

MLA Style Essay Sample

What is Artificial Intelligence?

Artificial intelligence, or AI, is a field of research in computer science that deals with the possibility of creating machines that may perform activities that, from the point of view of human beings, are intelligent. The most general definition is as following: it is a science and engineering of making intelligent machines, especially intelligent computer programs (McCarthy 141). The possibility of creating a sentient being that is not human fascinated scientists since the ancient times. Already in ancient Egyptian and Grecian folklore we find descriptions of thinking inanimate beings created by humans.

However, this dream is beginning to become truth only now. Only in the middle of the 20th century the technical level of humanity grew high enough to start thinking about the actual possibility of building such machines (Cringewood 95). The main idea behind the whole notion is that the characteristic that distinguishes human from other living beings, his intelligence, may be studied and described thoroughly enough to create a computer program that would effectively imitate human's thought and behavior. In the beginning of its active study, the problem was viewed upon with optimism, because the possibility of creating artificial intelligence seemed to be a rather easily attainable one, but further research showed that the problem is much deeper than that and requires greater scientific level. Modern times are widely known as *AI winter*, because the majority of projects working in this direction have suffered from loss of funding and were closed.

The industry now is divided in itself, with various trend fields concentrated around particular problems, ideas or individual scientists who cannot come to an agreement even as to what they are trying to create in the long run. Most modern research in the field is done behind the scenes, with those who started this concept slowly moving in other directions. The most successful implementation of AI lies in narrow spheres of knowledge, such as medical diagnosing and, in fact, due to exactly that reason – the fact that they tried to cover a single area.

As of now, study in the field of artificial intelligence both stands unmoved and develops – because many of the initial goals have been dropped. But computer industry develops all the time and very soon we may witness a new breakthrough – and maybe then the computational power of PCs will be enough to fulfill that dream.

Works Cited

Cringewood, Albert. *Electronic Systems*. New York: Academic Press, 2005. Print.

McCarthy, John. *What is Artificial Intelligence?* Stanford, CA: Stanford University, 2007. Print.