

U.S. to spend \$2 billion on artificial intelligence weapons

12th September, 2018



The United States Defense Department is going to spend up to \$2 billion on artificial intelligence (AI) weapons over the next five years. This will be the most the department has ever spent on AI systems for weapons. The department wants to have the most advanced weapons in the world. It wants its weapons to be better than those of China and Russia. Defense bosses want future weapons to be trusted and accepted by military generals and commanders. They want to make sure weapons in the future do not make mistakes. Department official John Everett said: "We think it's a good time to seed the field of AI. We think we can accelerate two decades of progress into five years."

Some of the new AI weapons may be able to make and act on their own decisions. This means computer systems and algorithms could make a decision (without any human decision-making) to attack a target that could kill people. Many people think this is dangerous and could lead to innocent lives being lost. The Defense Department said AI technology could, "make it possible to develop and [use] autonomous systems that could independently select and attack targets with [deadly] force". It added that weapons using AI systems can currently choose targets on their own, but military commanders do not want to let the weapons decide on the targets to attack. The commanders want to make the final decision.

Sources: theverge.com / cnn.com / interestingengineering.com

Writing

All countries should destroy their weapons. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

defense / artificial intelligence / weapons / advanced / military / generals / decades / decisions / computer systems / algorithms / dangerous / force / targets / commanders

True / False

- a) The USA will spend over \$2 billion on artificial intelligence for weapons. T / F
- b) The USA has a five-year spending plan for the weapons. T / F
- c) The article says the USA wants better weapons than Russia and China. T / F
- d) The USA will try to do 20 years of work in just five years. T / F
- e) The new weapons will not be able to make decisions without humans. T / F
- f) Nobody thinks the artificial intelligence weapons will be dangerous. T / F
- g) A.I. weapons will never be able to select targets on their own. T / F
- h) Military commanders want to make final decisions about targets. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1. up to | a. modern |
| 2. next | b. lethal |
| 3. advanced | c. speed up |
| 4. accepted | d. cause |
| 5. accelerate | e. upcoming |
| 6. decisions | f. choose |
| 7. lead to | g. last |
| 8. select | h. as much as |
| 9. deadly | i. judgments |
| 10. final | j. welcomed |

Discussion – Student A

- a) Is \$2 billion a lot to spend on a defense system?
- b) How could the \$2 billion be used in better ways?
- c) What do you think of weapons?
- d) What do you think of artificial intelligence?
- e) What do you think of weapons with artificial intelligence?
- f) What do you think of weapons that decide to bomb people?
- g) What will future weapons be like?
- h) What would the world be like with no weapons?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. the most the department has | a. not make mistakes |
| 2. the most advanced | b. the final decision |
| 3. trusted and accepted | c. ever spent |
| 4. make sure weapons in the future do | d. algorithms |
| 5. we can accelerate two decades of | e. by military generals |
| 6. act on their own | f. deadly force |
| 7. computer systems and | g. weapons in the world |
| 8. lead to innocent lives | h. progress into five years |
| 9. select and attack targets with | i. decisions |
| 10. The commanders want to make | j. being lost |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What are the weapons like in your country's army?
- Why do countries think they need weapons?
- Should humans always make the decision about what to target?
- What would happen if we could not control AI weapons?
- How does AI help your life?
- Could artificial intelligence weapons destroy the Earth?
- What questions would you like to ask the U.S. Defense Department?

Spelling

- the most the darettmnpe has ever spent
- the most eavadcdn weapons
- taepdcce by military generals
- do not make aketimss
- We think we can cteeaaeclr
- two cdeedsa of progress
- act on their own ssociiden
- computer semtsys
- lead to nicnneot lives being lost
- make it ispesblo
- attack targets with deadly cfero
- can lcrternuy choose

Answers – Synonym Match

1. h	2. e	3. a	4. j	5. c
6. i	7. d	8. f	9. b	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Weapons

You think weapons are the best thing to spend \$2 billion on. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with spending on their things. Also, tell the others which is the last of these to get money (and why): schools, hospitals or small businesses.

Role B – Schools

You think schools are the best thing to spend \$2 billion on. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with spending on their things. Also, tell the others which is the last of these to get money (and why): weapons, hospitals or small businesses.

Role C – Hospitals

You think hospitals are the best thing to spend \$2 billion on. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with spending on their things. Also, tell the others which is the last of these to get money (and why): schools, weapons or small businesses.

Role D – Small Businesses

You think small businesses are the best thing to spend \$2 billion on. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with spending on their things. Also, tell the others which is the last of these to get money (and why): schools, hospitals or weapons.

Speaking – \$2 Billion

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things to spend \$2 billion on at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| • sport | • weapons |
| • agriculture | • schools |
| • homelessness | • hospitals |
| • small businesses | • police |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	F	g	F	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.