

CITING SOURCES on a RESEARCH PAPER

Or

PLAGIARISM and HOW TO AVOID IT

Plagiarism is the word for stealing someone else's words or ideas without giving credit to the smart person who thought of those interesting words and ideas. It derives from the Latin word "plagiarius," which means "kidnapper". If you kidnap someone else's words for your research paper, you shall be punished. By punished, I mean you will fail your paper and have to have me again next year (evil laughter followed by stern look). If you don't want to take this class again, consider the writing of your paper very carefully. You are attempting to find research to support your thesis argument. Give credit where credit is due and don't try to say you had the research come to you in a dream one night. The results will not turn out in your favor... Again, just don't plagiarize.

Also, as it turns out, English teachers end up reading four million papers per year and I can always tell when something sounds too good for a sophomore paper. When you suddenly begin using phrases like "morally bankrupt" or "expostulate" or and the ever popular "lexicalization," I tend to become suspicious... very suspicious.

Because you do not want to be kidnappers (or if you do, at least ask for money instead of passing a paper) I present you with the following set of rules to avoid plagiarism. Learn them and then chew them up and swallow them. I would not recommend taking this advice literally, but just in case you do, read the following first:

1. DIRECT QUOTE: When you are copying someone's exact words:

According to experts in psychology at the University of Minnesota, "Bobby Baker has the most beautiful eyes that have ever been examined" (Lang).

*Notice that the author's name must be listed in parenthesis after the quotation marks.

*If there is no author listed for your source, list the first few words of the article title.

"He was a troublemaker at an early age," said the warden at the St. Cloud Penitentiary. "We always knew Jake Wagner's love of talking incessantly would land him in jail" (Famous Juvenile Delinquents...)

2. INDIRECT QUOTE: Use this when you are using a source's cool idea, but you are not going to use it exactly as it was originally written.

Research has discovered that 99% of students who fail English, later find careers in the field of French fry cooking or interpretive dance (Burklund and Burnham).

Studies have determined that most teenage girls between the ages of 13-19 would gladly give up all their worldly possessions if they could marry Edward the vampire (Vampires Gone Wild).

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3. **BLOCK QUOTES:** Any time your quote runs longer than four typed lines of text, you should block it. Indent two tabs and DO NOT use quotation marks. You must still cite the author or source at the end. Usually block quotes are introduced with a sentence ending in a (:) but not always. Also, notice that the punctuation is different from other citations.

It all started the day Mr. Burklund stepped out of the room for a moment. When he returned to class, he was horrified that nobody was researching. It was the beginning of the end. Without warning, the students were out of control. They began making paper airplanes and using terms like “OMG” and “BFF”. The destruction continued as they purposely plugged up the toilets in the bathrooms and began tying teachers up and putting them into the closets. It was a downhill ride, and these students were out of control. (Kolbinger)

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4. **QUOTE WITHIN A QUOTE:** If you are ever quoting someone who is quoting someone else, you must use a quote within a quote.

She said, “My friends followed the ‘I have a dream’ philosophy of learning and never stopped believing in the power of finishing homework” (Johnson).

“My favorite motto comes from the words of my mother who used to always tell me that life was all about ‘tough love without the love.’ I am thinking about getting that as my first tattoo” (Sackett).

5. PROPER FORMAT FOR A CITATION:

“This is the quote in my paper” (AUTHOR LAST NAME OR TITLE OF WORK).

Quotation Mark>> TEXT >> QUOTATION MARK >> (Source) >> Period

If you are unsure whether information needs to be cited, consider the frequency that information was found while completing your research. Also, consider how specific the information is.

EACH PARAGRAPH OF YOUR PAPER SHOULD HAVE CITATIONS (this excludes the intro and conclusion).

No more than 25% of your paper should be direct quotations.