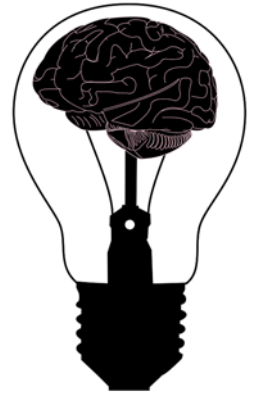# Can You Spot the Thinking Machine?

Artificial intelligence can write essays, give advice, and even make big decisions - sometimes so smoothly that we don't notice where the "human" ends and the "algorithm" begins. In this activity, you'll read three short decision-making stories. One was written by an AI, one by a human, and one by a mix of both. Your task: **decide which is which** and explain what clues led you to your guess. Then, reflect on what your reasoning says about how you define *human judgment* and *machine logic.*

Story A: The School Lunch Dilemma - The cafeteria manager at Central High wanted to make the lunch menu more efficient. She collected six months of data on food waste, student preferences, and nutrition goals. The new system she implemented predicted which meals would be most popular each day and adjusted orders automatically. Within weeks, food waste dropped by 30%, and students were mostly satisfied - except for the few who missed surprise menu days. The manager said she liked how "the numbers take the stress out of guessing," though she admitted she still peeked at the data herself every morning, just to make sure it "felt right."

Story B: The Shelter Decision
After a major storm, volunteers at a community shelter faced a tough choice - who to help first when supplies ran low. A coordinator suggested a fairness algorithm that ranked people by vulnerability: age, health, and number of dependents. The system worked quickly but coldly. When one volunteer noticed that several families without documentation were excluded, she paused the program. "We can't leave compassion out of the math," she said, and the team decided to recheck the list manually. It took longer, but everyone agreed the process felt more just.

Story C: The Hiring Process
A startup received hundreds of applications for an internship. To save time, it used a program that scored candidates on writing clarity and keyword matches. The CEO reviewed the top ten and interviewed them. Later, she realized several talented applicants had been filtered out because they used more creative phrasing. "Efficiency isn't the same as insight," she said in the post-mortem meeting. The company kept the program but added a human check - a final round where an employee could override the system's ranking based on intuition or unique qualities.

Name _____

Your Task

Story	Your Guess (AI / Human / Mix)	What clues gave it away?	What language or logic sounded "human" or "machine-like"?
A			
B			
C			

<u>Reflection Questions</u>

1. What clues helped you tell the difference between human reasoning and algorithmic reasoning?

2. Did any story surprise you - did one feel more or less "human" than expected?

3. What qualities (tone, empathy, logic, detail) made a story feel human? What qualities felt artificial?

4. What does this tell you about trust? Are we more likely to trust logic, or empathy - and why?

5. If AI can sound human, what new skills will people need to tell truth from imitation in the future?