



Internet Research and Information Literacy: Effective Strategies and Cautionary Tales

Plagiarism 2.0: Information Ethics in the Digital Age

INTRODUCTION

This Teacher's Guide provides information to help you get the most out of *Plagiarism 2.0: Information Ethics in the Digital Age*. The contents of this guide will allow you to prepare your students before using the program, and to present follow-up activities to reinforce the program's key learning points.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

For a generation raised on the ideology of “open source” and the ability to quickly cut and paste, the concept of plagiarism may seem foreign or passé. And that, of course, can lead to trouble. This video examines the behaviors that constitute plagiarism, their consequences, and the best ways to avoid them. Showing how accidental copying as well as willful plagiarism can occur, the program lays out the dangers of cheating, then illustrates the pitfalls of non-attribution and patch writing while showing how to properly attribute and paraphrase a lengthy quotation. Copyright, trademark, and intellectual property concepts are clearly discussed, in addition to potential sources of non-copyrighted material. Common citation formats (APA, MLA, Bluebook, etc.) are listed along with the suggestion that the student confer with his or her instructor about them.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After viewing the program, students will be able to:

- Understand the difference between intentional and unintentional plagiarism
- Know the proper ways to cite sources
- Recognize works that are a part of copyrighted material and those that may fall under Fair Use
- Determine when to quote a source or when to paraphrase
- Comprehend the penalties of using someone else's work

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

For educational standards for this title, please see: http://ffh.films.com/id/20149/Plagiarism_20_Information_Ethics_in_the_Digital_Age.htm

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Ever find yourself wondering if you need to credit the author of a piece of work you referred to in a paper? Found it difficult to put information into your own words? Fallen into the trap of using one or two sentences of someone else's work to fill your paper? *Plagiarism 2.0: Information Ethics in the Digital Age* illustrates the proper ways to cite your sources and paraphrase information to make it your own. While borrowing a sentence or two from a book or Web page might seem harmless, plagiarism can lead to serious consequences. Often students don't realize they are plagiarizing by simply using improper citation. *Plagiarism 2.0* gives tips to both teachers and students on how to avoid getting caught in the plagiarism trap. This video provides information on copyrighted and trademarked material, and offers insight to writing and research techniques that will be used for many years to come.

MAIN TOPICS

Topic 1: Plagiarism and How to Avoid It

In this section, *Plagiarism 2.0* defines what plagiarism is, the different types of plagiarism, and some tips to avoid getting caught in the plagiarism trap.

Topic 2: Why Do Some People Plagiarize?

Here, the program describes different pressures students face and common examples of how turning to plagiarism is a quick but wrong solution to their problems. The program explains the technique of paraphrasing information instead.

Topic 3: Protected Content: Copyright and Fair Use

In this section, viewers learn about works and content protected by the United States government and what information is free for public use.

Topic 4: Proper Citation

Different institutions want students to properly cite their sources in different formats. *Plagiarism 2.0* goes over the most common formats in identifying authors and their work.

FAST FACTS

The most important part of researching a topic and collecting information is turning it into work of your own.

Just because information is free on the Internet, does not mean you can copy it without someone's permission.

Unintentional plagiarism is as common as intentional plagiarism.

Pressures for higher grades and success can lead students to plagiarize.

A solution to plagiarism is paraphrasing, or putting information into your own words.

Quotes should be used when a writer expresses something so well that his or her specific words are vital to making your argument.

Rushing to make a deadline is one of the most common reasons students plagiarize through non-attribution and patch-writing.

Copyright is secured the moment the work is created.

Copyright lasts for 95 years for corporate work and 70 years plus the life of the author for private work.

The best way to stay out of trouble is to always cite your sources!

VOCABULARY TERMS

attribution: a synonym for the word *citation* meaning to give credit to an author or the creator of a scholarly work.

bibliography: a list of sources referenced in your paper (books, articles, Web sites, etc.) The bibliography also includes other resources that have been read but not cited in text.

common knowledge: anything that is within the public domain or is easily located; fact-based information that does not require attribution.

copyright: a form of protection on original created content given by the United States to the authors of intellectual work.

fair use: Copyright states that the owner has the right to “reproduce or authorize others to reproduce” his or her work. Fair use is one of the limitations of copyright, and states that “reproduction of a particular work may be considered ‘fair,’ such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research.”

paraphrase: to restate a portion of text in your own words, using the original ideas of the author. Correct paraphrasing involves completely rewriting in your own words an expression of the original idea—substituting one or more words is not considered correct paraphrasing.

plagiarism: to steal, use, or pass off other people’s words and ideas as your own without proper acknowledgment or credit to the original source. To avoid plagiarism, always cite your source!

plagiarism (intentional): to deliberately and knowingly steal someone else’s work.

plagiarism (unintentional): to use someone else’s ideas or information without the intent to steal.

public domain: materials available to the public that are not owned by any one person. Works are usually copyrighted for a set amount of time—when a work is no longer copyrighted, it enters the public domain.

quote: to state the exact words of an author in your paper. Quotation marks are often used at the beginning and end of each quoted section inserted into the paper and must be cited. Page numbers where the original words can be found are often included.

source: a firsthand document, statement, interview, video, or primary reference work used in the creation of a research paper. Sources can include books, articles, Web sites, conversations, movies and more.

PRE-PROGRAM DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How soon do you start your research before a paper is due?
2. What does it mean “to paraphrase”?
3. When is a good time to use a direct quote from a source?
4. Why is it important to cite your sources?
5. Have you ever felt the pressure to use someone else’s work? Why?

POST-PROGRAM DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between intentional vs. unintentional plagiarism?
2. What types of work are protected under copyright laws?
3. What kinds of content are available in the public domain?
4. How can plagiarism be prevented?
5. What are the consequences of plagiarism?

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 1

RECYCLED TEXT

Older teens and young adults frequently rely on information obtained on the Internet to gather information and make informed choices. Increasingly they are confronted with the “recycled text” effect, seeing the exact same information or verbiage repeated on numerous Web sites. This may lead students to believe the information is up for grabs. Ask your students to research a topic of their choice, beginning with Wikipedia. Suggest that they cut and paste a phrase of 5–6 words from the first paragraph of the Wikipedia article into their browser’s search bar. What did they find? If they found instances of repetition or plagiarism, what types of Web sites were involved? Share the results with the group.

ACTIVITY 2

The following activity is adapted from materials created by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Research Integrity <http://ori.hhs.gov/education/products/plagiarism/index.shtml>

PARAPHRASING AND SUMMARIZING

Here is an original paragraph from Martini, F. H., & Bartholomew, M. S. (1997). *Essentials of Anatomy and Physiology*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall

“Because the intracellular concentration of potassium ions is relatively high, potassium ions tend to diffuse out of the cell. This movement is driven by the concentration gradient for potassium ions. Similarly, the concentration gradient for sodium ions tends to promote their movement into the cell. However, the cell membrane is significantly more permeable to potassium ions than to sodium ions. As a result, potassium ions diffuse out of the cell faster than sodium ions enter the cytoplasm. The cell therefore experiences a net loss of positive charges, and as a result the interior of the cell membrane contains an excess of negative charges, primarily from negatively charged proteins.”¹ (p. 204).

Which of the following are appropriate uses of paraphrasing? Which are not? Explain your answers.

EXAMPLE 1

A textbook of anatomy and physiology¹ reports that the concentration of potassium ions inside of the cell is relatively high and, consequently, some potassium tends to escape out of the cell. Just the opposite occurs with sodium ions. Their concentration outside of the cell causes sodium ions to cross the membrane into the cell, but they do so at a slower rate. According to these authors, this is because the permeability of the cell membrane is such that it favors the movement of potassium relative to sodium ions. Because the rate of crossing

for potassium ions that exit the cell is higher than that for sodium ions that enter the cell, the inside portion of the cell is left with an overload of negatively charged particles, namely, proteins that contain a negative charge.

EXAMPLE 2

Because the intracellular concentration of potassium ions is high, potassium ions tend to diffuse out of the cell. This movement is triggered by the concentration gradient for potassium ions. Similarly, the concentration gradient for sodium ions tends to promote their movement into the cell. However, the cell membrane is much more permeable to potassium ions than it is to sodium ions. As a result, potassium ions diffuse out of the cell more rapidly than sodium ions enter the cytoplasm. The cell therefore experiences a loss of positive charges, and as a result the interior of the cell membrane contains a surplus of negative charges, primarily from negatively charged proteins.¹ (p. 204)

EXAMPLE 3

The concentration gradient for sodium (Na) ions tends to promote their movement into the cell. Similarly, the high intracellular concentration of potassium (K) ions is relatively high resulting in K's tendency to diffuse out of the cell. Because the cell membrane is significantly more permeable to K than to Na, K diffuses out of the cell faster than Na enter the cytoplasm. The cell therefore experiences a net loss of positive charges and, as a result the interior of the cell membrane now has an excess of negative charges, primarily from negatively charged proteins.¹ (p. 204)

EXAMPLE 4

The relatively high concentration gradient of sodium ions outside of the cell causes them to enter into the cell's cytoplasm. In a similar fashion, the interior concentration gradient of potassium ions is also high and, therefore, potassium ions tend to scatter out of the cell through the cell's membrane. But, a notable feature of this process is that potassium ions tend to leave the cell faster than sodium ions enter the cytoplasm. This is because of the nature of the cell membrane's permeability, which allows potassium ions to cross much more freely than sodium ions. The end result is that the interior of the cell membrane's loss of positive charges results in a greater proportion of negative charges and these made up mostly of proteins that have acquired a negative charge.¹

DISCUSSION

In their attempts at paraphrasing, sometimes authors commit “near plagiarism” (or plagiarism, depending on who is doing the judging) because they fail to sufficiently modify the original text and thus produce an inappropriately paraphrased version. Depending on the extent of modifications to the original, the extent of text involved, and who is doing the judging, inappropriate paraphrasing may constitute an instance of plagiarism. For example, the following versions of the Martini and Bartholomew paragraph are inappropriately paraphrased and are thus classified as plagiarized versions:

A comparison between the original version of the Martini and Bartholomew paragraph to EXAMPLE 2 reveals that the rewritten version is a mere copy of the original. The few modifications that were made are superficial, consisting merely of a couple of word deletions, substitutions, and additions. Even though the writer has credited Martini and Bartholomew with the ideas expressed, by the insertion of a reference note ⁽¹⁾ most of the words and structure of the original paragraph are preserved in the rewritten version. Therefore, the reader would have been misled as to the origin of the writing.

At first glance EXAMPLE 3 may look as if it has been significantly modified from the original, but, in reality, is not unlike the first inappropriately paraphrased version in that only superficial changes have been made to the original. In this particular case, the writer has made a seemingly disingenuous change by substituting the names of the atoms by using their chemical symbols (e.g., sodium = Na). In addition, the order of the first two sentences was changed giving the appearance of a substantial modification. However, as in the previous version, the language and much of the rest of structure is still too similar to the original.

EXAMPLES 1 and 4 are properly paraphrased. Again, we must emphasize that when we paraphrase we must make every effort to restate the ideas in our words.

Now ask the students to write a SUMMARY. Here is an example of a summary:

The interior of a cell maintains a negative charge because more potassium ions exit the cell relative to sodium ions that enter it, leaving an over-abundance of negatively charged protein inside of the cell.¹

ACTIVITY 3

Research the facts of one or more of the following cases of *alleged* plagiarism. Discuss the outcomes of each case and whether or not you feel they were handled fairly.

Doris Kearns Goodwin, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys*

OUTCOME: Paid fines; withdrew a book from the market; declined participation as a Pulitzer Prize judge; left her job as a PBS commentator; a speaking engagement was revoked at the University of Delaware.

T S Eliot, *Waste Land*

OUTCOME: Allegations mostly ignored in his lifetime; the American poet, Madison Cawein, whom Eliot lifted from, died mostly unknown.

Alex Haley, *Roots*

OUTCOME: Haley settled out of court for \$650,000 after it was shown he lifted more than 80 passages from Harold Courlander's *The African*.

Dan Brown, *DaVinci Code*

OUTCOME: Judge Peter Smith rejected the copyright-infringement claim by Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, who alleged Brown plagiarized their book, *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*.

Stephen King, *Desperation*

OUTCOME: The judge ruled in favor of Mr. King against Christine Starobin.

Stephen E. Ambrose, *The Wild Blue*

OUTCOME: Mr. Ambrose was accused of plagiarizing Thomas Childers' *Wings of Morning*. In all, he was accused of plagiarizing the work of 12 authors and seven books, but he died of lung cancer very shortly after the allegations.

TRUE/FALSE QUIZ

(if the statement is false, explain why)

1. It's okay to cut and paste from the Internet if you find the same exact paragraph on several Web sites with no citation.
2. If you use quotation marks, you can use as many of an author's words as you want to.
3. Citing your source at the end of your paper is all you need to do when you summarize content.
4. If you were told a fact verbally, you don't have to credit the person who told you.
5. Most proverbs, folktales, and scripture are in the public domain.
6. If you heard an idea but can't remember where, it is okay to use it without a citation.
7. Copyright is secured the moment the work is created.
8. It's fine to paraphrase as long as it is in your own words and the ideas are cited.
9. It is okay to use a popular song in your movie as long as you only show it at festivals and are not selling DVDs
10. The birthdate of an American president is considered common knowledge and does not have to be cited.

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. It's okay to cut and paste from the Internet if you find the same exact paragraph on several Web sites with no citation.

False. *Just because the content has been repeated does not make it fair use.*

2. If you use quotation marks, you can use as many of an author's words as you want to.

False. *There are limits to the quantity of an author's content you can use. Excessive quoting is copyright infringement.*

3. Citing your source at the end of your paper is all you need to do when you summarizing content.

False. *Credit within the paper as well!*

4. If you were told a fact verbally, you don't have to credit the person who told you.

False. *Always credit your source.*

5. Most proverbs, folktales, and scripture are in the public domain.

True.

6. If you heard an idea but can't remember where, it is okay to use it without a citation.

False. *You have an obligation to track down the source.*

7. Copyright is secured the moment the work is created.

True.

8. It's fine to paraphrase as long as it is in your own words and the ideas are cited.

True.

9. It is okay to use a popular song in your movie as long as you only show it at festivals and are not selling DVDs.

False. *Festivals are public performances and you need to secure permission.*

10. The birthdate of an American president is considered common knowledge and does not have to be cited.

True.

ADDITIONAL INFOBASE LEARNING RESOURCES

Plagiarism: What Do You Value?

Why do students fall into the plagiarism trap? How does it hold a young person back on the journey toward self-reliance? Is it possible to “steal” material without knowing it? This program addresses the widespread ethical and legal problem of plagiarism, examining reasons used to justify content theft and the wide variety of forms it can take. Students and teachers talk frankly on-screen about their experiences with the problem and what leads some people to copy text or images from books, articles, Internet sites, and other students’ papers and projects. The program introduces writing and research skills that will enable viewers to steer clear of plagiarism, both intentional and unintentional. Viewable/printable educational resources are available online. (27 minutes) © 2005

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The Jayson Blair Story: Favoritism and Plagiarism at *The New York Times*

African-American journalist Jayson Blair has been pilloried as the personification of affirmative action out of control. Was it race that fueled his rapid promotions at *The New York Times* and prompted management to essentially ignore reports of his inaccurate work? In this ABC News program, correspondent Bob Jamieson chronicles the sensational rise and fall of Jayson Blair. Afterward, anchor Chris Bury talks with Mark Whitaker, editor of Newsweek; Condace Pressley, president of the National Association of Black Journalists; and *The Washington Post*'s Howard Kurtz to assess the impact of the scandal on *The Times*, the credibility of the news media, and equal opportunity. (23 minutes) © 2003

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WEB RESOURCES

The following are examples of online plagiarism detection and prevention tools:

<http://turnitin.com>

Internet-based plagiarism prevention service.

<http://plagiarism.com/>

Provides software programs to help deter and detect plagiarism.

<http://www.canexus.com/eve/>

Tools that allow professors and teachers to determine if students have plagiarized material from the Web.

<http://www.wordchecksystems.com/>

A free plagiarism detection site.

<http://plagiarism.phys.virginia.edu/links.html>

Software, forums, and links.

<http://www.coastal.edu/library/presentations/mills2.html>

Provides a list of sites that sell or provide free student papers.