

From Blank Page to Beautiful

Using Gemini to Build Student-Friendly Canvas Pages in Minutes

Building engaging Canvas pages doesn't have to be a time-consuming "formatting headache". By leveraging Gemini (or another AI), you can shift from manual content creation to being a high-level editor and architect.

Level 1: The Editor (Content & Clarity)

Simplify instructions and reduce cognitive load to help students navigate the LMS more efficiently.

- **The Action:** Copy and paste your existing text from Canvas into AI.
- **The Goal:** Improve scan-ability through information hierarchy (H2, H3 headers) and visual anchors like emojis and line breaks.
- **Prompt Idea:**
 - **AI Suggestion:** "Rewrite my instructions as if you are a [ROLE: Coach/Mentor]. Keep all requirements, but make the tone [TONE: Encouraging/Direct]. Use bullet points and add 3 relevant emojis".
 - **MY prompt** (yes, the typos are real!): *After reading the two essays on video games, the curriculum suggests this writing activity. I don't like the assignment. What suggestions do you have:*
- **Benefit:** Increases accessibility for screen readers and ensures students can jump straight into the work.

Level 2: The Architect (HTML & Layout)

Move beyond basic text to create professional, mobile-responsive layouts such as grids and buttons without writing a single line of code yourself.

- **The Action:** Request specific HTML code for Canvas LMS-friendly designs.
- **The Goal:** Create "web-developer" quality designs in seconds.
- **Pro Tip:** Always specify "Use Canvas-friendly HTML" to ensure the code renders correctly within the LMS environment. *MY prompt: **The formatting doesn't come through in my Canvas LMS. can you try again?***

The Technical Workflow

Follow these four steps to bridge the gap between Canvas and AI:

1. **Copy Code:** Open the Canvas LMS HTML Editor (represented by the `</>` icon). Select all (Ctrl+A) and copy (Ctrl+C).
2. **Bridge to AI:** Paste the code into Gemini with a prompt like, "Format this better using professional boxes and responsive grids". (MY Prompt: *Help me with the formatting on this lesson about Graphic Novel Elements*)
3. **Refine:** Use the AI's live preview if available. If the chat history gets too long and Gemini "forgets" the formatting, start a fresh chat - BUT, you will lose the learning if you start a new chat.
4. **Re-Paste:** Copy the AI's output and paste it back into the Canvas HTML Editor. **Always** check your URLs to ensure they aren't altered during processing.

Canvas Compatibility Guide

Feature	Will Work on Canvas	Won't Work on Canvas
Layouts	Responsive Grids (Mobile-friendly)	Traditional Tables (Often break on mobile)
Media	Verified URLs & Embedded Videos	Local network restricted links or YouTube filters
Formatting	Canvas-friendly HTML/CSS	Complex JavaScript or external scripts

Critical Reminders

- **Human Oversight:** AI is a "forgetful genius." It can make mistakes, show bias, or hallucinate misinformation. You remain the professional who must spot these errors.
- **Verification:** Always double-check links. AI is unaware of local network restrictions or filters.

Questions or Support?

Reach out to Kimberly Huber at kimberly_huber@beaverton.k12.or.us.