ASK GIO STUDYHELP

How Ask Gio Studyhelp works

And why that is different from asking a free AI chat. For parents, teachers, schools and anyone with questions about AI in education.



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The short version

When you type a question into a free AI chat (such as ChatGPT or Gemini), you get an answer from a system that does not know who is asking, does not know why, and decides for itself what the answer looks like. Long one moment, short the next. Sometimes right, sometimes just off.

Ask Gio Studyhelp use the same kind of technology, but put fixed frameworks around it. It is not a chatbot: you stay with one word or topic. The frameworks decide who the answer is for, at what level, what may and may not be in it, what it looks like, and which words have a fixed meaning. After that, we and teachers check whether it is going well. What we correct, stays corrected.

So AI is not the whole tool. AI is one part of a system that we control.

Why a single question to AI gives mixed results

Compare it to a company. You walk up to someone in marketing and ask: "What do you think of these financial figures?" That person is not stupid. They give an answer as best they can. But they are not a financial specialist, so the answer can be completely wrong. In a company you ask that question in the finance department.

A free AI chat works the same way. Ask a question, and the AI takes on a role by itself and answers from that role. You do not decide which role that is. The question itself matters too. "Show me a forecast" can mean a hundred things. If the question is broad, the AI fills in what you probably mean. That is where it can go wrong.

The more specific the question and the assigned role, the better the answer. Most people do not give the AI that information. A nine-year-old student, for example, does not even know it is needed.

What Ask Gio Studyhelp do differently

1 Not a chatbot, but a study tool

Ask Gio Studyhelp are not a chatbot. You do not have a conversation with them. You do not chat about the weather, and you do not jump from one topic to the next.

You type a word, a concept, an expression, a person, a place or an event. You get one answer about exactly that topic. You cannot ask follow-up questions on that answer: every search stands on its own.

If you type a whole sentence or paste a piece of text, the app first asks what you want to do with it: summarise it, explain it at your level, or translate it. Even then, it stays with that one text.

If you want to go further with a word, you use the buttons under the answer: more meanings, a comparison, a quiz, writing your own sentences. They are all about the same word. You stay on task.

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That is a deliberate choice. A chatbot invites you to keep talking. After three questions you are somewhere else than where you started, and the homework is still waiting. With Ask Gio Studyhelp an answer is the end point of a question, not the start of a conversation.

We take this far. With the information button we deliberately left out the "see also" suggestions, because they invite you to wander off.

The only place in the app where you can type freely is the help chat. It only answers questions about how the app works. If you start on something else there, you are sent back.

Everything you look up goes into your own history. You can sort it into folders and download it. That way you build your own word list with exactly the words you stumbled over. A conversation in a free AI chat is impossible to find again after two weeks.

2 A fixed role, with fixed limits

The AI in Ask Gio Studyhelp receives the same detailed instruction with every question. It says who it works for, within which frameworks it may answer, and which answers it must not give.

People who use an AI chat themselves almost never do this. A student who asks an AI chat something is talking to an AI that does not know there is a child on the other side.

3 Four fixed levels

You set once at which level you want explanations. After that, every answer matches that level. You do not have to learn how to ask an AI to say it more simply.

In a free AI chat you have to ask for simplicity again with every question. After a few messages it often slips back into its own way of talking. A child, or someone who finds reading harder, does not notice.

Level	What you get with Ask Gio Studyhelp
1	Short sentences, one or two concrete meanings, everyday words
2	More everyday meanings, synonyms and expressions
3	Figurative use and more nuance
4	All meanings, grammar and the origin of the word

The levels are deliberately different. At level 1 you do not see every meaning of a word. That is not a mistake: too many meanings at once confuses someone who is just starting. Anyone who wants more, sets the level higher. Level 4 goes furthest.

4 Short and to the point

The answers are short. That is a choice. A long text about a word you do not know often contains new words you do not know either. Then you end up further away instead of closer.

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We actively check for this. The explanation must not explain a word with another word that is just as difficult. An example of what we fixed this way, in Dutch: someone who looked up "zot" got "dwaas", and someone who looked up "dwaas" got "onverstandig": three words for foolish. A child just goes round in circles. The system no longer does that.

5 A fixed format for every answer

In a free AI chat the AI decides the format. Long text, short text, long sentences, bullet lists, capital letters used differently. It changes with each question and even each time.

In Ask Gio Studyhelp the structure of an answer is fixed: meaning, example sentences, image and the buttons, always in the same place. The AI first finds the answer, and then has to return it in exactly that format. That is a second check: first on content, then on format.

This is more than tidiness. After three searches a user knows where to look. Two words can be compared with each other. Memory holds on to a fixed structure.

6 Sensitive words: explain, don't ban

Users also look up swear words and words about sex. That is part of it. We do not ban those words. A ban only makes a word more exciting, and the user then looks it up somewhere else, without any explanation.

Ask Gio Studyhelp explain such a word calmly and properly, at the user's level. What it means, and why it can be rude or hurtful. We are not prudish about it. Someone who looks it up wants to know, and is better off getting good information from us than wrong information from someone else.

We also decide the image for such a word, not the AI. Normally the AI decides whether a word gets an image. That judgement can differ from one time to the next. For sensitive words we therefore fix it, word by word:

- **No image.** A word for a sexual act never gets an image. Not even if the AI would otherwise decide to make one, and not even if an image of it had been made before.
- **A biological illustration.** A word for a genital, even a rude one, shows a neat biological drawing, like in a biology textbook. Whatever image style the user has chosen.

We keep that list ourselves, and it grows as we come across new words.

A free AI chat or a search engine does not explain such words at the level of, for example, a child, and often shows what the user should not see.

7 Images that match the level

You can have an image made for a word. It matches the user's level. You choose a fixed style yourself, for example cartoon or colouring page, and that style stays the same. The pictures look alike and the style does not distract from the content.

The colouring page is a line drawing you can print and colour in. That works well for young children. While they colour, they are busy with the word.

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8 The buttons under every answer

Under every answer is a row of small buttons. Each button does one thing.

Behind every button is its own instruction for the AI, tuned to each level. The quiz at level 1 is a different request to the AI than the quiz at level 4. We wrote and tested those instructions. The user does not have to think about how to ask: they press a button, and the right request goes along with it.

Button	What the user gets	Why that helps
More meanings	The other meanings of the same word, side by side	Often you know the word, but not the meaning used in your sentence
Comparison	A comparison that explains the word, if possible with your hobby	A link to something you know is easier to remember
Grammar	How the word behaves in a sentence	You also learn to use the word correctly
Quiz	Five multiple-choice questions	Testing yourself makes a word stick better than reading it again
Write and check sentences	You write up to five sentences with the word, and the app checks them	See below: this is the most important step in learning
Compare two words	The difference between two words, with a picture	For words that look alike and that you keep mixing up
Information	Background on a place, person, animal or event; for a place, with a map	The location on the map comes from OpenStreetMap, not from the AI, so it is correct
Image	A drawing for the word, in your fixed style	An image sticks better than text alone
Read aloud	The answer read out loud	For those who find reading hard, and for pronunciation
Thumbs up or down	You tell us whether the answer was good, and why not	This is how we improve the tool, see point 10

Writing and checking sentences

A word you only read is gone within a day. A word you use yourself in a few sentences, stays. That is why the user can write their own sentences with the word after the explanation, and have them checked.

The app checks whether the word is used correctly, and also looks at spelling, capital letters, punctuation, verb forms, articles and sentence structure. What is checked depends on the level. For example: a child in the first years of primary school learns full stops and capital letters, not yet verb forms. So it gets no comments about those either.

The app only shows what is wrong, with a short explanation and the corrected sentence. Anyone who wants to know why, expands the rule. No exaggerated compliments, no long walls of text. And if the user keeps making the same mistake, the app says so.

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A free AI chat can also correct a sentence. But it often rewrites the whole sentence, does not explain why, and does not take into account what someone at that level has already learned.

Also

You can also take a photo of a text to extract the text, paste a long text for a summary or explanation, and have your own input translated. The app works in 22 languages.

A free AI chat can do much of this too, but only if you know exactly what to ask and how to ask it. And then it is different every time.

9 Words with a fixed meaning

For words we want to be sure are always explained in one way, we use our own word lists. We can import and extend them, and every row is checked before it goes in. If a word is on that list, the AI no longer decides its meaning. The AI only writes the sentences around it, and we can correct those too.

In a free AI chat the system makes up the definition again every time. In Ask Gio Studyhelp the definition is fixed once we have set it.

10 Check, correct, and the correction stays

This is what we mean by "a system that learns". It does not learn on its own from user data. It learns because we improve it.

This is how it works:

1. Every answer has a thumbs up and a thumbs down. Anyone who presses thumbs down chooses a reason: not correct, too difficult for this level, too little information, or something else.
2. We read those reports and run a fact check.
3. If an answer is wrong, we correct it in our own database.
4. When someone looks up that word afterwards, they get the corrected answer. The correction stays.
5. If we see a mistake happening more often, we adjust the instruction the program works with, so it does not happen with other words either.

The user also gets a reply to their report. Often it turns out the answer was correct, but the user was looking in the wrong place. For example: level 1 does not show every meaning. That is deliberate, see point 3. Then we explain where the rest can be found.

In a free AI chat a mistake does not go away. Someone else can get exactly the same wrong answer tomorrow.

An automatic check will be added soon. It will go through the answers in our database at fixed times and report anything outside the lines. Then we do not have to wait for someone to press thumbs down.

11 People keep watch

On top of the technology there is human review. We keep an eye on it, and teachers who work with the tool also look critically at what comes out. If they see something that is not right, we fix it.

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12 We choose and monitor the AI models ourselves

There are many AI models, and they are not all equally good at the same thing. We choose per task which model may answer. A model that is not suited to a task does not get that task.

And we keep monitoring and checking those models. An important difference: a free AI chat switches to a new model automatically with every upgrade. The answers then change in format and tone from one day to the next, without anyone saying so. We do not do that. A new model only goes into use with us after we have tested that the answers are at least as good, and in the same format.

13 Technical checks the user does not see

An example. Sometimes an AI model stops halfway through a sentence. In a normal chat you then see half an answer, or you do not even notice. When making an image, the AI first writes a description of what should be in it. Ask Gio Studyhelp check whether that description is complete. If it is cut off, it is not used and the app falls back on a safe, fixed description. That way a user never gets a picture based on half a sentence.

14 User privacy

- Free AI services often use their users' questions to train their systems further. Ask Gio Studyhelp use paid connections where that is not allowed, and we have switched off training on user data with our providers.
- A user's email address is not sent to the AI. Only the word or the question.
- A photo you upload is not stored. It goes to the AI once and is then gone.
- Everyone agrees to the terms and the privacy statement when they first log in.
- Retention periods are set for data such as login records and search history.

How we develop the tool

There are two ways to build something new.

The first: think everything through in detail beforehand, and only launch when it is finished. That sounds careful. In practice the product is often never finished, and the world has moved on in the meantime.

The second: start small, measure what happens, and adjust based on what you learn. That is how we work. That is also why we do not have a database that was filled with everything in advance. We have a system that grows, that we keep an eye on and that we steer (see point 10).

That does not mean we are uncritical. Quite the opposite:

- We work with smaller test groups, so we can see what works and what does not.
- We test new features first, before everyone gets them.
- We do not think "it's good, it stays this way". What we learn, we adjust.

Thinking you got it right in one go is exactly what is most dangerous.

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What we don't promise

No AI is flawless, and neither is ours. What we do: keep the chance of mistakes as small as possible, spot mistakes when they happen, and fix them so they don't come back. In a free AI chat the user is on their own. With Ask Gio Studyhelp they are not.

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Comparison at a glance

How it works

	Free AI chat, as most people use it	Ask Gio
Kind of conversation	Endless chatting, about anything	One topic at a time, you stay on task
Knows who the answer is for	No, it guesses	Yes, set by the user
Level of explanation	Varies; you have to keep asking	Four fixed levels, set once
Length of the answer	Often long, with new difficult words	Short and to the point, no difficult detours
Format of the answer	Changes with every question	Fixed format, the same every time
Quality depends on	How well the user asks	Mainly our fixed instructions, per button and per level
Sensitive words	Not at a child's level	Explained properly, at the right level
Images for sensitive words	The AI decides, differently each time	We set it per word: no image, or a biological drawing
Images	A different style every time	Fixed style, matched to the level, also as a colouring page
Finding things again	Conversation lost after two weeks	Own history, folders and download

Control and quality

	Free AI chat, as most people use it	Ask Gio
Which AI model	One model for everything	Chosen per task
New AI model	Automatic, without notice	Only after our own test
Meaning of subject terms	Made up again each time	Fixed in our own word list
A mistake is found	Keeps coming back	Corrected, and stays corrected
User feedback	Disappears into a big pile	We read it and reply
Human review	None	Our team and teachers
Cut-off image description	Used anyway	Detected and not used
Automatic check afterwards	None	Coming soon

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	Free AI chat, as most people use it	Ask Gio
New features	Straight to everyone	Tested in a small group first

Privacy

	Free AI chat, as most people use it	Ask Gio
User data	Often used for training	Not used for training
Email address sent to the AI company	Yes, the user has their own account there	No, only the word or the question
Uploaded photo	Often stored	Not stored

The buttons

Feature	Free AI chat	Ask Gio
Other meanings	Ask yourself, usually two	One button, fixed number per level
Comparison with your hobby	Ask yourself and explain your hobby	One button, hobby already set
Grammar	Ask yourself	One button
Quiz	Ask yourself, format varies	One button, always five questions, at your level
Checking your sentences	Often rewrites the whole sentence, without explanation	Only what is wrong, with an explanation, matched to what you learn at that level
Comparing two words	Ask yourself	One button, with an image
Information with a map	No reliable map	One button, map from OpenStreetMap
Image	Style varies	Fixed style, matched to the level
Read aloud	Not everywhere	One button
Text from a photo	Possible, not at your level	One button
Thumbs up or down	Goes to a big company	Comes to us, and we act on it

Want to know more, or try it yourself? **studiehulp.askgio.nl/en/**

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