What is plagiarism?

(And why you should care!)

Definition:

Plagiarism is the act of presenting the words, ideas, images, sounds, or the creative expression of others as your own.

How serious is the problem?

"A study of almost 4,500 students at 25 schools, suggests cheating is . . . a significant problem in high school - 74% of the respondents admitted to one or more instances of serious test cheating and **72% admitted to serious cheating on written assignments. Over half of the students admitted they have engaged in some level of plagiarism on written assignments using the Internet.**"

Based on the research of Donald L. McCabe, Rutgers University

Source: "CIA Research." Center for Academic Integrity, Duke University, 2003 <http://academicintegrity.org/cai_research.asp>.

Students. If:

- you have included the words and ideas of others in your work that you neglected to cite,

- you have had help you wouldn't want your teacher to know about,

You have probably plagiarized!

Two types of plagiarism:

Intentional
- Copying a friend's work
- Buying or borrowing papers
- Cutting and pasting blocks of text from electronic sources without documenting
- Media "borrowing"without documentation
- Web publishing without permissions of creators

Unintentional
- Careless paraphrasing
- Poor documentation
- Quoting excessively
- Failure to use your own "voice"

Excuses

It's okay if I don't get caught!

Everyone does it!

This assignment was BORING!

I was too busy to write that paper!
(Job, big game, too much homework!)

I've got to get into ??? U.!

My teachers expect too much!

My parents expect "A"s!

Rationale for academic integrity (as if it were necessary!)

- When you copy you cheat yourself. You limit your own learning.

- The consequences are not worth the risks!

- It is only right to give credit to authors whose ideas you use

- Citing gives authority to the information you present

- Citing makes it possible for your readers to locate your source

- Education is not an "us vs. them" game! It's about learning to learn!

- Cheating is unethical behavior

Is your academic reputation valuable to you?

Real life consequences:

- 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

Consequences (cont'd)

- *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."

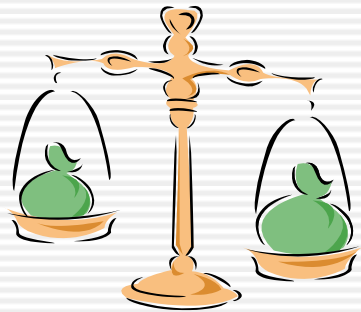"New York Times Exposes Fraud of Own Reporter." *ABC News Online*. 12 May, 2003.
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/newshour_index.html

Consequences (cont'd)

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

Possible school consequences:

Is it worth the risk?

- "0" on the assignment
- Parent notification
- Referral to administrators
- See the KLMS planner for more consequences

Is this important?

- 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)

Nope!

- Facts that are widely known, or
- Information or judgments considered "common knowledge"

Do **NOT** have to be documented.

Hooray for common knowledge!

Examples of common knowledge

- John Adams was our second president
- The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941

If you see a fact in three or more sources, and you are fairly certain your readers already know this information, it is likely to be "common knowledge."
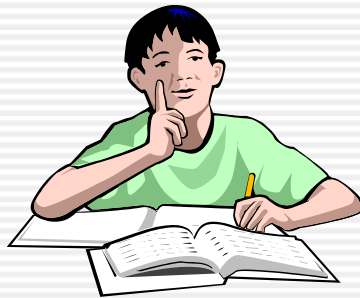   But when in doubt, cite!

No need to document when:

- You are discussing your own experiences, observations, or reactions

- Compiling the results of original research, from science experiments, etc.

- You are using *common knowledge*

You can "borrow" from the works of others in your own work!

Use these three strategies,

- Quoting
- Paraphrasing
- Summarizing

To blend source materials in with your own, making sure your own voice is heard.

Quoting

Quotations are the exact words of an author, copied directly from a source, word for word. Quotations must be cited!

Use quotations when:

- You want to add the power of an author's words to support your argument
- You want to disagree with an author's argument
- You want to highlight particularly eloquent or powerful phrases or passages
- You are comparing and contrasting specific points of view
- You want to note the important research that precedes your own

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Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing means rephrasing the words of an author, putting his/her thoughts in your own words. When you paraphrase, you rework the source's ideas, words, phrases, and sentence structures with your own. Like quotations, paraphrased material must be followed with in-text documentation and cited on your Works-Cited page.

Paraphrase when:

- You plan to use information on your note cards and wish to avoid plagiarizing
- You want to avoid overusing quotations
- You want to use your own voice to present information

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Summarizing

- **Summarizing involves putting the main idea(s) of one or several writers into your own words, including only the main point(s). Summaries are significantly shorter than the original and take a broad overview of the source material. Again, it is necessary to attribute summarized ideas to their original sources.**

Summarize when:

- You want to establish background or offer an overview of a topic
- You want to describe knowledge (from several sources) about a topic
- You want to determine the main ideas of a single source

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As you take notes:

- Include any direct quotes or unique phrases in quotation marks or mark with a big **Q** and make sure the speaker's /writer's name is identified.

- Make sure you note a paraphrase with the writer's name and mark it with a big **P**

- Include page numbers and source references so you can go back and check for accuracy as you write.

In-text / in-project MLA documentation

- Purpose--to give immediate source information without interrupting the flow of paper or project.

- The academic world takes in-text documentation seriously.

- Inaccurate documentation is as serious as having no documentation at all.

- Brief information in in-text documentation should match full source information in Works Cited

Use in-text / in-project documentation when:

- You use an original idea from one of your sources, whether you quote or paraphrase it
- You summarize original ideas from one of your sources
- You use factual information that is not common knowledge (Cite to be safe.)
- You quote directly from a source
- You use a date or fact that might be disputed

How do I cite using MLA style?

- Parenthetical citations are usually placed at the end of a sentence, before the period, but they may be placed in the middle of sentence
- Cite the author's last name and the page number
- In the absence of an author, cite the title and the page number
- If you are using more than one book by the same author, list the last name, comma, the title, and the page
- If you identify the author and title in the text, just list the page number

But, what about the Web?

When citing a Web source in-text, you are not likely to have page numbers. Just include the first part of the entry.

(Smith)

or

("Plagiarism and the Web")

Typical example:

"Slightly more than 73% of Happy High School students reported plagiarizing papers sometime in their high school careers" (Smith 203).

For more information and specific examples see our school's *Research Guide*

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