

**Vernessa Neu**  
**Newsome High School, Hillsborough County**  
**2025 Runner-Up**

Vernessa teaches English at Newsome High School in Hillsborough County.

She was chosen as a 2025 Runner-Up for incorporating NIE's weekly "Use the News" lessons as daily bellwork in her 9<sup>th</sup> grade English class.

Each week, she selects two Use the News articles designed for grades 9-12, targeting one article on a trending topic students may already be familiar with and one on a less widely discussed by students. For each article, she develops discussion questions aligned with Florida's B.E.S.T. Standards.

- Monday begins with vocabulary instruction drawn from the article.
- Tuesday focuses on activating background knowledge and previewing the article's topic.
- Wednesday is dedicated to reading the article and annotating key details.
- Thursday centers on identifying the central idea and analyzing the author's purpose.
- Friday concludes with small-group discussions, where students articulate their ideas and respond to the perspectives of their peers.

Vernessa writes, "This structure has allowed me to target key ELA benchmarks, support differentiated instruction and provide frequent practice in skills aligned to state testing – all while nurturing student voice, collaboration, and confidence in reading. The weekly discussions have become a favorite part of class for many students, giving them a meaningful space to engage with real-world content and one another."

# A.I. FORECAST

## Small Group Discussion

Do you agree with the author's report that we need to prepare for possible dangers, or do you think the predictions sound more like science fiction?

Use evidence from the article to support your opinion and explain how you think A.I. could impact our lives—for better or worse—in the next 5 to 10 years.

Be sure to consider both the risks and the benefits of fast-moving A.I. technology.

▲ Too quiet

