

THE SHORTCUT:

What Is Learning When AI Can Do the Work?

SIGN IN

BOY26-TheShortcuts

PAIR BEFORE WE BEGIN

Find someone from a different grade band or role.

Workbook · card · pen should be on every seat

THE SHORTCUT LAB

Designing AI Use That Protects Learning

01

AUDIT

See what the artifact cannot prove.

02

REDESIGN

Force one piece of human work.

03

BOUNDARY

Say the rule so a student gets it.

The talk asks the question. This hour, you build the answer into a task.

This post would earn full marks under this rubric.

In ‘The Last Lantern,’ the empty harbor first makes belonging seem like a place a person must earn. Mara arrives after every shop has closed, and the narrator says, ‘Every window was dark except the one nobody owned.’ That unclaimed light mirrors Mara: she is present, but no household or neighborhood has claimed her. The setting therefore begins as evidence of exclusion rather than comfort.

The abandoned lighthouse changes that idea. Mara repairs its broken lens even though no one asks her to. When the fishing boats return through fog, the story says, ‘The lantern kept its promise even after the keeper forgot his.’ The promise belongs to the light, but Mara chooses to keep it. By acting for people who do not yet know her, she creates a relationship before she receives recognition.

At the end, the harbor is still physically cold and weathered, yet the windows open one by one as neighbors walk toward the tower. That shift shows the theme: belonging is not merely being invited into an existing place. It can begin when someone takes responsibility for the well-being of others. Mara does not wait for the town to name her as one of them; her choice to restore the light makes the town see that she already is. The setting develops from darkness, to a single shared signal, to many open windows, turning Mara’s private act into a community’s recognition.

**WHAT CAN YOU SAY,
WITH CONFIDENCE,**

**about the
learning that
produced this?**

Not what you suspect.
What the evidence can
actually support.

45 sec silent read → 90 sec with your
partner

IN 55 MINUTES, YOU LEAVE WITH

Monday in your hand.

01

ONE AUDITED TASK

You can see the shortcut—and the evidence gap.

02

ONE REDESIGN

One capacity protected by unavoidable human work.

03

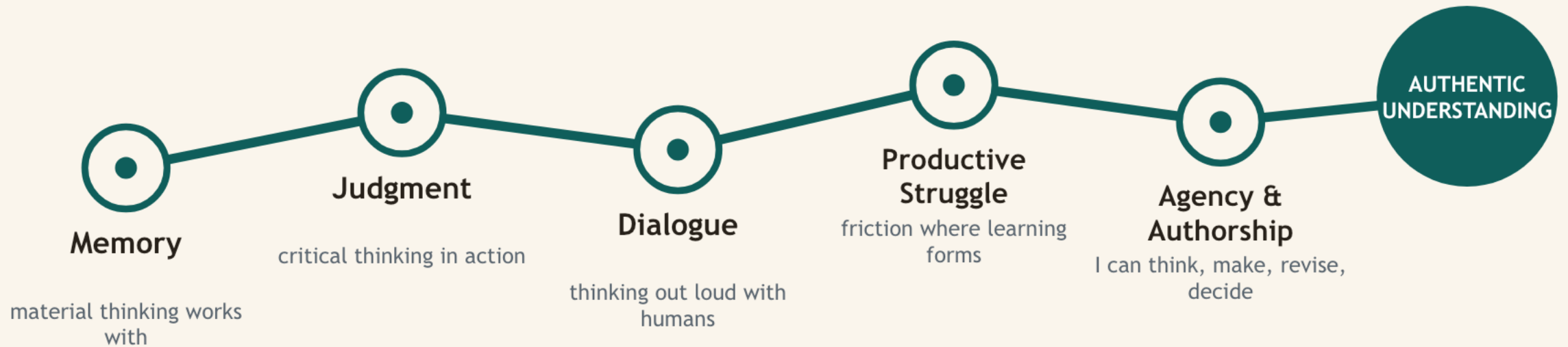
ONE BOUNDARY SENTENCE

Student-clear language for one part of the task.

And none of it may add to your grading load.

THE FIVE CAPACITIES

What the shortcut must not erase



Protect one capacity on purpose. Authentic understanding is the destination—not another artifact.

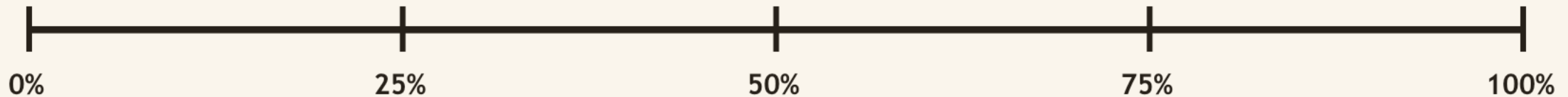
5 MIN · SOLO

Name the artifact.
Name the hidden work.
Mark the Shortcut Test.

4 MIN · PARTNER INTERVIEW

Name the capacity cost.
Name the evidence gap.

THE SHORTCUT TEST



How much of a full-credit submission would come back?

Partner push: “Could AI really not do that?”

What did the task mean to protect?



MEMORY



JUDGMENT



DIALOGUE



PRODUCTIVE
STRUGGLE



AGENCY &
AUTHORSHIP

Tell your partner: “The part AI can skip is _____. The capacity that costs is _____.”

MAKE ONE PIECE OF HUMAN WORK UNAVOIDABLE

1

PICK ONE CAPACITY

2

CHOOSE ONE MOVE

3

REWRITE ONE
COMPONENT

You are not AI-proofing the task.
You are making one piece of human work unavoidable.

WELLNESS GATE · If grading gets heavier, redesign the redesign.

What can you say with confidence?

Okay. The sentence I changed was, “The monster is evil because it hurts people.” I changed it to, “The monster becomes a mirror for the community's fear.”

AGENCY & AUTHORSHIP

What evidence do you hear?

JUDGMENT

What evidence do you hear?

Name one claim the artifact supports—and one claim it cannot.

What can you say with confidence?

The evidence that changed my mind was the scene where the villagers react before they actually know what happened. At first I thought the conflict was just about the monster. That scene made me think the fear is doing part of the harm.

AGENCY & AUTHORSHIP

What evidence do you hear?

JUDGMENT

What evidence do you hear?

Name one claim the artifact supports—and one claim it cannot.

What can you say with confidence?

I kept the word “mirror” because it connects back to my thesis, and because the community creates the thing it is most afraid of.

AGENCY & AUTHORSHIP
What evidence do you hear?

JUDGMENT
What evidence do you hear?

Name one claim the artifact supports—and one claim it cannot.

That voice was synthetic. The words were generated.

If the voice alone convinced us, the redesign changed the wrapper—not the evidence.

TEXT

TRAP

Polish can hide who retrieved,
judged, revised, or chose.

PATCH

Tie evidence to visible process.

VOICE

TRAP

Fluency may come from a script, TTS,
or cloning.

PATCH

Add unpredictable uptake when
dialogue matters.

VIDEO

TRAP

Eye contact may come from an avatar,
teleprompter, cuts, or coaching.

PATCH

Apply the idea to a new case.

What would you add so the student's thinking has to show up?

Patch the evidence. Do not police every artifact.

Mark the task part. Name the learning.

● GREEN / OPEN

△ YELLOW / ALLOWED WITH RECEIPTS

⬡ RED / CLOSED

FOR THIS TASK, AI IS

[OPEN / ALLOWED WITH RECEIPTS / CLOSED]

for [this part], because the learning you're building here is [the human work—in student language].

EAR TEST · Would a 4th/9th grader understand your sentence?

Give one. Get one. Name Monday.

1

STAND

Find someone who was not your partner.

2

STEAL

Give one redesign move. Write one idea you are taking.

3

COMMIT

Name the task, capacity, boundary, and check-in partner.



TAKE THE SHORTCUT LAB WITH YOU

<https://whatlearningbuilds.org/resources>

BEFORE ASKING

“Did they use AI?”

ASK

“What did this task require the student to do that mattered?”

Design the evidence. Protect the learning.