LESSON 11

AI Video and Synthetic Media

40 minutes | Making with AI

WHAT THIS LESSON DOES

You examine short clips to judge real or generated before the reveal. Then generate synthetic media, spot failures like hands and text, build a class list of tells and write three checks you would run first on a new clip.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO

- Generate a short piece of synthetic media from a text prompt
- Identify model failures in generated outputs such as hands, fingers, text, physics and continuity
- Build a class list of tells from observed failures
- Write three tells drawn from failures you saw and state which you would check first on a new clip

BEFORE THE BELL

- Confirm a school-approved tool that actually returns a short video or animated image from a text prompt (for example Copilot or Gemini through school accounts, or another approved assistant with that capability).
- Run the worked-example prompt once so you know timing and typical failures.
- Prefer two genuine rights-cleared phone clips and one generated clip for the examine step; keep the interactive stems as viewing prompts.
- Board or shared doc ready for the class tells list.

AI Video and Synthetic Media

HOW THE LESSON RUNS

4 min	introduction	Start
8 min	activity	Examine: Real or Generated?
12 min	activity	Hands-on: Generate, Then Hunt Failures
10 min	content	Your Turn: Three Tells You Trust
3 min	content	Make Sense
2 min	content	Reflect
1 min	summary	What You Covered

ANSWERS AND LOOK-FORS

- Clip 1, Likely real footage On the full clip the puddle ripples a moment after the bus passes, the wind noise is messy and linked to the street, and the free hand keeps five clear fingers throughout. Those linked cause-and-effect details are the kinds of things real cameras pick up without trying. None of that proves a clip forever, but together they are stronger than a smooth picture alone.
- Clip 2, Likely AI-generated On the full clip the free hand shows six fingers for two frames then five, the wall sign reads CHMPIONS NIGT, the cup casts no shadow while the player does, and the crowd noise stays flat even when people cheer. Broken fingers, unreadable sign text, a missing shadow and audio that does not rise with the cheer are classic generation failures. Any one might be a bad encode; several at once is a patterned model failure, not a shaky phone.
- Clip 3, Likely real footage On the full clip the mouth shape tracks the words, the locker slam lands on the door close, and head motion stays continuous even though compression makes the image blocky. Blocky compression is a delivery problem, not a generation tell. Mouth sync, timed background sound and continuous motion are what you expect from a real recording under a weak connection.

TEACHING MOVES

- Model the generation tool on the board using student-dictated prompts for the hands-on activity.
- Lead whole-class discussion to compile the list of tells from actual observed failures only.
- Circulate during individual work to prompt specific rather than vague descriptions of issues.
- Keep the final reflection focused on technical model weaknesses.
- If a student names real harm, a classmate, or a politician: acknowledge that synthetic media can target real people, state we do not analyse non-consensual or sexual content in class, steer back to technical tells on the board clip, and offer a private follow-up if they need to report something.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Students provide vague tells such as 'it looks weird'; direct them to reference specific failures seen in the output like finger count or text errors.
- Students make guesses about clips without a visible reason; insist on committing to an observable detail before the reveal.
- Students use generic warnings instead of today's observations; refer them back to the class-built list.
- Starting a second generation before the first result is on screen and burning the failure-hunt time.

DIFFERENTIATION

- Support: Offer sentence starters like 'One failure I saw was...' for writing the three tells.
- Extension: Challenge students to predict which tells might no longer work as models improve; if generation is fast, optional second run with one changed word.
- Support: Allow students who had generation issues to use examples from the class discussion or the opening clips, naming the exact detail.