

PLAGIARISM

WHAT IS PLAGIARISM?

Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas and presenting them as your own.

- **Plagiarism is stealing.** By definition, when you plagiarize, you steal someone else's work, even if you have that person's "permission" to steal it.
- **Plagiarism is lying.** By passing someone else's work off as your own you are lying to your teacher.
- **Plagiarism is cheating.** Plagiarism is equivalent to copying from someone else's paper during a test and then pretending the work is your own.

FORMS OF PLAGIARISM

1. Word-for-word copying

- The most obvious form of plagiarism happens when a student turns in a paper that contains content written either partly or completely by someone else. For example:
 - ✓ Papers written by your mom, friend, or anyone else other than yourself.
 - ✓ Papers copied word-for-word or with only minor changes from the Internet, a book, or any other source.

2. Improperly paraphrasing someone else's words

- Proper paraphrasing requires you to put the idea in your own words—you cannot use exact sentences or phrases from the original source.
- Simply changing a few words, removing or adding words, or altering the order of words or phrases is not enough to call it your own work.

3. Failing to cite the original source

- As a rule, you need to provide a citation for any fact, figure, or idea that you present that is not common knowledge.

4. Giving your work to another student who then copies it makes you complicit in the act of plagiarism.

- This is true even if you didn't know that they were going to copy your work.
- While it's nice to help your friends, be very careful who you share your work with.

HOW TO AVOID PLAGIARISM

- If you want to use another person's ideas in your own writing, you must either put the idea in your own words or use direct quotes.
- No matter whether you use quotes or paraphrasing, you must acknowledge the original source by properly citing the original author.

WHAT CAN HAPPEN IF I PLAGIARIZE SOMETHING?

1. You don't learn what you were supposed to learn.

- The most important consequence of plagiarism is that you have robbed yourself of the opportunity to learn something.
- You were given an assignment in order for you to learn something, and by not completing the assignment yourself, you have not learned what your teacher wants you to learn.

2. You lose the teacher's trust.

- Once lost, trust takes time to rebuild.
- Teachers do not appreciate having their time wasted grading plagiarized assignments.

3. You lose credit for the assignment.

- Plagiarized assignments receive a 0!
- This can really hurt your overall grade in the class.

4. You can lose credit for the class.

- If the plagiarism is serious enough or if the assignment is a benchmark, you could lose credit for the entire class.
- If you have plagiarized before, a second offense is grounds for losing class credit.

5. You can face other disciplinary action.

- You can be suspended or expelled from school.
- You can be fired from a job.

I have read and understand the plagiarism policy.

Student Name (print)

Student Signature

Date

Parent Name (print)

Parent Signature

Date

Adapted from "[The Student's Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism](#)" by the Department of Sociology at Western Washington University.

"Copyright and Plagiarism." *CIIA: Teaching and Learning Resources*,
cii.wvu.edu/cii/resources/copyright/default.asp.