

READING COMPREHENSION

Note: This article requires deeper analysis and critical thinking. Prepare to present your article to the class and defend your interpretations.

ARTICLE 2: "The Guardian View on AI in War: The Iran Conflict"

Editorial, The Guardian - 6 March 2026

ADVANCED VOCABULARY

Word/Expression	Definition	Context clue
paradigm shift	fundamental change in approach	"the paradigm shift has already begun"
geopolitical turbulence	international political instability	"speed of development...geopolitical turbulence"
to collapse the distinction	to make differences disappear	"collapsing the distinction between theory and reality"
unprecedented	never done or known before	"unprecedented use in the Iran crisis"
safeguard	protection, safety measure	"remove safeguards preventing..."
autonomous lethal weapons	weapons that kill without human control	"preventing...autonomous lethal weapons"
to blacklist	to put on a list of banned entities	"blacklisted it as a supply-chain risk"
red lines	limits that must not be crossed	"maintained the red lines"
backlash	strong negative reaction	"user and employee backlash"
opportunistic	taking advantage of situations for gain	"made OpenAI look opportunistic"
precursor	something that comes before	"precursor systems are already transforming"
afterthought	something considered too late	"human control risks becoming an afterthought"
to facilitate	to make easier, to enable	"Claude has reportedly facilitated the offensive"
to brag	to boast, to speak proudly	"Hegseth brags of loosening rules"
to dodge	to avoid, to evade	"dodging questions about deaths"
bias	unfair preference or prejudice	"AI inaccuracy and biases"
stamp of approval	formal agreement/authorization	"being a stamp of approval"
moral distancing	feeling less morally responsible	"moral and emotional distancing"
multilateral	involving multiple countries	"multilateral constraints"
sorely needed	urgently needed	"a treaty that is sorely needed"

PART 1: DETAILED COMPREHENSION

1. Context - The UN Warning

- a) Quote António Guterres' warning: "Never in the future will we _____"
- b) What two factors are "collapsing the distinction between theoretical arguments and real world events"?

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2. The Anthropic-Pentagon Controversy

Read lines 6-13 carefully. Complete this timeline:

Event	Details
Anthropic's position	Could not remove safeguards preventing: 1) _____ 2) _____
Pentagon's response	No interest in those uses, BUT _____
Administration's action	1) _____ Anthropic 2) _____ it as supply-chain risk
OpenAI's action	_____, while insisting it maintained _____
Sam Altman's admission	OpenAI does NOT _____ Pentagon's use and handling was _____

Analysis question:

- a) Why is it significant that Anthropic was "blacklisted" for refusing to remove safeguards?
- b) What does Altman's admission reveal about corporate control over AI military use?

3. Nicole van Rooijen's Warning (Stop Killer Robots)

- a) Complete her statement:
"The issue is not just _____, but how their _____ are already transforming _____."
- b) Her fear: "Human control risks becoming an _____ or a mere _____."
- c) **Interpretation:** What does "human control as a formality" mean in practice?

4. Iran Conflict - AI Use in Practice

a) Despite the controversy, which AI system "has reportedly facilitated the massive...offensive"?

→ _____

b) Estimated civilian deaths: _____

c) The phrase "bombing quicker than the speed of thought" means: AI thinks faster than humans

Attacks happen so fast humans can't process them

AI makes decisions faster than humans can think

All of the above

d) AI's role in targeting - List the 3 functions mentioned:

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5. Human Responsibility vs AI Automation

a) **US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth:**

- His action: _____
- His attitude: He _____ of this (verb from text)

b) **Specific incident mentioned:**

- Date: _____
- Event: US strike on _____ in Iran
- Deaths: _____ schoolgirls
- US response: _____

c) **Israeli intelligence source quotes (Gaza war):**

Quote 1: "The targets never end. You have another _____ waiting."

Quote 2: "I spent _____ assessing each target...I had _____ as a human, apart from being a _____."

d) **Analysis:** What do these quotes reveal about the impact of AI on human decision-making?

6. Impacts of AI in Warfare

The article states AI enables "mass killing...in every sense." List the 3 consequences mentioned:

- Further _____ and _____ distancing
- Reduced _____
- (Implied earlier: increased _____)

Your interpretation: Explain "moral and emotional distancing" - why does AI create this?

7. Solutions Proposed

a) **What is needed instead of leaving decisions to "entrepreneurs and defence departments"?**

- _____ oversight
- _____ constraints

b) **Geneva meeting:**

- Topic: Lethal _____ weapons systems
- Draft text could be basis for: _____
- Who wants clear guidance? _____
- Who resists? _____

c) **The dilemma:** Complete this statement: "The pace of AI-driven warfare means that _____ can look like handing control to _____."

8. The Editorial's Conclusion

a) What do "tech workers and military officials themselves" realize?

→ The dangers of _____ are far greater (than what?)

b) **Final implicit argument:** The editorial ends by emphasizing dangers of "uncontrolled expansion" rather than...what?

PART 2: CRITICAL ANALYSIS

1. Editorial vs Opinion Piece

a) This is an EDITORIAL (newspaper's official position), not a single author's opinion. What clues in the text show this?

b) Does the editorial present:

- A balanced view of both sides
- A clear position with supporting evidence
- Pure facts without opinion
- Alarmist fear-mongering

Justify your answer.

2. Evidence and Examples

Strong evidence:

Example	Why it's effective
165 schoolgirls killed	
Israeli intelligence quotes	
Anthropic blacklisted	

Questions raised by the evidence:

a) The Iran conflict is described as ongoing (March 2026). Does using a current crisis make the argument stronger or weaker? Why?

b) The 165 schoolgirls death "appears to have been a US strike" - the editorial acknowledges uncertainty. Does this hurt their credibility?

3. Key Arguments Evaluation

Argument 1: "AI is not a prerequisite for civilian deaths, military errors or unaccountability."

- What does this admit?
- How does this affect the anti-AI argument?

Argument 2: "The paradigm shift has already begun."

- What evidence supports this?
- Is this claim justified?

Argument 3: "Democratic oversight and multilateral constraints" are essential.

- Why would these help?
 - What obstacles exist? (text mentions resistance from "biggest players")
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4. Moral and Ethical Dimensions

a) The Israeli source says he was just "a stamp of approval" with "zero added-value as a human."

Questions to consider:

- If a human approves every AI target recommendation, is that sufficient oversight?
- At what point does human approval become meaningless?
- Where is the line between "AI-assisted" and "AI-controlled"?

b) "Moral and emotional distancing" - is this necessarily bad?

Arguments concerning "it's BAD":

Arguments concerning "it might be NECESSARY in warfare":

5. The Regulation Dilemma

The editorial acknowledges: "The pace of AI-driven warfare means that caution can look like handing control to adversaries."

a) Explain this dilemma: If Country A slows AI military development, what happens?

b) **Your analysis:** Is international regulation realistic when countries are competing militarily?

c) The Geneva draft text is described as "sorely needed" but "biggest players...resist." Why would major military powers resist AI weapons treaties?

6. Connection to BTS CIEL

a) **Cybersecurity angle:** How might AI warfare relate to:

- Cyberattacks between nations
- Protection of critical infrastructure
- Autonomous cyber-weapons

b) **Ethical responsibility:** As future tech professionals, what ethical considerations should guide your work if:

- You're asked to develop AI for military use?
- You work for a company that sells to defense contractors?
- Your AI tools could be weaponized?

PART 3: ORAL PRESENTATION PREPARATION

Structure your 5-minute presentation:

INTRODUCTION (30 seconds)

- Article type (editorial), publication, date
- Context: Iran conflict, AI in warfare
- Main argument in one sentence

SECTION 1: The Controversy (1 min 15 sec)

- Anthropic vs Pentagon conflict
- What it reveals about corporate vs government control
- OpenAI's response and what Altman admitted

SECTION 2: AI in Practice - Iran & Gaza (1 min 30 sec)

- How AI is being used in current conflicts
- Specific examples: civilian deaths, targeting speed
- Israeli intelligence quotes - "stamp of approval"
- Impacts: moral distancing, reduced accountability

SECTION 3: The Dilemma (1 min)

- Need for regulation vs military competition
- Geneva discussions
- Why major powers resist
- "Caution = handing control to adversaries"

CONCLUSION (45 seconds)

- Editorial's position: is it convincing?
- Realistic solutions?
- Your perspective: What should be done?
- Question for debate

DEBATE QUESTIONS YOU MUST PREPARE:

1. **Is human approval enough?** If a human spends 20 seconds approving an AI target recommendation, is that meaningful oversight?
2. **The speed argument:** If AI enables "bombing quicker than the speed of thought," can humans realistically maintain control?

3. **Regulation realism:** Can international AI weapons treaties work when countries are in military competition?
 4. **Corporate responsibility:** Should companies like Anthropic be able to refuse military contracts? Or should governments decide?
 5. **The trolley problem of AI warfare:** Is it worse to:
 - Use AI and kill more efficiently with less accountability?
 - NOT use AI and lose wars to adversaries who do use it?
 6. **Moral distancing:** Is reducing soldiers' emotional trauma (through distancing) actually a benefit? Or does it enable more killing?
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