



Humanity on the Page

Writing in the Age of AI

Rand Richards Cooper

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Cooper begins by discussing “the lost history of workplace automation.” Have you ever been replaced by a machine? Can you imagine how it would happen in your job, if it were to?

2. Cooper juxtaposes two brothers, Dan and Darryl, to contrast how people use artificial intelligence. Which one do you seem more to resemble? How do you feel about your opposite?

3. At first, Dan is skeptical of chatbots, but he begins to use them so much that ChatGPT produces text claiming that it is doing most of the work, not Dan. Do you use chatbots? How have your opinions and use of them developed since their inception?

4. Cooper mentions a novel that its publisher cancelled because of the “author’s” use of AI. Would you read a novel that you knew was generated, even partly, by a chatbot? Why or why not?

5. Uncertain how much one may use a chatbot for writing, Cooper says, “We all know where the slippery slope ends. But where does it start? Where to draw the line?” What do you think?

6. Cooper quotes Baldacci: “If you lose the ability to read, you lose the ability to think.” Do you agree? What about societies that do not write? Do we rely too heavily on written language as a show of intelligence?

7. “To resist the AI Siren and its seductive claim to speak to us in our own language—to know us and be with us, as one of us—we will need powerful resources.” Do you think we should resist it? How are you doing so?

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING:

Alexander Stern, “Wittgenstein’s Apocalypse,” April 2026:

<https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/wittgenstein-apocalypse-ludwig-stern-ai-artificial-intelligence-technology>

Rand Richards Cooper, “The Shredder’s Trade,” February 2025:

<https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/shredders-trade>

Kevin Gallagher, “Almost a Blasphemy,” April 9, 2026:

<https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/gallagher-ai-artificial-intelligence-pope-leo-vatican>