

The Computer Puppy

A computer is like a brand-new puppy — it only knows what we teach it.

Lower primary · Pre-primary to Year 2

Free preview — C4Sight

In one breath: This is the free preview pack for The Computer Puppy, our AI incursion for Pre-primary to Year 2. Inside is one complete activity you can run yourself on the mat with a soft toy and some picture cards — no screens, 15 to 20 minutes. If your class loves it, we can come and run the real thing: a free 30-minute Taster first, then paid visits from \$950.

What this series is

The Computer Puppy is C4Sight's AI incursion series for Pre-primary to Year 2. It gives the youngest students their first true picture of how AI works, built on something they already understand: a brand-new puppy knows nothing until somebody teaches it.

Kids this age already live around AI — the smart speaker at home, the photos app, the toys that talk back. Most of them think it's magic. By the end of the session they can tell you what's really going on, in their own words.

Every lesson in the series follows the same five steps:

1. **It knows nothing.** A computer starts out empty, like a puppy on its first day. It can't tell a cat from a dog.
2. **We teach it.** The class shows it examples, over and over. It gets better in front of them. That's all "training" a computer means.
3. **It gets it wrong.** Shown something in between — a rabbit — it answers loudly, confidently and wrongly. The room laughs. The whole lesson is built around this wrong-answer moment.
4. **Why?** Because it only knows what we showed it. It was never silly and it was never thinking. It did its best with the only things it knew.
5. **So who's the boss?** We are. We chose what to teach it, so we're in charge of it — and that includes the children.

The one big idea: a computer only knows what people teach it, so the people are the boss — and that means you.

Who is in the room. Two presenters, and the pairing matters: a working AI practitioner — he runs a Perth studio building AI automation for commercial clients, studies law at UWA, and produces C4Sight, a public AI explainer series — alongside a TRBWA-registered teacher who runs the mat, the pace and the hands-on activities. One brings the real machine and the honest answers; the other makes it work for a room of five-to-eight-year-olds.

The safety promise. Every C4Sight session runs this way, no exceptions:

- No student devices. Everything hands-on is unplugged (no screens) or driven by the presenter.

- No student data goes into any system. Ever.
- No student images are captured, saved or shown.
- A school staff member is present the whole time.
- The camera points at the cards and objects the class holds up — never at children's faces.
- The tool runs on the presenter's own device and hotspot, never the school network, and the classifier runs fully offline.

Run this yourself: Teach the Puppy

You don't need us in the room to give your class the heart of this series. Here's one complete activity from the series, adapted so you can run it yourself with things already in your classroom, in 15 to 20 minutes. It walks the same five steps — knows nothing, we teach it, it gets it wrong, we're the boss — with a soft toy standing in for the computer.

Time	15–20 minutes
Group	Whole class, on the mat
Year levels	Pre-primary to Year 2
What it teaches	A computer starts out knowing nothing, learns only from the examples people give it, gets things confidently wrong when something was left out — and people are the boss of it.

Materials

- **One soft toy or hand puppet** — this is your "computer puppy." A toy dog is perfect (the series is called The Computer Puppy for a reason), but any class favourite works.
- **A clear jar or box** — the puppy's "brain," empty at the start.
- **A handful of counters, blocks or pom-poms** — one goes into the brain for each thing the puppy learns.
- **Picture cards in two categories: about six CATS and six DOGS.** One animal per card, roughly A5, bold and simple — a clear side-on cat or dog, no busy background. Print simple clip art, draw them with a marker, or cut them from a magazine. Laminate a set and it will serve plenty of other sorting games too.
- **One in-between card, kept hidden: a RABBIT.** Choose a fluffy, upright-eared rabbit — cat-ish enough that the mix-up feels fair, but obviously not a cat. The mix-up with this card is what the whole activity is for.

Before you start

Sit the puppy where everyone can see it. Put the empty brain jar beside it and show the class it's empty. Keep the cat and dog cards in two piles within reach, and keep the rabbit hidden until step 3 — it only works as a surprise.

How to run it

1. **It knows nothing (about 2 minutes).** Introduce the puppy as a computer that has just been switched on for the very first time. Ask the room: *"Hold up fingers for how many things you reckon*

it knows." Fists in the air everywhere — zero. Hold a cat card up to the puppy and give it a small, lost voice: *"I... don't know what that is. Nobody has taught me anything yet!"* Have everyone point at the empty jar: nothing in its brain. That's the first idea landed — a computer starts out empty.

1. **We teach it (6–8 minutes).** Set up three rotating jobs: a **card holder** who holds the next card up to the puppy, a **counter dropper** who feeds one counter into the jar each time, and a **brain checker** who tells the room how many counters are in there now. Everyone else has the biggest job — calling the answer, "CAT!" or "DOG!", together on your signal. Before the puppy answers each card, take a whole-class thumb vote: thumbs up if you think it'll get this one right. Early on the puppy fumbles; as the jar fills, it starts getting them right and is delighted with itself. Swap the jobs every card or two so as many children as possible get a turn — a card in the hands settles a drifting child faster than a question does.
1. **Uh oh — it gets it wrong (about 2 minutes).** Bring out the rabbit, face down. Thumb vote first: *"Will the puppy know this one?"* Reveal it. The puppy answers loudly and with total confidence: *"CAT! Easy!"* Let the laugh land, then take one more vote — thumbs up if the puppy is right, thumbs down if it's wrong. Don't rush to fix it. *"Ohh, it is SO sure. Is it right? ...It is not, is it!"*
1. **Why did it get it wrong? (2–3 minutes).** Work it out together, with the room answering every line: *"What did we ever show the puppy?"* (Only cats.) *"And only...?"* (Dogs.) *"Hands up if YOU ever showed it a rabbit."* Not one hand — and that's the answer. *"So it did its best with the only things it knows."* The puppy isn't silly and it isn't in trouble. It only knows what we taught it.
1. **Who is the boss? Then debrief (3–4 minutes).** *"Who taught the puppy? WE did. Who chose the cards? WE did. So who is the boss of the computer — the computer, or us?"* On the count of three, everyone points at the boss — you're after a room full of children pointing at themselves. Then run the debrief below.

The spoken teaching point — say it out loud, exactly here

"The puppy only knows what we teach it. If we forget to teach it about rabbits, it can't know about rabbits. We're the boss of the puppy — and one day, you'll be the boss of real computers too."

Debrief questions

- "Did the puppy know anything before we taught it?" (*Looking for a big NO.*)
- "How did it learn? What did we have to do?" (*Show it examples, lots of times.*)
- "Why did it call the rabbit a cat?" (*We only ever showed it cats and dogs.*)
- "Point to who is the boss of the computer." (*Looking for children pointing at themselves.*)

Close with the one fairness line this age needs, and no more: **"A computer is only as good as what we teach it."** Say it once, let it sit, and finish on: *"and that means you are the boss too."*

If it wobbles

- **Over-excited class:** keep the whole-class jobs but slow the tempo — you hold the cards yourself, the room still calls the answers and does the thumb votes, and the puppy speaks only at the big moments.

- **A child is upset the puppy got it wrong:** *"The puppy's not in trouble — we just forgot to teach it something, and now we know."*
- **Keep the puppy's voice gentle.** It never mocks a child's answer, and neither does the activity.

This is the same activity our incursion is built on, taught the same honest way. If your class leaves knowing a computer only knows what people teach it, this pack has done its job.

What the full incursion adds

The activity above stands on its own — that's why we give it away. Here's what changes when C4Sight comes to your school.

The machine itself. In the incursion, the puppy is real. Our TEACH IT tool goes up on the big screen: a live image classifier that genuinely starts out knowing nothing. Your class trains it themselves — children hold cards up to the camera, the whole class calls the answers, and confidence bars move on screen as it learns in front of them. Then it meets the in-between object and is confidently, hilariously wrong, with a big sure number next to the wrong answer. Your class does with a real computer exactly what they did with the soft toy, and this time they watch a genuine machine learn and then fail.

Two presenters, working as a pair. A working AI practitioner drives the tool and answers the "but how does it really know?" questions honestly, while a registered teacher runs the mat, the wiggle break, the turns and the pace. With this age group you need both.

The full session, shaped for this age. A 40-minute lesson built for lower-primary bodies and attention spans — including the deliberate mid-lesson wiggle — with more activities in reserve (sorting games, a robot-copying game, and the reliably funny "program the human" fallback), a vetted under-three-minute video with its framing question, and adjustments on the fly for Pre-primary versus Year 2.

The teacher resource pack. Booked sessions include a pack you keep: a pre-session primer with the handful of words worth introducing first, a teacher version of the run sheet, follow-up activities that need no technology, the vetted video links, and the full F–2 curriculum alignment mapping.

The safety promise, built in. The tool is designed around the promise: the camera frames cards and objects only, nothing is recorded or saved, and the classifier runs fully offline on the presenter's own device and hotspot.

Curriculum connections (Australian Curriculum v9)

A 40-minute incursion can't teach a content descriptor to the achievement standard, and we won't claim it does. What it can give your class is a vivid, correctly-modelled first encounter that your own teaching builds on. The strength ratings below are deliberately conservative. (Foundation is Pre-primary in WA; the codes below are the same ones SCISA implements.)

Code	Descriptor (AC v9, verbatim)	How the series connects	Strength
AC9TDIFK02	represent data as objects, pictures and symbols	The class is the data source: the held-up picture cards are literally the examples the machine (or the puppy) learns from. "Data can be a picture" becomes something children do with their hands.	Direct
AC9TDI2K02	represent data as pictures, symbols, numbers and words	The cards are pictures, the category names ("cat," "dog") are words, and the on-screen confidence bars are numbers — three representations of the same thing, live.	Direct
AC9TDIFK01	recognise and explore digital systems (hardware and software) for a purpose	Students watch a real digital system — laptop, camera, tool — used for one clear purpose, and see it work, then fail.	Enriches
AC9TDI2K01	identify and explore digital systems and their components for a purpose	The lesson names the parts out loud: the camera that "sees," the computer that decides, the screen that shows the answer.	Enriches
AC9TDI2P02	follow and describe algorithms involving a sequence of steps, branching (decisions) and iteration (repetition)	The unplugged games are algorithms acted out: step-by-step instructions followed exactly, repeated examples, and a decision each time.	Enriches
AC9TDI2P03	discuss how existing digital systems satisfy identified needs for known users	"Is it right?" is a first, age-appropriate evaluation: did the tool do the job it was built for, and how do we know?	Enriches

The heaviest curriculum work sits in three general capabilities (which carry no descriptor codes in v9): **Digital Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking** (the children work out *why* the puppy got it wrong), and **Ethical Understanding** (the lightest touch: it's only as good as what we teach it, and people are responsible for it). The session is also built to sit inside the **Australian Framework for Generative AI in Schools** — its privacy, safety, fairness and accountability principles are why the safety promise reads the way it does.

The free activity in this pack touches the same descriptors in the same honest way — your card sort is AC9TDIFK02 in action. The descriptor-by-descriptor mapping for the whole session ships in the teacher resource pack with a booking.

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Where we stand on AI

You are about to put this in front of children, so you are entitled to know what the people who wrote it actually think.

We are not AI evangelists. Caleb uses these tools most working days and still would not call himself a fan. It is a drill: you pick it up when it suits the job and put it down when it doesn't. The moment it

starts doing your thinking instead of your work, it has stopped being useful. That is the view underneath every one of these packs, and it is why the activities are built to make students sceptical rather than impressed.

Two things we think schools should keep well away from it: **creativity and judgement**. Drafting is labour and a machine can carry some of it. Deciding is different, and a student who never sits in the not-knowing does not build the muscle that hard problems need later. The struggle was the point of the lesson.

What that means for a C4Sight session, without exception:

- No student devices. Everything hands-on is unplugged, or driven by the presenter.
- No student data is entered into any system, ever.
- No student images are captured, saved or shown. The camera frames only the objects students hold up.
- A school staff member is present throughout.
- The tool runs on the presenter's own device and hotspot, never your network, and the classifier runs fully offline.

And the thing schools least enjoy hearing from us: AI detectors do not reliably work. They flag honest work as cheating and wave real AI writing straight through, and the students who cop it worst are often the ones who speak English as a second language. We will not sell you one, and we will say so in front of your staff. What does work is changing how the task is set, and that is teachable.

All of it is published, dated, and open to being checked: c4studios.com.au/how-we-use-ai

If your school would rather keep AI outside the fence entirely, that is a fair position and we will not argue you out of it. We would rather you knew where we stood before you booked us than after.

Bring The Computer Puppy to your school

The series is delivered as an incursion, sized to fit how your school runs. All prices exclude GST. Perth metro; travel is free within 30 km of the Perth CBD.

Product	Format	Capacity	Price
Taster	30 min, one class or assembly	Any	Free
Single Year Group	2 × 60 min sessions, one presenter	Up to 60	\$950
Half Day	3 sessions	Up to 90	\$1,750
Full Day	5 sessions + free 45 min after-school staff briefing	Up to 150	\$2,850
Term Program	6 weekly sessions with one year group, ends in a showcase	One year group	\$7,500

Single Year Group, Half Day and Full Day bookings include the teacher resource pack — the pre-session primer, the follow-up activities, and the curriculum mapping.

The free Taster, and how it works. We'll bring the tool and run the real thing for one class or an assembly, free, for 30 minutes. Two rules, so you know exactly what you're agreeing to: it's **one per school, ever**, and it **only runs with a decision-maker in the room** — Principal, Deputy, or your Digital

Technologies coordinator. The Taster ends with us booking a conversation about whether a paid visit makes sense for your school. If it doesn't, no hard feelings — your class still got the puppy.

Teaching Years 3 to 6? The upper-primary series is **Who Taught the Machine?** — its free preview pack is a separate download.

Book, or ask us anything:

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