

Food packaging warnings should be on AI books

13th February 2025



A leading poet and writer from Scotland has called for warnings to be put on books written by artificial intelligence (AI). Peter Mackay* became Scotland's national poet in December last year. He is concerned about the damage AI could do to the publishing industry. He wants food packaging-style health warnings on all AI-generated books. He told the BBC: "I have got huge concerns about AI in terms of the creation of new literature and the creation of new books, partly because, as a writer, it could be disastrous for new people who are in the profession." He added: "It's very hard to make a living as a writer anyway, and [now] you are having to compete with [all the] knowledge of every book written."

Mr Mackay wants all new books to have a special mark that shows whether AI or a person wrote it. He said the symbol could be like those used on food packaging. He believes the public needs to know about the level of AI input in a book. One idea is that information could show if a book is "100 per cent AI-free or 100 per cent organically produced". Mr Mackay's call comes just before the USA and UK refused to sign an international agreement on AI to keep it "clean" and "ethical". US Vice President JD Vance said too much regulation of AI could "kill a transformative industry just as it's taking off". He said "pro-growth AI policies" were more important than safety.

* Peter Mackay generally uses this English-sounding name. His real name is Pàdraig MacAoidh (in the Scottish Gaelic language).

Sources: scotsman.com / bbc.com / parliament.uk

Writing

A.I. books will be better than books written by people. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

poet / warnings / books / publishing / food packaging / literature / A.I. / knowledge / symbol / the public / information / international agreement / ethical / growth / safety

True / False

- 1) A poet from Scotland wants to write poems using AI. T / F
- 2) The poet says AI is great for the publishing industry. T / F
- 3) The poet said AI will be great for new people in the publishing business. T / F
- 4) The poet said it was hard to earn money as a writer. T / F
- 5) The poet wants books to have a sign that says if AI was used to write it. T / F
- 6) The poet said all books should be 100 per cent AI-free. T / F
- 7) JD Vance said too much regulation could kill AI. T / F
- 8) The USA vice president said growing AI was more important than safety. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. leading | a. harm |
| 2. concerned | b. declined |
| 3. damage | c. worried |
| 4. generated | d. information |
| 5. knowledge | e. amount |
| 6. mark | f. top |
| 7. level | g. right-thinking |
| 8. refused | h. created |
| 9. ethical | i. security |
| 10. safety | j. sign |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) Do you think books should have an AI mark on them?
- c) Why is it important to know if a book was written by AI?
- d) Should music and art also have a symbol if AI was used?
- e) What jobs do you think AI will replace?
- f) Will AI be better than real English teachers?
- g) How important is AI for our future?
- h) What questions would you like to ask a novelist?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. A leading poet and | a. policies |
| 2. He is concerned about the damage | b. in the profession |
| 3. disastrous for new people who are | c. every book written |
| 4. It's very hard to make a living | d. agreement |
| 5. all the knowledge of | e. AI could do |
| 6. the level of AI input | f. AI-free |
| 7. show if a book is 100 per cent | g. as a writer |
| 8. refused to sign an international | h. taking off |
| 9. kill a transformative industry just as it's | i. in a book |
| 10. pro-growth AI | j. writer from Scotland |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think of poets?
- What kinds of books do you like?
- What do you think of books written by AI?
- Are real writers or AI better?
- Are you worried about AI replacing human writers?
- How difficult is it to make a living as a writer?
- How will you make a living in 10 years from now?
- What is the best book you've ever read?

Spelling

- A leading pteo and writer
- books written by tilafraici intelligence
- He is concerned about the mgadae
- the creation of new tieraurelt
- new people who are in the orfipsenos
- all the wdngeoekl of every book written
- the slbmyo could be like those used on food
- 100 per cent lgoacnliyar produced
- keep it clean and thalcei
- too much uentgariol
- AI could kill a transformative yrsdntui
- pro-rwtgoh AI policies

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. c	3. a	4. h	5. d
6. j	7. e	8. b	9. g	10. i

Role Play

Role A – Romance

You think romance is the best book genre. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their genres. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): science fiction, horror or non-fiction.

Role B – Science Fiction

You think science fiction is the best book genre. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their genres. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): romance, horror or non-fiction.

Role C – Horror

You think horror is the best book genre. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their genres. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): science fiction, romance or non-fiction.

Role D – Non-fiction

You think non-fiction is the best book genre. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their genres. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): science fiction, horror or romance.

Speaking – Book Genres

Rank these with your partner. Put the best book genres at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| • Science fiction | • Mystery |
| • Comedy | • Romance |
| • Horror | • Historical fiction |
| • Non-fiction | • Adventure |

Answers – True False

1	F	2	F	3	F	4	T	5	T	6	F	7	T	8	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.