
Avoiding Plagiarism

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What is Plagiarism?

The word plagiarism comes from the Latin “plagiarius” meaning “kidnapper”.

Plagiarism is the act of presenting the work of another as your own. If you use someone else’s work and either knowingly or inadvertently claim it as your creation, you are committing an act of plagiarism.

Possible Forms of Plagiarism

- Word-for-word copying of another’s work without properly acknowledging the source of the information,
- Paraphrasing the work of another without acknowledgement,
- Failing to properly cite your source even if that failure is inadvertent,
- Attributing information to a source from which it did not come,
- Submitting material created by another under your name,
- Submitting material created by yourself and others but claiming the work entirely as your own.

Why Students Plagiarise

- It is easy to do

- Laziness
- Poor time management skills
- Procrastination
- Short time to complete the assignment
- Busy schedule outside of school
- Lack of fundamental research skills
- Lack of confidence in one's own academic abilities
- Pressure from external forces (parents, friends
- Cheating is perceived as acceptable nowadays

Why it is Wrong to plagiarise

- Plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft.
- The legal copyright owner has the exclusive right to reproduce, distribute, display, perform, and make derivative copies of the work.
- Using another person's copyrighted material without permission or properly identifying your source is essentially stealing someone else's property.

Two types of Plagiarism

○ Intentional

- Copying a friend's work
- Buying or borrowing papers
- Cutting and pasting blocks of text from electronic sources without documenting
- Media “borrowing” without documentation
- Web publishing without permission of creators

○ Unintentional

- Careless paraphrasing
- Poor documentation
- Quoting excessively
- Failure to use your own “voice”

Rationale for Academic Integrity

- Cheating is unethical behaviour.
- When you copy you cheat yourself. You limit your own learning.
- The consequences are not worth the risks!
- Citing gives authority to your paper
- Citing makes it possible for your readers to locate your source
- Education is not an “us vs. them” game! It’s about learning to learn!

Do I have to cite everything?

BIG NO! Facts that are widely known, and information or judgments considered “common knowledge” Need no documentation!

Three Strategies to Avoid Plagiarism

1. Paraphrasing

- Paraphrasing means rephrasing the words of an author, putting his/her thoughts in your own words.
- Like quotations, paraphrased material must be followed by an in-text citation and cited on your References page.
- APA format follows the author-date method of in-text citation

Paraphrase when:

- You plan to use the information on your note cards/fact sheet and wish to avoid plagiarizing
- You want to avoid overusing quotations
- You want to use your own voice to present information

Rule (APA)

- When you paraphrase, state the author's last name and the year of publication for the source in the text (in-text citation). Example:
 - * Harmer (1998) argues that there is a good reason to teach writing to EFL learners.
 - * There is a good reason to teach writing to EFL learners (Harmer, 1998).

Six paraphrasing tools:

- Replace some of the words with synonyms.

- Make a positive verb into a negative one.
- Change active constructions to passive, and vice versa.
- Change words into other parts of speech: adjectives into verbs, verbs into nouns, etc.
- Combine sentences with connecting words (like and).
- Move parts of sentences around (change positions within the sentence).

2. Summarising

- Summarizing involves putting the main idea(s) of one or several writers into your own words, including only the main point(s).
- Summaries are significantly shorter than the original and take a broad overview of the source material. Again, it is necessary to attribute summarized ideas to their original sources.

Summarise when:

- You want to establish background or offer an overview of a topic
- You want to describe knowledge (from several sources) about a topic
- You want to determine the main ideas of a single source

N.B. Use the same rule for citing the source as for paraphrasing.

3. Quoting

- Quotations are the exact words of an author, copied directly from a source, word for word. Quotations must be cited!

Quote when:

- You want to add the power of an author's words to support your argument
- You want to disagree with an author's argument
- You want to highlight particularly eloquent or powerful phrases or passages
- You are comparing and contrasting specific points of view
- You want to note the important research that precedes your own quoting

Rule (APA)

When you use a direct quote, add the number of the page in your in-text citation in addition to the author's last name and date of publication. Put the quote between quotation marks.

Example:

* Ajzen (2005) defines attitude as “a disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution, or event” (p. 3).

* An attitude is “a disposition to respond favorably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution, or event” (Ajzen, 2005, p. 3).

NB. All sources that are cited in the text must appear in the Reference page at the end of the paper.

Tips on Avoiding Plagiarism

- Familiarize yourself with the basics of the research writing process, including the citing of sources
 - Make note of all the sources you consult during the research process
 - Remember that paraphrasing the ideas of another still requires proper citation
 - 3-word Rule: Do not copy more than three consecutive words from a source.
 - Properly cite the sources you use in your paper
 - Proofread the final version of your paper to ensure that all the sources you used are cited correctly
 - If unsure whether to cite a source or how to cite it properly, ask your instructor
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