Weekly readings - 2024-06-16

Tom Rochette <tom.rochette@coreteks.org>

November 2, 2024 — 36c8eb68

I read more articles from https://www.oneusefulthing.org this week.

How to. . . use AI to teach some of the hardest skills

Very insightful article on the topic of using LLMs to teach students. . . or yourself. Based on this article I started learning about sociology terms, electronics, tried to have it role play a senior software backend engineer I could practice mentoring (and get mentoring feedback from). I also added the prompt "Explain how X works" to my prompt collection. I love articles that expand my thinking and exploration.

Prompt to learn about a domain through question/review cycles:
Act as an expert in X. Ask me to explain a concept and then correct me if I'm wrong. Then restart the process, continuing endlessly.

How to. . . use AI to unstick yourself

I've been using LLMs a lot to help me get some quick sanity check on thoughts I have and see what I might not have considered. I think LLMs are a rather useful tool to help you stay motivated when you feel a bit stuck or don't want to particularly work on a piece of code. It's like having a peer that's always willing to help.

Thinking companion, companion for thinking

Two heads are generally better than one. LLMs can be your second head when you need to think about what might go wrong or to address gaps in your thinking.
You should also learn about opportunity cost and sunk cost!

ChatGPT is my co-founder

One of LLMs strengths is their ability to always be somewhat helpful. One helpful thing they do is lowering the barrier to doing anything, as long as you know how to ask for help. While I code this mostly means giving me a small push to accomplish a task I would partially complete without its help. When writing, it's a great tool to stimulate creativity and get feedback on which you can act.

Superhuman: What can AI do in 30 minutes?

More and more of how you decide to spend your time will decide how effective (or not) you are. In this article the author spends 30 minutes to accomplish the following with the help of generative AI:

> Output: Bing generated 9,200 words or so of text and a couple images, GPT-4 generated a working HTML and CSS file, MidJourney created 12 images, ElevenLabs created a voicefile, and DiD created a movie.

> Input: I made less than 20 inputs to all the systems to generate these results.

Assuming that there were only 20 interactions, that would mean ~1 minute between interaction. Over a 30 minutes period, most of the time is likely spent on reviewing the generated content and then deciding our next move/writing prompts. A time breakdown would have been interesting.