

## 7 Practical Ways to Strengthen Thinking in an AI World

### 1. Institute Daily Silent Reading — On Paper.

Set aside 20–30 minutes each day for uninterrupted reading, preferably from physical books. Strong readers become strong thinkers, and deep reading builds attention, vocabulary, and judgment in ways scrolling never will.

### 2. Require Students to Explain Their Thinking Out Loud.

After completing an assignment, ask: “Why did you choose that?” or “How do you know this is accurate?” Verbal reasoning strengthens clarity and exposes weak understanding quickly.

### 3. Build in a Validation Step.

Whenever AI is used, require students to verify at least one claim independently. Make checking sources and evaluating accuracy a routine, not an optional add-on.

### 4. Make Directions a Graded Skill.

Occasionally assess only whether students followed instructions precisely. Attention to detail is not busywork — it is professional preparation.

### 5. Reward Iteration, Not Just Polish.

Ask students to submit drafts or show how they refined a prompt. Emphasize that strong work rarely comes from the first attempt.

### 6. Practice Writing Without AI.

Continue requiring handwritten responses or timed writing exercises. Students need to be able to organize and express ideas independently before they can effectively evaluate machine-generated writing.

### 7. Create Productive Struggle.

Resist the urge to immediately rescue students from difficulty. Wrestling with ideas — even sitting in uncertainty — builds the intellectual muscle AI cannot supply.

