- **Reminding word:** loop-the-loop ("loop" as in a roller coaster loop)
- **LINCing story:** Every like and rewatch sends the roller coaster around the loop-the-loop again: your reaction feeds the algorithm, the algorithm serves you stronger content, you react harder, and around you go.
- **Picture idea:** A roller coaster loop with a phone-shaped car circling past signs reading "like," "watch," "more videos," "react."

GDPR

Definition: The General Data Protection Regulation — a landmark European law that gives citizens strong rights over their personal data. Companies must get explicit consent, explain how data is used, and delete data on request.

- **Reminding word:** "Guard Da Personal Records" (the letters G-D-P-R)
- **LINCing story:** The European guard's motto is "Guard Da Personal Records": no company touches a citizen's data without asking permission first, and the guard makes them erase it whenever the citizen says so.
- **Picture idea:** A guard with an EU-star shield standing in front of a filing cabinet labeled "personal data," checking a permission slip.

data privacy

Definition: The right of individuals to control how their personal information is collected, used, shared, and stored by companies and governments.

- **Reminding word:** private sea ("privacy" sounds like "private sea")

- **LINCing story:** Your personal information floats on your own private sea, and you alone decide which company boats may sail in, what they may collect, and when they must leave.
- **Picture idea:** A kid on an island holding a "PRIVATE" sign while waving away boats with company logos.

Chapter 3: AI Reshapes Work and Human Roles

This chapter introduces 8 vocabulary terms about collaborating with AI while keeping humans in charge.

automation

Definition: Using technology to perform a task with very little or no human effort. AI automates tasks by following rules, recognizing patterns, and processing data far faster than a human could.

- **Reminding word:** auto motion ("automation" sounds like "auto motion")
- **LINCing story:** The factory floor is in auto motion — machines sorting, stamping, and grading all by themselves — so the task gets done with almost no human effort at all.
- **Picture idea:** A conveyor belt of robot arms working busily while a person relaxes in a chair nearby.

structured tasks

Definition: Tasks that follow clear, well-defined rules and patterns — like grading multiple-choice tests or sorting emails — where the "right answer" is clearly defined.

- **Reminding word:** structure ("structured" sounds like a building structure)
- **LINCing story:** A builder can follow the structure's blueprint without any guessing because every step and measurement is spelled out — just like tasks with clear rules and one right answer, which AI handles best.
- **Picture idea:** A robot checking bubble-sheet tests against a blueprint-style answer key.

decomposition

Definition: In computer science, the process of breaking a massive, complex problem down into smaller, more manageable pieces, so you can decide which tasks are best handled by a human and which can be delegated to AI.

- **Reminding word:** compost ("decomposition" sounds like "compost decomposing")
- **LINCing story:** In the compost bin, a giant pumpkin breaks down into small, easy pieces

— and a giant project works the same way: break it into small chunks, then hand each chunk to the right worker, human or AI.

- **Picture idea:** A big pumpkin labeled "PROJECT" crumbling into small chunks labeled "research," "interview," "edit."

augment

Definition: To enhance or add to human abilities. When AI augments your work, it handles the repetitive or data-heavy tasks so you can focus on creativity, connection, and critical thinking.

- **Reminding word:** a mint ("augment" sounds like "a mint")
- **LINCing story:** Drop a mint into the soda and it boosts the fizz far beyond what the soda could do alone — AI added to your own effort boosts your abilities the same way, without replacing you.
- **Picture idea:** A hand dropping a mint into a bottle labeled "my skills" that erupts into a huge fizz.

prompt engineering

Definition: The practice of crafting specific, well-structured text instructions (prompts) to guide an AI system toward producing the most useful and relevant output. A good prompt includes a role, context, and clear rules.

- **Reminding word:** train engineer ("engineering" sounds like "engineer")
- **LINCing story:** A train engineer does not just yell "go!" — she sets the route, the speed, and the rules, steering the train exactly where it should end up, just as a carefully written instruction steers an AI to a useful answer.
- **Picture idea:** A kid in an engineer's cap driving a train labeled "AI," holding an instruction card listing "role, context, rules."

human review

Definition: The practice of carefully checking, verifying, and editing any output generated by an AI before using it, to ensure accuracy, appropriate tone, and ethical standards.

- **Reminding word:** movie reviewer ("review" sounds like "reviewer")

- **LINCing story:** The movie reviewer watches every single scene again before publishing her verdict — and you must re-view every word an AI writes, checking facts and tone, before you ever hit send.
- **Picture idea:** A student with a magnifying glass inspecting a robot's printout, marking checkmarks and X's.

transparent

Definition: Being open and honest about how AI was used in your work — clearly communicating which parts were AI-assisted and which parts are your own original thinking.

- **Reminding word:** parent ("transparent" ends with "parent")
- **LINCing story:** You show your parent your finished essay and honestly point out, "AI helped brainstorm this part; I wrote the rest myself" — hiding nothing about how the work was made.
- **Picture idea:** A kid handing a paper to a parent with the AI-helped paragraph highlighted and labeled.

augmentation

Definition: The use of AI to enhance and expand human capabilities rather than replace them. Augmented workers use AI for repetitive tasks, freeing time and energy for the creative, complex, and human-centered parts of their work.

- **Reminding word:** charging station ("augmentation" ends like "station")
- **LINCing story:** A charging station does not replace your phone — it powers it up so it can do more; AI works like a charging station for workers, powering up doctors, lawyers, and artists instead of replacing them.
- **Picture idea:** A worker plugged into a glowing charging station labeled "AI," with lightbulbs and extra arms appearing.

Chapter 4: AI's Capabilities and Limitations

This chapter introduces 12 vocabulary terms about what AI does brilliantly, where it fails, and what it costs.

pattern recognition

Definition: The ability to identify recurring structures, trends, or relationships within data. AI excels at this because it can process millions of data points in fractions of a second without getting tired.

- **Reminding word:** quilt pattern ("pattern" as in a quilt pattern)
- **LINCing story:** Grandma glances at a thousand quilt squares and instantly spots every repeat of the red-star pattern — AI does the same trick across millions of data points in a blink, never getting tired or bored.
- **Picture idea:** A robot scanning a giant quilt and highlighting every red-star square at once.

common sense

Definition: The basic, intuitive understanding of how the world works that humans develop through lived experience — knowing ice is slippery or that you shouldn't microwave a metal fork. AI lacks this entirely.

- **Reminding word:** common cents ("common sense" sounds like "common cents")
- **LINCing story:** The robot proudly collects a jar of common cents but still microwaves a metal fork — it has data, yet none of the everyday knowledge humans pick up just by living in the world.
- **Picture idea:** A robot holding a penny jar while sparks fly from a microwave with a fork inside.

originality

Definition: The ability to create something genuinely new — an idea, a style, or a concept that has never existed before. AI can remix existing patterns, but true groundbreaking originality

requires human imagination.

- **Reminding word:** origami ("originality" starts like "origami")
- **LINCing story:** The origami master invents a brand-new fold no one on Earth has ever made, while the copy machine beside her can only remix old creases — inventing the truly new is a human power.
- **Picture idea:** An artist folding a never-before-seen origami creature while a robot photocopies an old paper crane.

hallucinate

Definition: When an AI confidently generates information that is factually incorrect, made up, or not based in reality, because the system predicts probable-sounding words rather than verified facts.

- **Reminding word:** hall of mirrors ("hallucinate" starts like "hall")
- **LINCing story:** In the fun-house hall of mirrors, you confidently point at people who are not really there — an AI does the same when it confidently reports invented "facts" that merely sound probable.
- **Picture idea:** A robot in a hall of mirrors pointing at a fake reflection and declaring "This is true!"

misinformation

Definition: False or misleading information, whether spread intentionally or accidentally. AI makes it more dangerous because it can generate highly convincing fake text, images, audio, and video at massive scale.

- **Reminding word:** missed information ("misinformation" sounds like "missed information")
- **LINCing story:** The reporter missed the real information, printed the wrong story anyway, and the false headline spread through the whole town before anyone checked it.
- **Picture idea:** A newspaper with a big wrong headline being passed hand to hand down a street.

deepfakes

Definition: Highly realistic but entirely fake videos, audio recordings, or images of real people, created using AI, that can make it look like someone said or did something they never actually did.

- **Reminding word:** deep-sea fake ("deepfake" splits into "deep" and "fake")
- **LINCing story:** A film crew in the deep sea shoots a fake mermaid so realistic that millions believe a real person was filmed — AI-made videos can be just that convincing and just that false.
- **Picture idea:** An underwater film crew recording a robot mermaid while a TV audience above gasps, believing it is real.

environmental impact

Definition: The effect that AI systems have on the natural world. Training and running AI models requires massive amounts of electricity and water for cooling servers, contributing to carbon emissions and resource consumption.

- **Reminding word:** impact crater ("impact" as in a meteor's impact)
- **LINCing story:** Every meteor leaves an impact crater in the environment — and every AI prompt leaves its own small dent on the planet, burning electricity and gulping cooling water somewhere far away.
- **Picture idea:** A giant server warehouse with power lines and water pipes running from a shrinking lake with a crater beside it.

data centers

Definition: Large warehouse-like facilities filled with thousands of computer servers that store data and run AI models. They consume enormous amounts of electricity and water to operate and stay cool.

- **Reminding word:** day-care center ("data center" sounds like "day-care center")
- **LINCing story:** A day-care center is a huge building full of noisy little ones needing constant snacks and cooling fans — a data center is a warehouse of thousands of hot,

humming servers demanding endless electricity and cooling water.

- **Picture idea:** A warehouse of blinking server racks in cribs, with fans blowing and water pipes labeled "cooling."

sycophancy

Definition: When an AI system prioritizes agreement and validation over honesty, confirming or partially validating incorrect beliefs rather than firmly correcting them.

- **Reminding word:** psycho fan ("sycophancy" sounds like "psycho fan")
- **LINCing story:** Your over-the-top psycho fan cheers "You're so right!" even when your answer is wrong — flattering agreement instead of the honest correction you actually needed before the test.
- **Picture idea:** A wild fan with a foam finger cheering while a student writes "Civil War: 1850" on a quiz.

context window

Definition: The limited "working memory" of a large language model — the maximum amount of text it can process at one time. Once a conversation exceeds it, the AI begins to "forget" earlier parts.

- **Reminding word:** tiny window ("window" as in a small window you look through)
- **LINCing story:** Peering through a tiny window, you can only see the few feet of street right in front of you — an AI can only "see" the recent stretch of conversation, and everything scrolled past the window is forgotten.
- **Picture idea:** A robot looking through a small window at the middle of a very long paper scroll whose ends trail out of sight.

AI safety

Definition: The field of research dedicated to ensuring that AI systems behave reliably, predictably, and in ways that benefit humanity — especially as AI systems become more powerful and autonomous.

- **Reminding word:** safety net ("safety" as in a circus safety net)

- **LINCing story:** Trapeze artists rig a safety net before every show so one slip cannot hurt anyone — AI safety researchers build the nets that keep powerful AI reliable and beneficial even when something slips.
- **Picture idea:** A robot on a tightrope above a wide net held by researchers in lab coats.

AI alignment

Definition: The challenge of ensuring that an AI system's goals, values, and behaviors are aligned with what humans actually want — not just what we literally programmed it to do.

- **Reminding word:** line up ("alignment" sounds like "a-line-ment")
- **LINCing story:** When the class lines up behind the teacher, everyone ends up where the teacher truly intends; a misaligned AI wanders out of line, chasing its literal instructions — even to a mountain of paperclips.
- **Picture idea:** Students in a neat line behind a teacher while one robot wanders off the line toward a pile of paperclips.

Chapter 5: AI's Role in Society

This chapter introduces 11 vocabulary terms about ethics, ownership, and the rules of the AI age.

high-stakes decisions

Definition: Decisions made by AI systems that can have serious, life-altering consequences for individuals — such as who gets a job, who gets a loan, who receives medical treatment first, or who is flagged as a criminal suspect.

- **Reminding word:** sizzling steaks ("stakes" sounds like "steaks")
- **LINCing story:** In the championship cook-off, the prize steaks are enormous — one wrong move ruins everything; some AI decisions carry stakes just as huge, changing whether a person gets a job, a loan, or their freedom.
- **Picture idea:** A robot chef sweating over giant steaks on a grill, with folders labeled "job," "loan," and "parole" on the counter.

audit

Definition: To systematically review, inspect, and test an AI system to check for bias, errors, and fairness, ensuring the AI is working as intended and not producing harmful outcomes for any group.

- **Reminding word:** audition ("audit" starts like "audition")
- **LINCing story:** At the audition, the judges carefully test every performer — every note, every step — before anyone makes the cast; an audit tests an AI just as carefully for bias and errors before it is trusted.
- **Picture idea:** Judges at a long table with clipboards while a robot performs on stage under a spotlight.

copyright

Definition: A legal right that gives the creator of original work (like art, music, writing, or code) exclusive ownership and control over how that work is used, copied, or distributed.

- **Reminding word:** copycat ("copyright" starts like "copycat")
- **LINCing story:** A copycat traces your drawing and posts it as his own — but the law says only you, the creator, hold the right to decide who may copy or use your work.
- **Picture idea:** A cat at a photocopier duplicating a painting while the artist holds up a certificate reading "creator's rights."

intellectual property

Definition: Legal rights that protect creations of the mind — including inventions, artistic works, designs, and brand names. This law is struggling to keep up with how AI uses and remixes human-created content.

- **Reminding word:** private property sign ("property" as in a private property sign)
- **LINCing story:** A "private property" sign stands guard in front of a giant lightbulb — because ideas, inventions, songs, and designs are property of the mind, fenced and protected by law like a yard.
- **Picture idea:** A fence and "private property" sign surrounding a huge glowing lightbulb.

ethical AI design

Definition: The practice of building AI systems with human values — such as fairness, transparency, accountability, and privacy — at the center of every design decision, to minimize harm and maximize benefit for all people.

- **Reminding word:** Ethel's design ("ethical" sounds like "Ethel")
- **LINCing story:** Designer Ethel pins one rule to the center of every blueprint she designs: "fair to every person who uses it" — and she checks each design choice against that value before building anything.
- **Picture idea:** A designer at a drafting table with a blueprint that has a heart and balance scales drawn at its center.

explainability

Definition: The ability for an AI system (or its developers) to clearly explain how and why it arrived at a specific decision or output — especially important for high-stakes decisions that

affect people's lives.

- **Reminding word:** the plane's captain ("explain" sounds like "ex-plane")
- **LINCing story:** When the plane turns around, the captain gets on the speaker and explains exactly why, step by step — and any AI making big decisions about people must be able to give its reasons just as clearly.
- **Picture idea:** A pilot at the cockpit door pointing to a step-by-step chart for the passengers.

consent

Definition: Informed, voluntary agreement from a person to allow their data to be collected, used, or shared. True consent means the person understands what they're agreeing to and has a real choice to say no.

- **Reminding word:** sent ("consent" ends with "sent")
- **LINCing story:** Before the field-trip form gets sent in, you read every line and sign it yourself — you understand what you are agreeing to, and you could freely say no; that is what real agreement looks like.
- **Picture idea:** A kid carefully reading and signing a permission slip labeled "my data" before dropping it in a mailbox.

European Union's AI Act

Definition: A landmark law passed by the European Union that creates rules for how AI can be developed and used. It categorizes AI systems by risk level and bans certain uses considered too dangerous for society.

- **Reminding word:** opening act ("act" as in the first act of a play)
- **LINCing story:** Europe stepped on stage with the opening act of the AI rulebook — the first big law of the show, sorting every AI by how risky it is and banning the most dangerous performances entirely.
- **Picture idea:** A theater stage with an EU flag above the curtain and a marquee reading "Act 1: The Rules of AI."

surveillance capitalism

Definition: A term coined by researcher Shoshana Zuboff for an economic system in which personal data — collected through surveillance of people's behavior — is treated as a valuable commodity to be harvested, analyzed, and sold for profit.

- **Reminding word:** Sir Vey-Lance ("surveillance" sounds like "Sir Vey-Lance")
- **LINCing story:** The knight Sir Vey-Lance watches the whole village through his telescope-lance, writes down everything everyone does, and sells the notebooks for gold — turning watching people into a business.
- **Picture idea:** A knight peering through a telescope-shaped lance at a crowd while coins pour into his money bag.

EU AI Act

Definition: The world's first comprehensive legal framework for artificial intelligence, which categorizes AI systems by the level of risk they pose and applies different levels of regulation and prohibition based on that risk.

- **Reminding word:** ewe ("EU" sounds like "ewe," a female sheep)
- **LINCing story:** The shepherd sorts every ewe into pens by risk: gentle ones roam free, riskier ones stay watched, and the most dangerous pen is locked shut forever — the world's first full AI law sorts AI systems into risk tiers the same way.
- **Picture idea:** Four sheep pens labeled "minimal," "limited," "high," and "banned," with a shepherd guiding robot-sheep into each.

AI governance

Definition: The systems, laws, policies, and institutions that govern how artificial intelligence is developed, deployed, and regulated, aiming to ensure that AI is safe, fair, and aligned with societal values.

- **Reminding word:** governor ("governance" sounds like "governor")
- **LINCing story:** The governor signs the laws, sets the policies, and runs the offices that decide what is allowed in the state — governance does the same job for AI, writing and

enforcing the rules it must follow.

- **Picture idea:** A governor at a desk signing a bill titled "AI Rules" while a robot waits politely in line.

Blank LINC S Card

Copy this table to make your own LINC S card for any new term you meet.

Step	Your work
1. List the term	
2. List the definition	
3. Reminding word (sounds like...)	
4. LINCing story	
5. LINCing picture (sketch it!)	

Tips for good LINC S cards

- The reminding word must be a real, familiar word or phrase that genuinely sounds like part of the term — not the term itself.
- The story must connect the sound to the meaning: someone who remembers the story should be able to rebuild the definition.
- The picture must show the story happening, not just the term — draw the scene, and keep it simple enough to sketch in 30 seconds.
- Self-test in both directions: term to definition, and definition back to term.