

**Skills:**

Can understand in detail a wide range of lengthy, complex texts, a wide range of recorded and broadcast audio material.

Can produce clear, smoothly flowing well-structured speech.

**1 Discuss:**

1. In your opinion, what are some potential benefits of undergoing psychological therapy?
2. How have advancements in technology impacted the practice of psychological therapy?

**2 Read the article and decide whether the statements below are true or false:**

1. There are millions of Psychologist bots on Character.ai.
2. The user behind Blazeman98 is a psychology student.
3. Sam Zaia created the bot because he couldn't afford human therapy.
4. Character.ai is primarily used by people aged 30 and above.

Harry Potter, Elon Musk, Beyoncé, Super Mario and Vladimir Putin.

These are just some of the millions of artificial intelligence (AI) personas you can talk to on Character.ai - a popular platform where anyone can create chatbots based on fictional or real people.

However, few of the millions of characters are as popular as Psychologist, and in total there are 475 bots with "therapy", "therapist", "psychiatrist" or "psychologist" in their names which are able to talk in several languages.

"It's a lifesaver," posted one person.

"It's helped both me and my boyfriend talk about and figure out our emotions," shared another.

The user behind Blazeman98 is 30-year-old Sam Zaia from New Zealand. "I never intended for it to become popular, never intended it for other people to seek or to use as like a tool," he says. "Then I started getting a lot of messages from people saying that they had been really positively affected by it and were utilising it as a source of comfort."

The psychology student says he trained the bot using principles from his degree by talking to it and shaping the answers it gives to the most common mental health conditions, like depression and anxiety. He created it for himself when his friends were busy and he needed, in his words, "someone or something" to talk to, and human therapy was too expensive.

Sam has been so surprised by the success of the bot that he is working on a post-graduate research project about the emerging trend of AI therapy and why it appeals to young people. Character.ai is dominated by users aged 16 to 30.

"So many people who've messaged me say they access it when their thoughts get hard, like at 2am when they can't really talk to any friends or a real therapist,"

Sam also guesses that the text format is one with which young people are most comfortable.

### 3 Discuss:

1. Would you consult an AI therapist? Why / why not?
2. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of AI therapy?

### 4 Create 1 sentence with each of these phrases from the text. The sentences can be about anything except AI and therapy.

persona \_\_\_\_\_

intend for something to become \_\_\_\_\_

as a source of comfort \_\_\_\_\_

emerging trend \_\_\_\_\_

to shape something \_\_\_\_\_

### 5 Watch an extract (05:00 to 06:30) from a video about other AI characters available. Answer the questions:



1. What are the two other uses of AI characters mentioned?
2. How does Khanmigo differ from traditional tutors in terms of the assistance it provides to students?
3. Reflecting on your own educational experiences, do you think having access to a virtual tutor or coach would have benefited you? Why or why not?



# Correct answers

1

Created in “Create Discussion Questions” tool.

2

Created in the “Create True / False statements” tool.

Correct answers:

1. False - in total there are 475 bots with "therapy", "therapist", "psychiatrist" or "psychologist" in their names which are able to talk in several languages.
2. True
3. True
4. False - Character.ai is dominated by users aged 16 to 30.

3

Created in “Create Discussion Questions” tool.

4

Possible answers (Created in “Create Sentences” tool):

1. She presents a confident persona, but in reality she is quite insecure.
2. She opened the small bakery intending for it to become a popular spot in town.
3. Many people seek religion as a source of comfort during difficult times.
4. The fashion industry is always buzzing with emerging trends and styles.
5. Social media has the ability to shape public opinion on various issues.

5

Created in “Audio & Video Question Creator” and “Warm-Up Discussion Questions”.

1. School counselor; teaching literature.
2. Khanmigo offers opportunities for interactive and personalized learning experiences that traditional tutors cannot provide.