Writing Ethically

Analyzing issues of plagiarism and academic dishonesty

Learning to correctly synthesize and utilize sources is a practice that takes awareness and effort, and even published authors sometimes find themselves in trouble with accusations of plagiarism. Consider these two examples:

- **Stephen Ambrose** **(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephen_E._Ambrose#Plagiarism)** (1936-2002), a highly regarded historian and writer, was accused of plagiarizing several passages of one of his later books. Although Ambrose had noted the original sources in footnotes, he had neglected to use quotation marks for passages he reproduced. Plagiarism stained Ambrose's reputation even after his death.
- Harvard student Kaavya Viswanathan (born 1987) authored her **first novel** **(https://en.wikipedia.org /wiki/How_Opal_Mehta_Got_Kissed,_Got_Wild,_and_Got_a_Life)** at the age of 17. A major publisher offered her a six-figure advance and released the book in 2006. DreamWorks SKG bought the rights to make it into a movie. Everything was great for Viswanathan until a reader found that she had plagiarized passages from another writer. Viswanathan's novel was pulled from bookstores and DreamWorks dropped the film project. Her career as a novelist may have come to an embarrassing end.

In this section, you'll learn how to avoid plagiarism (and the fate of these authors!) and how to appropriately include quotes, summaries, and paraphrases in your writing.

What You Will Learn To Do

- analyze the definition of academic dishonesty
- analyze the definition of intentional and unintentional plagiarism
- analyze reasons for concerns about plagiarism and academic dishonesty in academic settings
- analyze strategies to avoid intentional and unintentional plagiarism and academic dishonesty, including summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting

Video: Academic Integrity

Defining Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is defined as the honest and responsible pursuit of scholarship. Academic integrity is characterized by

- completing exams and other academic assignments in an honest way
- presenting truthful and accurate data and research information in academic assignments
- avoiding plagiarism by properly incorporating and acknowledging sources

The reputation of a school and its assessment of student work depend on integrity.

SFU: What is Academic Integ...

Why Academic Integrity Matters

- It's vital to being a responsible part of the academic community.
- Consequences for failing to give credit to sources can be severe. Violating your school's academic integrity policy may lead to suspension or expulsion.
- As a member of the academic community, it is important to build and uphold a positive reputation. This will carry over to life after college, as you seek recommendations from professors to enter a career field.

Defining Plagiarism

Plagiarism as "Intellectual Theft"

- Plagiarism occurs when you present another person's ideas, intentionally or unintentionally, as your own.
- In the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*, Joseph Gibaldi likens plagiarism to "intellectual theft," because it "gives the impression that you wrote or thought something that you in fact borrowed from someone, and to do so is a violation of professional ethics" (165).
- It is your responsibility as the student to avoid plagiarizing.
- As a scholar, you are expected to credit the sources of ideas that you use in your own work.

What Counts as Plagiarism?

Plagiarism can be **intentional** or **unintentional**. It often occurs because the process of citation can be confusing, technology makes copy + paste so easy, and knowing exactly what to cite is not always easy! You can avoid unintentional plagiarism by learning how to cite material and keeping track of sources in your notes. Give yourself plenty of time to process sources so you don't plagiarize by mistake. Here are some examples of plagiarism:

- Submitting a paper written by someone else.
- Using words and phrases from the source text and patching them together in new sentences.
- Failing to acknowledge the sources of words or information.
- Not providing quotation marks around a direct quotation. This leads to the false assumption that the words are your own.
- Borrowing the idea or opinion of someone else without giving the person credit
- Restating or paraphrasing a passage without citing the original author
- Borrowing facts or statistics that are not common knowledge without proper acknowledgement

Why You Should Care

Being honest and maintaining integrity in your academic work is a sign of character and professionalism. In addition to maximizing your own learning and taking ownership of your academic success, not plagiarizing is important because

- your professors assign research projects to help you learn. You cheat yourself when you substitute someone else's work for your own.
- you don't like it when someone else takes credit for your ideas, so don't do it to someone else.
- plagiarizing comes with consequences. Depending on the offense and the institution, you may be asked to rewrite plagiarized work, receive a failing grade on the assignment, fail the entire course, or be suspended from the university.
- professors use search engines, databases, and specialized software to check suspicious work, so you will eventually get caught.

Is This Plagiarism?

Yes, because Joe Student purchased a paper and handed it in as his own work. Putting your name on a paper written by someone else, whether a friend wrote it for you or you bought it, is plagiarism. Even though the web site alleges that the paper purchased by Joe Student is original, turning in a paper written by someone else is unethical–and pretty easy for professors to spot.

Is This Plagiarism?

Yes, this is plagiarism because Joe Student used someone else's ideas and words without giving them credit. Using someone else's words–even in a different order–is stealing if you don't give the original author credit.

Is This Plagiarism?

No, it's not plagiarism. Credit to the source is given in both the text and the list of references. Quotation marks are used when citing someone's exact words. When you paraphrase, simply include an in-text citation or footnote.

Avoiding Plagiarism

Avoiding plagiarism begins with properly managing your research. If you are rushed, don't take good notes, or lose track of where you found your sources, you may find yourself accidentally plagiarizing. Here are some tips to prevent that from happening:

- **Start your research early**.
- **Take and keep accurate notes** of the sources you use. Distinguish between your ideas and other's ideas and direct quotes.
- **Document your sources immediately**. As you gather sources during your research, make sure to record all the information you need to cite your sources accurately and completely (e.g., authors, titles, URL addresses, etc.). Check with your instructor or a librarian to see what citation information is required for the citation style you will be using (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago).

Manage Your Materials

Reference management websites and applications exist to assist you in tracking and recording your research. Most of these websites are free and will even create the works cited page for you! Some of the most popular citation tools are:

- **Zotero**   **(https://www.zotero.org/)**
- **RefME**   **(https://www.refme.com/us/)** (which works with **Evernote**   **(https://evernote.com/)**)
- **BibMe**   **(http://www.bibme.org/)**
- **Mendeley**   **(https://www.mendeley.com/)**

Pick one of these helpful tools at the beginning of your research and use it during your initial searches to ensure you always keep track of your materials.

More Tips for Avoiding Plagiarism

- Make sure to place **direct quotes** from another person in **quotation marks**. This is especially important to remember when you are taking notes from any source you use. Make sure to copy the words exactly as they appear in the source.
- When you **paraphrase**, be sure you are not just changing or rearranging a few words. Carefully read over the text you want to paraphrase. Write out the idea in your own words. Check your paraphrase against the original text to make sure you have not accidentally used the same phrases or words.
- Make sure to include **complete** and **correct citations** in your works cited list.
- Make sure to follow the **guidelines** and **rules** for the **citation style** specified by your instructor (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago).
- In the beginning of the first sentence containing a quote or paraphrase of another's work, make it clear that it is someone else's idea (e.g., According to Smith . . .)
- Make sure to include **in-text citations** within your paper for any information taken from another person's work. A typical in-text citation includes the author's last name and the page number of the source. The in-text citation is inserted at the end of the last sentence containing a quote or paraphrase of another's work – example: (Jones, 127)

Using Sources in Your Writing

Summarizing

Summarizing involves condensing the main idea of a source into a much shorter overview. A summary outlines a source's most important points and general position. When summarizing a source, it is still necessary to use a citation to give credit to the original author. Summaries of different lengths are useful in research writing because you often need to provide your

readers with an explanation of the text you are discussing. This is especially true when you are about to quote or paraphrase from a source.

Quoting

Direct quotations are words and phrases that are taken directly from another source, and then used word-for-word in your paper. If you incorporate a direct quotation from another author's text, you must put that quotation or phrase in quotation marks to indicate that it is not your language.

When writing direct quotations, you can use the source author's name in the same sentence as the quotation to introduce the quoted text and to indicate the source in which you found the text. You should then include the page number or other relevant information in parentheses at the end of the phrase (the exact format will depend on the formatting style of your essay).

When to Quote

In general, it is best to use a quote when:
- The exact words of your source are important for the point you are trying to make. This is especially true if you are quoting technical language, terms, or very specific word choices.
- You want to highlight your agreement with the author's words. If you agree with the point the author of the evidence makes and you like their exact words, use them as a quote.
- You want to highlight your disagreement with the author's words. In other words, you may sometimes want to use a direct quote to indicate exactly what it is you disagree about. This might be particularly true when you are considering the antithetical positions in your research writing projects.

Quotation Example

Here's the first **BAD** example:
> There are many positive effects for advertising prescription drugs on television. "African-American physicians regard direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription medicines as one way to educate minority patients about needed treatment and healthcare options" (Wechsler, Internet).

This is a potentially good piece of information to support a research writer's claim, but the researcher hasn't done any of the necessary work to explain where this quote comes from or to explain why it is important for supporting her point. Rather, she has simply "dropped in" the quote, leaving the interpretation of its significance up to the reader.
Now consider this revised **GOOD** example of how this quote might be better introduced into the essay:
> In her Pharmaceutical Executive article available through the Wilson Select Internet database, Jill Wechsler writes about one of the positive effects of advertising prescription drugs on television. "African-American physicians regard direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription medicines as one way to educate minority patients about needed treatment and healthcare options."

In this revision, it's much more clear what point the writer is trying to make with this evidence and where this evidence comes from.

Paraphrasing

When paraphrasing, you may put any part of a source (such as a phrase, sentence, paragraph, or chapter) into your own words. You may find that the original source uses language that is more clear, concise, or specific than your own language, in which case you should use a direct quotation, putting quotation marks around those unique words or phrases you don't change.

It is common to use a mixture of paraphrased text and quoted words or phrases, as long as the direct quotations are inside of quotation marks.

When to Paraphrase

In general, it is best to paraphrase when:

- There is no good reason to use a quote to refer to your evidence. If the author's exact words are not especially important to the point you are trying to make, you are usually better off paraphrasing the evidence.
- You are trying to explain a particular a piece of evidence in order to explain or interpret it in more detail. This might be particularly true in writing projects like critiques.
- You need to balance a direct quote in your writing. You need to be careful about directly quoting your research too much because it can sometimes make for awkward and difficult to read prose. So, one of the reasons to use a paraphrase instead of a quote is to create balance within your writing.

Paraphrasing Example

The original passage, from Benjamin Franklin's "Speech to the [Constitutional] Convention":

> Mr. President, I confess that I do not entirely approve of this Constitution at present; but, Sir, I am not sure I shall never approve it; for, having lived long, I have experienced many instances of being obliged, by better information or fuller consideration, to change my opinions even on important subjects, which I once thought right, but found to be otherwise.

Here's the first **BAD** example:

> Benjamin Franklin tells the president of the Constitutional Convention that he does **not entirely** approve of the Constitution at the **present** time, but that he is not sure **he will never approve it**. He points out that he has lived a long time, and in his experience there have been **many instances** when **better information of fuller consideration** of a topic have made him change his opinions **on important subjects** that he had originally thought to be correct. He points out that he finds himself more likely to doubt his own judgment the older he gets, and contrasts his knowledge of his own fallibility with other people's conviction of their infallibility.

The problem with this paraphrase is in the way that it reproduces distinctive phrasing, sentence structure, and ordering of ideas. Note that the red, bolded parts of the paragraph actually reproduce Franklin's wording exactly, and that the order of information in the paraphrase is essentially the same as in the original. Notice the end of the paraphrase also contains extra information that is not present in the original passage.

Now consider this **GOOD** revised version:

> Benjamin Franklin tells the president of the Constitutional Convention that although he is currently uncertain about the Constitution they have created, he may eventually acknowledge its effectiveness. This is due, he explains, to new information or a different understanding of similarly important topics that have caused him to change his mind in the past.

This paraphrase is strong because of the way that it captures the main ideas and important details of the original passage without reproducing phrasing or sentence structure too exactly. There are still similarities of phrasing and structure, but they deviate in notable ways from the phrasing and structure of the original passage. Also unlike the poor paraphrase, this one does not include information not found in the original passage.

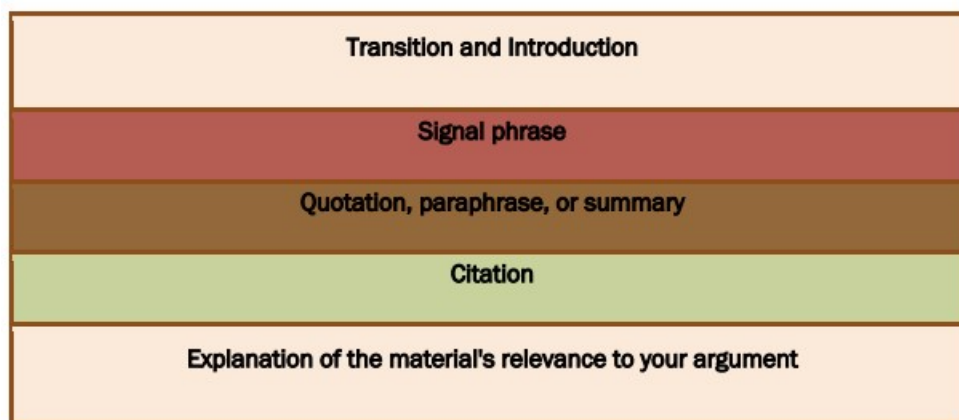## Overview: Paraphrase, Quotation, and Summary

	How is the original passage modified?	How is it marked or cited in the text?
Summary	Complete modification of wording and sentence structure; elimination of unnecessary elements; condenses	Signal phrase to indicate where the summary begins and other citation as required by style
Quotation	No modification	Quotation marks or a paragraph to signal long quotation format, as required by the citation style
Paraphrase	Complete modification of wording and sentence structure; meaning and details included should remain the same	Signal phrase to indicate where the paraphrase begins and other citation as required by style

Providing Context for Your Sources

Whether you use a direct quotation, a summary, or a paraphrase, it is important to distinguish the original source from your ideas, and to explain how the cited source fits into your argument. While the use of quotation marks or parenthetical citations tells your reader that these are not your own words or ideas, you should follow the quote with a description, in your own terms, of what the quote says and why it is relevant to the purpose of your paper. You should not let quoted or paraphrased text stand alone in your paper, but rather, should integrate the sources into your argument by providing context and explanations about how each source supports your argument.

The "Quote Sandwich"

You can think of the context for your quote as a sandwich with multiple parts. You'll want to: transition into and introduce the source, use a signal phrase to actually move into the material from the source, provide a citation that can be easily connected to the full citation material in your bibliography or works cited list, and explain how this material fits into your argument. Many writing textbooks refer to this as a quotation sandwich, but it can and should also be used to integrate paraphrases and summaries. All material from sources that you use in your own must be integrated in this way, or you risk readers becoming confused about its importance and purpose.

- SFU: What is Academic Integrity?. **Authored by**: Bruce Beh and Justin Lee. **Located at**: **SFU: What is Academic Integrity?**   (https://youtu.be/GU5Nv-YjlG8)

(https://youtu.be/GU5Nv-YjlG8)

. **License**: *All Rights Reserved.* **License Terms**: Standard YouTube License

CC licensed content, Original

- Revision and Adaptation. **Provided by**: Lumen Learning. **License**: *CC BY-NC-SA: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike*   (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/)

CC licensed content, Shared previously

- Pot of Gold: Information Literacy Tutorial. **Authored by**: University of Notre Dame. **Located at**: http://library.nd.edu/instruction/potofgold/utilizing/?page=12 (http://library.nd.edu/instruction/potofgold/utilizing/?page=12) . **License**: *CC BY-NC-SA: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike*   (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/)

- Section on Unintentional Plagiarism. **Authored by**: Community College of Vermont. **Located at**: http://tutorials.libraries.vsc.edu/plagiarism/unintentional/after (http://tutorials.libraries.vsc.edu/plagiarism/unintentional/after) . **Project**: Understanding Plagiarism Tutorial. **License**: *CC BY-NC-SA: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike* (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/)

- Academic Integrity Tutorial. **Authored by**: University of Maryland University College. **Located at**: http://www.umuc.edu/students/academic-integrity/ai-tutorial/academic-integrity-tutorial.html   (http://www.umuc.edu/students/academic-integrity/ai-tutorial/academic-integrity-tutorial.html) . **License**: *CC BY-NC-SA: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike*   (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/)

CC licensed content, Original

- Revision and Adaptation. **Provided by**: Lumen Learning. **License**: *CC BY-NC-SA: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike*   (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/)

CC licensed content, Shared previously

- Tips for Avoiding Plagiarism. **Authored by**: Denise Woetzel. **Provided by**: Reynolds Community College Library. **Located at**: http://libguides.reynolds.edu/c.php?g=143586&p=938808   (http://libguides.reynolds.edu/c.php?g=143586&p=938808) . **License**: *CC BY-NC-SA: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike*   (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/)

- Quote Sandwich, From Chapter 5: Critical Thinking, Source Evaluations, and Analyzing Academic Writing. **Authored by**: Denise Snee, Kristin Houlton, Nancy Heckel. Edited by Kimberly Jacobs. **Located at**: http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/679/734444/Snee_2012_Research_Analysis_and_Writing.pdf   (http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/679/734444/Snee_2012_Research_Analysis_and_Writing.pdf) . **License**: *CC BY-NC-SA: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike* (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/)

CC licensed content, Original

- Revision and Adaptation of Boundless material. **Provided by**: Lumen Learning. **License**: *CC BY-SA: Attribution-ShareAlike*   (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

- Integrating sources checklist. **Authored by**: Kim Louie for Lumen Learning. **License**: *CC BY: Attribution*   (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

CC licensed content, Shared previously

- Summarizing; Quoting; Paraphrasing; Providing Context for Your Sources. **Provided by**: Boundless. **Located at**: https://www.boundless.com/writing/textbooks/boundless-writing-textbook/the-research-process-2/using-your-sources-11/incorporating-your-sources-into-your-paper-96-10295/   (https://www.boundless.com/writing/textbooks/boundless-writing-textbook/the-research-process-2/using-your-sources-11/incorporating-your-sources-into-your-paper-96-10295/) . **Project**: Boundless Writing. **License**: *CC BY-SA: Attribution-ShareAlike*   (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

- Portions of Chapter 3: Quoting, Paraphrasing, and Avoiding Plagiarism, included in the When to Quote and When to Paraphrase examples. **Authored by**: Steven D. Krause. **Located at**: http://www.stevendkrause.com/tprw/chapter3.html   (http://www.stevendkrause.com/tprw/chapter3.html) . **Project**: The Process of Research Writing. **License**: *CC BY-NC-SA: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike*   (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/)

- Benjamin Franklin example from Chapter 5: Using Materials from Sources. **Authored by**: Denise Snee, Kristin Houlton, Nancy Heckel. Edited by Kimberly Jacobs. **Located at**: http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/679/734444/Snee_2012_Research_Analysis_and_Writing.pdf   (http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/679/734444/Snee_2012_Research_Analysis_and_Writing.pdf) . **Project**: Research, Analysis, and Writing. **License**: *CC BY-NC-SA: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike*   (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/)

- Table modified from Research, Analysis, and Writing table from page 98. **Authored by**: Denise Snee, Kristin Houlton, Nancy Heckel. Edited by Kimberly Jacobs. **Located at**: http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/679/734444/Snee_2012_Research_Analysis_and_Writing.pdf   (http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/679/734444/Snee_2012_Research_Analysis_and_Writing.pdf) . **Project**: Research, Analysis, and Writing. **License**: *CC BY-NC-SA: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike*

- Quote Sandwich, from Chapter 5: Critical Thinking, Source Evaluations, and Analyzing Academic Writing. **Authored by**: Denise Snee, Kristin Houlton, Nancy Heckel. Edited by Kimberly Jacobs. **Located at**: **http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/679/734444/Snee_2012_Research_Analysis_and_Writing.pdf** **(http://lgdata.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/docs/679/734444/Snee_2012_Research_Analysis_and_Writing.pdf)** . **Project**: Research, Writing, and Analysis. **License**: _**CC BY-NC-SA: Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike**_ _(https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/)_