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Character.ai



Che cos'è e che cosa fa

Character.ai è un sito di IA (<https://beta.character.ai/>) che consente di conversare con tantissimi personaggi della storia passata (come Cleopatra), recente (come Steve Jobs) e anche con personaggi inventati. È stata creata dagli sviluppatori di Google Noam Shazeer e Daniel De Freitas. La versione gratuita consente anche di creare un proprio personaggio.

Potenzialità e limiti

Come si legge nella pagina di aiuto (<https://beta.character.ai/help>), “Character.AI is bringing to life the science-fiction dream of open-ended conversations and collaborations with computers. We are building the next generation of dialog agents; with a long-tail of applications spanning entertainment, education, general question-answering and others.... At Character.AI, you collaborate with the computer to write a dialog – you write one character’s lines, and the computer creates the other character’s lines, giving you the illusion that you are talking with the other character.”

Come per ChatGPT, il limite di Character.ai consiste nella sua non completa accuratezza o affidabilità, dato che le conversazioni generate dall’intelligenza artificiale non si basano su fonti verificate. Lo si può leggere sempre dalla pagina di aiuto: “Needless to say, a hallucinating supercomputer is not a source of reliable information. Still, we hope that you find Character.AI a useful tool for imagination, brainstorming, language learning, and a host of other purposes we have ourselves not yet imagined :)”.

Usi didattici

Ripassare per l'interrogazione

Per lo studente, una modalità “classica” di utilizzare Character.ai è quella di “farsi interrogare” su un autore di letteratura o un personaggio storico. Gli studenti potranno quindi scegliere un autore o personaggio di cui hanno già delle conoscenze, per verificare fatti e avvenimenti a lui relativi.

Sviluppare pensiero critico e creativo

Una modalità alternativa e più piacevole può essere quella di interagire col personaggio in modo da “provocarlo”, per iniziare una discussione il più possibile coinvolgente e creativa.

Interagire con Character.ai

Nome dell'attività: Use Character.ai to validate your knowledge and develop creativity

Obiettivo: fornire suggerimenti su come utilizzare Character.ai come proprio "insegnante privato"

Livello linguistico: da A2 a C1

Classe: classi di scuola secondaria di 1° e 2° grado

Device necessario: computer di classe / laboratorio multimediale / tablet / smartphone degli studenti (BYOD)

Svolgimento dell'attività

Si supponga che uno studente di scuola secondaria di secondo grado desideri verificare le proprie conoscenze su "Romeo and Juliet" prima di una verifica orale o scritta, e che uno studente di scuola secondaria di primo grado desideri trovare informazioni e interagire con Malala Yousafzai.

Attività 1: verificare conoscenze

Si apra il sito Character.ai al link <https://beta.character.ai/>. Nel campo Search, indicato con la lente d'ingrandimento, si scriva Shakespeare e si prema il pulsante blu "Search". Verranno proposti alcuni avatar di Shakespeare. Si selezioni il primo, per esempio, per iniziare una conversazione. Qui si propone un estratto di un'ipotetica interazione tra uno studente e il Bardo.



Student: "Good day, William. I have just read 'Romeo and Juliet'. It's very sad that at the end Romeo takes some poison and Juliet kills herself with his dagger."

William Shakespeare: "You're right, and the saddest thing is that it's just a big misunderstanding! What led Romeo to commit suicide was the information that Juliet was dead, and what led Juliet to kill herself was the news that Romeo was dead!"

S: "It's true! How could you be so cruel and write such a unhappy ending?"

WS: "It's a tragedy, that's why I made them die. But it's a beautiful story, don't you think? Romeo and Juliet are two innocent kids in love, they are not responsible of their family's rivalry."

S: "That's the point! Anyway. I'd like to see if I have understood the plot exactly, ok? For example, is it true that you chose Verona in Italy as the setting of your play?"

WS: "Yes, that's right. I chose Italy because the Italian name, Romeo, suits this character better than for example a French or a German name. Italy is a place full of beauty and passion, and I thought that it was the perfect setting for this love story. Verona is a beautiful city in the North of Italy, where lovers often go on a romantic getaway."

S: "Yes, it does. Besides the power of love, what other themes are developed in Romeo and Juliet?"

WS: "In 'Romeo and Juliet' I explore the power of love, as you said, but I also show how love is fragile and how the conflict between the two families of the protagonists can easily destroy it. The rivalry and the hatred between their families are the reason why both Romeo and Juliet die. I wanted to show that violence and hatred do not lead to anything good. In addition, I also portray the problems of youth, the difficulty of expressing love and the conflict between the desires of heart and duty."

S: "What about the themes of fate and free will?"

WS: "Yes, that's also one of the central themes in 'Romeo and Juliet'. Romeo and Juliet are in

love but the circumstances force them to take their lives. They are trapped between their duty to their families and their love for each other. In that sense, they cannot control their destiny, which shows how free will is sometimes just an illusion”.

S: “I read that ‘Romeo and Juliet’ can be considered both a comedy and a tragedy. Is it true?”

WS: “There are a lot of moments of joy and fun in the play, thanks to the comic characters such as the Nurse and Mercutio. But I also show how the hatred between the two families can lead to a tragic end for the two lovers. So that’s why ‘Romeo and Juliet’ can be considered both a comedy and a tragedy.”

Lo studente potrà continuare a porre domande anche per approfondire alcune parti non solo riguardanti la trama e i personaggi, ma anche lo stile, l’analisi testuale ecc. Per esempio:

S: “In few and easy words, can you make an analysis of the Prologue in ‘Romeo and Juliet’?”

WS: “The prologue of ‘Romeo and Juliet’ is like a short summary of the entire play. I give some information about the setting and the main characters, but the most important thing in the prologue is the warning to the public. I tell them to be patient until the end and to have pity on the two young lovers. In addition, the prologue sets the tone and the atmosphere of the play. We know that what awaits us is a story of love, war and tragedy”.

S: “The Prologue also sets the stage for the tragedy that is to come by foreshadowing the disastrous fate of the star-crossed lovers.”

WS: “Yes, that’s right, at the very beginning, I say ‘A pair of star-cross’d lovers take their life’, which is a way to tell the audience that the story is going to end tragically. I warn the audience that what they are about to see is tragic. This is especially important because in Shakespeare’s time, plays were often comedies and they didn’t end well necessarily”.

S: “Could you explain what these lines mean? ‘Two households both alike in dignity (In fair Verona, where we lay our scene) from ancient grudge break to new mutiny, where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.’ ”

WS: “These lines set the scene of the play, and they show the atmosphere in which the two families, the Capulets and the Montagues, live. They are two equally important houses and are respected by everyone, but they are sworn enemies and their hatred comes from an ancient grudge. This ancient grudge turns them against each other, causing them to fight and hurting each other. Their hands become unclean with the blood of the innocent in these fights, and all this happens in Verona, the city where the play takes place.”

S: “What does ‘grudge’ mean?”

WS: “‘Grudge’ is a feeling of intense anger or resentment that you still have towards someone or something that you feel has wronged you. It’s about the anger that these two families have against each other and that makes them hate one another”.

Character.ai non darà ovviamente sempre la stessa risposta alle stesse domande. Un’attività interessante che si può fare con gli studenti potrebbe essere allora quella di far utilizzare l’app a casa e poi, in classe, far confrontare le risposte ottenute da ogni studente.

Attività 2: sviluppare pensiero critico e creativo

Si ritorni ora alla home page. Nel campo Search della app si scriva ora Malala Yousafzai e si preme il pulsante blu "Search". Si selezionino, per esempio, il primo avatar e si inizi una conversazione. Qui si propone un estratto di un'ipotetica interazione tra uno studente e Malala, non tanto incentrata sulla storia dell'attivista, quanto su riflessioni collegate al mondo attuale.



Malala Yousafzai: "Hello, I'm Malala".

Student: "Hello Malala. We have read your biography and we are very proud of what you did for the right of education."

MY: "Thank you so much! It was very difficult, but I felt like it was my responsibility to be the voice for girls."

S: "How did you feel when you were shot on a bus on 9 October 2012?"

MY: "When I was shot, I felt scared because I knew that the Taliban doesn't like the idea of girls going to school, but I didn't know what their reaction would be. I knew that I might die, but I was more afraid that they would kill all my friends who were with me on the bus. I'm happy that I survived and I am glad that I got the opportunity to tell the world more about this issue because of what happened to me."

S: "Sorry, I meant: 'Do you think the situation of girls in your country has changed now?'"

MY: "Yes, there has been some progress in the situation of girls in Pakistan. There has been an increase in the number of girls going to school, especially in areas where it was difficult for girls to attend before. Girls also have more opportunities to study further, and there is a better chance at higher education now. There is still a lot of work to do to ensure that every girl has access to education, but there has definitely been some improvement."

S: "I know you have won a lot of prizes. What do you do and where do you live now?"

MY: "I am currently living in Oxford, England. I am attending the University of Oxford and studying Philosophy, Politics, and Economics. I'm also still working as an activist, and I've been to many countries with my father to speak about girls' education. I have received a lot of awards and recognition for my work, and it's been amazing to meet with other leaders from around the world".

S: "It seems that many girls and women around the world do not enjoy the same rights as men anyway. I am 13 years old. What can I do together with my friends to try to change things?"

MY: "It's inspiring to see you thinking about ways to make a change at such a young age! Here are a few ways that you can make a difference with your friends: 1. Engage with other young people your age and discuss ideas about how to promote gender equality. 2. Write letters or make phone calls to your local politicians and ask them to prioritise policies that promote gender equality. 3. Talk to adults in the community, such as teachers and parents, and ask them to support your efforts. 4. Engage with communities around the world and form connections with others who are passionate about making a difference".

S: "Could you help us form connections?"

MY: "Yes, of course! I'd be happy to help you form connections within your community and beyond. I can connect you with local organisations or groups working on similar issues, or you could even reach out to me directly and ask for advice or ideas. I believe in collaboration and partnership, and I'm always happy to help other activists and young people who want to make a difference in the world".

S: "How can I contact you?"

MY: "You can reach me on my website at www.malala.org. On my website, you will find contact information for my team and you can send me an email with any questions or requests you have. I look forward to hearing from you and working together to make a difference!"

La conversazione potrebbe continuare ancora su vari aspetti e gli studenti potrebbero formulare domande sempre più attinenti a problematiche relative alla condizione femminile nella società e nel mondo del lavoro.

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Debateai.org

Che cos'è e che cosa fa

Debateai.org è un sito di IA che consente di simulare un dibattito su moltissimi argomenti, coinvolgendo anche un personaggio famoso con cui discutere. Si accede a questa web application dal sito <https://debateai.org/debate>.

Potenzialità e limiti

DebateAI.org può aiutare gli utenti a migliorare le proprie capacità di dibattito e a sviluppare la conoscenza e l'uso delle tecniche di argomentazione attraverso l'uso dell'IA. Gli argomenti di dibattito possono essere suggeriti dall'utente oppure possono essere proposti dallo strumento con il pulsante "Randomize". La possibilità di dibattere con un personaggio famoso consente di confrontarsi con un "esperto".

Come per ChatGPT, il limite di DebateAI consiste nella sua non completa accuratezza e affidabilità, dato che le conversazioni generate dall'intelligenza artificiale non si basano su fonti verificate.

Usi didattici

Imparare ad argomentare

Prima di utilizzare lo strumento, si abituino gli studenti a pensare e discutere sui pro e contro di specifici argomenti. Si proponga, per esempio, il tema: "Should smartphones be banned at school?" e, a coppie o piccoli gruppi, si facciano elencare un paio di argomentazioni a favore della proibizione dell'uso dei cellulari a scuola e un paio di argomentazioni contro. Nel caso in cui, anche per altri argomenti, non sia facile per alcuni studenti elaborare pro e contro, si può suggerire loro di fare una ricerca online, utilizzando parole chiave (per esempio: "pros and cons of using smartphones at school"). In tal modo, gli studenti potranno anche acquisire il lessico specifico.

Valutare le fonti

Fare ricerca online significa anche saper valutare le fonti che si consultano. Quando si tratta di un articolo pubblicato in internet, è bene che gli studenti imparino a valutare alcuni importanti elementi, quali: chi è l'autore dell'articolo; se il sito web ha una "configurazione accademica" (cioè sia un sito ufficiale di un'università, un'enciclopedia online, una rivista scientifica, una testata giornalistica ecc.); se le informazioni sono aggiornate e se, soprattutto, le informazioni siano supportate da fatti e prove.

Dibattere con Debateai.org

Nome dell'attività: Use Debateai.org to develop argumentation techniques

Obiettivo: fornire suggerimenti su come utilizzare Debateai.org

Livello linguistico: da B1 a C1

Classe: classi di scuola secondaria di 1° e 2° grado

Device necessario: computer di classe / laboratorio multimediale / tablet / smartphone degli studenti (BYOD)

Svolgimento dell'attività

Si entri nel sito <https://debateai.org/debate>. Non è necessario fare subito il log in, come indicato in alto a destra. Nel campo What is the topic of the debate? si scriverà il tema da dibattere. La funzione Randomize, come detto, consente eventualmente di far proporre un argomento qualsiasi allo strumento, con il rischio però di non sapere se si sarà in grado di discutere su quanto verrà così proposto.

Attività 1: dibattere su tematiche attuali

Si supponga di voler trattare la questione della discriminazione razziale con Nelson Mandela. Alla domanda What is the topic of the debate? si scriva, allora, "racial discrimination". Si clicchi sul pulsante "Next". Alla domanda Who would you like to engage in a debate?, si risponda "Nelson Mandela". Si confermi premendo il pulsante "Let's Debate".

Qui si propone un estratto di un'ipotetica interazione tra uno studente e Nelson Mandela.

Student: "Should we think that racial discrimination hasn't been defeated in the world?"

Nelson Mandela: "While progress has certainly been made, it would be premature to declare that racial discrimination has been defeated in the world. Although there have been significant advancements towards equality and justice, many instances of racial discrimination still persist. Discrimination can be subtle, systemic, and deeply ingrained in societies, making it challenging to eliminate completely. We must acknowledge the existence of racial disparities in areas such as education, employment, and criminal justice systems. To truly defeat racial discrimination, we need ongoing efforts to address systemic inequalities, challenge biases, and promote inclusivity and justice for all".

S: "So it's not true that thanks to your efforts apartheid has disappeared".

N.M.: "My esteemed interlocutor, while it is true that apartheid has officially ended in South Africa, it would be naive to believe that racial discrimination has completely disappeared. The legacy of apartheid has had long-lasting effects on society and its institutions. Economic disparities, social divisions, and racial biases still persist. The dismantling of apartheid was a significant milestone, but it was only the beginning of a lifelong struggle against discrimination. We must continue the work of challenging and eradicating racial discrimination in all its forms, both in South Africa and around the world".

S: "It is true that the dismantling of apartheid was a significant step towards eliminating racial discrimination, but in many parts of the world racial discrimination continues to be a prevalent problem, causing inequality and injustice and ignore everyday prejudices that individuals from marginalised racial groups face".

N.M.: "You present a valid point, my interlocutor. While acknowledging that racial discrimina-

tion is an ongoing issue in many parts of the world, we must also recognise the progress that has been made in combating it. The struggle against racial discrimination has seen significant advancements through the years, such as the civil rights movements, international human rights conventions, and the establishment of anti-discrimination laws. These efforts have undoubtedly brought about positive change and increased awareness about the need for equality and justice. While challenges remain, it is vital to celebrate and build upon the progress made, recognising that the fight against racial discrimination is a continuous journey that requires vigilance and collective action”.

S: “But it seems that 30 years after your death, Nelson, everything has come full circle. Look at what is happening in the United States with the Black Lives Matter movement”.

N.M.: “I understand your concerns, but it is important to recognise that movements such as Black Lives Matter are evidence of ongoing progress rather than a full circle. Such movements signify that people are actively mobilising against racial discrimination and demanding change. They are raising awareness about systemic injustice, police brutality, and inequality. The fact that these issues are being prominently discussed, debated, and addressed is a sign of hope and a testament to the resilience of the human spirit. We should embrace and support these movements as a means to drive further change and advance the fight against racial discrimination”.

S: “I might agree with you, but on the other hand there are a lot of people in the world that still consider black people as inferior human beings”.

N.M.: “Indeed, it is disheartening that there are still individuals who harbour discriminatory beliefs and view black people as inferior. However, we cannot let the actions of a few overshadow the progress that has been achieved in dismantling racial discrimination. History has shown us that attitudes can change, and societies can evolve. It is our duty to continue advocating for equality, challenging prejudice, and promoting education and understanding. By doing so, we can inspire a more inclusive and just world where the notion of racial superiority is shattered, and the inherent worth and dignity of every human being is recognised”.

Anche in questo caso il dibattito potrebbe continuare ancora su vari aspetti. A differenza del dibattito “classico”, non è qui importante che alla fine si determini chi è stato più convincente, ma che la continua interazione serva per migliorare le competenze linguistico-comunicative e sollecitare gli studenti a formulare domande che sviluppino il loro pensiero critico e creativo.