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PLAGIARISM DETECTION ENGINE

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO DISCOURAGING PLAGIARISM

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INTRODUCTION

Plagiarism is a serious problem that has academia seeking a decisive solution. European universities reported more than 17,000 cases of cheating in its 2009-2010 academic year.(1) In the United States, The New York Times reported in 2014 that Senator John E. Walsh had his master's degree taken away by The Army War College after it was determined he had plagiarized large portions of his thesis. A Pew Research Study in 2011 university presidents 55 percent says that plagiarism has increased in the past 10 years.(2)

One of its main problems is technology's integration into today's society has muddled the term's definition. Compounding the issue is the ease of travel and universities looking outside its country's borders for new students. A student's view on plagiarism and what is and what is not cheating depends on the student's culture and background.

Plagiarism simply is defined as cheating – whether it was intentional or by accident it still is considered plagiarism and the plagiarist could face some serious consequences. Plagiarism simply is taking credit for someone else's work, interpretation or idea.

China has an epidemic problem with student cheating and plagiarizing material on its higher education entrance exam, but it's a culture that does not see a problem with plagiarism as long as it aides the community as a whole. On the other hand, Spain is trying to come to grips with the epidemic since it is ruining their education system. Some countries look to Britain, who they say have a grip on plagiarism, but statistics show even they are struggling with the issue.

In America many institutions are hitting plagiarism head on with class instructions detailing what is and what is not plagiarism along with utilizing modern technology to stem the plague.

But its definition is blurring as students embrace technology and it becomes more ingrained in every-day life. Technology makes it easy to not only copy and paste but also to integrate others works into your own until you have a blended work that most digital savvy students call their "own" creation. This blended work still is plagiarism and studies show instructors can prevent much of this type of plagiarism with proper instruction.

This guide will take a look at what is and what is not plagiarism. It also will look at the areas where instructors need to give explicit instructions so their students will not become victims of plagiarism. These areas include copyright laws, how to know good sources, how to prepare for writing an academic paper, where resources can be located, what needs to be cited and how to properly annotate resources.

1 WHAT IS / IS NOT PLAGIARISM

DEFINING PLAGIARISM

Educators realize that students generally think of plagiarism as something along the lines of cutting and pasting someone else's work or copying another person's homework. But plagiarism is clearly more than literally copying paragraphs of text. It's taking someone's thoughts or ideas and using them as your own. The truth is plagiarism is fraudulent, it's being deceitful and it's trying to hustle someone – it's a sham. Defining plagiarism lets students know what is expected of them when assignments are given.

> " *An act or instance of using or closely imitating the language and thoughts of another author without authorization and there presentation of that author's work as one's own, as by not crediting the original author*
>
> The definition of "plagiarism" by dictionary.com

Plagiarism is stealing. When handing assignments, educators need to understand what the student's perspective is towards plagiarism. They need to ensure students understand that plagiarism is "taking someone else's idea, words, work, concept, lyrics – or any other intellectual property and claiming it as your own." Let students know the institution realizes students "rationalize" their plagiarism – using the excuse that "I'm only cutting corners," or "taking advantage of the technology that is available," or the rationalization that "I bought this paper so it's my work."

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To curb the epidemic educators need to plainly define plagiarism by using examples so students will understand what is being looked at in an assignment and that the institution is aware of all the ways students plagiarize.

OWNERSHIP AND PLAGIARISM

Intellectual property rights are increasing in importance – especially with the growing trend for off-site classes or internet courses. Educators are discovering the courses they have spent years developing are being used in unauthorized virtual classrooms. In this setting, no one really knows the instructor's true identity making it easy for others to steal.

Technology has opened up the world of ideas to any and every one. The internet is a world-wide ocean of thoughts and their creators want people to acknowledge their works and in many cases pay them their due.

> **The ownership issue has people lining up on various sides of the fence arguing their worth and how everyone should handle protecting their intellectual property.**

The ownership issue has people lining up on various sides of the fence arguing their worth and how everyone should handle protecting their intellectual property.

Taking ownership of one's thoughts, ideas, words, or any other intellectual property primarily is a Western Culture idea. This ownership mutated from the French philosophy that "I think, therefore I am." In other words, America's copyright laws are based on the premise that an individual is defined by their intellectual thought so they have a right to their own creations. (3)

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With that belief, the Founding Fathers included in the Constitution the phrase, "To promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries." This means all works not your own must be cited.

For many years America's copyright law was not enforced around the world. But with the boom in technology and America's economic and cultural influence, this law now is being globally enforced. But is this ownership law any different than the thought processes in other cultures?

The Chinese think it is absurd that one person has the legal rights to a movie, book, saying, or any other intellectual property. A 2010 "Forbes" report(4) highlighted an on-going issue much of the world has with China counterfeiting products, software, pirating movies, basically plagiarizing other's intellectual property.

What the World Trade Organization and many Western countries see as a major problem that requires immediate retribution, China responds with confusion and questioning what they have done wrong. Their response is based upon a culture built on community first and individualism last. To create a land of peace and prosperity their culture is vigorously built upon a system of communal property and the belief that the perfect answer to an issue is the one that is best for the community at large. If this answer comes at the expense of an individual, that is okay since the community benefitted as a whole.

COMMON KNOWLEDGE AND PLAGIARISM

Academic writing in any form requires citation of sources – a fact that educators should reinforce throughout the time students are working on an assigned project.

Unfortunately keeping track of all the sources is labor intensive and when reading hundreds of articles, books, and web pages in the research phase, the thought of keeping track of all the authors, publishers, page numbers, etc., can be daunting. Fortunately, there is software such as Mendeley that can keep tabs on all research information so students can focus on what is important – the research.

Educators need to explain the concept of "common knowledge" to their students and give examples of what is considered common knowledge for their assignment.(5)

> **Common knowledge is defined as any information that is commonly known among your paper's readership.**

Generally speaking, common knowledge is defined as any information that is commonly known among your paper's readership.

Unfortunately, what is considered common knowledge is judgmental at best and when in doubt the best answer is to cite the source. Also, "common knowledge" for one group might not be common knowledge for another audience. Common knowledge facts do not require a citation.

The general population knows the moon reflects the sun's light so this information would not require a citation in an academic paper. The knowledge that a baby has between 270 and 350 bones at birth (depends on how an individual counts the bones within the ear, etc.) but an adult only has 206 bones would be considered common knowledge in the medical field but not necessarily information an average person would know. The reason for the reduced number of bones in an adult is because many of the small bones in the human body fuse together as a person ages. This type of information would require a proper citation within an academic paper being read outside of the medical field.

One common misconception many educators run across with plagiarism issues from their students is when a student quotes common knowledge information verbatim from a source. Since it's common knowledge, the student did not cite the source and ended up being accused of plagiarism. This is a serious issue in academia.

> **Common knowledge information quoted verbatim must be cited to avoid plagiarism charges.**

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Another common plagiarism issue educators see too frequent is the common knowledge quotes such as Buddha's, "What you think, you become." Generally, this type of a quote does not have to be cited since it can be found in many motivational speeches, leadership and management courses, etc. The plagiarism problem many educators are running into is when the student begins to expound on this thought and offers someone else's interpretation of this quote without referencing the source. A source's interpretation, ideas, and any other thoughts must be cited. Expounding on any common knowledge must be cited unless it's the student's thoughts.

PATCHWRITING AND PLAGIARISM

> **Patchwriting is cutting and pasting material without adding anything of value to the content.**

Patchwriting is cutting and pasting material without adding anything of value to the content.

A student may change a few sentences around and swap a few words to avoid plagiarism charges, but it's not their own thoughts, words, or conclusions. None of the work is original. One red flag for educators is the project will lack the student's writing voice. Patchwriting is easily detected because it does not "sound" like the student whose name appears on the project.

That is what a student does when copying and pasting material into their academic paper – patchwriting. They make a half-hearted attempt to paraphrase the material but what they end up doing is just as wrong as plagiarism. Both are stealing. The individual puts no original thought into the pasted material. They do not make it their own. Fortunately, it's easy for an instructor to detect.

COLLABORATION AND PLAGIARISM

In today's world people are interactive, involved, and in the know about their friends, family, and in some cases, general acquaintances. Collaboration also takes place in the workplace today with group projects and even having employees now being called team members. With that said, it's nearly impossible for a student to not collaborate on an assignment – but at Harvard University the policy is there will be no collaboration on any project unless stated as permissible by the instructor. This is a policy that is becoming more common in academia.

> **Collaboration is considered to be a joint effort that results in a complete product. This is fine in a team environment but in an academic environment based on an individual grade; this is where collaboration tends to tread in murky territory.**

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Collaboration is considered to be a joint effort that results in a complete product. This is fine in a team environment but in an academic environment based on an individual grade; this is where collaboration tends to tread in murky territory.(6)

How does a teacher give a student an individual grade when they did not complete all the work on their own? Did they plagiarize any of the material? How much effort did a certain student put into this project?

Teachers today must explicitly indicate what is considered appropriate collaboration and what constitutes plagiarism within their class.(7) It is inevitable that a student will tweet or text a friend for sympathy when being assigned a research paper on an obscure topic due in a week. If said friend has taken the course they will give an inside tip to assist their troubled buddy in their time of need.

Is this collaboration or is it touching on plagiarism if the tip involves the foundation of a thesis statement for the research paper? These are the rules that must be dictated by the teacher before handing out assignments.

2 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

Cheating is using resources in a dishonest way for personal gain.

Cheating is using resources in a dishonest way for personal gain.(8) An example of cheating that has become popular among high school and college students is to print out a fake label to be placed on their favorite drink. Instead of the label having an ingredients list it has answers for their exam.(9) In various chat rooms a question that pops up – "Is copying someone else's answers cheating or plagiarism?"

From the definition previously listed for plagiarism you can see that plagiarism is a form of cheating – it's stealing someone else's work for personal gain. So to correctly answer the question, the answer would be cheating since plagiarism is a form of cheating.

COPYRIGHT AND PLAGIARISM

Copyright laws are laws that have been passed to protect an individual's works from being plagiarized, or illegally copied, stolen, displayed, performed, or published.

> **To use works that have been copyrighted the individual must obtain permission from the copyright holder although there is a clause within the law that states an individual can use certain works under the term "fair use."**

To use works that have been copyrighted the individual must obtain permission from the copyright holder although there is a clause within the law that states an individual can use certain works under the term "fair use." Fair use means an individual can use certain works for teaching purposes, research, news reporting, or for critiquing.

Certain criteria must be met such as the amount of the material that was used, if it was for academia or commercial use, the nature of the work and its value versus the effect the fair use usage had on its perceived value.

Under certain circumstances where large portions of a work are being used, citing a source is not enough to avoid copyright infringement – permission still must be granted although citing the source generally would avoid plagiarism charges.

When a project could conceivably change the original source's value and could possibly result in a large monetary gain for the student or institution, it would be wise for the educator to consult with the institution's leadership and legal department concerning any copyrights.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic dishonesty(10) is the opposite of what academia is looking for from its students and faculty.

> **All academia encourages honest scholarly work that casts a positive light on the academic community as a whole, which is called academic integrity.**

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Most universities describe plagiarism as one of the many acts of academic dishonesty. Other forms of academic dishonesty include cheating on an exam, turning in the same work in multiple classes, and faking lab work results.

3 WHY PLAGIARISM FLOURISHES

More than half of the college students today admit they have plagiarized portions of their academic work.

> **CollegeHumor surveyed 30,000 students in 2007 and discovered that more than 60 percent said they have cheated.**

CollegeHumor surveyed 30,000 students in 2007 and discovered that more than 60 percent said they have cheated.(11) According to the study, it appears the massive lack of morals in academia among college students is indicative of society's attitude as a whole towards plagiarism – a casual slap on the hand for doing something bad and a failing grade for that project – mild consequences considering the benefits a student gains if their project receives a passing grade. Surveys show that most students say the reason for their plagiarism includes:

- unclear about what is and what is not plagiarism
- lack of direction from their teacher about what is required in the project
- the due date slipping up on them requiring frantic last minute work
- not knowing how to properly cite a source
- thinking they had paraphrased information and it did not require referencing
- chances of good grades outweighed the consequences.

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PAPER MILLS

With the internet opening up a world of information, today's students or even a company's researcher can locate information on anything from stem cell research to how to lose 10 pounds in 10 days. All it takes is a few key words and a powerful search engine and all the necessary information is there on your screen in a matter of seconds. The problem is most students say they do not have the time to write the research paper. Enter paper mills, sites(12) that employ professional writers who will write an academic paper for the right price.

What technology has done is commercialized plagiarism. What once was a closet filled with academic papers in a dorm room or fraternity house is now a burgeoning business on a website. By filling out a document that includes any instructions for the topic, format style, length, etc., plus a credit card number, a student has a research paper ready for printing in a matter of hours or days.

The question many ask is cheating and plagiarism on the rise in today's world or is it more noticeable because of marketing ploys and easier access to information? That answer is up for debate.

> **The truth is the booming business of paper mills now makes plagiarism harder to detect because of the skilled writers at these mills use of a thesaurus.**

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HOW THE INTERNET AFFECTS PLAGIARISM

The internet has removed the hours a student must spend in a library pouring over dusty books and newspapers, along with hours of loading and unloading reels of film in search of a few articles on their given academic paper's topic. No, that grueling research has disappeared.

It is now replaced with the internet where a few keystrokes produce an endless supply of information.(13) And for those creative in the art of "making school easy" better known as cheating, the internet offers even more. Copying and pasting from educational and news sites makes writing a research paper quick and efficient. Copying and pasting does make plagiarism a huge issue unless the information is rewritten in the individual's own words.

Another issue with the internet is sites such as Facebook that allows a group of students to create a web page for exchanging information, do group research for papers, copy each other's papers, or even offers answers to class exams – all for free. These sites are a university professor's nightmare and a hotbed for plagiarism.

Others argue that using the internet for its paper mill sites, as a group "homework" site or for copying and pasting all or portions of an academic paper is not really cheating because it is utilizing the tools available. Students say this is not a problem since the internet will be available at their work site too so the copying and pasting can continue into the workforce. But as one researcher notes – plagiarism was in academia long before the World Wide Web – the internet only made it easier.

4 GIVING SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS

HOW TO FIND YOUR OWN WRITING VOICE

One of the fastest ways to know if a student has plagiarized their academic paper is if the project is not written in their "voice." The words, the style of language, the examples and conclusions do not match the student's personality or style.

Of course teachers also must take into account that not every student is a proficient writer, but there should be a hint of the student within the paper.

> **Research shows that many of the students are looking for good advice detailing how to write their paper.**

Research shows that many of the students are looking for good advice detailing how to write their paper. For teachers to alleviate much of the plagiarism in their classes they will have to go beyond the traditional "handing out assignments" and spend some time teaching their students some of the basics – proper citations; writing and finding your voice; and where and how to research.

The best advice for a student searching for their "writing voice" is to write in a normal conversational tone. The only problem with this advice is the paper also must appeal to its audience. If the audience is professors with a doctorates degree who utilize their large vocabulary in their everyday talking then the project needs to be adjusted without the student losing their voice within the project.

For students uncomfortable with writing, one suggestion many writing coaches has found helpful is to have the student look through material they enjoy reading. The coaches had the students take notes on the way the sentences were constructed, the types of verbs and adjectives the writer used, the overall tone and how the sentences were structured within the piece. Once the writing was broken down the students were able to pinpoint why the material appealed to them and it was easier for the student to duplicate that writing style.

Another suggestion that has been successful for students wanting to become better writers was choosing the proper environment for writing. If a student is uncomfortable at the school's library and is easily distracted then avoid writing there. A student needs to feel comfortable. Realize that everyone is not alike. Some people can write in a noisy and chaotic environment while others need quiet. If the student is easily distracted tell them they might find more success writing in a quiet, plain, empty room.

> **The other thing teachers should point out to their students is to picture what is being written in their mind – visualize what is being written to ensure it makes sense.**

The other thing teachers should point out to their students is to picture what is being written in their mind – visualize what is being written to ensure it makes sense.

Finally, encourage your students to get it on paper and remind them that is why there is a step in writing called editing if some sentences do not make sense. Let them know the hardest part is to get their thoughts down the first time – after that it is easy. So encourage them to sit down and write out that first draft without trying to immediately create a masterpiece.

HOW TO RESEARCH

The key to solid and successful research is to have a narrow and specific focus. This is accomplished through a pin-pointed thesis statement. Without this targeted thesis statement students will find it difficult to perform comprehensive research for their academic paper. Spending time with the students explaining how to narrow their focus will pay dividends when it comes time to grade their projects. The narrowed focus also will make it easier for the student to perform the needed research.

> **Great journalists know how to perform research. Their secret lies in the six questions they look to answer when researching information about a story – who, what, when, where, why, and how.**

Great journalists know how to perform research.(14) Their secret lies in the six questions they look to answer when researching information about a story – who, what, when, where, why, and how. Fully answering the five W's and one H will give the student all the information they will need for their project.

The next thing a student needs to know about research is where to look. Teachers realize that college academic papers require more research skills than Google, Yahoo, and Bing – but has that been pointed out to your students, especially if they are first year college students?

Now do not count out these search engines because Google Books could offer a number of resources for your student's paper if it falls within one of the engines primary subjects. Also, Google and Microsoft offer comparable search engines for academic papers – Google Scholar and Microsoft Academic Search.

Another internet search engine worth noting is JURN. This search engine is great for locating eJournals and academic publications in the fields of arts, humanities, science, biomedical, business and ecology. So make sure these resources are given to your students explaining that any information used from these sites must be referenced within their papers.

Also encourage your students to introduce themselves to the school's librarian. Explain how the librarian can save the student time in their research by pointing out the more popular tools utilized by students who have researched the topic in the past. Another resource the librarian will give the student is a listing of the books and journals available through the library concerning their chosen topic.

Teachers should point out to their students that books are great for extra resources and citing topic experts. But make sure to them know that the they will be responsible for checking the publishing dates to ensure the information is the latest available in their chosen field of research.

Journals will be a strong second credible source that will offer some of the latest information for students. Most journals are subscription based and the librarian will know what journals are available through the school. It's important for teachers to point their students in this direction so they will not be scrambling at the last minute trying to obtain enough data to write their paper. The data from all the studies proves that last minute writing leads to more cases of plagiarism.

> **If more sources are needed, point students to Ipl2, a virtual library that merges the Internet Public Library with the Librarians' Internet Index.**

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If more sources are needed, point students to Ipl2, a virtual library that merges the Internet Public Library with the Librarians' Internet Index. This site has an "ask" search engine so students can type in their question. The site reveals answers like a regular search engine.

The site claims the questions have been answered by volunteer library science professionals and university students.

One other suggestion to offer your students is have them perform a Google search for topic specific search engines. Another quick resource is to look at all the different countries governmental sites for information. Their information is free and up-to-date and depending on the research topic, one of these sites possibly could offer some unique information.

HOW TO PARAPHRASE

With studies showing that students truly think they are not plagiarizing by changing a few words or sentences within paragraphs copied from another source, educators need to teach their students how to properly paraphrase to alleviate plagiarism.

> **Explain to your students that summarizing is not paraphrasing – the two are different.**

Explain to your students that summarizing is not paraphrasing – the two are different. Changing a few words is not paraphrasing a source's information – that is plagiarism.

Summarizing is taking a person's complete information on a topic and shrinking it into a few short sentences. Summarizing is giving the reader enough background so they will have the needed information to understand the point or points within your paper.

When summarizing information, students should remember to cite the source.(15)

Paraphrasing is taking researched information and putting it into one's own words. Here are six steps students can follow to properly paraphrase a source's information:

STEP 1
Fully comprehend the material. Before attempting to paraphrase the source read through the material to ensure a general understanding of the main points. Being familiar and understanding the topic makes paraphrasing a simple task.

STEP 2
Note the keywords and phrases used in the material. Flush out the main terms and understand their definitions before attempting to paraphrase.

STEP 3
Map out a writing strategy. Mapping is a type of outline but without all the rules. This gives a visual to ensure that when writing all the main points are covered and in the proper order. Paraphrasing of the material does not have to be in the same order as the source but it must be logical, flow smoothly, and make sense.

STEP 4
Write the paraphrase. It doesn't have to be perfect the first time, but it needs to be written out.

STEP 5
Check that everything is accurate and all the material needed from this source has been covered in the paraphrase.

STEP 6
Once all the facts have been checked and are factual then edit the material so that it flows with the rest of the paper. Also ensure all sources are properly cited.

CITING REFERENCES

> **Educators need to reinforce the fact that to avoid being accused of stealing someone else's material students must reference all their sources used within their project.**

Educators need to reinforce the fact that to avoid being accused of stealing someone else's material students must reference all their sources used within their project. Emphasize that when they use facts, ideas, test or experiment results, interpretations or words from someone else, they must reference that individual's work.

Most students do not realize that citing sources adds credibility to their work. Many students are under the impression it hurts their project. The truth is that citing the sources used raises the paper's credibility level so encourage your students to reference their sources for a better grade. Remind them that references also are important to avoid being accused of plagiarism – basically stealing another person's words, facts, ideas, images, etc.

Many students do not know how to cite sources so teachers need to allot class time for explaining the basics of referencing sources. The following information can serve as a guide for teaching students citing basics:

- Generally, references are listed in the order they appear in the document. The only exception to referencing information within your academic paper is any information that is considered to be common knowledge.

- To reference properly there needs to be a "sign" within the body of the text to let the reader know more information is available at the end of the paper or in a footnote. The type of sign will depend on the style being used for the project.

- Reference listings usually are alphabetized or appear in the order the information is used within the paper. Sometimes listings are broken up according to chapters.

- Each listing within the reference list should have enough material to allow the reader to locate the source referenced in the paper. Generally this information includes: the author's name; publisher of the material; date of publication; page numbers used; title; and location of the publisher or website.

WHAT MUST BE CITED

- Any facts that is not common knowledge such as distances, percentages, statistics, etc.

- Quotes or statements from publications, research papers, books, magazines, newspapers, web sites, videos, etc.

- Pictures, videos, graphs, statistical analyses, or other types of graphics not created by the author.

- All information used within any visuals created by the author.

- Ideas, philosophical expressions, doctrines, methodologies or theories that are not "common knowledge".

HOW TO RATE SOURCES

Explain to the students that all their sources must be credible. If a source's credibility used within their paper is questioned then their whole paper's credibility will be questioned.

So it is important for the student to know all their sources are credible.

So it is important for the student to know all their sources are credible.

The following simple checklist will help your students avoid using bad resources for their projects and encourage them to cite their sources and avoid plagiarism charges.

To know your source is credible, use the same five "W's" and one "H" that you utilize to accomplish your research – who, what, when, where, why, and how?

- Who is the author? If the author is unknown then be skeptical about the information unless it is from a well-known institution or governmental site.

- What type of information or what is the purpose of the information the author is discussing? Is this an area of expertise with the author? If not, once again be skeptical.

- When was this published? Is it recent?

- Why was this published? Why did the author come to their conclusion? Why did the author perform the test, research, etc.?

- Where was this published? Did this information come from another source? Was that source credible?

- How did the original author come to his conclusions? Is his conclusion verifiable?

Always verify any information with a second source. If verification cannot be found then the information may not be reliable.

WHAT ARE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES

For your students to hand in a well-researched paper it is imperative they know what is a primary and secondary source. The following simple explanations can aid your students in knowing the difference between the two types of sources. Remind the students that for their papers to be well received that all their main facts must come from primary sources.

- Primary sources are original in nature. These documents, experiments, videos, or other forms of documentation are all original material or in the case of written documents, articles written within a reasonable amount of time after the event.

- Secondary sources generally explain primary sources. These are interpretations of a primary source's experiment or an author trying to explain what an artist was "feeling" while painting his famous piece of work. Secondary sources come to conclusions about a primary source.

COMMON REFERENCING STYLES

- **American Psychological Association (APA)** – This citation style focuses attention on specific punctuation, abbreviations, how tables of information are designed, types of headings, and the presentation of statistics.

- **Modern Language Association (MLA)** – This citation style is suited for humanities subjects.

- **Chicago Manual of Style (CMS)** – This dual style is suited for both humanities type essays and for research papers in areas of physical and social sciences – it's a versatile citation system that is considered the style used by the "real world" – newspapers, magazines, etc. CMS uses two systems of documentation – notes/bibliography and an author/date citation style.

- **Oxford Referencing Style (Oxford)** – This is a documentary or note citation style with two main points – footnote citations; and a complete listing at the end of the paper.

- **Harvard Referencing System (Harvard)** – This citation system also is known as the author-date style and places an emphasis on the author's name and date of publication. It uses footnotes and a listing at the end of the paper.

- **Turabian Style (Turabian or Chicago Style)** – This style also is called the Chicago style since the two have minor differences. There are two styles in the Turabian - the notes-bibliography style also called the bibliography style and the author-date list or reference list. The bibliography style caters to the subjects of history, literature and arts while the concise reference list style primarily is used in the natural, physical, and social sciences.

5 TRACKING PROGRESS

GETTING A PLAN

Every project needs a plan that involves the instructor who handed out the assignment to ensure everyone sticks to their timetable. To cut down on plagiarism the teacher needs to take an active approach towards their students' research project.

> **Statistics show that educators who have a more hands-on approach have less instances of plagiarism.**

Statistics show that educators who have a more hands-on approach have less instances of plagiarism.

Set dates for students to turn in their chosen topic, thesis statement, outline, source listings, first draft and final paper. Let them know the dates are not flexible. Some teachers have offered incentives for students who are ahead of the deadlines so the teacher isn't talking with so many students on deadline day. Incentives include anything from extra credit to some form of food or a portion of class time that can be used for research.

Let students know that when they are first given the assignment it feels like there is a lot of time to complete the project, but as the saying goes – "time flies."

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> **By setting deadlines within the project for your students they are being handed a simple planned checklist that allows them to break down the large project into smaller manageable chunks.**

By setting deadlines within the project for your students they are being handed a simple planned checklist that allows them to break down the large project into smaller manageable chunks. Encourage students to stay ahead of the classroom deadlines to allow them time to change their conclusions if needed or to add more "discovered" resources as they work on their project.

For the technological savvy students who love to use the latest software and gadgets to keep their lives organized, have them check out Wunderlist, software for creating that perfect organizational plan.

To discourage late papers and possible plagiarism issues, encourage students to pick a topic that interests them, is relevant to the class, and most importantly – a topic with plenty of available resources to complete the paper. Make sure students realize there is a deadline for choosing their topic and they should not spend a lot of time second guessing their choice.

The following explanation can aid in simplifying the student's task with writing their thesis statement.

> **A thesis statement simply tells the reader what the paper is about, what the author will prove, how the author is going to prove it, the end results, and the author's conclusion.**

A thesis statement simply tells the reader what the paper is about, what the author will prove, how the author is going to prove it, the end results, and the author's conclusion. The thesis statement needs to be narrow, focused and should be a direct roadmap telling everyone where the paper is going and how it will get there.

The student's rough outline probably will be one of their tougher challenges but will aid them the most. Instructors should explain the reason behind an outline at this point is so they can identify what resources they will need to write their paper. The outline allows the student to begin lining up their resources and begin researching their project.

Students should be aware their outline is not set in stone but is flexible in nature. Explain to students their research could uncover unexpected information – material that possibly could lead to a different conclusion than first planned. Teachers need to make sure they have allotted enough time for their students to complete all the required research and still leave plenty of time for writing and editing.

Students should be encouraged to begin writing their paper once most of their research has been completed. Let them know not all their research has to be done for them to start writing. Make sure students understand that research must continue up until the final edit so the latest information on their topic is being used in their project.

> **Teachers need to continuously remind their students of their upcoming deadlines and encourage them to stay ahead of schedule.**

Teachers need to continuously remind their students of their upcoming deadlines and encourage them to stay ahead of schedule. By meeting deadlines students are less likely to plagiarize their material.

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SAMPLE CHECKLIST TO AID STUDENTS WITH RESEARCH PROJECTS

CHOOSE TOPIC – 1 DAY

- Go to school library
- Google internet sources
- Locate interviewees in local area or within X hour driving distance

THESIS STATEMENT – 2 DAYS

- Quick research to determine paper's direction
- Write statement
- Get statement approved

RESEARCH – X WEEKS

- Library research – X weeks
  - Books – X days
  - Journals – X days
  - Magazine and other articles – X days
- Internet Research – X weeks
  - Sites X – X days
  - Sites X – X days

- Order any needed sources by X
- Interviews – X days
    - So and So on MM/DD/ time
    - So and So on MM/DD/ time

ROUGH DRAFT – BEGIN WRITING ON X
TO BE COMPLETED BY X

- Research topic X to be completed by X
- Edit and rewrite rough draft – begin on X to be completed by X
- Additional research X days

FINAL EDIT – BEGIN ON X
TO BE COMPLETED BY X

6 AVOIDING THE PLAGIARISM PLAGUE

THREE STEPS TO HELP STUDENTS AVOID PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is in today's academic spotlight. No, it's not a new problem but thanks to technology it has made it to the forefront. Many universities are fighting the issue with plagiarism software such as Unplag. Many professors also are monitoring chat rooms, posing as students in internet classes, and enforcing stricter guidelines for classroom assignments. But many educators say the best answer to this epidemic is to meet it head-on in the classroom before the student begins their assignment.

1. The first step to making sure your students avoid plagiarism is to ensure they have a plan and stick to it. Be proactive in every phase of their project. Keeping tabs will ensure they stay on their plan. Plagiarism becomes tempting to a student when they are up against a deadline. Make sure your students know the best advice for avoiding plagiarism is to immediately get to work on the assignment and have a plan to finish it ahead of schedule.

2. The second step to explain to your students when handing out an assignment is for them to document all sources looked at, read, used, or even thought about so they will have that information when it is needed to reference a source in their paper. Besides Mendeley, another piece of software that can help students keep track of their resources is Evernote.

This program places all their "notes" in one location for easy access, which will help keep students organized when working on a large research project.

3. The third step instructors should emphasize before handing out an assignment is to remind the students to write their paper themselves. Explain they could easily fall into the plagiarism trap if they copy and paste information into their project – even if they take the time to change a few words to "make it their own." As the educator grading their paper, tell them a poorly written one is better than facing the accusation of plagiarism and failing the project.

HOW TO DETECT AND CONFIRM PLAGIARISM

The following list is things within a student's paper professors can look for to quickly detect plagiarism:

* Dated material is an instant red flag that the paper could have been copied.

* Check the paper's voice. If the paper is written using vocabulary that is strange to the student then rest assured the paper probably has been plagiarized.

* Look at the spelling and see if it's consistent with the students other work.

* Check for common phrases that are used in class, by the author, or by other students and note if they are present in the paper. Missing common terms or phrases are a red flag.

• Another fast check for professors who have been teaching for years is to run through the student's bibliography glancing at the resources. If all the resources look familiar and nothing new is found then there are chances the paper has been plagiarized and the paper deserves a close look.

Plagiarism confirmation is as simple as copying the questionable phrase into a search engine and seeing what appears. Another fast way to check a complete paper is through plagiarism detection software such as Unplag.

PLAGIARISM CONSEQUENCES

Plagiarism is a serious issue in academia and its generating a lot of discussions among educators. There are those who have their students sign papers stating they understand what constitutes cheating. Other teachers insist their students submit their work through plagiarism detection software such as Unplag. Still others mention plagiarism in their syllabus but do nothing else about the issue unless they run across blatant plagiarism. Most who take this stance say they rather focus on teaching their course than worrying about the students who cheat.

Teachers should not completely ignore plagiarism since their job is to teach their students. If the student is cheating then he or she is not learning.

A student who only learns to find the easy way out of a situation will not be an asset anywhere they go.

Unplag.com®
PLAGIARISM DETECTION SOFTWARE

A student who only learns to find the easy way out of a situation will not be an asset anywhere they go. Their bad reputation will reflect on the academic institution where they received their education. It's the teacher's job to teach and ensure the student is learning the material. That is why an institution insists on some form of measurement such as a test or major project during the course to ensure the student is obtaining the education he or she is seeking. By ignoring plagiarism, learning is not taking place within their classroom.

As with an instructor's stance in the classroom towards plagiarism, institutions have varied penalties for students who are caught plagiarizing. The consequences to a student caught plagiarizing depends on the school's policies and if the sources author wants to take the plagiarist to court for violating their legal copyright. Institutions are not consistent on their punishment for plagiarism but the ramifications listed below are the more common ones being used in academia:

Most schools give failing grades – 0 – for a plagiarized project.

> **Along with failing the student's project, many schools have some form of an honor council the teacher can send the plagiarist to where the student faces a panel.**

Along with failing the student's project, many schools have some form of an honor council the teacher can send the plagiarist to where the student faces a panel. The panel has the authority to suspend the student from school, enforce fines, and/or place the student on some form of probation.

Plagiarism ruins the student's academic reputation meaning all their work will be scrutinized as long as they are in school.

If the plagiarized work involves research that is being funded by a grant then the grant money could be in jeopardy along with the student's and institution's reputation.

UNPLAG PLAGIARISM SOFTWARE AS A TEACHING TOOL

Technology is being utilized in the classroom today in numerous ways – from watching videos of animals in their natural habitats to virtual classrooms where students sit in different states and even countries while attending the same class.

Unplag realizes technology has changed the face of education. With the ease of access to information plagiarism has become more of an issue in today's world. With that thought in mind, the software helps students learn how to properly write their research papers and accurately annotate the sources they use.(16)

The software highlights each phrase or new thought and gives the possible plagiarism percentage beside the phrase so students are prompted to cite where the information came from. This reinforces the need for citing sources and helps teach a student how to properly annotate sources within their papers. It also allows students to upload their previous works so they can check for self-plagiarism.

> **Unplag allows teachers to manage classroom assignments, check a student's work for plagiarism.**

Unplag allows teachers to manage classroom assignments, check a student's work for plagiarism.

Unplag.com®
PLAGIARISM DETECTION ENGINE

Another great feature is the software allows the instructor to keep track of all student paper checks and see the changes students introduce to their papers after the instructor comments on what should be corrected.

CONCLUSION

Plagiarism is an issue that only can be curtailed with a proactive approach from teachers in the classroom. Reports show many teachers do not enjoy talking about plagiarism with their students – mainly because of all the negative connotations that are associated with the term.

But as this guide points out, teachers can take a proactive approach and highlight the positive aspects of addressing plagiarism issues such as ensuring all work is properly cited and teaching students better research and writing skills. The classroom atmosphere is dictated by the teacher so approach plagiarism in a professional, positive, and educational manner and students will not be offended. They will realize the teacher is teaching them how to organize, research, and put together their project – in essence, helping them get a better grade on their project.

This approach only can help a student pass the course – a positive for them and for the institution since it will be turning out better graduates ready to face the world. Be positive, be proactive, and stop plagiarism before it begins in your classroom.

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