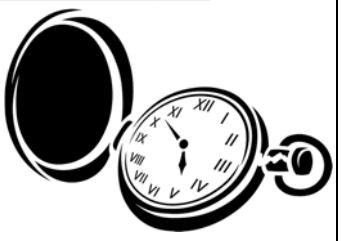
Name _____



# Then vs. Now

In the 1950s and 1960s, many researchers believed that Artificial Intelligence would quickly reach human-level abilities. Some predictions were bold and some were overly optimistic. Today, AI has advanced in amazing ways, but not always in the ways early scientists expected.

In this activity, you will compare **early AI predictions** with the **reality of today** and think about what came true, what didn't, and why.

| **Then (Predictions in 1950s/60s)** | **Now (Today's Reality)** |
|---|---|
| Computers will achieve human-level intelligence within a generation. | AI can perform specific tasks (like language, vision, games) very well, but general intelligence is still unsolved. |
| A few years of research will be enough to make machines reason as humans do. | Decades later, progress in reasoning is still gradual, requiring massive data, algorithms, and computing power. |
| Machines will quickly master natural language and "understand" human speech. | Systems like Siri, Alexa, and ChatGPT process natural language impressively, but true understanding is still debated. |
| AI will replace human doctors and experts. | AI helps in medicine (diagnosis, imaging, drug discovery), but humans remain essential decision-makers. |
| Once a machine can play chess, human-level intelligence is basically solved. | Computers mastered chess (Deep Blue, 1997), but broader human-like reasoning did not follow automatically. |

## Reflection Questions

1. Which early prediction do you think was the most unrealistic, and why?

2. Which prediction came closest to being true today? Give an example.

3. Why do you think researchers in the 1950s/60s were overly optimistic about AI progress?

4. Do you think today's predictions about AI (like Artificial General Intelligence within 20-30 years) might also be overly optimistic? Why or why not?