

Plagiarism

Let's clarify any misconceptions!

What is Plagiarism?

According to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, to "plagiarize" means:

- to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own
- to use (another's production) without crediting the source
- to commit literary theft
- to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source

In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward.

What is Considered Plagiarism?

- turning in someone else's work as your own
- copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not

How Can I Avoid Plagiarism?

- Most cases of plagiarism can be avoided by citing sources. Simply acknowledging that certain material has been borrowed and providing your audience with the information necessary to find that source is usually enough to prevent plagiarism.

What isn't Plagiarism?

It isn't plagiarism if it is common knowledge

- Generally speaking, you can regard something as common knowledge if you find the same information undocumented in at least five credible sources. Additionally, it might be common knowledge if you think the information you're presenting is something your readers will already know, or something that a person could easily find in general reference sources. But when in doubt, cite; if the citation turns out to be unnecessary, your teacher or editor will tell you.

Examples of Common Knowledge

- George Washington was the first President of the United States of America.
- Water freezes at 32 degrees Fahrenheit.
- The United States declared independence on July 4th, 1776.

When in doubt, cite it!

What Happens if I Plagiarize?

- Students shall not misrepresent examination materials, writing, homework, or other assignments as their own when they are someone else's work. If cheating occurs, an automatic zero will replace any score, we will make a phone call home, and administration will be notified. Remember that aiding a cheater is also considered cheating. We will clearly define plagiarism in class.
 - From Mrs. Crawley's Disclosure Document

Quiz Time!

Is it plagiarism?

Question 1: Is this plagiarism?

Kelli needs to write a research paper on a topic she's passionate about. She loves animals and finds a research paper on the internet about animal rights. She thinks the author says everything better than she ever could, so she copies the paper onto a document with her own name on it. She does, however, mention the true author on a works cited page.

Question 2: Is this plagiarism?

Jackson is writing a paper on Greek Mythology. After doing his research, he writes the following sentence:

Zeus is the god of the sky and ruler of Olympus.

He does not use quotation marks and does not cite any sources.

Question 3: Is this plagiarism?

Leo needs to write an analysis on *The Crucible*. He starts the paper the night before it is due and starts to run out of ideas. He finds an online essay and decides to take some ideas without copying sentences exactly. Read the following examples and compare.

Online Essay's: "If Danforth could use his power as a judge to make Proctor confess, then the presence of witchcraft and evil in the town would soon disappear and order would be restored."

Leo's: "Danforth makes John confess to doing witchcraft to quiet the crowd down. He believed if he got rid of an apparent witchcraft leader people would calm down and order would restore to Salem."

Question 4: Is this plagiarism?

During lunch, Haley remembers that she forgot to do a HW assignment for her 8th period math class. Her friend is in the same class as her and remembered to do his HW. He let's her copy his work and she is able to turn in a completed worksheet with her name on it.

Question 5: Is this plagiarism?

Matthew wrote a great analysis on *To Kill a Mockingbird* using his own ideas. He even put direct quotes in quotation marks, but he did not include author name and page number after each quote. Example: (Lee 42). He also forgot to include a Works Cited page.

Any Questions?

Now is the time to ask!

Sources

- <http://www.plagiarism.org/article/what-is-plagiarism>
- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>
- <https://integrity.mit.edu/handbook/citing-your-sources/what-common-knowledge>