



PLAGIARISM: AVOIDING TROUBLED WATERS

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

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NOTES

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Why is it important to learn about plagiarism?

Let's see why it is important for every person, student or not, to learn about plagiarism and how to avoid it.

You will be given an article about an individual who has committed plagiarism. As you read the story think of these questions:

- What did the individual in the story do that constituted plagiarism?
- What were the consequences for the individual who committed plagiarism?
- What were the consequences of the individual's actions for the company they worked for or the school they attended?

Plagiarism: Avoiding Troubled Waters



Have you ever been at the beach swimming or on a boat and hit turbulent waters? Turbulent waters are difficult to get out of but can be avoided with some planning. You can check the weather before you go out on the water and completely avoid having to deal with turbulent waters. It is the same with plagiarism. Plagiarism has serious, far-reaching consequences for your standing as a student and can even affect your future life as a professional. Once committed it is not something you can get out of. You are better off avoiding the troubled waters of plagiarism completely with some prior planning.

This workshop will help you develop skills to avoid plagiarism. You will learn what plagiarism is by learning what specific actions constitute plagiarism. You will also learn what makes a piece of writing be considered plagiarized. Once you know what non-plagiarized and plagiarized writing looks like, you can avoid committing plagiarism in your own writing.

By completing this workshop, you will also better understand:

- *the consequences of committing plagiarism in an academic setting and in the workplace
- *what paraphrases and quote are
- *when paraphrases and quotes should be used and how they should be written
- *study skills you can develop to help you avoid actions that lead to plagiarism

SELF-CHECK✓

1. How confident do you feel that you know what actions constitute plagiarism?

Very Confident 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not Confident

2. How confident do you feel that you know the consequences of committing plagiarism?

Very Confident 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not Confident

3. How confident do you feel about being able to define what a quote and what a paraphrase are and how to write each correctly?

Very Confident 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not Confident

4. How confident do you feel about being able to identify whether a quote and a paraphrase are written correctly or if they are plagiarized?

Very Confident 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not Confident

5. How confident do you feel in your ability to avoid committing plagiarism?

Very Confident 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not Confident



What is plagiarism anyway?

Plagiarism in simple terms is passing off another person's words, images, or ideas as your own without giving them credit.

What specific actions constitute plagiarism?

Scenario 1:

Rose has a paper due for her art appreciation class, she finds a website where a scholar discusses how Vincent Van Gogh's childhood experiences affected his art specifically the fact that he was named after his brother who was born stillborn. She likes the idea presented by the scholar and wants to write her paper about that. Since she took the idea and expounded on it, she does not cite the scholar. She figures that she needs to cite only when she quotes the scholar.

Scenario 2:

Sam has three assignments due tomorrow and has a late shift at work tonight. He is able to pump out two of the assignments, but when he gets to the third he finds that he is just too tired and it is well past 3 a.m. He goes online and finds that someone else has written about the same thing he was going to write about. He reads it and it seems pretty well written. He decides to use it. The student who did the paper says that anyone is free to use it without needing to buy it. Sam knows that buying papers is not good, but since the paper is available for free he does not feel it is as bad.

Scenario 3:

Sara is preparing a speech for her Communication class. She researched and found information in several sources. She finds a quote she wrote down, but can't remember where she got it from. She decides to use it anyway and in her write up includes the quote using quotation marks, but since she does not remember the source for the quote, she does not include a citation. As long as she puts the statement in quotes, she feels that she is covered.

Scenario 4:

Carlos is working hard on his English paper. He knows that his instructor wants students to paraphrase more than quote. He finds a passage that he wants to paraphrase. He goes ahead and put the information in his own words and expounds on the information so that his paper is similar, but much more than what he read. Since most of the paper was his own analysis and thoughts, he does not cite the author he read. Why should he as he did not use quotes and expounded on the original in his paraphrase.

Scenario 5:

Beth is working on her Biology paper on the Ice Age and mammals. She finds a research article. She was told that she should paraphrase more than quote because it has to be her writing. The article she read had a good way to start her paper. She wants to keep her paraphrase as close to the author's words as possible as it sounds so good the way the author had it. She gets her dictionary and finds synonyms for each word the author used. She keeps the structure of the sentences exactly like the original author and just replaces words from the original text with their synonyms. She remembers to cite her source and finishes up her paper.

Scenario 6:

Troy's girlfriend is in the same degree program that he is in and so they have a lot of the same classes. He sometimes shares his notes with her for a class they have together. She took the Sociology class he is currently in last semester. An individual project is due soon in that class and he just does not have time to complete it. Since he has helped Susan with notes in the past, he figures it is her turn to help him and when she offers to do his assignment, he agrees. He will only do it this one time since she is willing to help and he just does not have the time. He reviews what she has done and changes small parts of it and turns it in.

HOW TO WRITE QUOTES CORRECTLY

Example of a quote

From page 3 of *The Story of My Life* by Hellen Keller (1903):

Original Source:

When I try to classify my earliest impressions, I find that fact and fancy look alike across the years that link the past with the present.

Writing Sample:

Hellen Keller may have found it hard to separate her memories from reality when writing about her childhood as fact and fancy look alike across the years that link the past with the present.

What is a quote? (write a definition)

Notes:

How should you use and write a quote?

- ◆ Always cite the source!!!
 - ◆ Do not use too many quotes in your writing or else it will be someone else's paper not yours
 - ◆ If the quote is longer than three lines, use a block quotation, which does not require quotation marks, but still needs a citation
 - ◆ Make sure your quote stays identical to the original
 - ◆ If after thinking about it carefully you take parts out of the quote, use an ellipsis (...)
 - ◆ If after much thought, you think you need to add a word(s) to clarify the meaning put the words in square brackets
-
-
-

Example of a well-written quote

From page 3 of *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller (1903):

Original Source:

When I try to classify my earliest impressions, I find that fact and fancy look alike across the years that link the past with the present.

Writing Sample:

Helen Keller may have found it hard to separate her memories from reality when writing about her childhood as "fact and fancy look alike across the years that link the past with the present" (3).

Make sure you use quotation marks and include a citation!!!

In the bibliography:

Keller, Helen. *The Story of My Life*. New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1903.

Notes:

Example of a plagiarized quote

From page 24 of *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller (1903):

Original Source:

As we returned to the house every object which I touched seemed to quiver with life. That was because I saw everything with the strange, new sight that had come to me.

Writing sample:

Helen's new ability to fingerspell opened up a new way of perceiving things. She said that every object I touched seemed to quiver with energy and I saw everything with the new sight that had come.

Notes:

Example of a paraphrase

From page 7-8 of *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller (1903):

Original Source:

Gradually I got used to the silence and darkness that surrounded me and forgot that it had ever been different, until she came--my teacher--who was to set my spirit free.

Writing Sample:

Even though Helen Keller became accustomed to her condition, it was only after her teacher began working with her that she truly felt released from its restrictions.

What is a paraphrase? (write a definition)

PRACTICE YOUR NEW SKILLS

Look at the original sources and sample writing that are based on them below. Think about what you have just learned regarding writing and citing quotes, paraphrase, and summaries. Do you think the writing sample is acceptable or is an example of plagiarism? If you think it is unacceptable put X by the reason(s) why.

1. From page 29 of *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller (1903):

Original Text:

Children who hear acquire language without any particular effort; the words that fall from others' lips they catch on the wing, as it were, delightedly, while the little deaf child must trap them by a slow and often painful process.

Writing Sample:

Children who are deaf struggle a lot more than hearing children to learn language and vocabulary.

- a. Appropriate Summary b. Incorrect Summary

If b, put an x by the reason(s) why:

- ☐ the writer has not provided a correct citation for word, an idea, or thought
☐ the writer has only changed the order of the words and used synonyms not their own style or words
☐ the writer has changed the meaning of the original source
☐ the summary is not shorter than the original text

2. From page 32 of *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller (1903):

Original text:

This natural exchange of ideas is denied to the deaf child. My teacher realizing this, determined to supply the kind of stimulus I lacked. This she did by repeating to me as far as possible, verbatim what she heard, and by showing me how I could take part in the conversation. But it was a long time before I ventured to take the initiative, and still longer before I could find something appropriate to say at the right time.

Writing Sample:

Helen like other deaf children found it difficult to engage and participate in conversations around her even though her teacher tried to translate everything that was said in the conversation and encourage Helen to participate. Despite her teacher's efforts, Helen held back until she felt comfortable in knowing how to begin a conversation and participate correctly.¹

1. Helen Keller, *The Story of My Life* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1903), 32.

- a. Correct Paraphrase b. Incorrect Paraphrase

If b, put an x by the reason(s) why:

- ☐ the writer has not provided a correct citation for words, an idea, or a thought
☐ the writer has only changed the order of the words and used synonyms not their own style or words
☐ the writer has changed the meaning of the original source

3. From page 32 of *The Story of My Life* by Helen Keller (1903):

Original Source:

Any teacher can take a child to the classroom, but not every teacher can make him learn. He will not work joyously unless he feels that liberty is his, whether he is busy or at rest: he must feel the flush of victory and the heart-sinking of disappointment before he takes with a will the tasks distasteful to him and resolves to dance his way bravely through a dull routine of textbooks.

Writing Sample:

Many times teachers will try to make students learn not realizing that they will not learn unless they can experience some of the flush of victory and the heart-sinking of disappointment that exist. If they can experience this then they will want to learn.

a. Appropriate Quote b. Incorrect Quote

If b, put an x by the reason(s) why:

- ☐ the writer has not provided a correct citation for words, an idea, or a thought
- ☐ the quote is not a word for word exact duplicate of the original text
- ☐ if the quote is long the writer has not used a block quotation
- ☐ the writer has not used proper quotation marks



TOP TEN WAYS TO AVOID PLAGIARISM

10. Give yourself enough time to do good research and writing.
9. Learn how to cite sources correctly both in text and in the bibliography.
8. Keep good notes while researching and put things that are direct quotes within quotation marks in your notes.
7. Quote accurately and not frequently.
6. Don't use auto-summarize on your word processor.
5. Use your own words and do not just rearrange words and use synonyms to paraphrase.
4. Do your own work and do not buy or borrow papers and pass them off as your own.
3. Re-read your writing to make sure it is in your voice and style.
2. Write a cohesive paper, not just patchwork of different paraphrases and quotes.
1. Cite everything and anything that is someone else's such as words, ideas, or thoughts unless it is common knowledge like what year Columbus sailed.

SELF-CHECK✓

1. How confident do you feel that you know now what actions constitute plagiarism?

Very Confident 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not Confident

2. How confident do you feel now about being able to define what a quote, paraphrase, and summary?

Very Confident 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not Confident

3. How confident do you feel now about being able to distinguish between a quote, paraphrase, and summary?

Very Confident 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not Confident

4. How confident do you feel now about being able to write a quote, paraphrase, and summary based on another author's writing?

Very Confident 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not Confident

5. How confident do you feel now about being able to recognize plagiarism in other's writing samples?

Very Confident 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not Confident

6. How confident do you feel now about being able to recognize plagiarism in your own writing samples?

Very Confident 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not Confident

Additional Sources

About plagiarism:

<http://www.lib.usm.edu/legacy/plag/plagiarismtutorial.php>

http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/rul/libs/robeson_lib/flash_presents/text_plag.html

<http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/scc/tutorial/plagiarism/>

About citing using MLA:

<http://library.osu.edu/sites/guides/chicagogd.php>

<http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/online/cite7.html>

<http://library.williams.edu/citing/styles/chicago1.php>