

# The Expert Challenge

Role-Play Experiment

Skill: Tacit Knowledge &amp; Experiential Learning

45–60 Minutes

**RECOMMENDED AGE RANGE**

Ages 8–14 — Old enough to follow instructions from a guide but young enough to experience the genuine difficulty of tacit knowledge gaps.

**WHAT YOU NEED**

Three "Expert Guides" (instruction sheets you create)

Cooking ingredients OR craft supplies OR basic tools

Timer

Paper for observations

**ACTIVITY STEPS**

01

**Set up three mini-challenges:** Your child follows written instructions for something that requires experiential judgment: folding a fitted sheet, making scrambled eggs that aren't rubbery, or wrapping an oddly-shaped gift. Give them technically correct but incomplete instructions — like "fold fitted sheet in half, then in half again" without showing how to find the corners.

02

**Let them struggle for 10 minutes:** They follow only the written guide — no questions, no demonstrations. Set a timer. They can attempt it multiple times but only using what's written. Watch without helping. This is hard for parents but essential.

03

**Bring in the experienced expert:** You, an older sibling, or grandparent demonstrates the same task without explaining — just doing it while they watch. Then give them 5 minutes to try again. Notice what changes when they can see it done.

04

**Work alongside the expert:** One more attempt — working simultaneously, asking questions, getting real-time feedback. Let the expert share invisible knowledge: "I can tell by the sound when..." or "I've learned to watch for..."

05

**Reflection conversation:** Ask: "What was in the written guide that an AI could follow? What did you need that wasn't written anywhere? Why couldn't I just write that down for you?" Have them write three things they learned that couldn't have been in the instructions.

#### THE DEEPER LESSON

*This activity makes visceral what research shows: AI can follow codified instructions perfectly, but it cannot access the tacit knowledge that comes only from doing something repeatedly, feeling when it's right, noticing subtle cues, and building intuition. Your child experiences firsthand why entry-level workers who just follow manuals are being replaced, while experienced workers who possess embodied wisdom are becoming more valuable.*

#### CONVERSATION STARTER

*“If I wanted to teach a robot to do what you just learned, what parts could I program and what parts would be impossible to explain?”*