



Avoiding Plagiarism

SPI 3002.4.6 Identify information that must be cited or attributed within a writing sample.



What is plagiarism?

- Plagiarism is presenting someone else's knowledge or ideas as your own.
- It is illegal.
- It will earn you a zero on your research paper in this class and all future English classes.
- Many other content areas in this school (science and history) are also aware that students are taught about plagiarism.



Some real-life instances:

- Damaged the reputation of two prominent historians, Stephen Ambrose and Doris Kearns Goodwin,
 - Kearns left television position and stepped down as Pulitzer Prize judge for “lifting” 50 passages for her 1987 book *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys* (Lewis)
- Senator Joseph Biden dropped his 1987 campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination. (Sabato)
 - Copied in law school and borrowed from campaign speeches of Robert Kennedy
- Boston Globe journalist Mike Barnicle forced to resign for plagiarism in his columns (“Boston Columnist . . .”)
- Probe of plagiarism at UVA--45 students dismissed, 3 graduate degrees revoked
 - [CNN Article](#) AP. 26 Nov. 2001
 - [Channel One Article](#) AP. 27 Nov. 2002



Real-life instances, continued

- *New York Times* senior reporter Jayson Blair forced to resign after being accused of plagiarism and fraud.
- “The newspaper said at least 36 of the 73 articles he had written had problems with accuracy, calling the deception a “low point” in the newspaper's history.”

“New York Times Exposes Fraud of Own Reporter.” *ABC News Online*. 12 May, 2003.

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/newshour_index.html



Real-life instances, continued

- Controversial New Jersey valedictorian denied her seat as a Harvard freshman when it was discovered she plagiarized in a local newspaper.



What's the big deal?

- What if:
 - Your architect cheated his way through math class. Will your new home be safe?
 - Your lawyer paid for a copy of the bar exam to study. Will the contract she wrote for you stand up in court?
 - The accountant who does your taxes hired someone to write his papers and paid a stand-in to take his major tests? Does he know enough to complete your tax forms properly?

(Lathrop and Foss 87)



Nobody likes a liar or a fake...

- People will call you on it if you don't cite your sources. There is no reason for your reader to believe your information if you can't prove it came from somewhere other than your imagination....

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inductive_reasoning



What needs to be cited?

- Any words that you copy from a source.
 - Put quote marks around them and use an in-text citation after them. This is called a DIRECT QUOTE.
- Any information you learned from having read a source, **EVEN IF YOU PUT IT INTO YOUR OWN WORDS!!!**
 - Do not put quote marks around it, but DO use an in-text citation after it.
- One exception: Information that is common knowledge (for example, George Washington was our first president) does NOT have to be cited. Generally, if you can find the same fact in three or more easily obtained sources, you don't need to cite it.



Try it out

- Determine if the following information needs to be cited: (Remember: if it's common knowledge, it doesn't need to be cited. All other facts need to be cited.)
 - In order for water to boil, it must reach 212 degrees Fahrenheit.
 - Losing weight can cure asthma.
 - Reconstructive surgery is covered by most health insurance plans.
 - Smoking marijuana can cause permanent brain damage in teens and young adults.
 - William Shakespeare wrote the play *Hamlet*.