

## Plagiarism

Plagiarism is used in the United States to describe both mistakes in handling and citing sources (source management skills) as well as deliberate cheating and lying about the authorship of the work handed in.

Plagiarism is intellectual dishonesty; it is using someone else's work as your own. Plagiarizing need not take the form of "word-by-word copying" of an entire book or an entire article; it could be just a few words in a phrase.

It is plagiarism if you:

- took notes without differentiating summaries, paraphrases or quotations from others' work or ideas and then presented wording from the notes as if they were your own.
- copied text from the Web and pasted it into your paper without quotation marks and citation.
- presented facts without saying where you found them.
- repeated or paraphrased wording without acknowledgment.
- took someone's unique or particularly apt phrase without acknowledgment.
- paraphrased someone's argument or presented someone's line of thought without acknowledgment.
- bought or otherwise acquired a research paper and handed in part or all of it as your own.

Source: Joseph Gibaldi, *The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, Sixth Edition Modern Language Association Of America, 2003

The World Wide Web is a vast place; a few students have concluded that they can successfully copy materials from others because the instructor would have a difficult time trying to prove plagiarism with so many sources to check on the Web. However, be forewarned: faculty use other means to learn when someone is plagiarizing other than finding the text a student may have copied. In addition, software programs and other techniques are available to help a faculty member detect plagiarism.

## Avoiding Plagiarism

To avoid plagiarizing, correctly cite all of the sources used:

- List the writers and viewpoints discovered in your research and use the list to double-check the material in your report before turning it in.
- While taking notes, keep separate and distinct your own ideas, summaries of others' ideas or exact wording.
- Identify the sources of all exact wording, paraphrases, ideas, arguments and facts that you borrowed.
- Ask your instructor if you are uncertain about your use of sources.

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